



ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥
Ik oankār sat nām kartā purakh nīrbhāo nirvair akāl mūrati ajūnī saibhān gur parsād.



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Punjabi Editor: Gyani Jarnail Singh Arshi (Malaysia)
Editors: Moninder Singh (Canada), Harpreet Kaur (New Zealand)
Technical Lead: Amrinder Singh Sandhu (USA)

Editorial

Happy Vaisakhi 1469, Happy Vaisakhi 1699.

The 1st of Baisakh Nanakshahi Sammat 557, which coincides with 14th of April 2025 marks two pivotal events of Sikhi – Vaisakhi of 1469 and of 1699. Vaisakhi 2025 is thus the 556th anniversary of Guru Nanak's birth in 1469; and the 326th anniversary of the celebration in 1699, of the culmination of a 230-year journey.

Vaisakhi 1699 was the celebration of spiritual completeness. The journey of spiritual completeness began with Guru Nanak in 1469, and was contributed to by nine successive Gurus. This journey, which was celebrated in 1699, culminated in 1708 with the installation of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib representing the *Shabd* as our Guru and guide towards spiritual enlightenment. Spiritual completeness is defined within the *Shabd* as being linked completely with the messages of the complete Guru within; and being linked completely with humanity without.

The highlight of Vaisakhi 1469 was the advent of Guru Nanak. The highlight of Vaisakhi 1699 was the celebration of being linked within and without. Guru Gobind Singh called out 5 Sikhs that he had selected based on their links with Guru Nanak's Sikhi. He made sure they were each from different regions and different castes. He united them in the one-ness of humanity, erased their differences in caste and origin, gave them one identity as Khalsa through the initiation of the *khande di pahul*. When it was all over, he had united them with him and him with them.

The Sikh world is, lamentably, removed from the essence of both events. Vaisakhi 1469 has gotten erased from the Sikh psyche as the birthdate of Guru Nanak. And Vaisakhi 1699 has become mired in unbelievable tales of the Guru beheading his own Sikhs before brining them back to life. This irony notwithstanding, the Sikh Bulletin wishes the Sikh world in general, and our readers in particular Happy Vaisakhi.

Karminder Singh Dhillon, PhD.
Editor-in-chief.

Shabd Vichar

ਜਾਲਿ ਮੋਹੁ ਘਸਿ ਮਸੁ ਕਰਿ

*Jaal Moh Ghas Mas Kar**Karminder Singh, PhD (Boston)*

dhillon99@gmail.com



This Shabd is composed by Guru Nanak and recorded on page 16 of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji (SGGS). It is the sixth shabd of Sri Rag – the first rag of the SGGS.

ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲੁ ੧ || *Sri Rag Mehla 1*
SriRag First Mehl.

ਜਾਲਿ ਮੋਹੁ ਘਸਿ ਮਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਮਤਿ ਕਾਰਾਦੁ ਕਰਿ ਸਾਰੁ || *Jaal Moh Ghas Mas Kar Mat Kagad Kar Saar.*

Jaal – Lit. Burn, reduce. **Moh** - Attachement. **Ghas** - Lit. Grind, convert. **Mas** – Ink. **Kar** – Make, turning. **Mat** – Conscience. **Kagad** – Paper. **Saar** – Lit. Can be used. Metap. Blank.

Reduce Your Attachment To Ash And Convert It Into Ink, While Turning Yourself Into A Blank Sheet Of Paper,
O Conscience.

ਭਾਉ ਕਲਮ ਕਰਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਲੇਖਾਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਪੁਛਿ ਲਿਖੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ || *Bhao Kalm Kar Chit Leykhari Gur Puch Likh Bichar.*

Bhao – Love. **Kalm** – Writing instrument. **Kar** – Make. **Chit** – Mind. **Leykhari** – Writer. **Gur** – Messages or counsel of the Guru *shabd*. **Puch** – Lit. Ask, consult. **Likh** – Destiny. **Bichar** – Discourse within, inner discourse.

Make Love Your Writing Instrument; Consult the *Shabd* Guru's Discourse Within And Write My **Spiritual**
Destiny, O Mind.

ਲਿਖੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਲਿਖੁ ਲਿਖੁ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰੁ || ੧ || *Likh Naam Salah Likh Likh Ant Na Paravar.*

Likh – Write. **Naam** – Divine virtues. **Salah** – Lit. Praise, greatness. **Ant Na** – Limitless. **Paravar** – Fathomless.

Write Divine Virtues; Write The Greatness Of The Limitless and Fathomless Creator **In My Spiritual Destiny O**
Mind.

ਬਾਬਾ ਏਹੁ ਲੇਖਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣੁ || *Baba Eh Leykha Likh Jaann.*

Baba – Mind. **Eh** – This, such. **Leykha** – Account, score. Metap. Destiny. **Likh Jaann**- Cause to be written.

Cause Such An Account **Of My Spiritual Destiny** To Be Written O Mind.

ਜਿਥੈ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੰਗੀਐ ਤਿਥੈ ਹੋਇ ਸਚਾ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ || ੧ || ਰਹਾਉ || *Jithay Laykha Mangeaiy Tithay Hoye Scha Nisaann.*
Rahao.

Jithay – Lit. Where, whence. **Leykha** – Account, score. **Mangeaiy** – Lit. Asked, demanded, needed. Metap. Matters. **Tithay** – Lit. There, thence. **Hoye** – Become. **Scha** – Creator, Divine. **Nisaann** – Lit. Sign, sign post, sign board. Metap. Provide direction.

Because Whence Needed, That Account Will Direct Me Towards The Divine.

ਜਿਥੈ ਮਿਲਹਿ ਵਡਿਆਈਆ ਸਦ ਖੁਸੀਆ ਸਦ ਚਾਉ ॥ *Jithay Milaiy Vadeayea Sad Khusia Sad Chao.*

Jithay - Lit. Where, whence. **Milaiy** – Lit. Meet. Sp. Realize. **Vadeayea** – Lit. Greatness. **Sad** – Lit. Forever, eternal, perpetual. **Khusia** – Bliss. **Chao** – Joy.

Whence Realization Of **Divine** Greatness Exists, So **Does** Eternal Bliss and Perpetual Joy.

ਤਿਨ ਮੁਖਿ ਟਿਕੇ ਨਿਕਲਹਿ ਜਿਨ ਮਨਿ ਸਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥ *Tin Mukh Tikay Nikleh Jin Man Scha Nao.*

Tin - Lit. They, there, thence. **Mukh** – Lit. 1. Forehead. 2. From ਮੁਖੀ *Mukhi*. Lit. Leading, foremost, paramount, above all. **Tikay Nikleh** – Annoited. **Jin** – Whose. **Man** – (With *sihari*) Within the mind. **Scha** – Pertaining to the Creator, Divine. **Nao** - Lit. Name. Sp. from the word ਨਾਮਣਾ *Namna* meaning credentials, standing, reputation, position.

They Stand As Leading Annoited Beings Whose Minds Realize The Standing Of The Creator Within.

ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਾ ਪਾਈਐ ਨਾਹੀ ਗਲੀ ਵਾਉ ਦੁਆਉ ॥ ੨ ॥ *Karm Milaiy Ta Paiyaiy Nahi Galee(n) Vao Duao.*

Karm – (With *sihari*). By the performance of deed. **Milaiy** – Lit. Gotten, attained. **Ta** – Then. **Paiyaiy** – Lit. Receive. Sp. Realize. **Nahi** – Not through. **Galee(n)** – Talk. **Vao** – Air. **Galee(n) Vao** – Idio. Empty talk. **Duao** – Requests through prayers.

Such Realization Is Attained Through Deeds; Not Through Empty Talk and Prayer Requests.

ਇਕਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਇਕਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਉਠਿ ਰਖੀਅਹਿ ਨਾਵ ਸਲਾਰ ॥ *Ek Aveh Ek Jahe Uth Rakheah Nav Slaar.*

Ek – (With *sihari*) Multitudes. **Aveh** – Come. **Jahe** – Go. **Uth** – Rise. **Rakheah** – Keep. **Nav** – Names, titles. **Slaar** – Lofty, haughty, lordly.

Multitudes Come And Multitudes Go; Rising To Accord Themselves Lordly Titles.

ਇਕਿ ਉਪਾਏ ਮੰਗਤੇ ਇਕਨਾ ਵਡੇ ਦਰਵਾਰ ॥ *Ek Upaye Mangtay Ekna Vdday Darvar.*

Ek - (With *sihari*) Multitudes. **Upaye** – Create, make. **Mangtay** – Beggars. **Ekna** – Multitudes. **Vdday** – Lofty. **Darvar** – Courts.

Multitudes Make For Beggars In Multitudes of Lofty Courts.

ਅਗੈ ਗਇਆ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਵੇਕਾਰ ॥ ੩ ॥ *Agaiy Gyea Janneaiy Vinn Navaaiy Vaykar.*

Agaiy – Lit. Ahead, before. Sp. Objective, goal. **Gyea** – Lit. Going, travelling, traversing. **Janneaiy** – Lit. Come to know. Sp. Realize. **Vinn** – Without, sans. **Navaaiy** – Divine virtues. **Vaykar** – Useless, worthless, futile.

While Traversing Towards My Spiritual Goal I Realize That Sans Divine Virtues **It Is** All Futile.

ਭੈ ਤੇਰੈ ਡਰੁ ਅਗਲਾ ਖਪਿ ਖਪਿ ਛਿਜੈ ਦੇਹ || *Bhaiy Tayraiyy Ddar Agla Khap Khap Chijaiy Deh.*

Bhaiy – Lit. Dread. **Tayraiyy** – Of you, of yours. **Ddar** – Fear, dismay. **Agla** – Plentiful, abundant. **Khap Khap** – Absorbed, spent, expended. **Chijaiy** – Wasted. **Deh** – Lit. Physical body. Metap. Life.

Dread Of Your Virtues (In Place Of Love) Has Created Dismay Aplenty Causing Life To Be Expended In Wasteful Ways.

ਨਾਵ ਜਿਨਾ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਖਾਨ ਹੋਦੇ ਡਿਠੇ ਖੇਹ || *Nav Jina Sultan Khan Ho(n)day Dithay Kheh.*

Nav - Names, titles. **Jina** – Of whom, whose. **Sultan Khan** – Idio. Lofty. **Ho(n)day** – Become. **Dithay** – Seen. **Kheh** – Lit. Ash. Metap. Nothing.

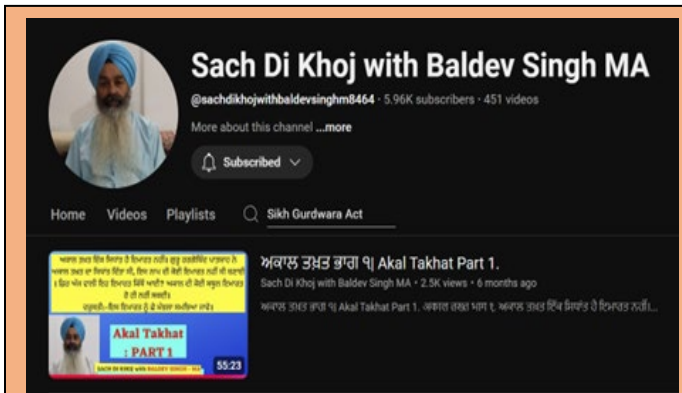
In Such Dismay, Beings With Lofty Titles Are Seen Being Reduced To Nothing.

ਨਾਨਕ ਉਠੀ ਚਲਿਆ ਸਭਿ ਕੂੜੇ ਤੁਟੇ ਨੇਹ || ੪ || ੬ || *Nanak Uthee Chale(n)ya Sabh Koorray Tuttay Neh.*

Uthee – Lit. Rise, raise, elevate. **Chale(n)ya** - Travelling, traversing, navigating. **Sabh** – All. **Koorray** - Lit. Fakey. Sp. Absence of Godliness, devoid of divinity. **Tuttay** – Lit. Break, discard. **Neh** – Attachement.

Nanak, Navigating The Journey Of Elevation Of Life, I Have Broken My Attachement With All That Leads To An Absence Of Divinity.

Editor’s Pick Videos



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k-F3E17Lf8>

Akal Takhat Part 1
ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਭਾਗ ੧



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohn5K5uLTXs&t=42s>

Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925.
ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਐਕਟ ੧੯੨੫

The Truth of The Akal Takhat.

Karminder Singh, PhD (Boston)
dhillon99@gmail.com



This article attempts to apply a *Gurbani*, *Gurmat*, *Gur-Itihas* perspective; and where applicable, existing legal provisions, in particular the Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925, to answer the following six questions.

- (i) Did Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, set up the Akal Takhat?
- (ii) What is the historical origin of the Akal Takhat as it exists today?
- (iii) What is the status of the position of “Jathedar” within the context of Akal Takhat?
- (iv) Is the Akal Takhat’s authority or jurisdiction over any matters (religious, social and political) pertaining to the Sikh World real or imagined?
- (v) Is the practice of “excommunication” of Sikhs by the Akal Takhat in accordance with *Gurbani* and *Gurmat*?
- (vi) Do the proponents of the Akal Takhat as an institution have a case?

1.0 DID GURU HARGOBIND SET UP THE AKAL TAKHAT?

The Historical Record. It is virtually impossible to find a single proponent of the Akal Takhat who does not claim that the Akal Takhat was set up by the sixth Guru Hargobind ji; and that it is part and parcel of the concept of “Miri-Piri.” The claim is that the Akal Takhat was constructed by the sixth Guru in 1606 AD. The question that needs answering is if there are any credible and trustworthy historical records of such a claim.

Two writers who were contemporaries of Guru Hargobind were Bhai Gurdas and Historian Mohamed Mohsen Fani. Bhai Gurdas was the scribe for Pothi Sahib, and Mohsen Fani was a writer of Persian origin who had spent a considerable number of years in India, some of which with the sixth Guru in Punjab.

Bhai Gurdas talks about the sixth Guru in 12 *paurris* (stanzas). Nowhere does he talk about Guru Hargobind setting up the Akal Takhat in these or any other *paurris* within his *Vaars*. In the relevant *paurri*¹ he writes of Guru Hargobind ji: ਮੰਜੀ ਬਹਿ ਸੰਤੋਖਦਾ ਕੁਤੇ ਰਖਿ ਸਿਕਾਰੁ ਖਿਲਾਇਆ॥ *Manji Beh Santokhda, Kutey Rakh Shikar Khelaeya*. The notion of the Gurus sitting on “Manjis” is used by Bhai Gurdas for the other Gurus as well. For instance, he writes of Guru Nanak²: ਬਾਬਾ ਆਇਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਭੇਖ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਗਲ ਉਤਾਰਾ॥ ਪਹਿਰ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਕਪੜੇ ਮੰਜੀ ਬੈਠ ਕੀਆ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ॥ *Baba Aya Kartarpur Bheykh Udasi Sagal Utara. Peher Sansari Kaprray Manji Baith Keeya Avtara*. The implications are clear: (i) that other than keeping hunting dogs, there was no difference in the way Guru Hargobind performed his Guru-ship duties when compared to other Gurus, and (ii) that the Guru built no “Takhat” to sit on.

¹ Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 26, paurri 24th verse four.

² Ibid, Vaar 1, paurri 38th, verse two.

Mohamed Mohsen Fani authored ਦਬਿਸਤਾਨ-ਏ-ਮਜ਼ਹਿਬ *Dabistan-E-Mazahib* in 1655. Its English translation was done by David Shea and Anthony Troyer in 1843³. In the narrative about Guru Hargobind, there is no mention of “Akāl Takhat.”⁴

There are those who believe that the Bachittar Natak Granth (Dasam Granth) is authentic and was indeed written by Guru Gobind Singh in 1698 AD. In this text too, there is no mention of the Akāl Takhat anywhere.

The earliest record of Sikh history in the post Guru period is within the pages of *Sri Guru Sobha Granth* which was written by Kavi Sainapat in 1711 AD – just three years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh – the tenth and final Guru. This voluminous historical text has no mention whatsoever of the Akāl Takhat within its pages.

The next available record is *Parchian*, authored by Seva Das which was written in 1725 AD. There is one *sakhi* (narrative) about the sixth Guru within its pages, and it contains no mention of Akāl Takhat.⁵

The next available record is *Gurbilas Patshahi 10* by Gyani Koer Singh, another voluminous text which was written in 1751 AD. This work too has no mention of the Akāl Takhat in any form or shape.

The next available record is Kesar Singh Chibber’s *Bansavlinama 10 Patshahian Da* – a massive work - which was written in 1769 AD. This historical text too has no mention whatsoever of the Akāl Takhat.

The next available record is *Mehima Parkash*, written by Sarup Das Bhalla in 1776 AD. This text too has no mention of the Akāl Takhat in any form or shape.

Lt. Col. Malcolm wrote the Sketch of the Sikhs in 1812. He provides a detailed description of the final Sarbat Khalsa that took place within Amritsar in 1804. Nowhere does Malcolm use the word Akāl Takht.⁶

Ratan Singh Bhangu wrote the *Pracheen Panth Parkash* in 1841 AD. His work talks of the sixth Gur’s wars against the Mugal rulers but makes no mention of the Akāl Takhat in any shape or form.

Bute Shah, a writer commissioned by the British rulers of Punjab to write Sikh history, wrote his book *The Geographical Description of the Punjab* in 1842. The original version in Persian was translated into Punjabi and published by Rev J. Porter in 1850.⁷ Bute has given a detailed description of the Darbar Sahib complex.⁸ He mentions the presence of an Akāl Bunga – the residence of the Akālī leaders (more of this in the succeeding portion of this essay). Bute does not mention the phrase “Akāl Takht” in any shape of form within his text.

A daily diary that provides information regarding routine matters of the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh written by Faqeer Syed Aziz-ud-Din provides an account of the Maharaja’s visits to places of worship, offerings and donations, but makes no mention of Akāl Takhat, indicating that the Maharaja was either unaware of such an institution or that it did not exist.⁹

³ David Shea and Anthony Troyer, *The Dabistan or School of Manners*, Montanna, USA, Kessinger Publishing, 2010.

⁴ Dr Iqbal Singh Dhillon writes on page 31 of his book, ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ: ਸੰਕਲਪ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਵਸਥਾ | *Akāl Takhat: Sankalap Atay Vevastha*, Chandigarh: Self, 2012, that Mohsen Fani does not mention the phrase “Akāl Bunga” as well. Dr Iqbal’s research on the history and origin of Akāl Takhat is one of the most comprehensive works that is available. Book accessed on 31 March 2025 and available here:

https://www.discoverikhism.com/sikh_library/gurmukhi/akaal_takhat_sankalp_atay_vivastha.html

⁵ Quoted in *Ibid*, page 32.

⁶ Malcolm, Lt. Col. *The Sketch Of The Sikhs: A Singular Nation Who Inhabit The Provinces Of The Penjab*, London: John Murray, 1812. There is a description of the Sarbat Khalsa on page 120.

⁷ Bute Shah, *The Geographical Description of the Punjab*, Punjabi version by Rev J. Porter, Ludhiana, Punjab: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1850.

⁸ *Ibid*, page 51.

⁹ Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, “The Myth of Akāl Takhat.” Article available at https://www.academia.edu/44522964/The_Myth_of_Akāl_Takht. Accessed on 30 March 2025.

If indeed the Akal Takhat was set up by the sixth Guru in 1606 AD, one needs to ask this question: “Why is there no mention of it anywhere in any historical record for almost 250 years up to 1850”? It is clear therefore that there is no historical source of repute that so much as mentions Akal Takhat – let alone expound on the concept in any shape or form.

Historian Dilgeer has stated in the clearest terms that Guru Hargobind ji did not construct any structure or building and name it Akal Takhat.¹⁰ Dr Iqbal Singh Dhillon, author of the most comprehensive work on the history and origin of Akal Takhat openly challenged anyone to prove that the phrase “Akal Takhat” has appeared in any shape or form in any literature written prior to 1840 AD.¹¹ Dilgeer has offered 10 lakh Rupees to anyone who can establish that the same.¹²

All he had done was to build a platform within the Darbar Sahib compound, but outside the Darbar Sahib where he sat to meet with people to discuss matters of concern to them, particularly matters that were unsuitable for discussion within the Darbar itself. There never was a name accorded to the platform, and there never was any religious, spiritual, political or social role or status that was assigned to this platform by Guru Hargobind, or any other Guru, or any Sikh leader.

There is nothing special, innovative or pioneering about the construction of a platform for people to meet, sit on, and discuss matters. The residences of village or communal leaders in Punjab – the Chaudhri, Sarpanch etc. – always had platforms that were constructed within the compounds of their homes, under the shade of some tree, where people who came to them with their social, communal, or political problems could sit and discuss with the leader concerned. This allowed the Chaudhri, Sarpanch or other leaders to keep matters and attendees within their own residences limited to family and relatives; while still welcoming and accommodating the general constituents on the platform. One would be on a strange plane of thought to want to accord any sort of special significance to the platform in the home of even the most distinguished Chaudhri or Sarpanch.

The Logic of a Takhat That Was Never Sat On. It is ridiculous to assume that the sixth Guru installed a Takhat and that the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth Gurus never came near it, let alone sit on it to exercise the authority and jurisdiction of the Takhat. Even the sixth Guru moved out of Amritsar in 1632 AD. Amritsar was where his self-created seat of authority in the form of Akal Takhat was supposedly located. Upon the Guru’s departure, the Darbar Sahib Complex and everything associated with it fell into the hands of Prithi Chand and subsequently his son Meharvan and then to his grandson Harji. Bhai Mani Singh would come to Amritsar in 1698. So, for all intents and purposes, the Mecca of Sikhi – the Darbar Sahib and everything associated with it, remained in the hands of anti-Sikhs and enemies of the Sikh world for 66 years.¹³ The ninth Guru did attempt to visit Darbar Sahib, within which precincts the Akal Takhat was supposed to have been installed, but was prevented from entering. The Guru was essentially locked out.

None of the Sikhs who are considered of high standing within the Sikh world ever stepped into the place that is considered the seat of “sovereignty and authority of the Sikhs” that is the Akal Takhat. The Panj Pyare, the 4 Sahibzadas, Bhai Nand Lal and the countless Sikhs who partook in the battles involving Guru Gobind Singh had not visited this place called the Akal Takhat.

¹⁰ Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Akal Takhat Sahib: Concept and Role*, Sikh University Press, 2011. Pp 31-37.

¹¹ Personal communication with author on 6th April, 2025.

¹² This claim is long-standing, but it was communicated directly to the author for the first time via an email dated April 7, 2025 that was sent to a group of Sikhs and copied to the author.

¹³ Baldev Singh MA, Akal Takhat, Part 1. Video available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k-F3E17Lf8>. Accessed on 31 March 2025.

In modern day politics, using the example of the political system of the USA, the equivalent of such a scenario would be as follows. Imagine that the White House in Washington DC being set up as the nation's seat of authority by the writers of the nation's constitution; and all subsequent Presidents not coming anywhere near Washington and the White House. And one of the Presidents being locked out of the White House and thus prevented from entering. On what grounds then, would one assert the notion of Washington and the White House being the seat of authority of the nation's political system. The reason why the political world of the USA accepts the White House in Washington DC as the nation's seat of political power is because the seat has been occupied by every President the country has ever had. The validity of a seat of authority is only good if it has been occupied by its rightful owners. A throne that was never sat on by the rightful emperor is no throne indeed.

2.0 THE HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT OF AKAL TAKHAT AS ITS EXISTS TODAY.

The Fraudulent Historical Record. The one text that does mention the Akal Takhat is the highly blasphemous and twice banned (by SGPC) *granth* of dubious authenticity – the *Gurbilas Patshahi 6*. This is one *granth* that has devoted its pages to denigrating the character of the sixth Guru to the extent of describing him as an adulterer; grounding Sikhi into the Snatan framework; and imposing the institution of a Clergy onto the parameters of Sikhi. The earlier editions of his *granth* have the author as anonymous. The proponents of the *granth* mention one Kavi Sohan and Bhagat Singh as its author. Both Kavi Sohan and Bhagat Singh are non-existent beings – having never being mentioned in any other classical texts, and having authored no other writing. Historian Harjinder Singh Dilgeer,¹⁴ mentions that *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* was written in the late 1830s by Nirmlas Gurmukh Singh and Darbara Singh who were *pujaris* (clergy) of Darbar Sahib.

The claim within the *Gurbilas* is that it was written in 1718, but this claim is proven false by the contents of the *granth* itself. Incidents and events that took place up to 1839 AD are mentioned within its the pages – invalidating the claim that it was authored a decade after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh. In fact, these events and incidents suggest that the *granth* was authored in the vicinity of 1840 AD.

The mention of Akal Takhat within this doubtful *granth* must therefore be looked at within the context of its aims as mentioned in the preceding para – particularly the objective of imposing an institution of clergy onto Sikhi. Its dubious authorship and false claims of the year of writing too need to be factored into the criteria of credibility. Both its real authors – Nirmlas Gurmukh Singh and Darbara Singh – were *pujaris* who had their roots in Snatanism and Benares. They were clergymen with an intent of establishing an institution that would be controlled by clergy, in the sense that it would give the clergy a measure of social, political and religious control of the masses – the kind of influence and control Benares had on adherents of Snatan beliefs. The creation of an institution named “Akal Takhat” and pegged on (falsely) to the sixth Guru fitted their designs.

Nirmla Kavi Santokh Singh's massive *Gurpartap Suraj Parkash Granth* which was published shortly after the *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* - in 1843 AD – relied heavily on the contents of *Gurbilas*. Dr. Iqbal Singh Dhillon has conducted a content analysis of Santokh Singh's work¹⁵ and concludes that the Nirmla Kavi talks of a “Takhat” but does not use the phrase “Akal Takhat.” Dr Iqbal notes that in chapter 42 Santokh Singh talks of the sixth Guru constructing a platform and laying the foundation stone of “Akal Bunga” but that the phrase Akal Takhat does not appear within the work. It is clear that despite Santokh Singh's association with Gurmukh Singh (the writer of *Gurbilas*) and both being mentored by the same Nirmla Sant Singh Giani – Santokh Singh was not convinced that the sixth Guru has constructed the Akal Takhat.

¹⁴ Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Sikh History 1 Ancient Punjab & Guru Period 1000 OE – 1708 CE*; Sikh University Press, 2011. Pp. 256.

¹⁵ Dr Iqbal Singh Dhillon, *Akal Takhat*, op.cit. Pp.34-35.

The True Historical Record: A Residence Is Transformed into An Eternal Throne. The origin of the structure that stands within the Darbar Sahib Complex at Amritsar facing the Darbar Sahib as the modern-day Akal Takhat is the Akali Bunga. Its English equivalent would be Akali Residence. The existence of a residence for the Akali leaders was a practice that existed during the Misl period in Sikh History. This was a turbulent period – politically and militarily - that succeeded the defeat and execution of Banda Singh and preceded Maharaja Ranjit Singh's raj. Its period is thus 1716 – 1799 AD. There were 12 Misls (Sikh Confederacies) that often warred with each other; and the Maharaja was able to unite them just enough, under the banner of Dal Khalsa, to establish his empire in 1801 AD.

The practice in the period of the Sikh Misls, and beginning 1765 AD, was for each Misl leader to have his residence in Amritsar which was the capital of the Sikh world then by virtue of the existence of the Darbar Sahib. The leaders of the Misls – the Misal Sardars or the Misaldars as they were known - came to Amritsar once or twice a year, and their respective Bungas served as their fixed and convenient place of residence. A great many of these Bungas were named after the Misls and others were named after their leaders. So, there was a Bunga Ahluwalia, Bunga Ramgharria, Bunga Sukercharia and Bunga Bhangian amongst the 70 odd Bungas that served as places of residence for the Misaldars of these respective Misls. A place of residence is just that. It would be baseless to accord any sort of religious or spiritual role or function to any of these Bungas.

One of the Bungas was named the Akali Bunga. Its original owner was Akali Nainna Singh. Upon his departure, Akali Phoola Singh took over ownership of this residence.¹⁶ Both Nainna Singh and Phoola Singh belonged to the Nihang group and were members of the Shahida(n) di Misl – one of the 12 confederacies mentioned above. The Nihang group had its headquarters outside Amritsar, but the Akali Bunga served as the residence of their leaders within the Darbar complex for reasons of convenience and ease of contact with other leaders of the Misls as well the Sikh world. Historian Dilgeer has argued that from among the Misls, the Akalis were the only group which did not occupy any land; hence they were respected by all the 11 Misls for their neutral stand on all issues.¹⁷ It follows therefore that the Akali Bunga was a place that bustled with activity, but only when its owners were around.

The argument that the Maharaja was ordered to be whipped (or actually whipped by some accounts) for his folly of marrying a non-Sikh woman by the then “Jathedar of Akal Takhat” Akali Phoola Singh is thus patently false on four counts. First, there was no “Akal Takhat” during the period. Two, Akali Phoola Singh was the Jathedar of his group, not of any institution, and certainly not of the then non-existent “Akal Takhat.” Three, the Maharaja – in need of political support of the Misls – often called upon the leaders of these groups. So, it was normal and natural for him to have visited Akali Phoola Singh regularly at the latter's residence, the Akali Bunga. Four, the Maharaja continued to remain married to non-Sikh women, marrying 33 more women, maintaining a large harem and of marrying a woman almost four decades younger than him.¹⁸ This means that either the “power and authority of the Akal Takhat” had no jurisdiction over him, or that the “Jathedar of Akal Takhat” then was selective in his imposition of punishment, or that the “Akal Takhat,” and its “Jathedar” simply did not exist then.

¹⁶ Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, “The Myth of Akal Takhat.” Article available at https://www.academia.edu/44522964/The_Myth_of_Akal_Takht. Accessed on 30 March 2025.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Maharni Jind Kaur was the youngest wife of Ranjit Singh, being married at 18 when the maharaja himself was of 55. She was the 34th maharani and mother of Dalip Singh. The maharaja died just after 4 years of their marriage. Md. Yousof Alam, “Chronicle of the forgotten female warriors: Jind Kaur” in Tripura Times, available at: <https://tripuratimes.com/timesarticle/chronicle-of-the-forgotten-female-warriorsjind-kaur-md-yousof-alam-45.html>. Accessed on April 1, 2025.

This fake narrative is often used by proponents of the modern-day Akal Takhat to make two points. First, that the “Akal Takhat” had the power and authority to sanction even the Maharaja, and that Ranjit Singh bowed down to the authority. Two, that there was a lineage of “Jathedars” of “Akal Takhat” starting from Guru Hargobind in 1606 AD till the current times, and Akali Phoola Singh was in this lineage during the Sikh Raj. The first point is self-serving. There is no law, procedure or practice that accords the unelected “Jathedar” of the “Akal Takhat” any sort of power to exercise his authority over political leaders – monarchs and democratically elected ones. The second point is unsupported by history. As stated above, the Darbar Sahib Complex was in the hands of anti-Sikh forces from 1632 AD (the year Guru Hargobind ji left Amritsar, never to return) till 1716 AD (the defeat and execution of Banda Bahadur). From that point on, it was in the control of Udasis and Nirmlas till the Singh Sabha Movement of the 1920s.¹⁹ During the period of the Sikh Raj, it was under the control of the Benares based Nirmlas.

Upon the death of Akali Phoola Singh Nihang in 1823 AD, the Akali Bunga was occupied by Nirmla Giani Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* who was the son of Nirmla Sant Singh Giani, the Chief *Pujari* of Darbar Sahib. Sant Singh *Pujari* had also mentored Nirmla Kavi Santokh Singh, the writer of *Gurpartap Suraj Parkash Granth* – which gives one an idea of the caliber of Nirmla Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* who would have most certainly been mentored by his father as well. Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* had designs of being a man of power and authority, having embedded himself in the intrigue of place politics during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He would be killed during the attempt by the Sandhwalia Sardars to take over the reins of power after the death of the Maharaja.

Transforming The Akali Bunga (A Residence) Into Akal Takhat (An Eternal Throne).

It becomes clear that Nirmla Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* had a clear plan and design (i) towards establishing an institution that would be able to exercise wide ranging power, authority and influence over the Sikh world; and (ii) in according that power and authority to himself. The physical structure of the institution that he had in mind already existed in the form of the Akali Bunga which he now occupied as his residence. What he needed was to create a self-serving historical, philosophical and even religious foundation on which to base his plan and design. Given his experience within the Sikh word as it existed within Amritsar and Darbar Sahib, his links with the Maharaja’s palace, the tutelage of his father and his philosophical mind and writing ability, his plan would move smoothly in the direction of becoming a reality.

He would be so successful that it may not be farfetched to say that Nirmla Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* is the father of both the concept and institution that the Sikhs world refers to as the Akal Takhat of modern times.

The first thing Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* did was to have the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) installed within the Akali Bunga. He did so in 1835.²⁰ The previous residents of the Akali Bunga had no need to do that because (i) it was a residence that was only occasionally occupied and (ii) it was in close proximity to Darbar Sahib where the SGGS was already installed. The installation of the SGGS within the Akali Bunga gave it a religious and spiritual status as Sikhs are generally predisposed to providing respect to any place where the SGGS is installed and would be loath to oppose or remove the SGGS from any location where it is already installed – even if the objective of the installation is merely to use the SGGS as a means to some nefarious end - collecting *chrrawa*, getting Sikhs to attend, or accord respectful status to a particular location as was the case with Gurmukh Singh’s decision pertaining to the Akali Bunga. Large numbers of Sikhs began visiting the Akali Bunga as a result of the SGGS being installed, and the residence took the form of a Gurdwara. The faith and conviction of the Sikhs was further cemented by Gurmukh Singh’s (insidious and false) claim that Guru Hargobind ji had constructed and occupied the Akali Bunga as his throne.

¹⁹ Karminder Singh Dhillon, *The Hijacking of Sikhi* (Revised Version), KL: Sikhi Vichar Forum, 2022. Chapters 1 -3.

²⁰ Baldev Singh MA, Akal Takhat, Part 1. Op.cit.

The next thing Nirmla Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* did was to use his palace connections to secure one lakh Rupees through Hari Singh Nalwa for the purpose of renovating and expanding the Akali Bunga. Historian Dilgeer alleges that the Nirmla *Pujari* embezzled a large portion of this money and found no need to provide an account given that Nalwa died two years later in 1837.²¹ In any case it shows that Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* had real designs in wanting to make the Akali Bunga into something very much more than it was.

Providing A Fake Narrative For the “Akali Takhat” (An Eternal Throne). The one task that remained in establishing and imposing an institution of the *pujaris* (clergy) onto the parameters of Sikhi was its philosophical, religious and historical framework. Given that none existed, it had to be concocted. Gurmukh Singh joined hands with Darbara Singh who was the Chief *Pujari* of Darbar Sahib to accomplish this task. It came in the form of a *granth* that claimed to provide the story of events surrounding the sixth Guru but was so highly blasphemous that both its *pujari* authors had to conceal their authorship behind fake names and concoct the lie that it was written in 1718. This lie of 1718 being the year of its composition served two ends: (i) it accorded credibility to the *granth*, and (ii) it absolved the two *pujaris* of their role in writing it and any possible repercussions that may arise as they were not alive in 1718. From Internal evidence of *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* it's easy to surmise that it was written in 1840.

An entire section is devoted within the *Gurbilas* towards establishing the lie that Guru Hargobind ji constructed the structure of the “Akali Takhat.” Given that grounding Sikhi into the Snatan framework was the other main objective of *Gurbilas*, the narrative is that Guru Hargobind ji had the “Akali Takhat” constructed at the behest of Lord Vishu – just as the Darbar Sahib was constructed by Guru Arjun as a *mandir* for Vishu; hence its name Har Mandir – Har being one of the many names of Vishu.

The account begins with the construction of Darbar Sahib as contained within *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* is as follows.²² ਦੋਹਰਾ। ਕਾਰ ਕਢਾਵਤ ਭਏ ਥੇ ਕਛੁਕ ਦਿਵਸ ਤਿਹ ਵਾਰ। ਮਹਾ ਬਿਸਨ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਜੋ ਮਨ ਮੈ ਕੀਨੁ ਵੀਚਾਰ। ੩੧। ਮਹਾ ਮਾਏ ਜੋ ਲਛਮੀ ਤਾ ਸੋ ਕਹਾ ਸੁਨਾਇ। ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਰੂਪ ਮਮ ਯ ਮੈ ਭੇਦ ਨਾ ਪਾਇ। ੩੨। ਚੌਪਈ। ਤਿਹ ਸੁਤ ਗੁਰ ਅਰਜਨ ਸੁਖਕਾਰੀ। ਮਮ ਸਰੂਪ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਨਿਹਾਰੀ। ਬਨਾਵਨ ਮਮ ਮੰਦਰ ਹੈ ਲਾਗਾ। ਸੁਧ ਸਰੋਵਰ ਰਚਿ ਵਢਭਾਗਾ। ੩੩। ਚਲੋ ਤਹਾਂ ਹਮ ਜਾਇ ਨਿਹਾਰੈ। ਕੈਸੈ ਕਰਿ ਹੈ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੈ। ਲਛਮੀ ਯੁਤ ਆਏ ਭਗਵੰਤਾ। ਗਾਵਤ ਜਸੁ ਜਿਹ ਬੇਦ ਅਨੰਤਾ। ੩੪।

Translation: Whence the work had gone on for some days and weeks, the great lord Vishnu contemplated. He informed the great goddess Lakshmi of his contemplation. That Guru Ramdas was my form, there being no distinction between us both. His son, Guru Arjun was my incarnation. He has begun to construct my *mandir*. And is constructing a blessed pool. Let's go and bless the construction. And contribute our part. Lakshmi thus came with the Lord whose praises are sung within the bountiful Vedas.

The *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* says that plan, layout and name of the temple was decided by Vishu himself. ਦੋਹਰਾ: ਹਰਮੰਦਰ ਕੈ ਚਾਰ ਦਰ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਰਚੇ ਅਪਾਰ। ਤਲਵਿ ਮੱਧ ਮੰਦਰ ਰਚੇ ਕਰਹਿ ਪੁਲ ਸੁਖ ਧਾਰ। ੪੪; ਇਹ ਮੰਦਰ ਮਮ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ, ਹਰਮੰਦਰ ਇਹ ਨਾਮ। ਰਿਧ ਸਿਧ ਇਹ ਠਾਂ ਹੈ ਨਿਸ ਦਿਨ ਆਠੇ ਜਾਮ। ੪੫।²³ Translation: Harmandar should have four doors which will add to its beauty. Construct the *mandir* in the center of the pool and make a bridge to ease the task of visitors. This *mandir* is my form, Harmandar is its name. Its where miracles will happen every hour of every day and night.

The account within the pages of the *Gurbilas* then moves on to the issue of the “Akali Takhat.” The relevant verses are: ਦੋਹਰਾ: ਨਿਸ ਦਿਨ ਤੁਮ ਇਹ ਠਾਂ ਰਚੇ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਮੇਰ ਸੁਹਾਇ। ਤੁਮਰੇ ਸੁਤ ਤੁਮ ਨਿਕਟ ਹੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਤਖਤ ਬਨਾਇ।੫੦।

²¹ Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, “The Myth of Akali Takhat.” Op.cit.

²² Joginder Singh Vedanti & Dr Amarjit Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi 6*, Amritsar: Dharam Parchar Committee, SGPC, 1998. Page 122.

²³ Ibid. Page 124.

Translation: Reside at this place day and night in the face of my blessings. Your son will construct, in proximity (of my mandir), my Takhat (throne).

The account within *Gurbilas* goes on to say that Lord Vishnu came to express his condolences upon the execution of Guru Arjun and reminded the sixth Guru of the deal he (Vishnu) had with the fifth Guru. The relevant verses are: ਦੋਹਰਾ: ਤੇਰ ਪਿਤਾ ਕੇ ਬਚ ਕਰੇ, ਪਾਛੇ ਮਮ ਇਹ ਭਾਇ। ਸੁਤ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਨਿਕਟ ਮੇਰੇ ਤਖਤ ਬਨਾਇ। ੨੫੪।²⁴ Translation: I had stated to your father that after his passing. “Your son will construct, in proximity (of my *mandir*), my Takhat (throne).

Vishnu then proceeds to give specific instructions to Guru Hargobind ji. ਔਰ ਸੰਤ ਬਚ ਅਟਲ ਪਛਾਨੇ। ਬੁੱਢੇ ਮਮ ਮੈ ਭੇਦ ਨਾ ਮਾਨੇ। ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੈ ਇਹ ਥਾਂ ਤਖਤ ਸਵਾਰੇ। ਮੀਰੀ ਪੀਰੀ ਅਸ ਦੇ ਧਾਰੇ। ਹਰਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਅਸ ਬਿਨਤ ਅਲਾਏ। ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਬ ਲਾਜ ਨਾਮ ਮਨਿ ਆਏ। ੨੫੬।²⁵ Translation: And consider the discourse of saints to be eternal. Consider no difference between me (Vishnu) and Baba Buddha Ji. First construct a Takhat in this location. Adorn two swords of Miri and Piri. Hargobind (then) vocalized his supplication by saying: “I will bring honor of your name within my mind, O Lord. “

Having been pleased with Guru Hargobind’s decision to honor Lord Vishnu’s commands, the Lord then proceeds to bless the sixth Guru. The relevant verses are: ਦੋਹਰਾ। ਰਾਮ ਕਿਸ਼ਨ ਤੇ ਆਦ ਲੈ ਪਾਛੇ ਜੇ ਅਵਤਾਰ। ਸੋਈ ਰੂਪ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਭਏ ਨਰ ਲੀਲਾ ਬਪੁ ਧਾਰ। ੨੫੭॥²⁶ Translation: All Incarnations that succeed the beginning ones of Ram and Kishen; You are an incarnate of the same as was your wondrous father.

Lord Vishnu then proceeds to offer the final command to Guru Hargobind ji. ਚੌਪਈ। ਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਠਾਂ ਤੁਤ ਸਵਾਰੇ। ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਮ ਤਾਹਿ ਮੈ ਧਾਰੇ। ਤਖਤ ਅਕਾਲ ਨਾਮ ਤਿਹ ਕੀਰੈ। ਤਾਹਿ ਬੈਠ ਪਿਤ ਬਦਲਾ ਲੀਜੈ। ੨੫੮॥²⁷ Translation: As such, construct a Takhat in this place. You will thus earn my honor. Call it by the name of Akal Takhat. Sit on it and avenge your father.

Nirmla *pujaris* Gurmukh Singh and Darbara Singh thus concocted a “philosophical, religious and historical framework” that went along with their agenda of killing two birds with one stone. They had provided the groundwork for establishing and imposing an institution of the *pujaris* (clergy) onto the parameters of Sikhi, and they had ensured that the institution would be subservient to Sattanism. How could this not be the case when both the Harmandar and the Takhat in its proximity were built by Vishnu, according to the plan envisioned by Vishnu, and in honor of Vishnu. The concept of Miri-Piri was the brainchild of Vishnu too. Gurus Arjun and Hargobind ji were incarnations of Vishnu and thus in the service and command of Vishnu in all of these instances. The cunning, intrigue and plot of the two Nirmla *pujaris* to mire the entire Sikh world in their nefarious scheme and agenda is mind boggling indeed.

After the death of Nirmla Gurmukh Singh *Pujari* in 1843, his son Ripdumann Singh stepped into his father’s shoes and continued to stay at the Akali Bunga. From 1859 onwards, the British government took control of all Gurdwaras through an appointed manager, and since Akali Bunga was considered a Gurdwara by virtue of the *parkash* of the SGGS and its regular activities, it fell under the control of the British. In the late 1870s Khem Singh Bedi, heading a breakaway faction of the Singh Sabha Movement took control of the Akali Bunga. The Akali Bunga would come under the jurisdiction of the SGPC after its formation in 1925.

²⁴ Joginder Singh Vedanti *Gurbilas Patshahi* 6. Op. Cit. Page 205.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

3.0 THE QUESTION OF THE STATUS OF “JATHEDAR” OF THE AKAL TAKHAT.

Given that there never was any historical, philosophical and spiritual foundation for the “Akali Takhat” there could never have been a “Jathedar.” The word Jathedar means the leader of a *Jatha* or group. There therefore has been a tendency – by error or design – to confuse individuals who were Jathedars of a group (Akali Phoola Singh, for instance) with “Jathedars of Akal Takhat.”

As stated above, in the late 1870s Khem Singh Bedi, heading a breakaway faction of the Singh Sabha Movement took control of the Akali Bunga. In 1877, this group issued an “excommunication order” against Prof Gurmukh Singh who headed the other faction. Dr Harjinder Singh writes of this incident as follows:

(T)his ‘Fatwa’ was not issued by the (so called) Akal Takht or the (so called) Jathedar or the (so-called) Punj Piaray (Jathedar word was not in existence till 12 October 1920); it was signed by Sarbrah (manager) of all the Gurdwaras (of Amritsar and Tarn Taran), one Raes (noble man) as well as granthis, mahants, nambardars, flower- decorators, incense burner, in charges of flag post, prayer-chanters and other office-bearers of Akal Bunga, Jhanda Bunga, Darbar Sahib, Baba Atal and Tarn Taran. Those priests etc. who signed it all of them had used the word Akal Bunga with their name, and not ‘Akal Takht’.

And when in 1928, Teja Singh Bhsaur was “excommunicated,” the parties that prepared the order, signed and issued it were Executive Members of the Religious Advisory Committee of SGPC and not the “Jathedars of Akal Takhat.”

We know that the SGPC is a product of the Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925 which was created to manage historic Sikh Gurdwaras in Punjab. The truth of the matter is that section 85(1) of The Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 designates the “Akali Takhat” as a Gurdwara under the management of the SGPC. Section 85(2) gives the power to SGPC to prepare a scheme for administration and management of the Gurdwaras described in sub-section (1) which includes the Akal Takhat.

For all intents and purposes then, the Akal Takhat is designated as a historic Gurdwara, and thus falls under the control and jurisdiction of the SGPC. The fact of the matter then is that the Akal Takhat is a Gurdwara and nothing more. The SGPC appoints the Granthi of the Gurdwara that is the Akal Takhat. The Granthi is under the employ of SGPC. He is hired by the SGPC and liable to be fired by the same.

But in the desire of making the “Akali Takhat” very much bigger than the Gurdwara that it is, and to create an illusion that the Akal Takhat has control and jurisdiction over Sikhs all over the world, the SGPC created the position of Jathedar, which is added to the Granthi’s name. The Granthi who is appointed a Jathedar is then paid an additional allowance in the form of an honorarium.

The Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925 makes no mention of the Akal Takhat in any way whatsoever, indicating further that under this Act, the Akal Takhat has no legal standing as an institution other than being just another Gurdwara. This act also makes no mention of a “Jathedar” or “Jathedars.”

4.0 THE AKAL TAKHAT’S JURISDICTION OVER THE SIKH WORLD – REAL OR IMAGINED?

Given the historical facts, interpretations and arguments presented above, the answer to this question is clear. An institution that has no historical and philosophical foundations – except those concocted in the dubious and blasphemous *Gurbilas Patshahi 6*; has no standing other than a Gurdwara as designated by the Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925; and is managed by a society (the SGPC) that has no jurisdiction outside of Punjab; cannot exercise jurisdiction over the Sikh world in any real sense.

In any case, jurisdiction is a legal construct. The Akal Takhat is administered by the SGPC. The SGPC is governed by The Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 which was a piece of legislation in British India which legally defined Sikh identity and brought Sikh gurdwaras under the control of a body of Sikhs whose membership was limited to

Punjab alone. The jurisdiction of SGPC, and by extension that of the Akal Takhat outside of Punjab, or at least outside of India, is thus non-existent.

5.0 EXCOMMUNICATING OF SIKHS BY AKAL TAKHAT - IN ACCORDANCE WITH GURBANI AND GURMAT?

The following six points are worthy of deliberation when it comes to the above-mentioned question.

One, the notion of “excommunication” does not exist within the Sikh scripture. It did not exist during the era of the ten Sikh Gurus (1469 – 1708). It did not exist in the post Guru period and the Sikh Raj period. It came to exist during British colonial rule.

Two, the *pujaris* at Akali Bunga (Khem Singh Bedi in particular) were exposed to the practice of excommunication when the British brought with them the tradition of Catholicism into Punjab.

Three, the first excommunication order by the Akali Bunga *pujaris* was overturned by the same body more than a century later in 1995. This suggests that the present-day Akal Takhat is aware of the illegitimacy of the excommunication.²⁸

Four, a study of the main excommunications indicate that they are targeted against intellectuals, thinkers, academics and reform minded Sikhs. Such a fact raises serious questions regarding the intent of the practice. It appears that these excommunications are meant to act as a sword of Damocles to silence Sikhs who think, act and write differently from the version of the Sikh religion that is adopted by those who control the SGPC and the Akal Takhat.

Five, four of the current five Jathedars of the Akal Takhat (and the 20 Jathedars of the other 4 Takhats) and all of the Granthis in the Takhats and Darbar Sahib are schooled in the *Taksali*, *dera* and *sampardayi* traditions. A study of those who have been excommunicated indicate they are either NOT from these traditions, or have, at some point in time, discarded these traditions. Such a situation raises serious questions regarding the selective nature of excommunications. Are they meant only for those who belong to traditions other than the *Taksali*, *dera* and *sampardayi* traditions? Tharminder Singh Anand is case in point. He was excommunicated for allegedly doing what the Dhumma faction and Nanaksar *derawadis* have done for decades – altering bani in their *gutkas*. There is no evidence of Tharminder “altering” bani while there is plenty against the other two; yet it is Tharminder who paid the price.

Six, a study of complaints and calls made to the Akal Takhat to “take action” against Sikh preachers in the past 5 years shows that 100% of them are made by people affiliated with the *Taksali*, *dera* and *sampardayi* traditions. Case in point is the complaints against Sikh preachers Professor Inder Singh Ghagga, Bhai Ranjit Singh Dhadreanwalla and Bhai Harinder Singh of Nirvair Jatha. Such a situation raises the question of the institution of Akal Takhat and the excommunication process being used as a tool by *Taksali*, *dera* and *sampardayi* people against those *parcharaks* who belong to other traditions.

In the case of Professor Inder Singh Ghagga, Dhadreanwalla, and Harnek Singh, the assertion can be made that the root cause of their excommunication or other action by the Akal Takhat was in the tensions that existed between those who propagate progressive interpretations of Sikh theology verses those who rely on orthodox ones. The assertion can also be made that the action taken against them by the Akal Takhat is, at its core, an instrument to silence them. The points made by Harnek Singh regarding his ex-communication by the Akal Takhat is instructive. He says:

“The root cause of my excommunication by the Akal Takhat lies in the tensions that exist between those who propagate progressive interpretations of Sikh theology verses those who rely on orthodox ones.

²⁸ Karminder Singh Dhillon, “The Legitimacy of Excommunication in Sikhi: The Case of Professor Gurmukh Singh,” in *The Sikh Bulletin* Vol 3/2023, pp22-24. Article accessible here: <https://www.sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/SikhBulletin2023Issue3.pdf>

Unable to match my progressive arguments, and anxious over the growing subscriber base of my Radio Show, the orthodox groups joined hands – both in New Zealand and Punjab - to get the Akal Takhat Clergy, a firm believer in maintaining the orthodox interpretation of Sikhism, to excommunicate me.

The excommunication is, at its core, an instrument to silence me. The Akal Takhat has no jurisdiction over me – a Sikh and citizen of New Zealand. The Akal Takhat is being used by the orthodox groups to shut down the voices of progressive and reformative Sikhs. The Akal Takhat does not have the authority and power to excommunicate anyone for the reason that such a notion does not exist in the Sikh Scripture – the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.”²⁹

6.0 THE CASE BY THE PROPONENTS OF AKAL TAKHAT.

Proponents and supporters of the continued existence, authority, power and jurisdiction base their arguments on the following points and sources.

- (1) That the Akal Takhat was conceptualized, set up and constructed by the sixth Guru;
- (2) That the earliest historical account of the narrative of Akal Takhat as in (1) above is found in the *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* which was authored in 1718;
- (3) That the “Sarbat Khalsa” of the 1700s and 1800s were held at Akal Takhat; and
- (4) Gurbani as contained within the SGGs ji.

Items (1) and (2) above have been dealt with in the preceding sections of this essay. If one accepts the narrative of the *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* that Guru Hargobind built the Akal Takhat, then one must also accept the narrative that the Darbar Sahib, the Akal Takhat and the concept of Miri Piri was the brainchild of Lord Vishnu, that the name of the temple is Harmandar and that the Takhat belongs to Vishnu. One cannot be selective in accepting only what fits one’s agenda.

As for item (3), the Sarbat Khalsa gatherings of 1721, 1733, 1745, 1747, 1748, 1763, 1765, could not have taken place at the Akal Takhat, because such an institution did not exist then. Even the final Sarbat Khalsa of 1804 (prior to its abolition in 1805 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh), as recorded by Lt. Col. Malcolm in his 1812 book, *The Sketch of the Sikhs*, does not mention Akal Takht.

What remains to be examined is point 4 above. To examine the usage of relevant verses, a latest article titled “Akal Takhat – Sovereign Authority of Sikhs”³⁰ within the pages of *The Sikh Review* will prove helpful. The article starts by quoting a verse from page 964 of the SGGs: ਵਡਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ ਸਚਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਤਖਤੁ ॥ *Vda Tayra Darbar Scha Tudh Takhat*. The translation provided is: “Your Court is great. Your throne is eternal.” The sentence that follows is “The Akal Takhat Sahib is the manifestation of Guru Nanak Sahib’s sovereign authority in socio-political, judicial and military realms.”

The use of a Gurbani verse to make the above point is either disingenuous or born out of ignorance. If it is the former, then the objective appears to be to mislead the reader into thinking that Guru Nanak himself supported the notion of Akal Takhat Sahib and the evidence is in the verse that is quoted. Why else is it being quoted right before the first sentence. If it’s the result of ignorance, then it would help to note the following points:

- (i) The verse is taken from a *paורי* within ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ *Ramkli Ki Var Mehla 5*. This means the verse is authored by Guru Arjun, not by Guru Nanak as the authors would like to have the reader believe.

²⁹ Personal communication with the author, 15 January, 2025.

³⁰ Charanpreet Singh, Harinder Singh, Santbir Singh, “Akal Takhat – Sovereign Authority of Sikhs, in *The Sikh Review* March 2025. Pp 56 – 62.

(ii) The verse that immediately follows the couplet is critical to get to the real meaning. The couplet in full is ਵਡਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ ਸਚਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਤਖਤੁ ॥ ਸਿਰਿ ਸਾਹਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਚਉਰੁ ਛਤੁ ॥ *Vda Tayra Darbar Scha Tudh Takhat. Ser Shaha(n) Patshah Nehchul Chaur Chhat*. It is clear from the second verse that this couplet of Guru Arjun is referring to the “throne of the Divine” or the “authority of the Creator” and has nothing to do with some man-made structure that is the Akal Takhat at Amritsar.

A second verse from the SGGS is used in the following manner.

“The original Takht, built by Guru Hargobind Sahib.... It was from this eternal throne that the Guru ruled as an independent and divinely inspired sovereign. As the Guru Granth Sahib says: ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਤਖਤੁ ਸਚਾ ਬਹਿ ਸਚਾ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਆਉ ॥ You are eternal, the throne is eternal; the Eternal sits and delivers justice. (SGGS 949).

Again, the use of this Gurbani verse to make the point that “It was from this eternal throne that Guru Hargobind ruled...” is either disingenuous or born out of ignorance. The verse is authored by Guru Amardas ji in ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ॥ *Ramkli Ki Var Mehla 3* and the full couplet - ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਤਖਤੁ ਸਚਾ ਬਹਿ ਸਚਾ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਆਉ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਸਚੇ ਸਚੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਈ ॥ *Scha Aap Takhat Scha Beh Kray Niayo. Sabh Sacho Sach Vartda Gurmukh Alakh Lkhayi* - makes it abundantly clear that the third Guru is referring to the Divine Creator, and the ਨਿਆਉ being referred to is the justice of Divine Law or *Hukm*.

If one accepts the notion that Guru Hargobind ji sat on the Eternal Throne that is being referred to by Guru Arjun ji on page 964 and Guru Amardas ji on page 949 of the SGGS respectively, then one can ask two questions that were first asked Historian Harjinder Singh.³¹ (i) Who sat on this Eternal Throne prior to Guru Hargobind ji? (ii) If it did not exist prior to Guru Hargobind ji, then how was “Eternal Justice” delivered?”

A pattern can be deciphered from the manner in which Gurbani verses are used by proponents and supporters of the continued existence, authority, power and jurisdiction of the Akal Takhat. This pattern can be summarized as follows. (i) Full couplets are not provided, perhaps for fear of the reader realizing that the verse has *everything* to do with the Divine and the Creator, but *nothing* to do with the clergy institution called the ‘Akal Takhat.’ (ii) Verses are used to make points that suit the arguments of the proponents but these points are not even remotely made by the authors of the Gurbani verses. (iii) Verses of Gurus other than Guru Nanak are insinuated as being composed by Guru Nanak to add weight to arguments of the proponents. For instance, in *The Sikh Review* article being referred to above, a verse of Guru Arjun ji is used to make the point that “The Akal Takhat Sahib is the manifestation of Guru Nanak Sahib’s sovereign authority.”

The use of Gurbani to support the continued existence, authority, power and jurisdiction of the Akal Takhat is an exercise in futility because no such verses exist. The only way available to, and deployed by writers and advocates who wish to engage in such a futile exercise is to misquote and misuse verses with the hope that readers

³¹ Dilgeer writes: “Today, Akal Takht is being presented as Theo-political seat of the Sikhs. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and the supporters of the party controlling the SGPC claim that Akal Takht is ‘Throne of Akal (God)’ and the verdict, edicts, fatwas issued by the chief priest (whom they call Jathedar) are ‘Divine proclamations.’ They also assert that Akal Takht was ‘built’ by Guru Hargobind, the Sixth Guru. In a way, this is a ‘strange’ statement; because, it means that God did not have a ‘Takht’ before Guru Hargobind Sahib; and, secondly, it was Guru Hargobind who built a ‘Takht’ for God (meaning thereby that Guru Hargobind was superior to God) ... all this is contradiction in terms.” Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *The Myth Of Akal Takhat*, op.cit.

would be misled into thinking Gurbani does indeed support their un-tenable positions. Needless to say, such writers lack intellectual honesty - losing their integrity in the eyes of serious readers as a result.

CONCLUSIONS

The following six conclusions can be made to establish the truth of the Akal Takhat.

- (i) There is not an iota of evidence to suggest that the Akal Takhat was set up by Guru Hargobind ji.
- (ii) There is no such thing as “Akal Takhat” from a genuine historical perspective either. The term cannot be found in any historical text of credibility. Its first usage is in the 1920s.
- (iii) There is no such thing as “Jathedar of Akal Takhat” being a long-standing position dating back to the Guru period. The title “Jathedar of Akal Takhat” was first used in 1920 AD.
- (iv) The Akal Takhat is an institution that has been forced upon the Sikh world as a *pujari* institution by the *pujari* class for the purposes of control and domination of Sikh affairs and matters by the *pujari* class.
- (v) From the legal perspective the Akal Takhat is a Gurdwara and the 5 “Jathedars” are Granthis under the employ of the SGPC. They are hired, paid, and when it suits, fired by the SGPC.

In essence then, the deceptions pertaining to the Akal Takhat are multi-fold. The first untruth concerns the notion that the Akal Takhat is a seat of sovereign institution with jurisdiction over the entire Sikh world. The legal provisions of the Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925 which governs both the Akal Takhat and its governing body, SGPC, accords it no such powers.

The second untruth is that the Akal Takhat was set up by the sixth Guru Hargobind Ji. All the sixth Guru did was to construct a platform to enable groups of Sikhs to have discourses. One could argue that the platform represented a concept that was related to discoursing social, political, historical and communal issues – issues that, for the reason that they are not spiritual, could not be arbitrated in the Darbar Sahib. But to take this concept into the institutionalized form that the parties who control and manage the Akal Takhat today have made it out to be – issuing edicts that are applicable to the entire Sikh world, excommunicating Sikhs, and subject to politicization by the political parties - and then say such an institution was founded by the sixth Guru is to stretch the argument too thin. Historian Dilgeer has put it as bluntly as anyone could: ਇਹ ਝੂਠ ਪਰੋਸਣਾ ਬੰਦ ਕਰੋ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨੇ (ਅਖੌਤੀ) "ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦੀ ਸਾਜਨਾ ਕੀਤੀ" ... ਜਿਹੜੀ ਕੌਮ ਗ਼ਲਤ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਪਰਚਾਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਸਲਾਂ ਝੂਠ 'ਤੇ ਪਲਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਝੂਠ ਅੱਗੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਝੂਠ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।³² Translation: The spreading of the lie that Guru Hargobind was the founder of the (so called) Akal Takhat needs to stop...The descendant generations of nations that propagate historical fabrications are nourished on lies. Fraud breeds fraud.

The third untruth is that the Akal Takhat is “independent.” A cursory examination of its behaviour in the past 7 decades makes it clear that it is a politicized instrument, weaponized by the Badals, SGPC, *deras*, *taksals* and others for political gains.

The fourth untruth is that the “Jathedar” of the Akal Takhat is a real position with real authority comparable say to the Vatican in Rome. This would only be true if the Vatican was a mere Priest who was hired, paid and subject to being fired by a local Church in Rome.

This is not to say that the Sikh world ought not to have an independent institution with sovereign authority in social, political, and religious matters. However, such an institution must be set up with input and consent of a wide array of Sikh organizations, thinkers, writers and intellectuals. This representation must be global, if the jurisdiction is intended to be global. The *Sewadars* that will be appointed must be of calibre and integrity; educated, of standing; neutral, far-sighted; with a capability to lead the panth out of its myriad challenges. The

³² Communicated via an email dated April 7, 2025 that was sent to a group of Sikhs and copied to the author.

organization must have a constitution that mirrors the philosophical principles of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib; and embody practical functions that reflect the needs of the Sikh world in the 21st Century. Its constitution must empower it to be free from weaponization by political groups, sects, cults and agenda-based individuals.

The argument for reforming the current structure of the Akal Takhat, while attractive, is not practical given its history of the past 7 decades. The Akal Takhat (and to a certain extent the SGPC and Akali Dal) is too broken, too untrusted, too politicized, too divisive and too weaponized to agree to any kind of *real and serious* reform. A complete overhaul is required.

Sikh thinkers, writers, *parcharaks*, intellectuals, and institutions need to provide fresh and out of the box ideas – with intellectual honesty - to achieve such a goal. For a start, the current practice of repeating untruths, selective reliance on blasphemous texts, abusing Gurbani to make points in favor of the current structure and ignoring its continued weaponization by the political parties, politicians, *deras*, *sampardas* and *taksals* must stop.

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Fear As an Instrument of Control of The Clergy.

By Dr Jogishwar Singh
jogishwarsingh@gmail.com



Throughout human history, fear has frequently been employed as a powerful tool by religious leaders to maintain control over populations. This method, often referred to as the use of “Fear Based Control” has served to enforce obedience, regulate moral behaviour and consolidate power by appealing to the dread of divine punishment, the afterlife or social ostracism. While fear can be a natural human response to the unknown or the perceived threat of the unknown or the perceived threat of divine punishment, its manipulation by religious leaders raises ethical concerns. This theme, central to many ancient, medieval and even some modern religious practices, highlights how fear can shape the behaviour of societies through spiritual doctrines. This article examines the historical and cross-religious use of fear as an instrument of control by the clergy.

1. Ancient Civilisations and Divine Retribution. In early societies the line between religion and political authority was often blurred. Priests were influential figures not only in spiritual matters but in politics, law and community life. Ancient civilisations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece had priestly classes who claimed knowledge of divine will and thereby exercised significant control. They warned of plagues, crop failures or floods as forms of divine punishment that could befall individuals or even entire societies if people disobeyed religious prescriptions.

The concept of an afterlife, especially one with rewards and punishments, intensified this hold. For instance, in ancient Egypt, the concept of afterlife involved the weighing of the heart by the god Osiris, where only the morally righteous would be allowed into eternal paradise. Fear of a punitive afterlife helped reinforce societal obedience. It allowed priests to maintain social order by positioning themselves as intermediaries between the people and gods.

2. Medieval Christianity: Hell, and Damnation. In medieval Europe, Christianity became a potent force with the Roman Catholic Church exerting unparalleled authority over nearly every aspect of life. Medieval Christian doctrine relied heavily on the concept of Hell as a tool of control. It was depicted as a place of unending torment, where the souls of sinners would suffer for eternity. Priests and church officials would often emphasise the horrors of Hell, using vivid imagery of fire, demons, and agony to instil fear among believers.

Church authorities preached that disobedience to God’s commandments, which were interpreted by the clergy, would lead directly to eternal damnation. In this way, the Church positioned itself as the sole path to salvation, capable of administering sacraments that could save souls. Practices such as confession and penance grew out of this fear-based control, as believers were taught to rely on the Church to avoid the eternal flames of Hell. Consequently, by controlling access to salvation, the Church was able to amass both political power and wealth, since the faithful were encouraged to pay indulgences or tithes as a way of mitigating their sins.

3. Islam: Fear of Divine Wrath. In Islam, the Day of Judgement, when individuals will be held accountable for their actions, is a central tenet of faith. The Quran describes the horrors of hellfire and the rewards of paradise. While fear of divine punishment is a motivator for many Muslims, it is often balanced with the hope of reward and the desire to please God. During some periods of Islamic history, fear of divine retribution has also played a role in consolidating control. Religious leaders, particularly in theocratic societies, have used the concept of divine punishment to suppress dissent, enforce strict interpretations of the Quran and maintain social conformity. For

instance, certain radical interpretations emphasise the concept of “Jahannam” (Hell) as a place of severe punishment for those who deviate from the path of Islam.

In contemporary contexts, certain extremist groups exploit fear as a means of gaining control over communities. By promoting strict adherence to religious laws and threatening physical or divine punishment for disobedience, these groups use fear to regulate behaviour. In such cases, divine punishment serves as the rationale for social regulation and as a form of social control that instils obedience through terror.

4. Judaism: Concept of Gehenna. In Judaism, the concept of Gehenna, a place of purification for the wicked, is used to instil a sense of moral responsibility. While there is no eternal damnation in traditional Jewish theology, the fear of divine punishment and the desire to live a righteous life are important motivators of Jewish observance.

Rabbis continue to exercise influence in daily lives of observant Jews. They represent a powerful force in Israeli politics. The present Israeli government, headed by Binyamin Netanyahu, depends on their support for survival. Apart from political compulsions of relying on the support of such religious elements, these priests obtain rewards for their adherents such as not having to do compulsory army service, getting special grants for Yeshivas (religious schools) and encouraging more settlements in occupied Palestinian areas, in complete violation of various UN resolutions.

5. Hinduism: Caste System and Karma. The concept of post-death judgement by Lord Yama, the God of death, is firmly anchored in Hindu theology as a permanent sword of Damocles over the heads of all believers. Those who do good deeds go to Swarg (Heaven), those who do not, go to Nark (Hell). There are detailed descriptions of Swarg with beautiful Apsaras doing ecstatic dances to divine music. Nark is a litany of horrors. The caste system, outlined in the sacred text Manu Smriti, one of the fundamental texts for many Hindus, establishes the power of the Brahmins, the Hindu priestly class, as interpreters of divine will. Even though the Constitution of India has formally abolished the caste system, it continues to prevail not only amongst Hindus but in other religions in India as well. Brahmins used fear of going to Nark if their instructions were not obeyed as an instrument to keep other castes subservient to them. They made an alliance with the Kshatriyas in political power to preserve their priestly status at the top of society.

The God of death, Yamaraj, is supposed to decide who goes to Swarg and who goes to Nark, depending on the deeds done in their lives, to be lived in accordance with rules laid down by the Brahmin clergy as unique interpreters of sacred texts. Only Brahmins had the right to master Sanskrit language in which many sacred texts were composed. Brahmin supremacy was sought to be challenged by the Bhakti movement, Lingayats and other movements but the caste system remains firmly embedded in Indian society, even though the supremacy of Brahmin clergy at the top of social pyramid is not as strong as it used to be in earlier epochs.

6. Sikhi: Distorted Values. The Sikh religion, with Guru Nanak Sahib as its first Guru, represents a serious effort to have an egalitarian society by rejecting the caste system, as well as meaningless religious rituals, used by the clergy to establish its control over believers, using fear of the afterlife as its instrument. Sikhi proposes a straight link between the Sikh and the Creator. The first lines of the Sikh scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib outline the virtues of the Creator, one of which is that He is fearless. The ninth Sikh Guru, Tegh Bahadur Sahib, in one of his compositions says that the Sikh does not fear anyone and does not seek to cause fear to anyone. Gender equality, social equality, liberation from fear of the clergy are striking features of Sikhi. There is no place for a formal priesthood in the Sikh religion. Despite this liberation theology, Sikhi has also developed a clergy which claims the right to interpret the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. To dilute the teachings of Sikh Gurus which have no place for a formal priesthood, a plethora of subsequent so-called sacred texts were created by Nirmalas, Udasis and other sects keen to show Sikhi as just another branch of Sanatan Dharma, Hinduism in popular mind.

Since Sri Guru Granth Sahib has compositions using then current religious vocabulary while refuting it in subsequent passages to demolish the hold of the clergy using fear as its primary instrument, the hijackers of Sikhi, belonging to various Hindu sects, created a parallel set of Sikh “religious” texts to establish prior notions of afterlife, Heaven, Hell and the need to have a living Guru as a spiritual guide. Their success can be observed from the state of present-day Sikh society. Most Sikhs use caste names, believe in an afterlife, Heaven, Hell. Sikh Granthis and Parcharaks have become interpreters of Sikh sacred texts. Deras and Taksals have attracted many adherents, especially poor Sikhs who are classed as being lower caste. These people show blind faith in the Dera heads, treated almost as Gurus. Such a Guru, based in Sirsa, has been formally convicted by Courts of law to long prison terms for heinous crimes like rape and murder. Yet, he continues to enjoy acceptance by his followers and political patronage despite his convictions. His acolytes control his followers by using fear as their instrument. Those who try to question his supremacy are harassed, even killed. This is not an isolated case. Many other so-called holy men have also been convicted of similar crimes, but the use of fear enables them to continue to hold sway over feeble minded adherents.

7. Fear: Socio-Political Tool in Modern History. In the modern era, though the power of organised religion over politics has lessened in many parts of the world, fear remains a tool used by religious authorities to maintain influence. In certain religious sects and denominations, leaders continue to evoke fear of the supernatural to enforce moral codes to consolidate authority. Many fundamentalist groups, for example, employ the fear of damnation, spiritual harm or divine punishment to dissuade members from leaving, questioning or challenging the religious hierarchy.

Religious institutions have sometimes allied themselves with governments to perpetuate ideologies based on fear. In some cases, authoritarian regimes have utilised religious fear to promote loyalty and obedience, painting any opposition as defiance of divine will. Religious authority in these settings effectively bolsters political authority by encouraging populations to view rulers as divinely sanctioned, creating a culture where questioning authority amounts to spiritual peril.

8. Psychological Implications of Fear-Based Control. The historical use of fear in religion has significant psychological implications. By instilling fear, religious leaders could shape not only actions but also the internal beliefs of adherents, leading to internalised control. Such internalised fear, known as guilt culture, cultivates an obedience that persists even in the absence of an immediate authority figure. Furthermore, by creating an atmosphere where fear is coupled with divine authority, religious leaders could ensure compliance across generations, as children were taught from an early age to fear the consequences both in this life and beyond.

9. Conclusion: Fear as a Persistent Method of Domination. The use of fear as a means of domination by priests across various cultures and historical periods shows the enduring power of spiritual anxiety as a means of control. Fear is a primal emotion. By linking fear to existential and supernatural consequences, religious authorities have wielded profound influence over humanity’s behaviour and beliefs. Today, while fear as a tool of religious control is less prevalent in secular societies, its historical legacy of this approach still shapes the role of religion in contemporary societies.

Ultimately, understanding this aspect of religious history offers insight into how deeply fear can influence collective human psychology, moral frameworks and societal structures. This legacy of fear-based control underscores the need for examining and understanding religious influence, not only as a source of moral guidance but also as a powerful social institution capable of shaping behaviour on the most fundamental level.

Crisis In The Sikh Polity

Prof. Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal
 Institute for Understanding Sikhism
 4418 Rue Saint Martin-Plouffe
 Laval, Québec H7W 5L9, Canada
 Email: sikhism@iucanada.com



The crisis among the three leading Sikh organizations – Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), and the Akal Takht seems to have reached a point of no return.

Giani Raghbir Singh, Jathedar of Akal Takht, acting under the influence of dissidents from the SAD and Harnam Singh Dhumma of Sant Samaj, took, what became a fatalistic decision on December 2, 2025. He declared Sr. Sukhbir Singh Badal, the President of the SAD, as *tankhaya* for his and his cabinet's mismanagement of governing affairs in Punjab. Besides, Raghbir Singh withdrew the title of "Panth Rattan Fakhr-e-Qaum" (Pride of the Sikh Community) from the late Sr. Parkash Singh Badal. Many Sikhs and Sikh organizations applauded Raghbir Singh's edict.

However, Raghbir Singh appeared not to know that the Jathedar of Akal Takht is supreme only when punishing and excommunicating a scholar or a politician who has gone against the SGPC or the SAD. If a Jathedar's edict is against the SGPC or the SAD, it is only effective within the four walls of the Akal Takht. It is evident that the edict of Raghbir Singh, or at least its fall-out, was not acceptable to the Badals.

According to the Gurdwara Act 1925, the executive committee of SGPC has the authority to appoint and remove Jathedars of all five Takhts. Therefore, on Friday, March 7, 2025, the SGPC sacked Akal Takht Jathedar Raghbir Singh and Takht Kesgarh Sahib Jathedar Sultan Singh from their posts and appointed Missionary College trained Kuldeep Singh Gargaj as the new head of Takht Kesgarh Sahib. He will also serve as the Acting Jathedar of the Akal Takht. This, in turn was not acceptable to the Sant Samaj, *derawadis*, *Taksali* and *Sampardayi* outfits.

To register its protest against Kuldeep Singh, Sant Samaj chief Harnam Singh "Dhumma, called for a "Panthic congregation" at Sri Anandpur Sahib on Friday, March 14, 2025. Representatives of various Sikh organizations, Sant Samaj and Nihang Singh *Jathebandis* attended the event to express their "joint dissent" against the SGPC's "arbitrary" removal of Takht Jathedars and new appointments, claiming they were made in violation of Sikh principles, "*maryada*," and traditions. They obviously knew nothing of the Gurdwara Act 1925 and the powers of SGPC to hire and fire Jathedars; or chose to ignore it.

Six resolutions were passed amidst the chanting of "*Bole so nihaal*" during the "Panthic gathering" held at Gurdwara Gurdarshan Prakash, Anandpur. Dhumma was nominated to lead the Sant Samaj, Sikh sampradayas, and "*jathebandis*" to "guide the Panth out of the current crisis."

This is the same Dhumma who declared that Sikhs should vote BJP during the Gujrat elections, and participated in the *Mahakumbh* to take a dip in the Ganges. He said certain Sikh traditions, particularly those of the *Udasee* and *Nirmala Akharas*, had supported his participation in the *Kumbh*. Dhumma claimed he was invited by both *akharas* and the Uttar Pradesh government. The Sikh Youth Federation (Bhindranwale) objected to his visit, and Dhumma responded by claiming that Sikh Gurus had visited Prayagraj and Kashi as well.

Given such stances, one can easily imagine the type of leadership Dhumma will provide in "guiding the Panth out of the current crisis."

This crisis has further caused the SGPC to lose its moral authority, if not its legal mandate, to govern and administer historic Sikh gurdwaras, educational institutes, and provide preaching and research in Sikhism. They

have failed to revise the 80-year-old *Sikh Rehit Maryda* of 1945 and have not resolved the long-awaited issue of removing *Rag Mala* from the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). They use many different definitions of a Sikh, and none of them are concise or precise. Moreover, there is no good research department to conduct textual analysis of the AGGS. They have failed to teach the messages within the AGGS logically and scientifically. They also failed to portray Guru Nanak's most logical and scientific philosophy during his 500th and 550th anniversaries.

It is evident, therefore that there is a need for drastic change in all the leading Sikh organizations – the SGPC, SAD, and the so-called Jathedar of Akal Takht. What is needed is an Apex Body of Sikh representatives from the democratic countries of the world where Sikhs have become citizens of those countries; scholars; experts in various fields; and retired administrators. This suggestion was first mooted by Sr. Partap Singh, DIG (Retd), through an editorial in the February 2025 edition *The Sikh Review* titled “21st Century Challenges – and Era of Alliance.” He suggested the creation of leadership group comprising a core group panel of 7 eminent persons; whose task would be to chalk out an immediate program to resolve the present crisis.

Sikh Population in Punjab

It needs to be noted that the crisis in the Sikh polity is folding out against the backdrop of a steadily declining Sikh population in Punjab. The Sikh population of Punjab declined to 57.69% in 2011 from 59.91% in 2001. The decline is caused by Sikh youth migration and a poor growth rate among the Sikhs during the last 25 years. Given that many Hindus from other states have immigrated to Punjab and that many poor Sikhs have become Christians, it would not be farfetched to surmise that the population of the Sikhs in Punjab would fall at or below 50% during the forthcoming census. Therefore, it should be kept in mind that Sikhs are not only minorities in the world's democratic countries but also Punjab, the birthland of Sikhism.

My suggestion is to expand the proposed core group panel of 7 eminent persons to 41. They would come from all the democratic countries where the Sikhs have settled as permanent residents. **The 41 representatives of the Apex Body** can be drawn from all over the world in the following manner. **Australia: 2; Africa: 2; Canada: 2; Europe: 2; Malaysia: 1; Singapore: 1; United Kingdom: 1; United States: 2; New Zealand: 1; Punjab: 7; Delhi: 1; Haryana: 1; Total: 23** representatives from the democratic countries of the world.

Administrative Members and Specialists in the Apex Body. Administrative members include retired judges, retired IAS and PCS, and experts in physical and chemical sciences, natural sciences, medical sciences, Sikh history, Sikh theology, Sikh philosophy, etc. At least two experts from each field. This makes 18 experts of the Apex Body.

The Total number of Apex Body would thus be: 23 + 18 = 41.

The Head or the Leader of the Apex Body would ideally come from the from the administrative group. The Head Office of the Apex Body will be at the main Complex of the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

The immediate task of the Apex Body will be to see that the long-due election of the SGPC is held peacefully. Similarly, only one list of the members of the SAD is prepared for the election of its members, and the most qualified leader helms the party. Thereafter, they should chalk out one-year, 2-year, and 5-year programs to make the SGPC the representative of the Sikhs of the world; set out regulations for the management of Gurdwaras all over the world; and draw out a plan for the preaching of Sikhi and Sikhism in their real perspective to the Sikhs and non-Sikhs throughout the world.

The SAD will remain the political Party of Punjab, India. However, the political issues of the Sikhs in foreign countries and India would be the task of the Apex Body.

Sikh Heritage Preservation - Its Need and Role of Young Sikhs

Dr. Devinder Pal Singh, Canada

Center for Understanding Sikhism, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Email: drdpsn@gmail.com



The topic, ‘*Preserving Sikh heritage and the pivotal role young Sikhs must play*,’ resonates deeply within every Sikh’s heart. Let’s explore the pressing need for preservation and how young Sikhs can rise to this responsibility with actionable steps and examples.

The Need for Preservation. Why do we need to preserve Sikh heritage? It’s not merely about relics; it’s about protecting our identity, values, and essence.

1. **Physical Heritage Under Threat.** Sikh heritage sites, from historic gurdwaras to battlegrounds where our forefathers fought valiantly, are in danger. Take the example of the Gurdwara Chhevin Patshahi in Lahore, Pakistan, a site of immense spiritual and historical importance. Many such gurdwaras in Pakistan and India suffer from neglect, lack of funds, or political barriers. They risk falling into ruin if proactive steps are not taken.

Another concern is the loss of priceless artifacts. Consider the *Kalgi* (plume) of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, preserved in museums yet vulnerable to theft or decay. These are not mere objects but symbols of our legacy that inspire generations.

2. **Erosion of Intangible Heritage.** Heritage is not just physical; it includes language, traditions, and values. The decline in Punjabi language fluency among young Sikhs is alarming. Without understanding Punjabi, we risk losing the depth of the Guru Granth Sahib’s bani, which conveys eternal wisdom. How can we grasp the power of teachings like “*Na ko bairee, naahi begana*” (No one is my enemy, no one a stranger) without understanding their linguistic and cultural context?

Sikh values like *seva* (selfless service) and *sarbat da bhala* (welfare of all) are often overshadowed by the pursuit of personal success in a competitive world. These values define us as Sikhs; losing them would mean losing the very essence of our identity.

The Role of Young Sikhs. How can young Sikhs contribute to this preservation? Our Gurus have shown us that leadership has no age limit. Guru Harkrishan Ji, at just seven years old, served humanity during an epidemic, embodying compassion and courage. Let’s explore how young Sikhs today can follow that example.

1. **Educate and Connect:** To preserve something, we must first know it ourselves. This begins with education. For example, young Sikhs can organize and participate in workshops like Sikh History Awareness Camps or online webinars that delve into topics like the lives of the Gurus, historical battles, and contributions of Sikh women.

Another way is to use social media platforms like Instagram or YouTube to share knowledge about Sikhism. For instance, the ‘Basics of Sikhi’ team, a group of young content creators, uses videos to explain Sikh values and heritage, reaching a global audience.

Beyond learning for ourselves, let’s connect with others, especially non-Sikhs. By sharing stories of Bhai Kanaiya Ji, who served water to both friends and foes during battle, we can inspire others to understand and appreciate Sikhism’s universal values.

2. **Engage in Preservation Efforts:** Action speaks louder than words. Young Sikhs can actively contribute to preserving Sikh heritage by participating in and supporting tangible preservation projects. For example, they can help and support initiatives such as restoring Historical Sites. They may join initiatives like the Guru’s Birth

Anniversary Projects, where young volunteers can help restore neglected gurdwaras and heritage sites in India and abroad.

Alternatively, they can contribute to Digital Preservation initiatives. Today, technology allows us to document Sikh history digitally. For instance, platforms like Sikhi Vichar Forum, Sikh Philosophy Network or apps like SikhNet work to preserve and share Sikh resources globally. As tech-savvy youth, we can contribute to such projects by uploading manuscripts, translating texts, or creating educational content.

As another example, it is pertinent to add that the Khalsa Aid Youth Program not only engages in humanitarian work but also helps preserve cultural awareness through global initiatives. Youth can volunteer in such organizations to combine seva with heritage preservation.

3. Live the Values: Preservation isn't just about sites or books—it's about living Sikhi in everyday life. Actions inspire far more than lectures. For example, emulate the spirit of seva demonstrated by young Sikhs, who, during COVID-19, organized free meals for patients and healthcare workers. By living Sikh values, they became a beacon of Sikh heritage. One can practice *sarbat da bhala* in small but impactful ways such as volunteering at a local langar, helping the underprivileged, or standing against social injustices.

Teaching by example is another good contribution. Young Sikhs can mentor younger children in their community to recite Nitnem, understand Sikh history, and imbibe values of humility and courage. They can organize programs like Gatka Training Camps to teach Sikh martial arts and instill pride in heritage.

A Call to Action. Preserving Sikh heritage is not optional but essential for safeguarding our identity. The time to act is now. As young Sikhs, you are equipped with energy, creativity, and resources to make a difference. Let's take inspiration from our Gurus and martyrs, who gave everything to uphold truth and justice. We can contribute through education, action, or simply living our faith proudly. Remember, we are the custodians of a legacy that has changed the course of history. Let's rise together to ensure that the Sikh heritage, with its profound values of equality, humility, and courage, continues to shine brightly for future generations.

ਅਪੀਲ
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਯੋਗਤਾ, ਨਿਯੁਕਤੀ, ਕਾਰਜ ਖੇਤਰ, ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਨਿਯਮਾਵਲੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਮੂਹ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀਆਂ, ਦਮਦਮੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ, ਨਿਹੰਗ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਲਾਂ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ, ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ, ਦੀਵਾਨਾਂ, ਸਭਾ ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਵੱਸਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਭੁੱਖੀਜੀਵੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੁਝਾਅ ਭੇਜਣ ਦੀ ਅਪੀਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।
ਇਹ ਸੁਝਾਅ 20 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ, 2025 ਤੱਕ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਪਾਸ ਦਸਤੀ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਤ ਈਮੇਲ info@sgpc.net ਅਤੇ ਵਟਸਐਪ ਨੰਬਰ 7710136200 'ਤੇ ਭੇਜੇ ਜਾਣ।
-ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਦਾਸ-
ਐਡਵੋਕੇਟ ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਧਾਮੀ
ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।

Appeal by SGPC
All Sikh Jathebandis, the Damdami Taksal, Nihang Singh Dals, Sikh Societies, Sikh Organizations, Diwans and Sikh Groups and Sikh intellectuals and academics residing locally and abroad are requested to send in their views on creating a code of regulations for the suitability, appointment, jurisdiction, responsibilities and termination of the Jathedar of Sri Akal Takhat. These suggestions should reach SGPC by 20 April 2025

They say that “Nero fiddled while Rome burned.” Imagine for a moment that Emperor Nero suspected his folly and sent out an appeal to residents of Rome asking them to suggest a “tune that they liked him to play” the next time Rome burned, or to help “create a rule book that would establish the procedure for tuning his fiddle, how to play it best, and when to stop playing it.”

The Sikh Polity is burning. Prof. Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD’s essay on page 20 titled “Crisis In The Sikh Polity,” says it all. The leading Sikh organizations – SGPC, SAD, and the AT are at their lowest ebb of trust and credibility within the Sikh world; while Kumbh-Mela-participating, Ganges-dipping and BJP political aspirant Dhumma has gotten himself appointed as the savior of the panth. How could it possibly get worse?

Nero fiddling while Rome burned is a popular legend, but its a misconception because Nero was away from Rome when the fire broke out, and the fiddle hadn't been invented yet.

One hopes the same could be said of the SGPC. But as they say “better late than never.” The *Sikh Bulletin* hopes some good does come out of this appeal; and that the SGPC realizes that the problem is not about “creating a code of regulations” but that the entire system is rotting. As they say “the rot starts at the top,” and the SGPC is right at the top of it all. *Editor.*

What's In a Name? Socio-Cultural Legitimacies In Using Guru Nanak's Name

Rishpal Singh Sidhu
rishpal.sidhu@gmail.com



Guru Nanak is widely revered by the global Sikh community both as the founder of the Sikh religion and as the first Guru of the Sikhs. His life and teachings have been commemorated through the naming of gurdwaras, educational institutions, and university chairs of Sikh studies both in India and overseas. Guru Nanak Jayanti (*in Sanskrit, 'holy birth anniversary'*), also more commonly known as Gurburabs are widely celebrated each year by Sikh communities throughout the world to mark the birth of Guru Nanak. November 15, 2024, marked the commemoration of the 555th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak who was born in 1469 C.E. in what is now known as Nankana Sahib. Questions have been raised in recent times regarding the prudence and legitimacy of using Guru Nanak's name in both commercial and business enterprises as well as some geographical places which have no real or significant association with Guru Nanak.

The recent renaming of a lake in Berwick Springs in the city of Casey, Victoria, Australia, has been met with a range of community reactions. It has been applauded¹ and criticised by both the Australian and Sikh communities in Australia who have questioned how this gesture helps to propagate Guru Nanak's philosophy. The renaming to Guru Nanak Lake followed joint representation by the Victorian Sikh Gurdwaras Council and the Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria to Victorian Premier, Jacinta Allan. The Casey City Council was aware of conversations that took place between the Victorian Government, Melbourne Water, and Geographic Names Victoria. However, the Casey Council was not involved in the renaming of the lake or have any authority on the naming of the lake.² Jasbir Singh Suropada, the Chair of the Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria lobbied for the new name and justified the renaming by claiming that "the name of our Guru will be part of legal documents such as Government Gazettes and be part of history." According to the 2021 ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) Census, there are 365,239 residents of Indian origin, of which 11,290 currently identify with the Sikh faith.

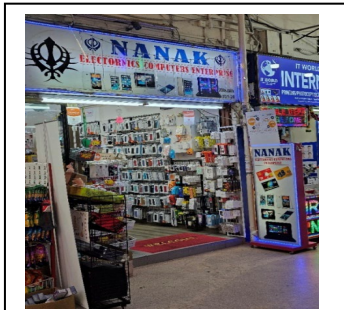


Picturesque lake in Berwick Springs, Casey, Victoria, Australia.

A petition to reverse the decision was launched in November 2024 by local residents and attracted more than 5,500 signatures. A counter petition supporting the name change attracted nearly 2,200 signatures. The original petition argued that this lake never previously had an official name, and that the naming decision lacked consultation with key organisations. In effect, while recognising that neither the Sikh community nor Guru Nanak Ji are the targets of this backlash, it alleged that due process had not been followed. The focus was primarily on the lack of consultation from the responsible authorities.³ Senior Sikh figures in the Sikh community have also reportedly slammed the lack of wide community consultation over the renaming of this lake in Melbourne's southeast, despite it being named in their honor.⁴

In the same context, it could well be argued whether the naming of roads/streets/places in honour of Guru Nanak outside of India is a questionable practice. The intersection of 118th Street between 101st and 95th Avenues in the Richmond Hill community of New York was renamed "*Guru Nanak Way*" in deference to the Sikh religion practised by a number of residents of South Queens. Richmond Hill is sometimes called *Mini Punjab*, which is an acceptable recognition of its visibly prominent Sikh population. The block which intersects with the part of 101st was earlier co-named "*Punjabi Avenue*" and is also the home of the Sikh Historical Society, the first one in the U.S. East Coast. With the hate crimes and attacks that took place after 9/11 (11 September 2001) in mind, it was proposed that the logic behind the co-naming was that it would result in an "increased knowledge of Sikhs and Sikh culture so this might lead to less ignorance and more understanding of the Sikh religion. The name will create a curiosity, and passers-by will start searching (researching?) for it."⁵ More recently, to mark

Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary, a region of a street in Canada's Brampton City was renamed *Guru Nanak Street*. Brampton is home to more than 200,000 people belonging to the Sikh community.⁶ Southall, a suburban town in West London, known as "Little Punjab" and home to more than 20,000 Sikhs also boasts a Guru Nanak Road. With the notable exception of *Via Dolorosa* (in Latin, meaning "Sorrowful Way") the busy, winding road through Jerusalem where Jesus is believed to have carried his cross, it is interesting to note that there no other street or place names in honour of Jesus and the Prophet Muhammad.



Source: Writer.

It is suggested that there are far more effective means of informing and educating our host communities on the tenets, forms, and symbols of the Sikh faith. In this context, it is important to note and recognise the tireless efforts of the American Sikh Council⁷ and the Sikh Council on Religion and Education (SCORE)⁸ in interfaith engagement as well as Dr. Rajwant Singh, co-founder of the National Sikh Campaign (NSC), an initiative to inform Americans about the Sikh identity. NSC's mission is to promote a better understanding of the Sikh community in America and other Western

countries, and to project a positive image and profile of the Sikh community. The NSC also "serves as a think tank that studies messaging and communications strategies as well as social and cultural dynamics affecting the Sikh community. This campaign is also a forum and resource centre for those interested in learning about the Sikh community and as a coordinator of other like-minded Sikh organizations."⁹ This is a far more practical and effective way of informing and educating host communities than the passive use of Guru Nanak's name for geographic places which have no real or directly perceived association with Guru Nanak. Closer to home, many gurdwaras in Australia, Singapore, and Malaysia have also been seen doing an excellent job in recent years in proactively inviting and hosting educational and informative visits for non-Sikhs groups in bids to broaden greater community understanding of the Sikh faith.



Gurudwara Kandh Sahib

Source:

<https://www.worldgurudwaras.com>

There are numerous educational institutions including public and private schools, colleges, and universities that rightfully bear Guru Nanak's name on their masthead for Guru Nanak believed in the importance of learning and "knowledge as a transformative process that liberates individuals from ignorance and empowers them to lead meaningful lives."¹⁰ Guru Nanak Dev University was established in Amritsar on 24 November 1969 to mark the birth quincentenary of Guru Nanak's birth. To mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak in 2019, Captain Amarinder Singh, the then Chief Minister of Punjab announced his government's intention to install a Chair in the name of the Guru in 11 universities, of which 7 would be in Punjab, 3 in other parts of India, and one in Iran. These Chairs would be entrusted with conducting research on the life and teachings of Guru Nanak.¹¹ Besides a small number of pre-existing Chairs in Sikh Studies in North America, a Guru Nanak Chair in Sikh studies was launched at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom in

2019 as part of the 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak. In similar celebration, Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, established a Guru Nanak Academic Chair in 2020 to promote studies related to the Sikh religion.

To commemorate the 551st birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, Lovely Professional University in Jalandhar, Punjab, proudly became one of the 11 universities across the world to have an endowed Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Chair for Studies in Global Peace and Equality. More recently, in October 2024, following a \$2.5 million bequest by Toronto resident Dr. Davindra Singh, the University of Toronto in Mississauga, Canada is matching the endowment and establishing a chair in Sikh Studies. There is also Baba Guru Nanak University in Nankana Sahib, Pakistan, and a Guru Nanak Sikh Academy in London.

Interestingly, there are numerous small and large business and commercial enterprises both within and outside of India whose business header includes Guru Nanak's name, and notable amongst these are many shops selling electrical goods, including computers and mobile phones.

Guru Nanak Jhira Sahib in Bidar,
Karnataka

Source:

<https://www.worldgurudwaras.com>

There are also a countless number of restaurants and other business enterprises bearing Guru Nanak's name, for example Nanak Rasoi in Blacktown, Australia and Guru Nanak Rasoi in Leeds, West Yorkshire. There is also Nanak Luxury Home Builders in Sydney and Nanak Builders in Melbourne, Australia. Far from suggesting that the use of Guru Nanak's name as part of their business header has been the reasoning and has actually resulted in increased sales or profits for these businesses, the merits of this practice are nevertheless



Gurdwara Guru Nanak Sahib,
Brussels, Belgium. Source: Manny
Pabla.

questionable, and approval of this seemingly widespread practice of using Guru Nanak's name in this manner may well lie beyond the jurisdiction of both the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and national governmental agencies responsible for registration of business names.



Guru Nanak Darbar in Dubai Source:
<https://www.worldgurudwaras.com>

A notable North American example includes Nanak Foods, headquartered in Surrey, Canada, with another factory in Bellingham, Washington, established in 1997 by two Canadian shareholders of South Asian descent and is today a well-known and successful business enterprise specialising in the manufacturing of a diverse range of products including paneer cheese, ghee, yoghurt, and various other dairy-based appetisers and desserts that are exported to many countries. Notwithstanding its name and to be fair, Nanak Foods stands out amongst Nanak named businesses for exercising its corporate social responsibility in supporting a diverse range of arts and culture initiatives. It has also evolved as a leader in philanthropic, community, and social endeavours and made significant donations to local and international organisations over the years.

There are a number of gurdwaras within and outside of India that rightly bear association with Guru Nanak's name. In India, two among these are the Gurdwara Sri Kandh Sahib in Batala which is associated with Guru Nanak's marriage in 1487, and Guru Nanak Jhira Sahib (*Jhira, meaning stream, spring or source*) in the municipality of Bidar in Karnataka. According to the Janamsakhis, Guru Nanak, accompanied by his companion, Mardana, is believed to have stayed in the outskirts of Bidar during his second udasi between 1510 to 1514. Outside of India some gurdwaras bearing Guru Nanak's name include the Gurudwara Janam Asthan Nankana Sahib in Nankana, Pakistan, Guru Nanak Darbar in Dubai, Guru Nanak Darbar in Medford, Massachusetts, and Gurdwara Guru Nanak Sahib in Brussels (Vilvoorde), Belgium.

The use of Nanak as a first name is not uncommon in Sikh culture, although the names of successive Sikh Gurus such as Angad, Arjan, and Gobind are more commonly encountered first names. A famous example is the late Punjabi poet, songwriter, and novelist, Nanak Singh, who was born as Hans Raj and later changed his name to Nanak Singh after adopting the Sikh faith. Naming a male child as Jesus is a common practice in the Hispanic cultures of Central and South America, as are adopting the names of the apostles and Christian saints. Mohamed or Muhammad is also a common first name in Muslim culture. There are however no known canons in either of these faiths that prohibit this practice.

Ultimately, it is as much a vexing question as it is an enigmatic practice. To what extent is the commercial and other uses of Guru Nanak's name a justifiable use of Sikh pride and identity? We could argue forever on this point!

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101st Anniversary Special (Falls on February 21, 2025)

Jaito Morcha: A Historical Beacon for Contemporary Civil Rights Movements

Dr. Devinder Pal Singh

Center for Understanding, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Email: drdpsn@gmail.com



ABSTRACT. *Jaito Morcha (1923–1925), a pivotal moment in India’s independence struggle, exemplifies the power of non-violent resistance against colonial oppression. Centred in Nabha, Punjab, this peaceful protest against the unjust deposition of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh and the suppression of Sikh rights highlighted the effectiveness of unity, discipline, and moral authority in the face of brutal repression. Despite violent crackdowns, the movement’s commitment to non-violence inspired national and international solidarity, ultimately forcing the British to reconsider their policies. Today, the principles of the Jaito Morcha remain deeply relevant, offering a blueprint for addressing modern challenges such as authoritarianism, social injustice, and environmental crises. From global movements like Black Lives Matter to digital activism, non-violent resistance continues to empower marginalized communities and drive transformative change. Jaito Morcha’s legacy underscores the enduring power of peaceful protest in shaping a more just and equitable world.*

Introduction. Jaito Morcha (1923–1925), a landmark event in India’s struggle for independence, is a powerful example of non-violent resistance against colonial oppression. This peaceful protest centered in the princely state of Nabha, Punjab, was a response to the unjust deposition of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh and the suppression of Sikh religious and political rights. Despite facing brutal repression, including the infamous Jaito firing of 1924, the Akali protesters remained steadfast in their commitment to non-violence, unity, and discipline. Their resilience not only drew national and international attention but also forced the British to reassess their policies, showcasing the transformative potential of peaceful resistance.



The principles of the Jaito Morcha—moral authority, civil disobedience, and sacrifice—continue to inspire modern movements addressing issues such as authoritarianism, social injustice, and environmental degradation. From the Arab Spring to Black Lives Matter and Extinction Rebellion, non-violent resistance remains a potent tool for challenging oppression and advocating for change. In an era of digital activism, the global reach of peaceful protests has expanded, enabling greater solidarity and impact. Jaito Morcha’s legacy is a timeless reminder of the power of non-violence in achieving justice and equality, offering a roadmap for contemporary struggles in an increasingly interconnected world. Its lessons remain vital for shaping a more equitable and compassionate future.

Historical Context of the Jaito Morcha. The Jaito Morcha (1923–1925) was a significant non-violent protest in the princely state of Nabha, Punjab, during India’s struggle for independence. It began as a response to the British deposition of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, who was seen as sympathetic to the Akali movement, a Sikh reformist and anti-colonial struggle. The British accused the Maharaja of mismanagement, but his removal was widely perceived as an attempt to suppress Sikh political and religious autonomy. In protest, the Akalis launched a

peaceful agitation, centered in the town of Jaito, demanding the Maharaja's reinstatement and the right to perform religious ceremonies freely.

The movement gained momentum in 1923 when the British disrupted a Sikh religious ceremony at Jaito's Gurdwara Gangsar. In response, the Akalis organized a series of peaceful marches and protests. On February 21, 1924, British forces opened fire on unarmed protesters during one such march, killing several and injuring many more. This event, known as the "Jaito firing," became a rallying point for the movement. Despite the violence, the Akalis remained committed to non-violence. The Jaito Morcha continued for two years, with thousands of protesters arrested and subjected to harsh treatment. Ultimately, the movement succeeded in drawing national and international attention to the injustices faced by the Sikh community, forcing the British to reconsider their policies.



Principles of Non-Violent Resistance. The Jaito Morcha was rooted in the principles of non-violent resistance, which include:

1. **Moral Authority:** By refusing to resort to violence, the protesters maintained the moral high ground, exposing the brutality of the oppressors and garnering sympathy from neutral observers.

2. **Unity and Discipline:** The movement

demonstrated remarkable unity among participants, who adhered to strict discipline despite provocation and violence.

3. **Civil Disobedience:** The Akalis engaged in acts of civil disobedience, such as holding religious ceremonies in defiance of British orders, to challenge unjust laws.
4. **Sacrifice and Resilience:** The protesters' willingness to endure suffering without retaliation underscored their commitment to the cause.

These principles not only defined the Jaito Morcha but also became hallmarks of other successful nonviolent movements, such as the Indian independence struggle, the American civil rights movement, and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

Modern-Day Relevance. In the 21st century, the lessons of the Jaito Morcha continue to resonate. Non-violent resistance remains a powerful tool for addressing contemporary challenges, including:

1. **Fighting Authoritarianism:** In an era where democratic freedoms are under threat in many parts of the world, non-violent resistance offers a way to challenge authoritarian regimes without escalating conflict. Movements like the Arab Spring and the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong have drawn on these principles.
2. **Promoting Social Justice:** Issues such as racial inequality, gender discrimination, and economic exploitation can be addressed through peaceful protests, boycotts, and advocacy. The Black Lives Matter movement, for instance, has used non-violent methods to highlight systemic racism and demand change.

3. **Environmental Activism:** Climate change and environmental degradation are global crises that require collective action. Non-violent movements, such as Extinction Rebellion, have mobilized people to demand urgent action from governments and corporations.
4. **Digital Activism:** The rise of social media has expanded the reach of non-violent resistance, enabling activists to organize, raise awareness, and mobilize support on a global scale. Hashtags, online petitions, and digital campaigns have become modern tools for peaceful protest.

Challenges and Opportunities. While non-violent resistance remains effective, it is not without challenges. Oppressive regimes often respond with violence, censorship, and propaganda to suppress dissent. Additionally, maintaining unity and discipline in diverse movements can be difficult. However, Jaito Morcha reminds us that perseverance, strategic planning, and commitment to non-violence can overcome these obstacles.

Moreover, the globalized nature of the modern world provides opportunities for solidarity and support across borders. International pressure, media coverage, and alliances with like-minded organizations can amplify the impact of non-violent movements.

Conclusion. The Jaito Morcha remains a defining chapter in the history of non-violent resistance, demonstrating the enduring power of peaceful protest in the face of oppression. Rooted in principles of moral authority, unity, and sacrifice, this movement not only challenged colonial injustice but also inspired countless struggles for freedom and equality worldwide. Its success in exposing the brutality of the British regime and mobilizing widespread solidarity underscores the effectiveness of non-violence as a tool for social and political change.

In today's world, where issues like authoritarianism, systemic inequality, and environmental crises demand urgent attention, the lessons of the Jaito Morcha are more relevant than ever. Modern movements, from climate activism to campaigns for racial justice, continue to draw on the legacy of non-violent resistance to challenge entrenched power structures and advocate for a more equitable society. The rise of digital activism has further amplified the reach and impact of peaceful protests, enabling global solidarity and collective action.

The Jaito Morcha's legacy is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the transformative potential of non-violence. It reminds us that even in the face of overwhelming adversity, unity, discipline, and an unwavering commitment to justice can pave the way for meaningful change. As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, the principles of the Jaito Morcha offer a timeless guide for building a more just, inclusive, and compassionate world.

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SABD GURU TO GRANTH GURU*

Prof. Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD
 Institute for Understanding Sikhism
 4418 Rue Saint Martin-Plouffe
 Laval, Québec H7W 5L9, Canada
 sikhism@iucanada.com



The subject, *Sabd Guru to Granth Guru*, is an advanced and modified version of my book (Chahal, 2004) and discussed in four Parts. Part I, titled *Sabd Guru*, discusses ‘Sabd’ as the ‘Guru’ declared by Guru Nanak (1469-1539). Part II, titled *Sabd To Bani To Pothi To Guru Granth* discusses how ‘sabd’ is erroneously spelled as ‘shabad’ in Sikh literature, whereas it is spelled as ‘sabd’ (ਸਬਦ) in the Sikh Holy Scripture and as ‘sabd’ (शब्द) in Sanskrit. Part III, titled *Guru Granth*, discusses the notion of the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs being accepted as the ‘Granth Guru’. Part IV, titled *How to Address the Holy Granth of the Sikhs* tries to discover the most appropriate and standardized title for the Sikh Holy Scripture.

Part I. SABD GURU

INTRODUCTION. The Holy Scripture of the Sikhs is the most respected Granth of the Sikhs. Dr. Gopal Singh (1987) indicated that due to an improper understanding of ‘Sabd’ (Word), the Granth was worshipped more than read, uttered as a magical formula or a Mantram for secular benefits. In almost all the Gurdwaras in the world, the Holy Scripture is treated almost as an idol, whether under the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar, or any other organization. However, idol worship is condemned in Nanakian philosophy. Therefore, in the series of four parts about “Sabd Guru to Granth Guru,” an integrated and in-depth study about the intrinsic values of ‘Sabd,’ ‘Guru,’ and ‘Sabd Guru’ is discussed.

WHO IS THE GURU OF NANAK. During the discussion of Nanak with the Siddhas, Siddhas posed a question to Nanak. *What age are we passing through, and who is your Guru?* ਕਵਣ ਮੂਲੁ¹ ਕਵਣ ਮਤਿ² ਵੇਲਾ³ ॥ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ Question: *What is the source of beginning¹, and which type of wisdom² is of this Age³?* * *Who is that Guru, and to whom are you, his disciples?* **Note:** ***The Ages:** The Stone Age, the Copper Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, or the Middle Age (1066 -1485).

Nanak Answers: ਪਵਨ¹ ਅਰੰਭੁ² ਸਤਿ³ ਗੁਰੁ⁴ ਮਤਿ⁵ ਵੇਲਾ⁶ ॥ ਸਬਦੁ⁷ ਗੁਰੂ⁸ ਸੁਰਤਿ⁹ ਧੁਨਿ¹⁰ ਚੇਲਾ¹¹ ॥ *The air¹ is the beginning of every life, and this is the Age⁶ of ever-lasting³ enlightening⁴ philosophy⁵* (Like the Renaissance from the 14th to 17th century in Europe). *The Sabd⁷ is my Guru⁸ (enlightener), and my keen¹⁰ consciousness⁹ is its disciple¹¹.* AGGS, M 1. p 943.

What are the meanings of ‘sabd’ here? Guru Nanak has explained in Stanza # 38 of JAP Bani how to construct ‘Sabd’ (philosophy) and then follow it to be a noble person: ਜਤੁ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ ॥ ਅਹਰਣਿ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ਹਥੀਆਰੁ ॥ ਭਉ ਖਲਾ ਅਗਨਿ ਤਪ ਤਾਉ ॥ ਭਾਂਡਾ ਭਾਉ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ ॥ ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥੩੮॥ *Self-control should be the furnace and patience of a goldsmith. Wisdom should be the anvil, and knowledge be the tools. Love for God should be the bellows to blow air into the fire to make it super-hot. The body is a melting pot where self-control, patience, wisdom, and knowledge merge to mold (prepare) Amrit (elixir). By this method, the **Sabd** is constructed in this mint of truth. Nanak says: God has blessed everybody with these qualities; those who work to achieve them are blessed by God.* AGGS, Jap # 38, p 8.

The theme in the above stanza # 38 of JAP Bani of Guru Nanak explains how to construct a ‘Sabd’ (word/philosophy) and prepare the *Amrit* (elixir), following which will make a person noble. From this stanza, it

can be assumed that 'Sabd' in the phrase, ਸਬਦੁ⁷ ਗੁਰੂ⁸ ਸੁਰਤਿ⁹ ਧੁਨਿ¹⁰ ਚੇਲਾ¹¹ || constructed by self-control, being patient, and using knowledge and wisdom became the 'Guru.'

Guru Amar Das has explained without such 'Sabd' of Guru Nanak, one cannot attain wisdom as follows: ਬਾਝੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਬਾਰੁ ਹੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਬੁਝ ਨ ਘਾਇ || (*Although*) *Without Guru, it is all darkness, but without his Sabd (philosophy), one cannot attain any wisdom.*" AGGS, M 4, p 45.

Now, the question is: **Who is GURU?** '**Guru**' (ਗੁਰੂ) *is a broad term covering many aspects. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 'Guru' means as follows: (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/guru>)*

- 1: A personal religious teacher and spiritual guide in Hinduism.
- 2: a. A teacher and especially intellectual guide in matters of fundamental concern.
- 3: One who is an acknowledged leader or chief proponent.

On the other hand, Bhai Kahn Singh says that the word 'Guru' originated from 'Gri', meaning 'engulfs and enlightens', i.e., the one who engulfs the darkness (ignorance) and enlightens (makes to understand). (K. Singh, 1981) According to him, 'Guru' in Gurbani is spelled as ਗੁਰ, ਗੁਰੁ, and ਗੁਰੂ. In addition to these spellings, it is also spelled as ਗੁਰਿ. Despite different spellings, all the forms are pronounced as ਗੁਰੂ (Guru) and mean, as explained above.

Bhai Kahn Singh, in *Gurmat Martand*, again explains 'Guru' as follows: (K. Singh, 1996) One who dispels ignorance and teaches the truth, affection, interest, and benefit (human rights). According to him, Nanak is the Guru sent by God to dispel ignorance and preach the truth and human rights.

A critical analysis of Gurbani indicates that 'Guru' has been explicitly used for the Eternal Entity as follows:

i) Guru is God. *Nanak says God is the Guru: ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ* ||੫||੧੧|| AGGS, M 1, p 599. *The One, who is Infinite, Transcendent, and Supreme, is the Guru realized (by Nanak).*

ii) Sat Guru is also God. *But Guru Ram Das says the God is 'Sat Guru' as follows: ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਨਾ ਆਵੈ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ || ਓਹੁ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ||੧੩|| AGGS, M 4, p 759. My True Guru is that Who exists forever and neither takes birth nor dies. Oh¹ (That) is imperishable² Entity³ and pervades everywhere.*

NANAK is GURU. On the other hand, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjun say that Nanak is the 'Guru' and 'Sat Guru' (True Guru):

Guru Angad: ਦੀਖਿਆ ਆਖਿ ਬੁਝਾਇਆ ਸਿਫਤੀ ਸਚਿ ਸਮੇਉ || ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਕਿਆ ਉਪਦੇਸੀਐ ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ ||੧||
What teachings can be imparted to those who have Nanak as their Guru (enlightened teacher)?
AGGS, M 2, p 150.

Guru Amar Das: ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ੍ਹ ਕਉ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਤਿਨ੍ਹ ਕਾ ਲੇਖਾ ਨਿਬੜਿਆ ||੧੮||੧||੨|| *Those to whom Nanak, the True Guru, has imparted his philosophy, their deeds have been accounted for.*"
AGGS, M 3, p 435.

Guru Ram Das: ਧਨੁ ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ* ਜਿਨਿ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਤਰੀ ਤਰਾਂਤਿ ||੪||੫|| *Blessed is Guru Nanak, who treats everybody equal*, and himself has crossed and helps the others to cross the stream (instinct) of slander and praise.* AGGS, M 4, p 1264. Note: *Without discrimination of caste, creed, sex, social status, etc.

Finally, Guru Arjun confirms that Nanak is the Guru: ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਿਨ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਪੇਖਿਆ ਸੇ ਫਿਰਿ ਗਰਭਾਸਿ ਨ ਪਰਿਆ ਰੇ ||੪||੨||੧੩|| *"Those who have heard and analyzed the philosophy of Guru Nanak are liberated."* AGGS, M 5, p 612. In the following phrase, Guru Arjun supports the theme of his above phrase that God entrusted Guru Nanak with the treasure of wisdom/philosophy for dissemination: ਭਗਤਿ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਗੁਰਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਸਉਪੇ ਫਿਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਲਇਆ ||੪||੩||੧੪|| *God entrusted Guru Nanak with the treasure of wisdom/philosophy¹ (for dissemination), then (God) never took any account² of this treasure.* AGGS, M 5, p 612.

Nanak as 'Complete Guru' / 'Sat Guru'. *The following verses indicate that Nanak is also 'Sat Guru':*

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ¹ ਗੁਰੂ^{2*} ਹੈ ਪੂਰਾ³ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ⁴ ਨਾਮੁ⁵ ਧਿਆਇਆ⁶ ॥੪॥੫॥ AGGS, M 4, p 882. *Nanak is the Guru¹ of Gurus^{2*}, is the Complete³ and True Guru⁴ by meeting him (Sat Guru) one can realize/comprehend⁶ God⁵.* **Note:** *ਗੁਰੂ¹ ਗੁਰੂ² (Guru Guru) means 'Guru' of the 'Gurus,' according to Bhai Kahn Singh. (K. Singh, 1981) ਸਭ ਤੇ ਵਡਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਲ ਰਾਖੀ ਮੇਰੀ ॥੪॥੧੦॥੫੭॥ *Guru Nanak is the greatest of all who protected my honor.* AGGS, M 5, p 750.

When 'kaka' of Nanak is with 'ounkar', it is generally considered Nanak as a person, Guru, or Sat Guru but not as a pen name. However, in some verses, *kaka* is without *ounkar*; still, Nanak is interpreted as a person, not a pen name. However, it is not a standard law of the Grammar of Gurbani; therefore, one must be careful when interpreting the name 'Nanak,' keeping in view the theme of the verse. But some scholars consider that 'Sat Guru' is God interpreted as follows:

Nanak says: "*The God is greatest of all who protected my honor.*" However, logical and scientific interpretation is as follows: *Guru Nanak is the greatest of all other so-called Sat Gurus who protected my honor.*

Nanak as the 'Representative of God'. On the other hand, some Sikh scholars have interpreted Guru Nanak as the light, image, or manifestation of God because of the presence of the word 'Guru' before and 'Dev' (ਦੇਵ) after 'Nanak' in the following phrase: ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਰੂਪੁ ॥੮॥੧॥ *Guru Nanak is the embodiment of the image of God (Gobind).* AGGS, M 5, p 1192.

Who else can be Sat Guru? It has already been established that Nanak is Guru, Sat Guru, and *Pura* (Complete) Guru; however, here Guru Nanak has also been mentioned that the one (anyone) who has realized the Ever-Existing Entity is also Sat Guru: ਸਤਿ¹ ਪੁਰਖੁ¹ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ² ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਿਖੁ ਉਧਰੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਹਰਿ³ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਉ ॥੧॥ *The one who has realized the Ever-Existing Entity¹ is named the True Guru². And whose association saves the Sikh. Nanak says: Sing the attributes of Ever-Existing Entity³.* AGGS, M 5, p 286.

Guru Sikh – Sikh Guru. *There is also a stage where Guru is a Sikh and Sikh a Guru, and there is no difference between them since both practice and preach the same philosophy:* ਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖੁ ਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਹੈ ਏਕੇ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ¹ ਚਲਾਏ ॥ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਦੇਵੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਮਿਲਣੁ ਸੁਭਾਏ ॥੮॥੨॥੯॥ *The Guru is the Sikh, and the Sikh is the Guru since both disseminate the same teachings of the Guru. Nanak says: Both keep the teachings¹ in their hearts, and such Guru/Sikh is met by chance.* AGGS, M 4, p 444.

CONCLUSIONS. Nanak says his Guru is 'Sabd' and advised the Sikhs how to construct the 'Sabd.' The meanings of 'Sabd' are discussed in Part II. Generally, 'Guru' means teacher, religious teacher, and enlightener. The Sikh Gurus who succeeded to the 'House of Nanak' have declared Nanak as 'Guru' and 'Sat Guru', and he is the 'Sat Guru' greatest of all. Guru Arjun has also declared Nanak as the 'Image of God.' On the other hand, Guru Ram Das has also said that there is no difference between 'Guru' and 'Sikh' when both are practicing and preaching the same philosophy (Nanakian Philosophy).

Part II. SABD TO BANI TO POTHI TO GURU GRANTH

SABD. *The word 'sabd' is spelled as शब्द in Sanskrit. But in the literature of Hinduism and Sikhism, it is erroneously spelled as "shabad". However, in the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs, 'sabd' (ਸਬਦ) is spelled as follows: ਸਬਦ, ਸਬਦਿ, ਸਬਦੁ, ਸਬਦੰ, ਸਬਦੀ, ਸਬਦੀਂ, ਸਬਦੇ, ਸਬਦੈ, ਸਬਦੇ, and ਸਬਦੌ with different prepositions. The word 'sabd' has many meanings: (K. Singh, 1981)*

- i) Sound, Word, Speech, Conversations,
- ii) Religion, duty,
- iii) Message, advice,
- iv) Philosophy, and

In addition, I have found a few more meanings from the Gurbani:

- v) Purifier,
- vi) Vehicle to Meet God,
- vii) Peace of Mind, and
- viii) Elixir of Life (*Amrit*).

i) Sound, Word, Speech, Conversation. *In general, 'Sabd' is taken as 'sound.' Here, Guru Nanak uses it as an 'unstuck sound/music' to describe the beauty and praise of nature. ਅਨਹਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਵਾਜੰਤ ਭੇਰੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ As if the Unstruck Sound (sabd) is coming out from a drum. 1. Pause. AGGS, M 1, p 13.*

Gurbani tells us that one's personality is discovered from one's 'sabd' word/ speech/ conversation): ਸਬਦੋਂ ਹੀ ਭਗਤ ਜਾਪਦੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੜ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਚੀ ਹੋਇ ॥ *Through one's 'sabd' (words), the noble persons (Bhagats/devotees) are discovered, whose bani (hymns) tell the truth. AGGS, M 3, p 429.*

ii) Duty/Religion. ਜੇਗ ਸਬਦੰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਬਦੰ ਬੇਦ ਸਬਦੰ ਤ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣਹ ॥ ਖਜੜੀ ਸਬਦੰ ਸੁਰ ਸਬਦੰ ਸੁਦ੍ਰ ਸਬਦੰ ਪਰਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤਹ ॥ ਸਰਬ ਸਬਦੰ ਤ ਏਕ ਸਬਦੰ ਜੇ ਕੇ ਜਾਨਸਿ ਭੇਉ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਦਾਸੁ ਹੈ ਸੋਈ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਦੇਉ ॥੩॥ *The duty of the Jogi is to attain knowledge, And that of Brahmans is to read Vedas. The duty of the Kshatriya is to show bravery. Understanding the One, God, is everyone's duty. Nanak is the servant of That (God), Who is without any blemishes." AGGS, M 1, p 1353 and AGGS, M 2, p 469. Some interpreters replace 'Duty' with 'Religion.'*

iii) Advice, Message. ਨਾਨਕ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੀਐ ਪਾਈਐ ਗੁਣੀ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ॥੮॥੧੦॥ *Nanak says: One attains the treasure of wisdom by contemplating/deliberating on the Advice/philosophy (of the Guru). AGGS, M 1, p 59.*

iv) Philosophy. ਏਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੀਐ ਅਵਰ ਤਿਆਗੈ ਆਸ ॥ *Contemplating only on the Word (philosophy) of the One (God) makes one abandon hope in others. AGGS, M 1, p 18. ਅਮਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਬੀਜੁ ਸਬਦੇ ਕਰਿ ਸਚ ਕੀ ਆਬ ਨਿਤ ਦੇਹਿ ਪਾਣੀ ॥ Make good deeds as the soil and put the Word (Guru's philosophy) in it as the seed. Irrigate it continually with the water of Truth. AGGS, M 1, p 24.*

v) Purifier. ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਹੋਇ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥ *Without the sabd (Word), pollution (of mind) is not washed off; otherwise, one suffers misery (symbolic cycle of death and rebirth). AGGS, M 3, p 29. ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ (When) The Word of the Guru abides within the mind, and then the mind and body become pure. 1. Pause AGGS, M 3, p 32.*

vi) Vehicle to Realize God. ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਦੂਖ ਨਿਵਾਰਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ *Through the sabd (word) of the Guru, one realizes the Truth (God) That removes all troubles. AGGS, M 3, p 36.*

vii) Peace of Mind. ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ *Peace of mind is attained through Guru's sabd (advice/philosophy). AGGS, M 5, p 46.*

viii) Elixir of Life. ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ¹ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ² ਹੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਪੀਤੈ³ ਤਿਖ ਜਾਇ ॥ *The elixir of life² is obtained through understanding³ the sabd (word)¹ means quenching the thirst for wisdom. AGGS, M 3, p 35.*

BANI (HYMN). 'Sabd' is Equated to 'Bani'. After Guru Nanak, 'Sabd' has been equated to 'Bani' by Guru Amar Das and Guru Ram Das as follows: ਸਚੁ¹ ਬਾਣੀ² ਸਚੁ³ ਸਬਦੁ⁴ ਹੈ ਜਾ ਸਚਿ⁵ ਧਰੇ ਪਿਆਰੁ⁶ ॥ *Put your love (faith)⁶ in the Truth⁵ (God), since the bani² (hymn) is the truth³, and the sabd⁴ (hymn) is the truth³. AGGS, M 3, p 33.*

Bani is Equated to 'God' by Guru Amar Das: ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ *Wondrous is the bani (hymn) of the Formless and is worth laudation as nothing equals it. AGGS, M 3, p 515.*

Now the 'Bani' is equated to 'Guru' by Guru Ram Das: ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਾਰੇ ॥ *The Bani is Guru, and Guru is Bani, which has all types of elixirs of life. AGGS, M 4, p 982.*

Now, the question is? Who says Bani? *Guru Ram Das has resolved this issue in the following phrase that it is the Guru who says bani: ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥੫॥ The Guru says Bani, and the humble follower believes in that Bani; thus, the Guru emancipates him.*

AGGS, M 4, p 982.

But who is that Guru who says Bani? Who is that Guru who says Bani? *Guru Ram Das made it very clear that 'Nanak' is the Guru who says the bani (hymn) as is explained in the following phrases: ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ* ਬੋਲੈ ਗੁਣ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਰਹਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥੪॥੫॥ Nanak* person speaks the Bani of good qualities; this enlightening bani is imbibed through the Naam of Hari (God). AGGS, M 4, p 494. And ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ* ਬੋਲੈ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਭਾਣੀ ॥ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਰੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀਅੰ ਜੀਉ ॥੪॥੭॥ Nanak* speaks Bani (hymn), the Elixir of Life¹. It is dear and pleasing to the minds of the Guru-oriented Sikhs. The Guru³, the True Guru⁴ (Nanak*), preaches² his teachings¹ of The Perfect⁵ Guru⁶. The True Guru⁷, who is Generous⁸ to all. AGGS, M 4, p 96.*

Note: * Nanak here is a person, not a pen name, since Kaka is with Ounkar in the above two stanzas.

Where can one get the Sabd/Bani? *Guru Amar Das and Guru Arjun have answered this question. It can be obtained from the True Guru/Perfect Guru: ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰੁ¹ ਕੀ ਸਾਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ² ॥ ਸੁਖ³ ਮਨ⁴ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਹਜਿ⁵ ਸਮਾਣੀ⁶ ॥੨॥ The true Bani² is obtained through the Perfect Guru¹. Through that Bani, one can easily⁵ attain peace of mind⁴. AGGS, M 3, p 663. ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ¹ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰੁ³ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰੁ⁵ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੀ⁶ ਸਾਚਿ⁷ ਸਮਾਣੀ⁸ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ "Wondrous¹ is the Bani of the perfect² Guru³, That was revealed⁶ by the perfect⁴ Guru⁵, and that helps to understand⁸ God (ਸਾਚਿ)⁷." AGGS, M 3, p 754. ਪੁਰਾ¹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ² ਜੇ ਮਿਲੈ³ ਪਾਈ⁴ ਸਬਦੁ⁵ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ⁶ ॥ If we meet³ the Perfect¹ True Guru², we can obtain⁴ the Treasure⁶ of the sabd⁵. AGGS, M 5, p 46. ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰੇ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜਪਿ ਅਨਦੁ ਕਰਹੁ ਨਿਤ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ॥੧॥ Contemplate/deliberate on the bani of the complete Guru¹ and attain bliss every day. AGGS, M 5, p 616. ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰੇ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਣੀ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸਿ ਵਖਾਣੀ ॥ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥੨॥੧੮॥੮੨॥ "The Bani of the Perfect Guru is pleasing to the mind of the Transcendent. Nanak, the servant of God, utters the bani that is immaculate but not easy to explain." AGGS, M 5, p 629. Note: * Nanak is himself, not a pen name, although Kaka is without Ounkar. It indicates that one must be very careful when interpreting Nanak as himself or as a pen name used by other Gurus to interpret Gurbani correctly.) ਬਾਝੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਬਾਰੁ ਹੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਬੁਝ ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥ (Although) Without Guru, it is all darkness, but without his Sabd (philosophy), one cannot attain any wisdom." AGGS, M 1, p 15.*

BANI COMPILED INTO A POTH (NOTEBOOK). *According to Prof Sahib Singh1(987), Guru Nanak, at the time of his demise, handed over a Pothi containing his Bani to Guru Angad, who succeeded to the 'House of Nanak.' Guru Angad added his Bani to it and handed over this Pothi to the next Guru, Amar Das, who succeeded to the 'House of Nanak.' This system of preserving the Bani of Guru Nanak in its original form continued till it reached Guru Arjun, the fifth Guru, who succeeded to the 'House of Nanak.' When Guru Arjun opened and examined this Pothi (inherited treasure), he exclaimed it in astonishment as follows: ਪੀਉ ਦਾਦੇ ਕਾ ਖੇਲਿ ਡਿਠਾ ਖਜਾਨਾ ॥ ਤਾ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਭਇਆ ਨਿਧਾਨਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਤਨ ਲਾਲ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਮੇਲੁ ॥ ਭਰੇ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਅਖੁਟ ਅਤੇਲ ॥੨॥ ਖਾਵਹਿ ਖਰਚਹਿ ਰਲਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਵਧਦੇ ਜਾਈ ॥੩॥ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਲੇਖੁ ਲਿਖਾਇ ॥ ਸੁ ਏਤੁ ਖਜਾਨੈ ਲਇਆ ਰਲਾਇ ॥੪॥੩੧॥੧੦੦॥ When I opened and viewed the inherited treasure (Gurbani) of our ancestors (Gurus), my mind was illumined with Treasure (Bani). Compared to this treasure, the jewels and rubies have no value. The chest is full of inexhaustible and immeasurable treasure (Bani). Oh, Brothers, let us utilize it together and dispense (disseminate) it amongst others. The Treasure (Gurbani) will not be exhausted but will multiply manifold. Nanak says whoever has the grace of God will be a shareholder in this treasure (Bani). AGGS, M 5, p 186.*

It appears from this phrase, ਖਾਵਹਿ ਖਰਚਹਿ ਰਲਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਵਧਦੇ ਜਾਈ ॥੩॥ in 1604 Guru Arjun thought to bind this inherited treasure, the Bani of Guru Nanak and that of other Sikh Gurus who succeeded to the 'House of Nanak' along with the other contemporary Bani of Bhagats and Swiayae (eulogy of Sikh Gurus) by

Bhatts into a *Pothi* (Granth) so that this Granth is made available to everybody for dissemination of Bani to the humanity. Although 'Sabd' was declared 'Guru' by Nanak, however, Guru Arjun equated this *Pothi* to '*Parmesar*' (the Highest God) as follows: ਪੇਥੀ¹ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ² ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ³ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ⁴ ਗਾਵਹਿ⁵ ਗੁਣ⁶ ਰੋਬਿੰਦ⁷ ਪੂਰਨ⁸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ⁹ ਗਿਆਨੁ¹⁰ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ AGGS, M 5, P 1226. *The pothi¹ is equated³ to the Highest God². From this Pothi, the noble people⁴ discuss (sing)⁵ God's⁷ attributes⁶ and deliberate on complete⁸ wisdom (philosophy)¹⁰ of God⁹*

From Prof Sahib Singh's book, *Aad Bir Baray*, it is evident that Guru Arjun allowed some devout Sikhs to make copies of this *Pothi* while it was being compiled so that as many Sikhs as possible read it. (S. Singh, 1987)

DECLARATION OF POTHİ AS GRANTH GURU. It means that on the day in 1604, the *Pothi* was compiled and equated to the Highest God (*Parmesar*) (ਪੇਥੀ¹ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ² ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ³ ॥); since then, Guru Arjun and all other Gurus carried on the preaching of 'Sabd' (Sabd Guru) from this *Pothi*. Therefore, the Granth was already 'Guru' ipso facto 'Sabd Guru' was enshrined for the last 104 years. Guru Gobind Singh confirmed this title as 'Granth Guru' after adding the Bani of his father, Guru Teg Bahadur, in 1708.

CONCLUSIONS. 'Sabd' has many meanings depending on the context in which it has been used. First, Guru Nanak declared the 'sabd' as his 'Guru,' then Guru Amar Das declared 'sabd' as 'Bani,' and afterward, Guru Ram Das declared "Bani" as 'Guru.' In 1604, Guru Arjun compiled the 'Bani' of five Gurus, plus that of Bhagats and Bhatts, in a *pothi*. He declared this *pothi* as *Parmesar ka Thaan* (Highest God). After 104 years, Guru Gobind Singh declared the same *pothi* as 'Granth Guru' after adding the 'Bani' of his father, Guru Teg Bahadur, in 1708.

Part III. Granth Guru

INTRODUCTION. The Granth as Guru has become an established fact in Sikhism and the minds of every Sikh. However, McLeod started the controversy over the declaration of Granth as Guru. (McLeod, 1975) Amid this controversy, McLeod stands firm in his refusal to accept that Guru Gobind Singh declared the Granth as Guru in 1708. He argues that it was a later addition, after the execution of Banda Bahadur, that the Granth was declared a Guru and a cohesive force for the leaderless community. Prof Madanjit Kaur (1988) sharply contradicts this view, who vehemently defends Guru Gobind Singh's declaration of Granth as Guru.

DISCUSSION. Prof Madanjit Kaur (1988) wrote an article entitled, "*The Guru-ship and Succession of Guru Granth*" to justify that Granth is Guru and Guru-ship was bestowed by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708. She stated that this article was written to refute McLeod's statement: "...tradition which conferred his (Guru Gobind Singh's) personal authority upon the sacred scripture and the corporate Panth may perhaps be a retrospective interpretation, a tradition which owes its origin not to an actual pronouncement of the Guru but to an insistent need for maintaining the Panth's cohesion during the later period." (McLeod, 1975)

In response to McLeod's contention (McLeod, 1975), Justice Gurdev Singh, Harbans Singh, and Ganda Singh, cited from Grewal (1998); and Madanjit Kaur (1988) and Ganda Singh (1986), have presented compelling historical evidence. This evidence, which includes Guru Gobind Singh's writings and the accounts of his contemporaries, unequivocally supports the claim that Guru Gobind Singh bestowed Guru-ship to the Granth in 1708 CE at the time of his demise.

Nevertheless, when I examined the information (data) given in *Sri Gur Sobha* (Singh (ed.), 1967), *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* (Vedanti, Joginder Singh and Singh, 1998), *Rahit Namay* (Padam, 1986), other historical evidence, and Gurbani, a new picture appeared. Initially, 'Sabd' was accepted as 'Guru,' but later, 'Sabd Guru' was changed to 'Granth Guru,' and then the bestowing of Guru-ship was ritualized.

i) Sri Gur Sobha. Ganda Singh quoted a part of the following phrase from Sainapat's *Sri Gur Sobha* to show that Guru-ship was bestowed onto the Granth: (Singh (ed.), 1967) (p 52, 14) ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ ਅਜਰ ਜਰੰ । ਹਿਰਦੇ ਧਰ ਧਿਆਨੀ ਉਚਰੀ ਬਾਨੀ ਪਦ ਨਿਰਬਾਨੀ ਅਪਰ ਪਰੰ 1 43 । 808 1 From this phrase, he had interpreted only a portion, ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ, as follows: "*Guru-ship was bestowed onto the Sabd, Eternal and limitless.*"

Ganda Singh used this phrase to justify that Guru-ship was bestowed onto the Granth. Madanjit Kaur (1988) followed Ganda Singh's interpretation to support her thesis. Moreover, a critical analysis of this phrase shows that Ganda Singh has not paid any attention to the previous stanzas of the above phrase to interpret it correctly. (Singh (ed.), 1967) (p 52) If we investigate the prior stanza of the above phrase # 808, a real interpretation will emerge. The previous stanza is as follows: ਖਾਲਸ ਖਾਸ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਭਰਮ ਨ ਹੋਈ । ਭਰਮ ਭੇਖ ਤੇ ਰਹੈ ਨੀਆਰਾ ਸੋ ਖਾਲਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ । 808 । *Khalis (pure) is one who has no superstitions in his/her mind. And that Khalis, who remains free from superstitions and religious garb, is my Satguru.*

This indicates that the 'Khalis', free from superstitions and religious garbs, was declared the 'Satguru'. Then, the interpretation of the second part, ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ ਅਜਰ ਜਰੰ । would be different from that given by Ganda Singh:

The Satguru (Khalis, the pure one free from superstitions and religious garbs as discussed above) is above all limits (ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ), who contemplates/deliberates on the Sabd (ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ), and who can bear (face) the unbearable difficulties (ਅਜਰ ਜਰੰ)".

In this phrase, it is crystal clear that the 'Khalis' (pure one) is the 'Satguru,' who contemplates on 'Sabd'. Nothing supports that 'Granth is Guru' in the above phrase # 808 as interpreted by Ganda Singh. The next stanza, ਹਿਰਦੇ ਧਰ ਧਿਆਨੀ ਉਚਰੀ ਬਾਨੀ ਪਦ ਨਿਰਬਾਨੀ ਅਪਰ ਪਰੰ, also explains the characteristics of the Khalis: "*(Khalis is that) who imbibes the Bani in mind and recites the Bani with full concentration; consequently, he attains the status¹ of free from any attachment² (means become Satguru), which cannot be described.*"

Although Ganda Singh failed to interpret phrase # 808 entirely and adequately, one can still easily find out from Sainapat's phrase # 808 the crucial message of Guru Nanak that has been ignored by many scholars, which is as follows: *The Khalis is free from superstitions and religious garb, and when the Khalis contemplates/deliberates on 'Sabd,' becomes Satguru (True Guru/ perfect teacher of Gurbani).*

The other important message is that: *The 'Sabd' is to be contemplated/deliberated by the Khalis to become Satguru.*

ii) Rehit Nama of Bhai Nand Lal. Ganda Singh also mentioned that Bhai Nand Lal tells us in his *Rehit Nama* (written in *Magar Sudi 9 Samat 1752* (1695 CE) about 13 years before his demise, Guru Gobind Singh made him understand that the Sabd is the Eternal: (Singh (ed.), 1967) ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਗੁਰ-ਸ਼ਬਦ ਹੈ ਤੋਹਿ ਸਮਜਾਇ । ਨੰਦਲਾਲ, ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ । (੫ 53) "*Made him (Nand Lal) understand that the Transcendent and Immanent Guru is the Sabd.*" Nand Lal, *Rehit Nama*. Guru Gobind Singh was preaching that the Sabd is the Eternal Guru.

Ganda Singh's above inference also supports that after Guru Arjun compiled the Bani into a Granth in 1604, he and the other Sikh Gurus taught Bani from this Granth. It also indicates that the 'Sabd' was the 'Guru' right from the time of Guru Nanak when he declared 'Sabd' as 'Guru' (ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ AGGS, M 1, p 943. Part II). Then 'Pothi' was declared as the place where one can find the attributes of *Parmeshar* (the Highest God) by Guru Arjun (ਪੋਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ ॥ AGGS, M 5, p 1226.) at the time of compilation of the Granth in 1604. Although Sikh Gurus were simultaneously present in the bodily form along with the 'Sabd Guru,' they taught that the 'Sabd' is 'Guru.'

iii) **'Sabd Guru' Changed to 'Granth Guru'.** Rehit Nama Bhai Prahlad Singh. Despite the above information available in *Sri Gur Sobha* and *Gurbilas Patshahi 6* that 'Sabd' was the 'Guru,' Madanjit Kaur (1988) and Ganda Singh (1985) have accepted the following statement of Bhai Prahlad Singh as accurate without testing its authenticity with the Nanakian philosophy: ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਸਿਉਂ, ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ । ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਹੈ, ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨੀਅਹੁ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ । 30 । (*Rehit Nama Bhai Prahlad Singh.*) *With the order of the Eternal Entity (God), Panth was established. All the Sikhs are hereby ordained to obey the Granth as the Guru.*

In the same *Rehit Nama* Bhai Prahlad Singh has declared 'Khalsa as Guru' and 'Khalsa as the Body of the Guru' in the following phrase: (Padam, 1986) (Anonymous (n.d.) ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮਾਨੀਅਹਿ ਪਰਗਟ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ । ਤੇ ਸਿਖ ਮੇ ਮਿਲਬੈ ਚਹਿਹ ਖੋਜ ਇਨਹੁ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹੁ । 24 । *Accept the Khalsa as Guru and Khalsa as the body of the Guru. Those who want to meet me search in the Khalsa.* According to Bhai Prahlad Singh, there are two Gurus: 'Khalsa Guru' and 'Granth Guru'.

It is important to know the differences between 'Khalis' used by Sainapat in *Sri Gur Bilas* and 'Khalsa' used by Bhai Prahlad Singh: Bhagat Kabir has used 'Khalsay' in the context of 'Pure' as follows: ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਜਨ ਭਏ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਜਿਹ ਜਾਨੀ ॥ AGGS, Kabir, p 655. Kabir says: *Those who have realized the devotion of God become Khalsay (Pure ones).* **Note:** *Khalsay* (Pure ones) is not the plural of 'Khalsa.'

It appears that Sainapat has used 'Khalis' in the same context as 'Pure' in his book, *Sri Gur Sobha* (in phrase # 808), as used by Bhagat Kabir. But the word 'Khalsa' used by Bhai Prahlad Singh is different than that of 'Khalis' and its plural form (*Khalsay*) used by Sainapat and Bhagat Kabir, respectively. The word 'Khalsa' has its roots in Persian and Arabic language, which means the land or the property that belongs to the king. In some, *Hukm Namay*, Guru Hargobind, and Guru Gobind Singh have used 'Khalsa' for their *Sangat* (congregation) of Hindus and Muslims. (Ganda Singh, 1985) It means the *Sangat* (congregation) was addressed as 'Khalsa' before initiating 'Khalsa' in 1699. After that, this *Sangat* comprising Amritdhari Sikhs, non-Amritdhari Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims who accepted Guru Gobind Singh as their Guru were also called as 'My Khalsa.'

iv. **Bansavalinama.** Kesar Singh Chhibber completed *Bansavalinama* in 1770 CE, 62 years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh. Kesar Singh's ancestors had been in the service of Guru Gobind Singh as *diwans*. He claims to have seen and consulted in his early days a *vehi* (account book) of the 'House of the Guru.' The tenth chapter of *Bansavalinama* deals with the life of Guru Gobind Singh. In stanzas 678-683, the author mentions the death of the Guru and his last commandment in reply to the question of the Sikhs: *The Granth is the guru, you hold the garment (seek the protection) of the Timeless God* (ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਲੜ ਪਕਰਹੁ ਅਕਾਲ – 679) as stated by Madanjit Kaur (1988) and Ganda Singh (1986).

The irony is that both these scholars, Madanjit Kaur and Ganda Singh, have ignored to mention that Kesar Singh Chhibber also reported that "*The Guru is Khalsa, the Khalsa is Guru*" (ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ।) and "*Accept the command of Granth Sahib but discover the value of the command by researching the Sabd.*" (ਆਗਿਆ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ, ਕਰਨੀ ਸਬਦ ਦੀ ਖੋਜਨਾ । 680 ।)

v) **Ritualism Introduced.** As soon as the 'Sabd Guru' was changed to the 'Granth Guru,' ritualism was introduced. Koer Singh, the author of *Gurbilas Patshahi 10*, explicitly states that Guru Gobind Singh discontinued the lineage of family or personal Guru-ship and did not appoint anyone to succeed him as Guru. (K. Singh, 1968). The author records that the Guru addressed his Sikhs before his demise and instructed them that there would be no successor to him, the *Sarbat Sangat* (the whole congregation), and the Khalsa should deem Sri Guru Granth Sahib as Supreme. Koer Singh further states that with five *paise* and coconut in his hand, the Guru paid homage to the Holy Granth and declared his succession as the Guru, as asserted by Madanjit Kaur (1988) and Ganda Singh (1986).

Harbans Singh reported the latest discovery of Giani Garja Singh (1907-1977) from *Bhatt Vehi Talauda Parganah Jind*, confirming the above information in the old writings. (H. Singh, 1986) Guru Gobind Singh asked Bhai Daya Singh on Wednesday, *Shukla chaouth* of the month of *Kartik*, 1765 BK (October 6, 1708) fetch Sri Granth Sahib. The Guru placed five *paise* and a coconut and bowed his head before it. He said to the *Sangat*: "It is my commandment: Own Sri Granth ji in my place. He who acknowledges it will obtain his reward. The Guru will rescue him. Know this as the truth."

After changing the 'Sabd Guru' to 'Granth Guru,' it was further changed to 'Visible Body of the Guru' and 'Darshan Guru.' Consequently, the Sikhs started to pay more attention to ritualistic aspects of the 'Granth Guru' than to deliberating on the philosophy of the 'Sabd Guru.'

CONCLUSIONS. In Sikh literature, the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs has been accepted as the 'Granth Guru.' However, McLeod refused to accept that Guru Gobind Singh declared 'Granth' as 'Guru' in 1708. He said the Granth was declared 'Guru' after Banda Bahadur as a cohesive force. On the other hand, Madanjit Kaur, Ganda Singh, and many other scholars confirmed that Guru Gobind Singh declared 'Granth' as 'Guru' in 1708. The critical study of phrase # 808 from Sainapat's *Sri Gur Sobha* indicates that Ganda Singh misinterpreted this phrase to declare 'Granth' as 'Guru.' Manjit Kaur quoted it in her article without verification. Bhai Prahlad Singh, in his *Rehitnama*, and Kesar Singh Chhibbar, in *Bansavalinama*, confirmed that the 'Granth' was declared 'Guru.'

Giani Garja Singh (1907-1977) from *Bhatt Vehi Talauda Parganah Jind* said that Guru Gobind Singh ritualistically sanctified 'Granth' as 'Guru.' Steadily, 'Granth Guru' became 'Visible Body of the Guru' and 'Darshan Guru.' Consequently, 'Granth Guru' became an idol for worshipping rather than studying the 'Sabd Guru' declared by Guru Nanak.

Phrase # 808 ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ ਅਜਰ ਜਰੰ | in Sainapat's *Gur Sobha*, when critically interpreted, indicates the recommendation is to contemplate/deliberate 'Sabd.' The 'Granth' can be called 'Guru' ipso facto, as 'Sabd Guru' has been assimilated into the 'Granth.' The 'Guru' used as an adjective for the 'Granth' means the 'Granth,' which contains 'Sabd Guru', removes ignorance and enlightens the mind, as explained in Part I.

Part IV. How to Address the Holy Granth of the Sikhs?

INTRODUCTION. Did Guru Arjun give any title to the Holy Scripture compiled by him? It is not clear from the review of the history of the Holy Scripture if Guru Arjun assigned any title to the Granth at the time of its compilation. However, Bhai Jodh Singh (1968) reported a letter from Bhai Kahn Singh in which Bhai Kahn Singh showed that two titles, 'Pothi' (book, Granth) and 'Guru Baba' (*Guru Father*), were used at the end of the Table of Contents of the *Kartarpuri Bir*. The exact wordings reported by Bhai Kahn Singh are as follows: ਸੰਮਤ 1661 ਮਿਤੀ ਭਾਦੋਂ ਵਦੀ 1 ਪੋਥੀ ਲਿਖ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ || ਸਾਰੇ ਪਤਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬਾ ਦੇ 974 || (*Samat* 1661 dated *Badhon* 1 of the second half, writing of *Pothi* was achieved. Total folios of *Guru Baba* are 974). However, Bhai Jodh Singh gave an entirely different version when he examined the *Kartarpuri Bir*. His version is as follows: ਸੰਮਤ 1661 ਮਿਤੀ ਭਾਦੋਂ ਵਦੀ ਇਕਮ 1 ਪੋਥੀ ਲਿਖਿ ਪੁਚੇ। (there are differences in some spelling also) (*Samat* 1661 dated *Badhon* first 1 of the second half, writing of *Pothi* achieved). He further says that these words were at the beginning of the Table of Contents rather than at the end, as reported by Bhai Kahn Singh. Moreover, he (J. Singh, 1968) categorically refuted Bhai Kahn Singh's statement, "Total folios of Guru Baba are 974," by saying that these words were not found written in the Table of Contents or anywhere else in the *Kartarpuri Bir*.

It is strange that two well-known scholars made two different observations about the Table of Contents of the same *Bir* (volume). Who is right? It is just possible that both may be right, and they might have examined two different *Birs* offered by the custodians of the *Kartarpuri Bir* since they have many copies of the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs.

Anyhow, without going into further discussion on this entry and its date of compilation, it will suffice to say that at least two titles, e.g., *Pothi* and *Guru Baba*, of the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs were in its Table of Contents at least in one of the *Birs* at Kartarpur.

When Professor Sahib Singh (1987) wrote a book, *Aad Bir Baray*, and gave another title, '*Aad Bir*' to this *Pothi*. I cannot figure out in what context he used the adjective '*Aad*' for this '*Bir*' compiled by Guru Arjun. Since then, almost all scholars have taken '*Aad Bir*' as the '*First Bir*' prepared by Guru Arjun.

Although the titles '*Pothi*' and '*Guru Baba*' are in the Table of Contents of *Kartarpuri Bir(s)*, some Sikh scholars have assigned their own titles. Now, the most prevalent titles found in the old and contemporary Sikh literature are as follows:

1. "*Pothi*" and "*Guru Baba*" in the Table of Contents in one of the *Birs* at Kartarpur.
2. Some Sikhs use names like, *Baba Ji*, *Guru Baba Ji*, *Baba Ji Di Bir*, *Guru Babay Di Bir*, verbally.
3. Professor Sahib Singh was the first to use the new title '*Aad Bir*' for *Kartarpuri Bir*.
4. Some scholars changed the spellings of the *Aad Bir* into *Adi Granth* in English.
5. Then some scholars dropped the adjective *Aad (Adi)*, replaced it with *Guru*, and named it *Guru Granth* for the *Bir*, sanctified as '*Guru*' by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708.
6. Then some devout Sikh scholars started adding prefixes and suffixes in the title of the '*Granth*' as follows:
 - a. *Guru Granth*
 - b. *Guru Granth Sahib*,
 - c. *Sri Guru Granth*,
 - d. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*,
 - e. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*,
 - f. *Aad Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji* (This title has been used for the last 48 years for all the *Granth* printed by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar,
 - g. The Institute for Understanding Sikhism has adopted the title '*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*' by dropping '*Sri*' and '*Ji*' from the title used by the SGPC. This title has been used in papers published in a journal, *UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM—The Research Journal*, for the last 25 years.

When I used '*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*' in my messages for the Sikh Diaspora (SD) Discussion Group, there was a great hue and cry from some members against the use of '*Aad*.' The irony is that none of the critics even cared to investigate the title of the Holy *Granth* published by the SGPC, Amritsar, before criticizing me. The inquiry has confirmed that the SGPC has been using the title '*AAD SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI*' since 1976. **Interestingly, none of these critics have criticized the SGPC against the use of '*Aad*' in the title of the Holy *Granth* during the last 48 years.** However, I found that Dr IJ Singh [Sikh Diaspora Discussion Group] has criticized the SGPC for using this title, saying that it is imprecise and misleading:

*"The volume compiled by Guru Arjan may be called the first **resension***, or Aad(i) Granth or the Pothee Sahib, and some few people do so. (To me, the word **Aad(i)** literally means the first.) Most Sikhs do not distinguish this volume from the definitive Guru Granth that came later. I think the distinction is important because the two versions are not identical; the Guru Granth has significant additional entries, specifically the writings of Guru Tegh Bahadur. I think my argument would carry weight even if there were minimal difference between the two. This does not mean that Sikhs should have less reverence for one than the other. Keep in mind that better than 90 percent of the Guru Granth is in the Aad(i) Granth. I know that the Guru Granth published by the Shiromini Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) carries this moniker, and I would argue that it is imprecise and even misleading to use the term "Aad(i) Granth" for the Guru Granth Sahib. Why? Because this implies a second revision, yet to come. Even to think of a second revised version of the Guru Granth would indeed be heresy."*

The meaning of ਆਦਿ (*Aad*) as “first and foremost” is the most appropriate prefix for the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs. It remains “Aad” (first and foremost) Granth even after the addition of 116 Bani of Guru Teg Bahadur in 1705 or even after the declaration of the Granth as ‘Guru’ by Guru Gobind Singh.

Reasons for dropping ‘Sri’ and ‘Ji’ from the SGPC’s Title. ‘Sri’ has been dropped from the title because it is redundant to use it after ‘Aad.’ Sikh theologians and Sikh scholars are so much under the influence of ancient Indian philosophy and *Bipreets* (ਬਿਪਰੀਤ—customs contrary to Nanakian philosophy) that they can't see beyond it. Bhai Kahn Singh (1981) has reported that ‘Sri’ is a sect of Vaishnavism in which the main deity of worship is Lakshmi. Swami Ramanuj was the preacher of this sect. Most probably, the adjective ‘Sri’ has been added before almost everything connected with the Sikhs and their Gurus, either innocently by the Sikh scholars under the influence of Vaishnavism or intentionally by the *Biprans* with certain objectives. Accordingly, if we want to pay the highest respect to the Granth, then we must use ‘Sri’ at least 108 times.

It appears that the influence of Vaishnavism and *Biprans* is still so strong that some contemporary scholars and theologians are still popularizing ‘Sri’ by eliminating the important adjective, ‘Aad’:

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Darpan by Prof. S. Singh (1972),

Sri Guru Granth Sahib (English Version) by Dr. G. Singh (1987),

Sri Guru Granth Sahib (English version) by Dr. Talib (1988),

Sri Guru Granth Sahib (English & Punjabi Translation) by M. Singh (1962), etc.

Similarly, the *Granth* published by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar, has also added ‘Sri’ before Guru in its title as *Aad Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*; however, credit goes to the SGPC for retaining the ‘Aad’ in the title.

On the other hand, it is encouraging to note a trend to eliminate the use of ‘Sri’ since the adjective ‘Sri’ used with Guru is inappropriate as it is a very commonly used title to address even a common man in India as ‘Mr.’ is used in the Western world. It is unfortunate that they have also eliminated ‘Aad,’ the most important and appropriate title for the Holy Granth. For example,

Mehboob (1988) used the title ‘*Guru Granth Sahib*’ without ‘Sri’ throughout his book *Sehjae Rachio Khalsa*. Kohli (1991) did not use ‘Sri’ in the title of his book, *Sikhism and Guru Granth Sahib*. Taran Singh (n.d.) did not use ‘Sri’ for the title of his book, *Guru Granth Ratnavali*, published by the Punjabi University, Patiala. Although G. Singh (1987) used ‘Sri’ for the title of his four volumes of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*; he used *Guru Granth Sahib* without ‘Sri’ at the bottom of every alternate page in all four volumes. It is a good trend that ‘Sri’ has already been accepted as a redundant adjective and has been dropped by some scholars.

Therefore, considering the above discussion, the adjective ‘Sri’ after ‘Aad’ in the title is redundant because of the above facts. Similarly, the suffix ‘Ji’ added by the SGPC at the end of the title is redundant since ‘Sahib’ has already been used as a suffix.

The suffix ‘Sahib’ is more important than ‘Ji’ because it has been used to address God in the *Gurbani* as reported by Bhai Kahn Singh (1981): ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿਉ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਦੇ ਸਾਚੁ ਅਧਾਰੁ ॥੨॥ Asa M 1; ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੇਤੀ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਕਹੀ ਬਣੈ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥ Asa M 2. Dr I J Singh [Personal communication] suggested the following: ‘Sahib’ is an honorific title based on Indian culture and could be translated as ‘Sir’ or ‘Exalted’ depending upon usage, much as ‘Sri’ stands loosely for Mr. I agree with you that ‘Sri’ has no place in the title of *Guru Granth* but nor does ‘Sahib’. Nevertheless, ‘Sahib’ has been retained in the title by the SGPC as well as by me, not because it means ‘Sir,’ but as a metaphoric word for the God in the *Gurbani* as ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੈ ਹੈ ॥ (AGGS, M 1, p 350) and as reported above by Bhai Kahn Singh (1981).

It is also apparent from Part III that Guru Gobind Singh, in his commandments in *Bansavalinama*, did not use ‘Sri’ before ‘Guru’ or ‘Granth’; however, he used ‘Sahib’ as a suffix for the ‘Granth.’ Therefore, the standardized title, AAD GURU GRANTH SHAIB, is almost the same as (AAD SRI GURU GRANTH SHAIB Ji) which has been used for

all the *Birs* published by the SGPC, Amritsar, and by all other publishers for the last 48 years except that 'SRI' and 'JI,' being redundant, have been dropped from the title. Therefore, it is suggested that the SGPC modify the title to 'Aad Guru Granth Sahib' in future Granth publications so that scholars consistently use its right title. It should be abbreviated as AGGS.

CONCLUSIONS. The Sikh and non-Sikh writers are not unanimous on any standardized title of the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs. *Baba* and *Guru Baba* were originally used for the *pothi* compiled by Guru Arjun in 1604. Later Prof. Sahib Singh addressed the Granth as the *Aad Granth* (spelled as *Adi Granth* by Western Scholars). After that *Guru Granth*, *Guru Granth Sahib*, *Sri Guru Granth*, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, and *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji* became popular. A title, *Aad Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, for the Sikh Scripture has been used for the Granth printed by the Shiromani Committee, Amritsar, for the last 48 years. However, 'Sri' before 'Guru' and 'Ji' after 'Sahib' are redundant.

Therefore, the most appropriate and standardized title for the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs is '*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*,' abbreviated as AGGS. '*Aad*' means 'first and foremost,' and '*Guru*' means that which removes ignorance and enlightens, as explained in Parts I and III.

The Aad Guru Granth means 'The First and the Foremost Granth,' which removes ignorance and enlightens. Granth is Guru, ipso facto, the 'Sabd Guru' sits in it.

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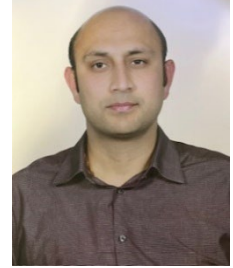
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Guru Amar Das J's Spiritual Messages Based On The Days Of The Week

Harmanpreet Singh Minhas

hpsminhas@outlook.com



ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ਵਾਰ ਸਤ ਘਰੁ ੧੦ ॥ ੧ੳ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਆਦਿਤ ਵਾਰਿ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੈ ਸੇਈ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਵਰਤੈ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਜਗੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਪਰੋਈ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੈ ਸੁ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਬੁਝੈ ਕੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਜਪਨੀ ਜਪਉ ਗੁਣਤਾਸਾ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਜਨ ਪਗਿ ਲਗਿ ਧਿਆਵਉ ਹੋਇ ਦਾਸਨਿ ਦਾਸਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਸੋਮਵਾਰਿ ਸਚਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਆਖਿ ਆਖਿ ਰਹੇ ਸਭਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਦੇਵੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਪਲੈ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਲਖਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੨॥ ਮੰਗਲਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਸਿਰਿ ਧੰਧੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਬੁਝਾਏ ਸੇਈ ਬੁਝੈ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਸੁਝੈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਮਤਾ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਲਾਇ ॥੩॥ ਬੁਧਵਾਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਬੁਧਿ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਮਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਲੁ ਖੋਇ ॥ ਦਰਿ ਸਚੈ ਸਦ ਸੇਭਾ ਪਾਏ ॥ ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਹਾਏ ॥੪॥ ਲਾਹਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਏ ਗੁਰ ਦੁਆਰਿ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਦੇਵੈ ਦੇਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਜੇ ਦੇਵੈ ਤਿਸ ਕਉ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਈਐ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਈਐ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਖਹੁ ਉਰ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਦੇਵਣਹਾਰੇ ਕਉ ਜੈਕਾਰੁ ॥੫॥ ਵੀਰਵਾਰਿ ਵੀਰ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਏ ॥ ਪ੍ਰੇਤ ਭੂਤ ਸਭਿ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਾਏ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਏ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਵੇਕਾ ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਰਤੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਟੇਕਾ ॥ ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਰਣਾਈ ॥ ਸੇ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਲੈਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਈ ॥੬॥ ਸ਼ੁਕਰਵਾਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਭ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੁ ਕਰੈ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਚੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਹੈ ਕਾਰ ॥ ਵਰਤੁ ਨੇਮੁ ਨਿਤਾਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਪੂਜਾ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਬੁਝੈ ਸਭੁ ਭਾਉ ਹੈ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੭॥ ਛਨਿਛਰਵਾਰਿ ਸਉਣ ਸਾਸਤ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਭਰਮੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਅੰਧਾ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ॥ ਜਮ ਦਰਿ ਬਾਧਾ ਚੋਟਾ ਖਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ ॥ ਸਚੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ॥੮॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਸੇ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰਿ ਸਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ ॥ ਤੇਰੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਾਤੇ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ ॥ ਤੂ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਲੈਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥ ਏਕਸ ਤੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੁਝੈ ਸੇਝੀ ਹੋਇ ॥੯॥ ਪੰਦ੍ਰਹ ਬਿਤੀ. ਤੈ ਸਤ ਵਾਰ ॥ ਮਾਹਾ ਰੁਤੀ ਆਵਹਿ ਵਾਰ ਵਾਰ ॥ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰੈਣਿ ਤਿਵੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਆਵਾ ਗਉਣੁ ਕੀਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ ॥ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਕਲ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੁਝੈ ਕੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥੧੦॥੧॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 841}

aadhrit vaar aadh purakh hai soiee || aape varatai avar na koiee || ot pot jag rahiaa paroiee || aape karataa karai su hoiee || naam rate sadhaa sukh hoiee || gurmukh viralaa boojhai koiee ||1|| hiradhahi japanee japau gunataasaa || har agam agochar apara(n)par suaamee jan pag lag dhiaavau hoi dhaasan dhaasaa ||1|| rahaau || somavaar sach rahiaa samai || tis kee keemat kahee na jai || aakh aakh rahe sabh liv lai || jis dhevai tis palai pai || agam agochar lakhiaa na jai || gur kai sabadh har rahiaa samai ||2|| ma(n)gal maiaa moh upaiaa || aape sir sir dha(n)dhai laiaa || aap bujhaae soiee boojhai || gur kai sabadh dhar ghar soojhai || prem bhagat kare liv lai || haumai mamataa sabadh jalai ||3|| budhavaar aape budh saar || gurmukh karanee sabadh veechaar || naam rate man niramal hoi || har gun gaavai haumai mal khoi || dhar sachai sadh sobhaa paae || naam rate gur sabadh suhaae ||4|| laahaa naam paae gur dhuaar || aape dhevai dhevanahaar || jo dhevai tis kau bal jaieeai || gur parasaadhee aap gavaieeai || naanak naam rakhahu ur dhaar || dhevanahaare kau jaikaar ||5|| veeravaar veer bharam bhulaae || pret bhoot sabh dhoojai laae || aap upaae kar vekhai vekaa || sabhanaa karate teree Tekaa || jee ja(n)t teree saranaiee || so milai jis laih milaiee ||6|| sukaravaar prabh rahiaa samaiee || aap upai sabh keemat paiee || gurmukh hovai su karai beechaar || sach sa(n)jam karanee hai kaar || varat nem nitaaprat poojaa || bin boojhe sabh bhaau hai dhoojaa ||7|| chhanichharavaar saun saasat beechaar || haumai meraa bharamai sa(n)saar || manmukh a(n)dhaa dhoojai bhai || jam dhar baadhaa choTaa khai || gur parasaadhee sadhaa sukh paae || sach karanee saach liv laae ||8|| satigur seveh se vaddabhaagee || haumai maar sach liv laagee || terai ra(n)g raate sahaj subhai || too sukhadhaataa laih milai || ekas te dhoojaa naahee koi || gurmukh boojhai sojhee hoi ||9|| pa(n)dhreh thita(n)ee tai sat vaar || maahaa rutee aaveh vaar vaar || dhinas rain tivai sa(n)saar || aavaa gaun keea karataar || nihachal saach rahiaa kal dhaar || naanak gurmukh boojhai ko sabadh veechaar ||10||1||

**ਹਿਰਦੈ ਜਪਨੀ ਜਪਉ ਗੁਣਤਾਸਾ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਪਰੰਪਰ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਜਨ ਪਗਿ ਲਗਿ ਧਿਆਵਉ ਹੋਇ ਦਾਸਨਿ ਦਾਸਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥**

hiradhai japanee japau gunataasaa ||

har agam agochar apara(n)par suaamee jan pag lag dhiaavau hoi dhaasan dhaasaa ||1|| rahaau ||

The word “Rahao” (ਰਹਾਉ) in Gurmukhi holds a beautiful essence—it means “pause and reflect.” Derived from “Raha,” which signifies “to cause to remain, fix, support, restrain,” Rahao appears frequently in almost every Shabad within the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. But what does this pause signify?

Central Theme: The line containing Rahao holds the central idea of the entire Shabad. When we encounter Rahao, the Guru instructs us to pause, contemplate the preceding line (Tuk), and allow its message to sink in. This line captures the overarching topic discussed in the Shabad, conveying the Gurmat Vichar—the “right thought” or divine wisdom. Therefore, the seekers are encouraged to pause and deeply reflect on this message, multiple times throughout the Shabad.

Exploration and Elaboration: The subsequent lines (the non-Rahao lines) serve to explain or further extrapolate on the central theme given in the Rahao line. They discuss prevalent practices, arguments, reasoning, intentions, and more. Think of them as illustrations or examples that strengthen or clarify the core message contained within the Rahao line.

Title of the Shabad: Since the label on the top of the Shabad is reserved for the musical composition and the writer of the Shabad, the Rahao is the title of the Shabad.

To be repeated multiple times when singing the Shabad: When doing Kirtan, the Rahao line must be sung first, followed by the first line of the Shabad. Followed by the Rahao line and the second line, Rahao line and third line and so on.

The label of this bani is ਵਾਰ ਸੌਤ (The Seven Days). Guru Ji shares spiritual messages with us each day of the week, each tailored to that specific day. He teaches us that God is an infinite treasure of virtues (gunataasaa). To connect with Him, we must recognize and realize Him within ourselves (our mind, hiradhai japanee japau). Since God embodies limitless virtues, we must embrace and incorporate these divine virtues into our lives to truly connect with and realize God from within. Guru Ji describes God as physically unreachable and beyond the grasp of our senses (har agam agochar apara(n)par suaamee). We can connect with God by following the teachings of those who are spiritually connected to Him, such as the contributors to the SGGS (jan pag lag dhiaavau). This connection is best approached with humility and modesty (hoi dhaasan dhaasaa).

ਆਦਿਤ ਵਾਰਿ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੈ ਸੋਈ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਵਰਤੈ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਜਗੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਪਰੋਈ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੈ ਸੁ ਹੋਈ ॥

ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਬੁਝੈ ਕੋਈ ॥੧॥

aadhrit vaar aadh purakh hai soiee || aape varatai avar na koiee ||

ot pot jag rahiaa paroiee || aape karataa karai su hoiee ||

naam rate sadhaa sukh hoiee || gurmukh viralaa boojhai koiee ||1||

For Sunday (aadhrit vaar), Guru Ji reminds us that God, who embodies limitless virtues, has been with us since the beginning and will continue to accompany us throughout our lives (aadh purakh hai soiee). Our existence and the systems that sustain it are manifestations of God alone (aape varatai avar na koiee). The rules, laws, and will of God permeate all of creation (ot pot jag rahiaa paroiee, aape karataa karai su hoiee). By embracing and incorporating divine virtues into our lives, we can connect with and realize God, leading to a happy life (naam rate sadhaa sukh hoiee). However, such connection and realization are rare, as many of us remain disconnected from God due to our materialistic goals. Rare are the individuals who embrace the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (i.e. SGGS) the ones who achieve the goal of internal connection and realization with God (gurmukh viralaa boojhai koiee).

The takeaway from the Sunday message is that God is with us for our entire existence. Everything within and around us is a manifestation of God. To find happiness in our lives, we need to connect with and realize God by embracing the messages, wisdom, and guidelines provided by our Gurus.

**ਸੋਮਵਾਰਿ ਸਚਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਆਖਿ ਆਖਿ ਰਹੇ ਸਭਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਦੇਵੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਪਲੈ ਪਾਇ ॥
ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਲਖਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੨॥**
somavaar sach rahiaa samai || tis kee keemat kahee na jai ||
aakh aakh rahe sabh liv lai || jis dhevai tis palai pai ||
agam agochar lakhiaa na jai || gur kai sabadh har rahiaa samai ||2||

For Monday (Somavaar), Guru Ji reminds us that God, who embodies limitless virtues, has been with us since the beginning and will continue to accompany us throughout our lives (sach rahiaa samai). Understanding God's rules, laws, and will is beyond human comprehension, no matter how dedicated our efforts are (tis kee keemat kahee na jai, agam agochar lakhiaa na jai). By embracing and internalizing the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS), we can achieve an internal connection and realization with God (gur kai sabadh har rahiaa samai). Those who grasp this simple message can be considered as blessed and they find spiritual success in life (jis dhevai tis palai pai).

The takeaway from the Monday message is that God is with us for our entire existence. Understanding God's rules, laws, and will is beyond human comprehension. Yet, we must live within the will of God. To find spiritual fulfillment in our lives, we need to connect with and realize God by embracing the messages, wisdom, and guidelines provided by our Gurus.

**ਮੰਗਲਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਸਿਰਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਧੰਧੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਆਪਿ ਬੁਝਾਏ ਸੋਈ ਬੁਝੈ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਸੁਝੈ ॥
ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਮਤਾ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਲਾਇ ॥੩॥**
ma(n)gal maiaa moh upaiaa || aape sir sir dha(n)dhai laiaa ||
aap bujhaae soiee boojhai || gur kai sabadh dhar ghar soojhai ||
prem bhagat kare liv lai || haumai mamataa sabadh jalai ||3||

For Tuesday (Ma(n)gal), Guru Ji reminds us that our attachment to material things (ma(n)gal maiaa moh upaiaa) distracts us from internalizing Godly virtues. This prevents us from connecting with or realizing God. While many of our daily activities are necessary for survival, the love of materialism often overshadows our love for God (aape sir dha(n)dhai laiaa).

To connect with and realize God, we must make a conscious effort to learn about Him (aap bujhaae soiee boojhai). This learning happens through embracing the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS) with complete dedication and unconditional love (gur kai sabadh dhar ghar soojhai). As we internalize this wisdom, we eliminate barriers such as ego and excessive attachment to material things, allowing us to connect with God (haumai mamataa sabadh jalai).

The takeaway from the Tuesday message is that attachment to material things hinders us from internalizing Godly virtues and realizing God. We need to make a conscious effort to shift our focus from materialism, overcome ego, and embrace humility. The Shabad Guru (SGGS) provides guidelines to help initiate this transition.

ਬੁਧਵਾਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਬੁਧਿ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਮਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਲੁ ਖੋਇ ॥
ਦਰਿ ਸਚੈ ਸਦ ਸੋਭਾ ਪਾਏ ॥ ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਹਾਏ ॥੪॥

budhavaar aape budh saar || gurmukh karanee sabadh veechaar ||
naam rate man niramal hoi || har gun gaavai haumai mal khoi ||
dhar sachai sadh sobhaa paae || naam rate gur sabadh suhaae ||4||

For Wednesday (Budhavaar), Guru Ji reminds us that self-effort is essential to correct our thinking process (aape budh saar). By analyzing and adopting the messages within the Shabad Guru, we can transform our mindset from unvirtuous to virtuous (gurmukh karanee sabadh veechaar). Internalizing and living life abiding by the divine principles purifies our mind (naam rate man niramal hoi). As we inculcate Godly virtues, vices like ego are eliminated from our mind and from our life (har gun gaavai haumai mal khoi). When our mind is filled with these divine virtues (naam rate), Guru Ji says we will be able to hold our head high in a spiritual context (dhar sachai sadh sobhaa paae, gur sabadh suhaae).

The takeaway from the Wednesday message is that self-effort is crucial to transform our thinking from unvirtuous to virtuous. No miracle or blessing will make this transition for us. The Shabad Guru (SGGS) offers guidelines to help initiate this change. Once we make this transition, we can live our lives with our heads held high in a spiritual context, keeping our minds and consciences untainted throughout our lives.

ਲਾਹਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਏ ਗੁਰ ਦੁਆਰਿ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਦੇਵੈ ਦੇਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥
ਜੇ ਦੇਵੈ ਤਿਸ ਕਉ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਈਐ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਈਐ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਖਹੁ ਉਰ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਦੇਵਣਹਾਰੇ ਕਉ ਜੈਕਾਰੁ ॥੫॥

laahaa naam paae gur dhuaar || aape dhevai dhevanahaar ||
jo dhevai tis kau bal jaieeaaai || gur parasaadhee aap gavaieeaaai ||
naanak naam rakhahu ur dhaar || dhevanahaare kau jaikaar ||5||

This verse does not reference any specific weekday, making its spiritual messages applicable every day. Guru Ji highlights the significant benefits of embracing the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS) (laahaa naam paae gur dhuaar). One benefit is understanding that everything we possess, including our life and all life-sustaining systems, is given to us by God (aape dhevai dhevanahaar). No other person or entity can provide these things. We should always be thankful to God for providing for us throughout our lives (jo dhevai tis kau bal jaieeaaai). Another benefit of embracing the Shabad Guru's wisdom is that we lose our ego and gain humility (|| gur parasaadhee aap gavaieeaaai). We uphold godly virtues and never compromise on them (naanak naam rakhahu ur dhaar). We must always be grateful to God, the source of divine virtues and all life-sustaining systems (dhevanahaare kau jaikaar).

ਵੀਰਵਾਰਿ ਵੀਰ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਏ ॥ ਪ੍ਰੇਤ ਭੂਤ ਸਭਿ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਏ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਵੇਕਾ ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਰਤੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਟੇਕਾ ॥
ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਰਣਾਈ ॥ ਸੇ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਲੈਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਈ ॥੬॥

veeravaar veer bharam bhulaae || pret bhoot sabh dhoojai laae ||
aap upaae kar vekhai vekaa || sabhanaa karate teree Tekaa || j
eea ja(n)t teree saranaiee || so milai jis laih milaiee ||6||

For Thursday (Veeravaar), Guru Ji reminds us that realizing God through internalizing divine virtues brings clarity of mind (veeravaar veer bharam bhulaae). Our minds, once filled with clergy-concocted narratives, fears, and rules, become purified (pret bhoot sabh dhoojai laae). We come to understand that God is the sole source of

life and all life-sustaining systems (aap upaae kar vekhai vekaa). The universal life energy within every human being originates from God (sabhanaa karate teree Tekaa, jee ja(n)t teree saranaiee). This transition to a clear mindset involves erasing previous tainted beliefs and habits and adopting new ones based on the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS) (so milai jis laih milaiee).

The takeaway from the Thursday message is that internalizing divine virtues to realize God brings clarity of mind. This clarity dispels fictitious narratives about God. It leads to the understanding that God is the sole source of all life and life-sustaining systems.

**ਸੁਕ੍ਰਵਾਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਸਭ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੁ ਕਰੈ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਚੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਹੈ ਕਾਰ ॥
ਵਰਤੁ ਨੇਮੁ ਨਿਤਾਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਪੂਜਾ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਬੁਝੈ ਸਭੁ ਭਾਉ ਹੈ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੭॥**

sukaravaar prabh rahiaa samaiee || aap upai sabh keemat paiee ||
gurmukh hovai su karai beehaar || sach sa(n)jam karanee hai kaar ||
varat nem nitaaprat poojaa || bin boojhe sabh bhaau hai dhoojaa ||7||

For Friday (Sukaravaar), Guru Ji reminds us that God permeates all of creation (prabh rahiaa samaiee). He is the creator, maintainer, and operator of life and life-sustaining systems (aap upai sabh). God decides and provides the powers, skills, and forms that aid different life forms throughout their lifetimes (aap upai sabh keemat paiee). We must align ourselves with the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS) and delve into the deep spiritual messages within Gurbani, not just the surface level (gurmukh hovai su karai beehaar).

One key message is to live truthfully and exercise restraint, avoiding overindulgence (sach sa(n)jam karanee hai kaar). Another important message is that rituals like fasting and specific prayers on certain days to impress God are misguided (varat nem nitaaprat poojaa). God is not impressed by these acts unless they lead to realization of God through internal mind transformation (bin boojhe sabh bhaau hai dhoojaa).

The takeaway from the Friday message is that God permeates all of creation as the creator, maintainer, and operator of life and life-sustaining systems. We should not focus on misguided clergy-concocted acts like fasting and reciting prayers to impress God. Instead, we must shift our mindset to embrace virtues. This will help us establish an internal connection and realization of God.

**ਛਨਿਛਰਵਾਰਿ ਸਉਣ ਸਾਸਤ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਭਰਮੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥
ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਅੰਧਾ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ॥ ਜਮ ਦਰਿ ਬਾਧਾ ਚੇਟਾ ਖਾਇ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ ॥ ਸਚੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ॥੮॥**

chhanichharavaar saun saasat beehaar || haumai meraa bharamai sa(n)saar ||
manmukh a(n)dhaa dhoojai bhai || jam dhar baadhaa choTaa khai ||
gur parasaadhee sadhaa sukh paae || sach karanee saach liv laae ||8||

For Saturday (chhanichharavaar), Guru Ji reminds us that there is no need to engage with religious texts that do not help us connect with or realize God (chhanichharavaar saun saasat beehaar). Such texts can lead us away from God, further contaminating our mindset with ego and other unvirtuous traits (haumai meraa bharamai sa(n)saar). Guru Ji refers to a person with an unvirtuous mindset as blind because this mindset distances them from God, trapping them in a perpetual cycle of spiritual life and death (manmukh a(n)dhaa dhoojai bhai, jam dhar baadhaa choTaa khai). Conversely, a person who embraces the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS) with complete dedication and unconditional love lives a life full of happiness and tranquility (gur parasaadhee sadhaa sukh paae). Their virtuous actions lead them to connect with and realize God within (sach karanee saach liv laae).

The takeaway from the Saturday message is to avoid religious texts that promote illogical practices, as they do not encourage virtuous living and can further taint our mindset. Instead, the Shabad Guru (SGGS) provides guidelines that foster virtuousness in our lives and help us connect with and realize God.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਸੇ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰਿ ਸਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ ॥
 ਤੇਰੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਾਤੇ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ ॥ ਤੂ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਲੈਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥
 ਏਕਸ ਤੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੂਝੈ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਇ ॥੯॥

satigur seveh se vaddabhaagee || haumai maar sach liv laagee ||
 terai ra(n)g raate sahaj subhai || too sukhadhaataa laih milai ||
 ekas te dhoojaa naahee koi || gurmukh boojhai sojhee hoi ||9||

In this verse, Guru Ji considers those who live their lives based on the wisdom of the Shabad Guru (SGGS) to be truly fortunate (satigur seveh se vaddabhaagee). These individuals seek guidance from the Shabad Guru (SGGS), transforming their tainted mindsets and enabling them to connect with and realize God (haumai maar sach liv laagee). Their new mindset keeps them imbued with love for the one God who is the source of all happiness within our life (too sukhadhaataa laih milai), maintaining a constant state of divine connection and realization (terai ra(n)g raate sahaj subhai). They understand that there is only one God, who incomparable in any context to anyone (ekas te dhoojaa naahee koi). This profound realization comes from embracing the Shabad Guru and living according to the wisdom imparted by those who have themselves connected with and realized God (gurmukh boojhai sojhee hoi).

ਪੰਦ੍ਰਹ ਥਿਤੀ ਤੈ ਸਤ ਵਾਰ ॥ ਮਾਹਾ ਰੁਤੀ ਆਵਹਿ ਵਾਰ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰੈਣਿ ਤਿਵੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਆਵਾ ਗਉਣੁ ਕੀਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ ॥
 ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਕਲ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੂਝੈ ਕੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥੧੦॥੧॥

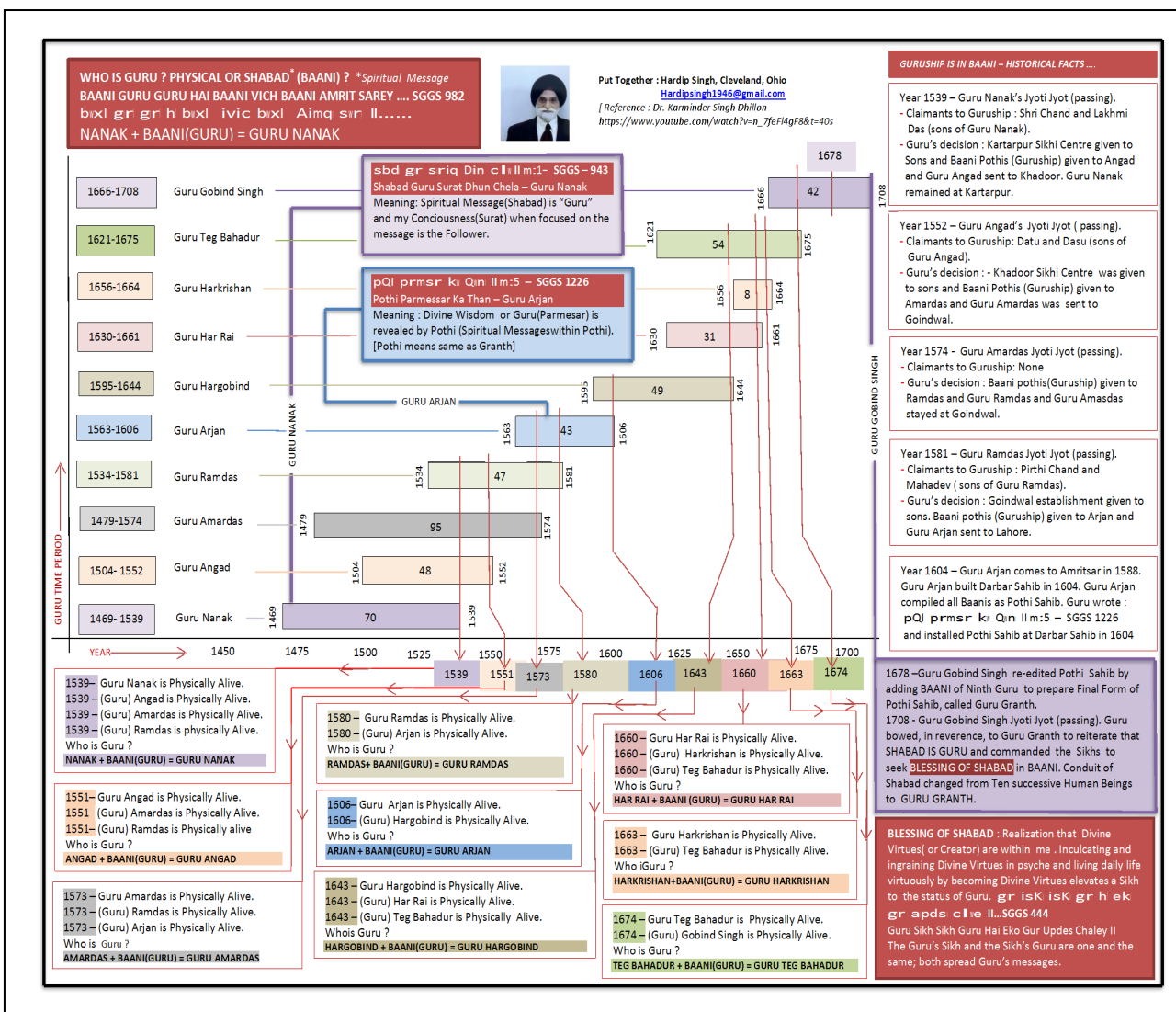
pa(n)dhreh thita(n)ee tai sat vaar || maahaa rutee aaveh vaar vaar ||
 dhinas rain tivai sa(n)saar || aavaa gaun keeaa karataar ||
 nihachal saach rahiaa kal dhaar || naanak gurmukh boojhai ko sabadh veechaar ||10||1||

In this verse, Guru Ji discusses various ways to measure time, starting with the fifteen phases of the moon in a month (pa(n)dhreh thita(n)ee). He also mentions the seven days of the week (tai sat vaar), the recurring (aaveh vaar vaar) months (maahaa) and seasons (rutee), and the cycle of days and nights (dhinas rain). Just as these cycles come and go, so do various life forms (tivai sa(n)saar). The originator, destroyer and sustainer of universal life energy is one God, who provides the energy that keeps creation going (aavaa gaun keeaa karataar, nihachal saach rahiaa kal dhaar). Guru Ji concludes the messages based on the days of the week, by saying that this realization is achieved through deep understanding and deep discourse of the spiritual messages contained within the Shabad Guru (SGGS, naanak gurmukh boojhai ko sabadh veechaar).

Summary of messages based on days of the week.

1. The Sunday message teaches us that God is always with us, and everything around us is a manifestation of Him; to find happiness, we must connect with and realize God by embracing our Gurus' wisdom and guidance.
2. The Monday message teaches that God is with us for our entire existence, and while His will is beyond human comprehension, we must live within it to find spiritual fulfillment by embracing the wisdom and guidelines provided by our Gurus.

- The Tuesday message teaches that attachment to material things hinders us from internalizing Godly virtues and realizing God, so we must consciously shift our focus from materialism, overcome ego, and embrace humility, with guidance from the Shabad Guru (SGGS).
- The Wednesday message emphasizes that self-effort is essential to transform our thinking from unvirtuous to virtuous, with the Shabad Guru (SGGS) providing guidelines for this change, allowing us to live spiritually untainted lives.
- The Thursday message teaches that internalizing divine virtues to realize God brings clarity of mind, dispelling fictitious narratives and revealing God as the sole source of all life and life-sustaining systems and energy.
- The Friday message teaches that God permeates all of creation as the creator, maintainer, and operator of life, and we should focus on embracing virtues rather than misguided rituals to establish an internal connection with and realization of God.
- The Saturday message advises avoiding religious texts that promote illogical practices, as they do not encourage virtuous living; instead, the Shabad Guru (SGGS) offers guidelines that foster virtues and help us connect with and realize God.



ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡ

ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਉਂ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ?

ਮਨਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਨੇਡਾ

terahukum@gmail.com



ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਬੜਾ ਹੀ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ - ਵਿਸਮਾਦ, ਜੋ ਸਾਡੀ ਬੋਲ ਚਾਲ ਦੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਸਦੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਗਾਇਬ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਉਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਖੇਡ, ਉਸ ਦੀ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ, ਉਸ ਦੇ ਅੰਤਹੀਣ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ, ਉਸਦੇ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਆਪਣਾ ਮਨ, ਉਸ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ, ਅਚੰਬੇ ਅਤੇ ਖੇੜੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਰਾਬੋਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇ।

ਮਨ ਦਾ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਨਾਲ ਭਰ ਜਾਣਾ, ਉਸ ਕਰਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਨਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਦਾ ਪਾਤਰ ਬਣਨਾ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਉਹ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਦਕਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਮੁਸ਼ੱਕਤ ਮੰਗਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਕੀ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ 'ਆਸਾ ਦੀ ਵਾਰ' ਵਿਚਲੇ ਇੱਕ ਸਲੋਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਫ਼ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ ਨੰਬਰ 463-464 ਉੱਤੇ ਦਰਜ ਹੈ।

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਃ ੧ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਦ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਵੇਦ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਜੀਅ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੇਦ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰੰਗ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਗੇ ਫਿਰਹਿ ਜੰਤ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਪਉਣੁ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਪਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਅਗਨੀ ਖੇਡਹਿ ਵਿਡਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਧਰਤੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਖਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਦਿ ਲਗਹਿ ਪਰਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਵਿਜੋਗੁ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੁਖ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੋਗੁ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਲਾਹ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਉਝੜ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰਾਹ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨੇੜੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੂਰਿ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੇਖੈ ਹਾਜਰਾ ਹਜੂਰਿ ॥ ਵੇਖਿ ਵਿਡਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਬੁਝਣੁ ਪੂਰੈ ਭਾਗਿ ॥੧॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 463-464}

ਅਰਥ: ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚਲੀਆਂ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਧੁਨੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚਲਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਮੇਰੇ ਲਈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਜੀਅ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਖੋ-ਵੱਖਰੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤੀ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਦਿੱਖ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ ਨੰਗੇ ਘੁੰਮਦੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ-ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੰਛੀ ਤੇ ਜਾਨਵਰ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਗੈਸਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਤਰਲ ਪਦਾਰਥ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਰਜਾ ਜੋ ਤੇਰੀ ਅਦਭੁਤ ਰਚਨਾ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਯੋਗਦਾਨ ਪਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਨਾਲ ਭਰ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਧਰਤੀ, ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ, ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਵੱਖੋ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਢੰਗ। ਮੇਰੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਕਿ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਸਵਾਦ (ਰੁਚੀਆਂ) ਜੋ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੋਹ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਨੇ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਇਨਸਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਿਲਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਛੜਨਾ। ਇਹ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਇਨਸਾਨੀ ਇੱਛਾਵਾਂ ਜਨਮ ਲੈਂਦੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਅਤੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਭੋਗ ਵੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਹੈ ਤੇਰੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ, ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਗੁਣਗਾਣ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਕਿ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਕਈ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਟੁੱਟੇ ਭਟਕ ਰਹੇ ਨੇ ਤੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ ਤੇਰੇ ਰਾਹ 'ਤੇ ਚੱਲਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਣਾ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਜੋ ਨੇੜੇ ਤੇਰੇ, ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਜੋ ਦੂਰ। ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਨਾ। ਆਪਣੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਇਹ ਖੇਡ ਵਾਪਰਦੀ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ। ਨਾਨਕ, ਤੇਰੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਮੈਂ ਇਹ ਖੇਡ ਖੁੱਲੀ।

ਮੇਰੇ ਲਈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਬੜਾ ਦਿਲਚਸਪ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਪਹਿਲਾ, ਉਹ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਖੇਡ ਹੈ ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਦੇ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੇ ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ। ਇਹ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਬੇਹੱਦ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜਾ, ਉਹ ਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ, ਉਹ ਅਉਗਣ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੁੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ, ਪਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਡੂੰਘਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਬਣਾਈ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ।

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੁਕਤਿਆਂ ਉਪਰ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਲੇਖ ਅਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੁਕਤਿਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਮਝ ਡੂੰਘੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਲੇਖ ਲਿਖ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ।

ਨੁਕਤਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ: ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਨੇ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਹਰ ਰੋਜ਼ ਹੀ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਬਚਪਨ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ ਪਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ। ਮੰਨਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬਹੁਤਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਮਾਲਿਕ ਦੀ ਧੁਰ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਕਦੇ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ, ਉਸ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ-ਨਾਜ਼ਰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ, ਆਪਣੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਸ

ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਵੀ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ। ਪਰ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚਲੀਆਂ ਧੁਨੀਆਂ, ਇਸ ਧਰਤੀ ਉੱਪਰ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਜੀਵ-ਜੰਤੂ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਖੂਬਸੂਰਤੀ, ਹਵਾ-ਪਾਣੀ-ਅੱਗ ਨਾਲ ਪੂਰੀ ਉਮਰ ਵਾਅ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਢੰਗਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੁੱਖ 'ਚੋਂ, ਆਂਡੇ 'ਚੋਂ, ਧਰਤੀ 'ਚੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਪਸੀਨੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ। ਇਹ ਸਭ ਅਸੀਂ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਪਰ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਹੁੰਚਦੇ। ਉਸਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਸਭ ਵਰਤਾਰੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਇੱਕ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਖਦੇ, ਉਸਦੀ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ। ਇਕ ਬੀਜ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਦਰਖਤ ਬਣ ਜਾਣਾ, ਇੱਕ ਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੁੱਖ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਇਕ ਬੱਚੇ ਦਾ ਜਨਮ ਲੈਣਾ, ਸੂਰਜ ਦਾ ਚੜਨਾ ਤੇ ਛਿਪਣਾ, ਹਵਾ ਦਾ ਵਹਿਣਾ ਤੇ ਮੀਂਹ ਦਾ ਵਰਣਾ, ਉਸ ਇੱਕ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਚਮਤਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਜੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਹਰ ਰੋਜ਼ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਪਰ ਉਸ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਦੀ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ, ਇਸ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਛਾਣਦੇ।

ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਵੱਡੀ ਕਾਰ, ਵੱਡਾ ਘਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਿਕਲਦਾ ਪਰ ਜਿਸਦੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਰੀ ਉਮਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰੀ, ਜਿਸਦੇ ਬਣਾਏ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਟਿਕਾਇਆ, ਉਸ ਬੇਮਿਸਾਲ ਅਧੁਤ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਭੁੱਲ ਗਿਆ। ਅੱਖ ਦਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਵਧੀਆ operation ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਡਾਕਟਰ ਦੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਏ ਪਰ ਅੱਖ ਵਰਗਾ ਇੱਕ ਕਰਾਮਾਤੀ ਅੰਗ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਿਕ ਨਾਲ ਮੈਂ ਗਿਲੇ ਪਾਲੇ ਹੋਏ ਨੇ।

ਇੰਝ ਕਿਉਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਇਸਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਦੇਰ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਕਾਮਨਾਵਾਂ, ਗੁੱਸੇ, ਲਾਲਚ, ਮੋਹ ਅਤੇ ਹੰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੈ, ਓਹਨੀ ਦੇਰ ਹਰ ਪਾਸੇ ਰਮਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਵੀ ਦਿਖਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਨੁਕਤਾ ਦੂਜਾ: ਇਸ ਸਲੋਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਫੁਰਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਨੇ "ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਦਿ ਲਗਹਿ ਪਰਾਣੀ॥" ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਵੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਸਵਾਦ/ਚਸਕੇ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੋਹ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਨੇ। ਇਥੇ ਹੀ ਮਸਲਾ ਦਿਲਚਸਪ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਇੱਕ ਵੱਡਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੀ ਚਸਕੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵਿੱਥ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਵਾਪਰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੇਖ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਸਮਾਦਿਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਨੇ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਫੁਰਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ "ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਉਝੜ" "ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੂਰਿ" ਭਾਵ ਜੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਜੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਵੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਹਨ। ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਪਾਸੇ ਰੱਬ ਤੋਂ ਟੁਟੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਕੂੜ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਫੇਰ ਉਹ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਕਿਵੇਂ? ਜੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਉਹ ਠੀਕ ਪਰ ਜੇ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਕਿਵੇਂ?

ਕੁੱਝ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੇਰੀ ਦਿਲਚਸਪੀ ਬਣੀ; ਪੜਨਾ, ਵਿਚਾਰਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਮਕਸਦ ਸੀ ਮਨ ਦਾ ਟਿਕਾਅ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ। ਬਹੁਤ ਪੱਖਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਸਦਾ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਵੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਪਰ ਇੱਕ ਅਜੀਬ ਸਮੱਸਿਆ ਹੋਣ ਲੱਗ ਗਈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਹਨ੍ਹੇਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਚਾਨਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਉਣ ਨਾਲ ਦਿਖਣ ਤਾਂ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਲੱਗ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਨਾਲ ਉਹ ਸਭ ਵੀ ਦਿਖਣ ਲੱਗ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਦੇਖਣਯੋਗ ਨਹੀਂ, ਜੇ ਤਕਲੀਫ਼-ਦੇ ਹੈ। ਮਿਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਸਭ ਚੰਗਾ-ਚੰਗਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਹੁਣ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਅਸਹਿਜ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਉੱਪਰ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਮਨਮਤਾਵਾਂ ਦੇਖ, ਮਨ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜਾਕੇ ਉਦਾਸ ਹੋਇਆ। ਜਿਵੇਂ-ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨਾ/ਸਮਝਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਅਤੇ ਕਮਾਈ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਸਮਾਨਤਾ ਨਾ ਦੇਖ, ਮਨ ਬੇਚੈਨ ਹੋ ਉੱਠਿਆ। ਸੋਚਿਆ, ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵੱਲ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਹੋਣ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਇਸਦੇ ਉਲਟ। ਮੈਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਭਾਈ ਇੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਘੱਗਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਮਿਲਣ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਵਾਲ ਸੀ। ਜਵਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਇਹੀ ਆਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸਫ਼ਰ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਪੜਾਅ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਸਵਾਲ ਕਈ ਸਾਲ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਰਿਹਾ।

ਫੇਰ ਅਚਾਨਕ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ 'ਆਸਾ ਦੀ ਵਾਰ' ਵਿੱਚ ਦਰਜ ਇਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਇਸ ਮੁੱਦੇ ਵੱਲ ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰ ਫੇਰ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਲੱਗਾ ਕਿ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਤਾਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਹੱਲ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਨੇ। ਨਾਨਕ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਐਸੀ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਦੀ ਚਰਚਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਉਲਟ ਪ੍ਰਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਇੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਦੀਆਂ ਨੇ। ਮਿਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਅੱਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਪੱਧਰ ਕੁੱਝ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕਰਮਕਾਂਡ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਚਰਮ 'ਤੇ ਸੀ। ਜੇ ਉਹ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਦੇਖ-ਦੇਖ ਖਿੜਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਸਕਦੇ। ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਐਨੀ ਤੜਪ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਓਹਨਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਹਨ੍ਹੇਰੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਕੱਢਣ ਲਈ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਮੀਲ ਦੀ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਕੀਤੀ। ਬਿਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਦੇ ਲੁਕਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਦੁੱਖਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਕੱਢਣ ਲਈ ਖੁਦ ਘਾਲਣਾ ਘਾਲੀ ਪਰ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਇਸਦੇ ਖੁਦ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਰਹੇ।

ਇਹ ਕਮਾਲ ਹੈ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਵਲੋਂ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਾ, ਉਸ ਕਰਤੇ ਦੇ ਬਣਾਏ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁਤ ਚੰਗੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਦਾ, ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਇਸ ਖੇਡ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਰੀਕੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਣ ਦਾ। ਇਹ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਕਿ ਹਰ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਬਣੇ ਇਹ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਰ ਇਹ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਫ਼ਰਜ਼ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਰਸਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਚੱਲ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਆਨੰਦ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ, ਉਹ ਹੋਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ

ਜਿੱਥੇ ਤੱਕ ਹੋ ਸਕੇ, ਉਸ ਰਾਹ 'ਤੇ ਪਾਉਣ। ਕੁੱਲ ਮਿਲਾਕੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਹੁਕਮ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਉਸ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਹਿਸਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਉਸਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਦੂਰ। ਕੋਈ ਸਚਿਆਰਤਾ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਤੁਰੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਕੂੜ ਦੇ। ਕੋਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਬਹਿ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਸੁੱਕਾ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਉਸਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੁਣਕੇ ਹੀ ਰੂਹਾਨੀਅਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਭਿੱਜ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਵੀ ਭਟਕਦਾ ਰਹੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸੁਣਕੇ ਹੀ ਰਾਹ ਲੱਭ ਲਵੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ 'ਤੇ ਚਲਦਿਆਂ, ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਿਉਂਦਿਆਂ, ਗ਼ਲਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਵੇਖ, ਦੁੱਖ ਅਤੇ ਗੁੱਸੇ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਦਇਆ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨੂੰ ਪਛਾਣ, ਅਚੰਬੇ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਨਾਲ ਭਰ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਹ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਨਾ-ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਗੋਂ ਆਮ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਓਨਾ ਹੀ ਕਾਰਗਰ ਹੈ। ਇਨਸਾਨੀ ਰਿਸ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਏ ਭੁਚਾਲ ਮੌਕੇ, ਅੰਖੇ ਤੇ ਉਲਟ ਹਾਲਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ, ਦੁੱਖ ਤੇ ਤਕਲੀਫ਼ ਸਮੇਂ, ਇਹ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਭਟਕਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾਈ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਉਪਰ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਸਮਝ ਆਵੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਨਿੱਤ ਦਿਨ ਦੀ ਖਿੜ, ਦੁੱਖ ਅਤੇ ਕਲੇਸ਼ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਸਮਾਦ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਪੱਖੀ

ਗਰਮੀ ਦੀ ਦੁਪਿਹਰ ਸੀ, 'ਤੇ ਚਿਲਕਦੀ ਧੁੱਪ ਸੀ,
 ਪੱਤਾ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਹਿੱਲਦਾ ਸੀ, ਹੋਇਆ ਡਾਢਾ ਹੁੱਟ ਸੀ।
 ਸੜਕ ਦੇ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਪਾਸੇ, ਸੰਘਣੇ ਬੜੇ ਰੁੱਖ ਸੀ,
 ਗਰਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਣ ਦਾ, ਵਧੀਆ ਇਹ ਢੁੱਕ ਸੀ।
 ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿੱਚ, ਛਾਵੇਂ ਟਹਿਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਸਾਂ,
 ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਇਕੱਲਤਾ ਦਾ, ਆਨੰਦ ਮਾਣ ਰਿਹਾ ਸਾਂ।
 ਅਚਾਨਕ ਹੀ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਇੱਕ, ਯੁਵਤੀ ਜੋ ਆਈ ਸੀ,
 ਹੱਥ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੱਖੀ, ਜਿਸ 'ਤੇ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਕਢਾਈ ਸੀ।
 ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਆਕੇ ਉਹਨੇ, ਬਾਂਹ 'ਚ ਬਾਂਹ ਪਾ ਲਈ,
 ਤਸੱਲੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੱਕਾ ਲੈਕੇ, ਪੱਖੀ ਝੱਲ ਲਾ ਲਈ।
 ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗੀ ਮੈਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ, ਸਾਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਹਾਂ ਜਾਣਦੀ,
 ਮੰਨੇ ਤੂੰ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਨਾ, ਤੇਰੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਹਾਂ ਪਛਾਣਦੀ।
 ਰੇਡੀਓ 'ਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਮੈਂ, ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਸਾਰੇ ਸੁਣੇ ਨੇ,
 ਵਿਚਾਰ ਤੇਰੇ ਸੁਣ ਮੇਰੇ, ਸਿੱਧੇ ਪਏ ਗੁਣੇ ਨੇ।
 ਮੇਰੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਹੀ, ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਡਾਵਾਂ ਡੋਲ ਸੀ,
 ਕਈ ਪੁੱਠੇ ਸਿੱਧੇ ਮੇਰੀ, ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ ਘੋਲ ਸੀ।
 ਅਚਾਨਕ ਇੱਕ ਦਿਨ ਤੇਰਾ, ਸੁਣਿਆ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸੀ,
 ਜਿਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ, ਮੇਰਾ ਬਦਲਿਆ ਆਚਾਰ ਸੀ।
 ਸੱਚ ਪੁੱਛੋ ਮੇਰੇ ਲਈ ਤੂੰ, ਬਣਿਆ ਮਸੀਹਾ ਸੀ,
 'ਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਚੋਂ ਮੁੱਕ, ਗਿਆ ਹਰ ਤਸੀਹਾ ਸੀ।

ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਸਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ, ਦੱਸ ਦੇਵਾਂ ਗੱਲ ਸਾਰੀ,
 ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਮਿਲੇ, ਜਾਵਾਂ ਤੈਥੋਂ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ।
 ਮੇਰੇ ਧੰਨ ਭਾਗ ਅੱਜ, ਤੂੰ ਹੈਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਗਿਆ,
 ਮੇਰੀ ਹਰ ਘਾਲਣਾ ਦਾ, ਫਲ ਅੱਜ ਪੱਲੇ ਪਿਆ।
 ਤੇਰੇ ਅਹਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ, ਬਦਲਾ ਚੁਕਾਉਣ ਲਈ,
 ਮੇਰੀ ਇਹ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀ ਰੱਖ, ਮੇਰੀ ਯਾਦ ਆਉਣ ਲਈ।
 ਫੜ ਲੈ ਇਹ ਪੱਖੀ, ਅਤੇ ਝੱਲੋਗਾ ਤੂੰ ਜਦੋਂ ਕਦੀ,
 ਠੰਢੀ ਹਵਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਵਲੋਂ, ਆਏਗੀ ਫਿਰ ਬਦੇ ਬਦੀ।
 ਇੰਨਾਂ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਉਹ, ਸੜਕ ਪਾਰ ਕਰ ਗਈ,
 ਗੱਲਾਂ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੈਨੂੰ, ਠੰਢਾ ਠਾਰ ਕਰ ਗਈ।
 ਪੱਖੀ ਹੱਥ ਫੜੀ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ, ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਅਵਾਕ ਮੈਂ,
 ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਸਵਾਲ ਕੀਤਾ, ਨਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਮੈਂ।
 ਸਕਤੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਮੈਂ, ਸੁੰਨ ਹੋਇਆ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਸੀ,
 ਸੱਚਮੁੱਚ ਉਸ 'ਤੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ, ਤਰਸ ਆਇਆ ਬੜਾ ਸੀ।
 ਤਰਸਵਾਨ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਤੋਂ, ਉਹ ਅਲੇਪ ਝੱਟ ਹੋ ਗਈ,
 ਸੁਪਨੇ ਦੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਉਹ ਵੀ, ਸੁਪਨਾ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਗਈ।
 ਸੁਪਨੇ ਦੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਉਹ ਵੀ, ਸੁਪਨਾ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਗਈ।

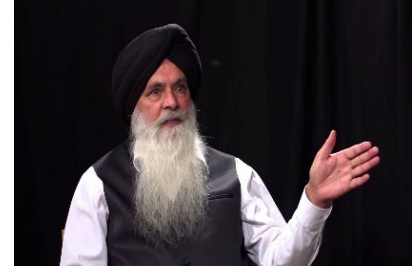
ਰਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੁੰਦਰਾ
 ਕੈਂਟੋਰੀ ਯੂ ਕੇ

ਜਿਉਣਵਾਲਾ ਜੀ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ...

ਨੀਰੂ ਵਰੈ ਵਹਿ ਚਲੈ ਜੀਉ

ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿਉਣਵਾਲਾ

brar.jiwanwala@hotmail.com



ਲਹੌਰ ਗਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੂਜਾ ਦਿਨ ਹੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧ ਇਤਹਾਸਕਾਰ, 'ਅਖਤਰ ਹੁਸੈਨ ਸੰਧੂ ਜੀ' ਜੋ ਲਹੌਰ 'ਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਇਤਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਕਾਲਜ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਸੀਪਲ ਵੀ ਹਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਡੀ ਜਾਣ-ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਮਨੋਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੂਹਾਨ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ, ਸਾਨੂੰ 'ਜਿੰਮ ਖਾਨਾ ਕਲੱਬ' ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲਣ ਆ ਗਏ। ਕਾਫੀ ਸਮਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਬਾਤਾਂ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪੁੱਛਣ ਲੱਗੇ ਕਿ ਸ਼ਾਮ ਨੂੰ ਕੀ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਜੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਗੈਰ ਹੋਰ ਕੁੱਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ। ਇਹ ਉੱਤਰ ਸੁਣਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਸੰਧੂ ਜੀ ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗੇ ਚੱਲੋ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਡੇ ਕਾਲਜ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਕਾਫੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਮਿਲਣੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਇਤਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ-ਮਿਲਾਪ ਕਰਾਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

ਜਿਉਂ ਹੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਸਜਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਆਨਾ ਹਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਕ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਜੋ 75 ਕੁ ਸਾਲ ਦਾ ਹੈ, ਮੇਰੇ ਸਿਰ ਤੇ ਪੱਗ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਵੱਲ ਭੱਜਾ ਭੱਜਾ ਆਇਆ ਤੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗਾ ਕਿ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਿਸ਼ਤਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਪੁਰਾਣਾ ਹੈ, ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਿਸ਼ਤਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਗੂੜਾ ਹੈ, ਇੰਝ ਕਰਦੇ ਕਰਦੇ "ਸਤਲੁਜ ਅਤੇ ਬਿਆਸਾ ਵਾਂਗੂ ਨੈਣ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੁੱਕੇ" ਉਸ ਨੇ ਸੁੱਚੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਪਿਆਰ ਭਰੇ ਮੋਤੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਝੜੀ ਲਗਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਬਸ ਫਿਰ ਕੀ ਸੀ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਸਮਝ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਤੇ ਅਸਰ ਹੋਣ ਲੱਗਾ ਤੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਝੱਟ-ਘੱਟ 47 ਵੀ ਮਾਰੂ ਵੰਡ ਵੱਲ ਚਲਾ ਗਿਆ। ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੱਦੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਰੇਲਾਂ ਇੱਧਰੋਂ ਉੱਧਰ ਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਉੱਧਰੋਂ ਇੱਧਰ ਨੂੰ ਆਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਦਿੱਸਣ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ।

ਉਹ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ, 'ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਜ਼ਮੀਲ ਖਾਨ' ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਭਾਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਹਉਕਿਆਂ ਭਰੀ ਅਵਾਜ਼ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਦਾਸਤਾਨ ਸੁਨਾਉਣ ਲੱਗਾ। ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਇਸ ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਵੰਡ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਛੋਟਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਾਂ-ਬਾਪ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਵਿਛੁੜ ਗਿਆ। ਸੜਕ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਖੜਾ ਰੋਂਦਾ ਰੋਂਦਾ ਵਿਆਕੁਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਬੇਵੱਸੀ ਦੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿਚ ਪਿੰਡ ਅਮਰ ਗੜ੍ਹ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਗਿਰ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਿਰਦਾਰ ਬਸੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੋ ਛਿੱਟਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਪਿੰਡ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ, ਮੈਨੂੰ ਚੁੱਕ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਲੈ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਨਵੀਂ ਮਾਤਾ ਹਰਬੰਸ ਕੌਰ ਮਿਲ ਗਈ। ਇਹ ਪਿੰਡ ਪਟਿਆਲੇ ਕੋਲ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਅੱਲਾ-ਤਾਲਾ ਦਾ ਜਾਂ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਸ਼ੁਕਰ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗੇ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਜਦੋਂ ਤਕ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਨਕਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਲੱਭ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਆ ਉਦੋਂ ਤਕ ਮਾਤਾ ਹਰਬੰਸ ਕੌਰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਬਣੇ ਭਰਾ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਛਾਤੀਆਂ ਚੋਂ ਇਕੋ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੁੱਧ ਚਖਾਉਂਦੀ ਰਹੀ। ਹੌਲੀ ਹੌਲੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਨਕੇ ਜੋ ਮਲੇਰ ਕੋਟਲੇ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਹੀ ਹਨ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਲੱਭਣ ਵਿਚ ਸਫਲ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਵੱਢਾ-ਟੁੱਕੀ ਦਾ ਮੁਆਮਲਾ ਥੋੜਾ ਠੰਡਾ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਨਕਿਆਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਜਨਮ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਮਾਪਿਆਂ ਕੋਲ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਗਿਆ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਵੱਸੀ ਦੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਛੜ ਗਿਆ ਸਾਂ।

ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਜ਼ਮੀਲ ਖਾਨ ਦੇ ਦੱਸਣ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਬਣੇ ਮਾਪੇ, ਮਾਤਾ ਹਰਬੰਸ ਕੌਰ ਤੇ ਸਿਰਦਾਰ ਬਸੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਜਿਤਨਾ ਚਿਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਗਏ ਮੈਂ ਭਾਰਤ ਦਾ ਵੀਜਾ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਸੱਤ-ਅੱਠ ਵਾਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਆਇਆ ਹਾਂ। ਹਰ ਵਾਰ ਓਹੀ ਪਿਆਰ, ਓਹੀ ਮੁਹੱਬਤ, ਓਹੀ ਚਿਹਰਾ ਮੂਹਰਾ ਤੇ ਓਹੀ ਮਮਤਾ ਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕੀਲੀ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਸ਼ੁਕਰਾਨਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਭੱਜਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸਾਂ। ਅੱਜ ਓਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਾਂਗਾ ਪਰ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੀ ਦੇਰ ਤੱਕ ਮੈਂ ਜਿਉਂਦਾ ਹਾਂ, ਆਹ ਸਾਹ ਚੱਲਦੇ ਹਨ, ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਅਸਲੀ ਮਾਤਾ ਹਰਬੰਸ ਕੌਰ ਤੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਸਿਰਦਾਰ ਬਸੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਸੰਭਾਲਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਆਹ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ, ਆਹ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰੀ ਨਾ ਰੰਡਾਉਂਦਾ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਮਿੱਟੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਿੱਟੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ।

1947 ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਜੋ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਇਤਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡਾ ਵਾਪਰਿਆ ਕਹਿਰ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਤਕਰੀਬਨ ਦਸ ਲੱਖ ਲੋਕ ਮਾਰੇ ਗਏ, ਕਈ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਜਿਉਂਦੇ ਹੀ ਆਪਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਰੀ ਹੋਈ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਰੰਡਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ, ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਹੋ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੀ। ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਾਪਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਧੀਆਂ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥੀਂ ਵੰਡ ਕੇ ਖੁਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਟਿਆ ਕਿ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਬਰ ਜਨਾ ਨਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਣ, ਉਹ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਜਿਉਂ ਰਹੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ, ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਕਠਿਨ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਦੂਸਰੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਗੱਲ ਛੱਡੋ ਆਪਣੇ ਧਰਮ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਜਲਵਾ ਵਿਖਾਇਆ ਉਹ ਕਿਹੜਾ ਘੱਟ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਾਪਰੇ ਕਹਿਰ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਨੇਡਾ ਦੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਾ, ਇਸ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਨੂੰ ਕਮਲ ਬੱਧ ਕਰਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ, ਮੈਂ ਆਪ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਤਨੀ ਵਾਰੀ, ਮੁਹੰਮਦ ਜ਼ਮੀਲ ਖਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਜੱਫੀ ਪਾ ਕੇ, ਭੁੱਬਾ ਮਾਰ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਰੋਇਆ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਵਾਪਰੇ ਕਹਿਰ ਨੂੰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਸ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿੰਡੇ ਤੇ ਰੰਡਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਯਾ ਸੀ, ਹਮਦਰਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਆਪਣੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਨੂੰ ਬੰਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ।

ਕੰਵਰ ਦੀ ਕਲਮ ਤੋਂ...

ਕਬੀਰ ਸਾਕਤ ਤੇ ਸੂਕਰ ਭਲਾ ਰਾਖੇ ਆਛਾ ਗਾਉ

ਐਡਵੋਕੇਟ ਸੁਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੰਵਰ

E-mail- kanwar238@yahoo.com



ਕਬੀਰ ਸਾਕਤ ਤੇ ਸੂਕਰ ਭਲਾ ਰਾਖੇ ਆਛਾ ਗਾਉ ॥ ਕਬੀਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ-੧੩੭੨ 'ਤੇ ਅੰਕਿਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਕਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਇਕ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਉਣ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਦੇ ਅਖਰੀ ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝ ਲੈਣੇ ਕੋਈ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਭਾਵ ਸਾਕਤ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਸੂਕਰ (ਸੂਰ) ਚੰਗਾ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਘੱਟੋ ਘੱਟ ਕਿਸੇ ਗਾਉਂ ਦੀ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਫ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ: "ਹੇ ਕਬੀਰ! (ਕੁਟੰਬ ਦੇ ਗਹਗਚ ਵਿਚ ਪੈ ਕੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸਾਰ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ) ਸਾਕਤ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਸੂਰ ਹੀ ਚੰਗਾ ਜਾਣੇ (ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ ਦਾ ਗੰਦ ਖਾ ਕੇ) ਪਿੰਡ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਫ਼-ਸੁਥਰਾ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਉਹ ਮੰਦ-ਭਾਗੀ ਸਾਕਤ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਚੇਤਾ ਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਂਦਾ (ਭਾਵੇਂ ਉਹ ਜਿਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਕਿਤਨਾ ਹੀ ਵੱਡਾ ਬਣ ਬਣ ਬਹਿੰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੋਵੇ)"। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਥੋੜਾ ਹੋਰ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਚਾਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵੇਖਣਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸੂਕਰ ਸਾਕਤ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਭਲਾ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੋਇਆ? ਇਸ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਜੀਵਨ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਲਈ ਕੀ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ?

ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਕਤ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੂਕਰ ਜਾਨਵਰ (ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ) ਦੀ ਤੁਲਨਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਸਾਕਤ ਉਹ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਰੱਬ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਨਕਰ ਹੋਵੇ ਭਾਵ ਉਹ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਦਾ। ਐਸੇ ਸਾਕਤ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦੀ ਤੁਲਨਾ ਸੂਰ ਵਰਗੇ ਜਾਨਵਰ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਖਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸੂਰ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਖਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਸੂਰ ਨੂੰ ਨਖਿੱਧ ਅਤੇ ਗੰਦਾ ਜਾਨਵਰ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਸਾਕਤ ਅਤੇ ਸੂਰ ਦੀ ਤੁਲਨਾ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਜੋ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਉਣ ਦਾ ਰਾਜ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਮੰਨਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦਾ ਫਰਕ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੋਣਾ ਲਾਜ਼ਮੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਰੱਬ ਗੁਣੀ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਵ ਰੱਬ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਫ਼ਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ: ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਗੁਣੀ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਹੈ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਇ॥ (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-੩੨) ਭਾਵ ਰੱਬ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ ਅੰਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਇਸੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ: "ਨਾਨਕ ਗਾਵੀਐ ਗੁਣੀ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ॥" (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-੨) ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਮਝਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਜੋ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਰੱਖੀਏ, ਯਾਦ ਰੱਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਗੁਣ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾਏ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਗੁਣ ਅਪਣਾਏ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੇ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣ ਭਾਵ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਅਪਣਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਮਾਜ ਲਈ ਭਲਾਈ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਐਸਾ ਗੁਣਵਾਨ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਹੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਲਈ ਉਪਯੋਗੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ 'ਸਾਕਤ' ਭਾਵ ਜੋ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ, ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਪਣਾਉਂਦਾ। ਉਹ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਐਸਾ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਅਵਗੁਣੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਕਰਮ ਵੀ ਬੁਰੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਉਹ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਬੁਰਾਈ ਫਲਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਕਈ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਫਸਾਦ, ਝਗੜੇ ਖੜੇ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਨੂੰ ਦੁੱਖੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਠੀਕ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਗੰਦ ਖਲਾਰਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਐਸਾ ਸਾਕਤ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਉੱਤੇ ਇਕ ਬੋਝ ਤੇ ਕਲੰਕ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਮਾਜ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਕੋਈ ਭਲਾਈ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ।

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਬੀਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਮਝਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਐਸੇ ਸਾਕਤ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਖਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੂਰ ਹੀ ਚੰਗਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਲਈ ਕੁਝ ਭਲਾਈ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਸਾਕਤ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਸਮਾਜ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਖੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਕਤ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਸਾਫ਼ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਏ ਗੰਦਗੀ ਫਲਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੂਕਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਕਤ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਭਲਾ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਸਲਾਹਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਜੋ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੀਵਨ ਬਤੀਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਹ ਡੰਗਰਾਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਚੰਗਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਉ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਲ ਵਾਪਸੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਅੰਤਰਰਾਸ਼ਟਰੀ ਸੰਮੇਲਨ ਦੇ ਫੈਸਲੇ



ਅੱਜ, 4 ਮੱਘਰ ਸੰਮਤ 556 ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ (17 ਨਵੰਬਰ 2024) ਦਿਨ ਐਤਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ, ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਇਲਿਨਾਇਸ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਸੈਂਟਰ, ਫ੍ਰੀਟਨ, IL 60189, ਵਿਖੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵੱਲ ਵਾਪਸੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਅੰਤਰਰਾਸ਼ਟਰੀ ਸੰਮੇਲਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਬੁਲਾਰਿਆ ਨੇ ਖੋਜ ਭਰਭੂਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ। ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਧਿਆਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਇਕੱਠ ਵੱਲੋਂ, ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਮਤੇ ਪਾਸ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ।

ਮਤਾ ਨੰ: 1

ਸੰਗਤ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਇੱਕੋ ਇੱਕ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਅਨਮਤੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਂ, ਦੀ ਮੌਜੂਦਗੀ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰੱਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਮਤਾ ਨੰ: 2

ਸੰਗਤ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਛੇਕਣ ਦੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਰੱਦ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸਰਬਵਿਆਪੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਵਿੱਚ, ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਭੇਦਭਾਵ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਵਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੀ। ਅੱਜ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਇਕੱਠ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਅਣਉਚਿਤ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ, ਪੰਥ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਇਕ ਸਦੀ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਰੱਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ, ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ, ਸ. ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਾਲਾ ਅਫਗਾਨਾ, ਜੋਗਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ (ਸਪੇਕਸਮੈਨ), ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ (ਵਰਜੀਨੀਆ) ਅਤੇ ਸ: ਥਮਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਨੰਦ ਦੇ ਛੇਕਣ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰੱਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਾਰੇ, ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ, ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਪੁਰਨ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਹੋਣ ਵਜੋਂ ਮਾਨਤਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।



ਮਤਾ ਨੰ: 3

ਅੱਜ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਇਕੱਠ, ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ, ਅਤੇ ਬੁਲਾਰਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਲਾਈ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ ਨੂੰ ਰੱਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਡਾ: ਪਿਆਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਡਾ ਗੁਰਬਚਨ ਕੌਰ, ਡਾ: ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਿਲਗੀਰ, ਇੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਘੱਗਾ ਆਦਿ ਤੇ ਲਾਈ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ।

ਮਤਾ ਨੰ: 4

ਸੰਗਤ ਇਸ ਫੈਸਲੇ 'ਤੇ ਪੁੱਜੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸ. ਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁਰੇਵਾਲ ਜੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਮੂਲ ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਕੈਲੰਡਰ ਹੀ ਇੱਕੋ-ਇੱਕ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਗਿਆਨਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਹੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੈਲੰਡਰ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤੇ

ਆਧਾਰਤ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕੈਲੰਡਰ ਦੀ ਪਾਲਣਾ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ, ਸੰਗਤ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਸਾਲਾਨਾ ਤਾਰੀਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਮਨਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ:



- ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ 1-ਵੈਸਾਖ (14-ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ) |
- ਹੋਲਾ ਮੁਹੱਲਾ, ਸਿੱਖ ਨਵ ਵਰ੍ਹੇ ਦਾ ਦਿਨ 1-ਚੇਤ (14-ਮਾਰਚ) |
- ਬੰਦੀ ਛੇੜ ਦਿਵਸ 1-ਫੱਗਣ (12-ਫਰਵਰੀ) ।

ਮਤਾ ਨੰ: 5 ਅੱਜ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਇਕੱਤਰਤਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਸਰਬ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਨ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਮੁਹਿੰਮ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਯਤਨਸ਼ੀਲ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਹਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਲਈ ਮਾਤਰ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਸਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਪੀਲ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਲਹਿਰ ਦਾ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਬਣਦਾ ਯੋਗ ਦਾਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ।



ਇਲੀਨੋਇਸ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਇਹ ਇਕੱਤਰਤਾ, ਇਹ ਯਕੀਨੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈਚਾਰਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੰਕਲਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰੱਖਣ ਦਾ ਸੱਦਾ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਪਵਿੱਤਰਤਾ



ਸਿੱਖ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਦੇ ਧੁਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿਣ। ਅਸੀਂ ਦੁਨੀਆ-ਭਰ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਧਿਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਵੰਡੀਆਂ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਕਾਰਵਾਈਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਰੱਦ ਕਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਵਿਗਿਆਨਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਸਹੀ ਮੂਲ ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਕੈਲੰਡਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਦਰਸਾਏ ਸਮਾਨਤਾ, ਪਿਆਰ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਭਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਸ ਸੁਨੇਹੇ 'ਤੇ ਅਧਾਰਤ ਏਕਤਾ ਲਈ ਯਤਨ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਅਪੀਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।



ਇਹ ਮਤੇ ਕਾਨਫਰੰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਮੁੱਚੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸਰਬ-ਸੰਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੂਲ ਕਦਰਾਂ-ਕੀਮਤਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਭਾਲਣ ਦੇ ਸਮੂਹਿਕ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

Gurbani for English Speakers

Tejpal S. Hansra
Seattle, WA USA

Email: paulhansra@hotmail.com



INTRODUCTION

Are you primarily an English-speaking Sikh? Do you feel like Gurdwara is not quite meeting your needs because of a language barrier? Do you find the English translations on the screens to be inadequate and unclear? Are you tired of receiving inconsistent and confusing explanations about Gurbani from well-intentioned uncles and aunts or loved ones?

If you answered yes to any (or all) of the above questions, know that I have felt your pain. I've been searching for answers about Sikhi and Gurbani for most of my life. At times, it has been very frustrating. Other times, it has been discouraging.

Thankfully, it doesn't have to be that way anymore!

What if folks like us could learn about Gurbani in an English-speaking medium using terminology that was understandable and precise? What if, for every concept that was discussed, there were multiple citations to the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji shown in PowerPoint slides (both in Gurmukhi and in English) with clear, scholarly, and sensible explanations? What if the entirety of Gurbani could be explained with consistency to show how all the messages flow together? What if a structured methodology was provided to help us understand what the writers of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji intended for us to learn?

SIKHI VICHAR FORUM

With God's grace, I've come across the videos and writings of Dr. Karminder Singh Dhillon (affectionately known as "Dr. K"). His YouTube Channel entitled "Sikhi Vichar Forum" has more than 150 hours of video, which I have had the pleasure of watching. The clarity of his explanations and, most importantly, his reliance on Gurbani to explain concepts is astounding.

So, readers can get a flavor of Dr. K's videos and books, I will be providing relatively short reviews of his work in this forum. While I will try my best to do his work justice, I encourage those that are interested to go directly to his YouTube channel to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

Let's Start with Reviews of Three Sets of Videos

I will start by reviewing 3 sets of professionally recorded videos. The first set of videos is entitled "Sikhi Concepts" and sets forth "basic" concepts taught in Gurbani. For example, do Sikhs believe in an afterlife, reincarnation, 8.4 million life forms, heaven and hell, salvation, etc. You know, things that have been made "abundantly clear" (I'm being sarcastic) when folks talk to us about Sikhi. This set of videos leaves little doubt as to what Gurbani teaches us on these subjects.

Next, I will cover a second set of videos entitled "The Hijacking of Sikhi," which provides a historical understanding of where much of the confusion about Sikhi started and how it has been perpetuated. This set of videos is eye-opening and lays the groundwork for returning to the authentic messages set forth in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Then, I will discuss a third set of videos entitled "Understanding Gurbani" which sets forth a precise, structured, and well-considered methodology for interpreting Gurbani. This group of videos helps us to move from the literal to the spiritual by focusing on how to place terms and concepts found in Gurbani in proper context. The scholarly manner by which the methodology is explained is both impressive and logical.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME AND THE FOCUS IS GURBANI

One final note. These reviews and Dr. K's videos are for you if: (1) you are willing to study Gurbani as found within the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, rather than using translations which allowed rejected concepts to return to Sikhi; (2) you focus on what is stated in Gurbani, rather than what people have told you about Gurbani; (3) you value what Gurbani teaches about spirituality more than what any person has taught you (e.g., bhai, baba, parcharik, keertinea); (4) you are more interested in following what the 35 writers of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji taught, rather than following rituals; (5) you are willing to consider different perspectives and be open-minded; (6) you have a curious mindset; (7) you believe that you already know all about Sikhi and Gurbani; and, (8) you believe that there are some things about Sikhi that you don't know and don't understand. In short, this space is for everyone and everyone is welcome.

Review**SIKHI CONCEPTS (PART 1 OF 12): GURU NANAK'S CANVAS**

In this video, Dr. Karminder S. Dhillon lays the foundation for his 12-part video series entitled "Sikhi Concepts." He contrasts the spiritual beliefs that existed prior to Guru Nanak's arrival (which had an obsession with life after death) with Guru Nanak's unique spiritual beliefs (which focused on life and on living in the here and now). Dr. K explains how Guru Nanak redefined, in a revolutionary way, concepts from existing spiritual beliefs, so that he could present the spiritual beliefs of Sikhi. Over the course of this 12-part video series, Dr. K cites many verses in Gurbani, which show how old concepts and beliefs have been both redefined and discarded.

A. Missing the Key Concept of Guru Nanak's Revolutionary Redefining of Terms

Dr. K notes that many Sikhs have failed to understand Guru Nanak's revolutionary redefining of terms such as death, reincarnation, 8.4 million lifeforms, heaven and hell, salvation, etc. Missing this key concept has, undoubtedly, led to confusion amongst many Sikhs. Some Sikhs (incorrectly) believe that the mere mention of the old terms in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji equates to acceptance by Guru Nanak. However, how can a concept be rejected if it isn't discussed? How can a term be redefined if it isn't used? Dr. K notes that mere use of a term does not signify acceptance of the term, nor does it constitute approval of the concept associated with such term.

Importantly, Dr. K notes that new meanings for all the redefined concepts are provided within the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, so there is no need to rely on outside sources (which would just lead us back to the old definitions). For me, this is just like when a lawyer interprets a contract. He/she uses definitions of terms that are provided within the contract (intrinsic definitions), not definitions from external sources.

With the above understanding, we gain a better appreciation for the title of the video, namely, Guru Nanak's Canvas. Specifically, Dr. K uses a painter's canvas as a metaphor for the human mind. He also uses the images painted on the canvas as a metaphor for spiritual beliefs. Dr. K argues that, at the time of Guru Nanak's arrival, the canvas was not blank. Rather, the canvas had been painted with images for thousands of years and such images were familiar to nearly all in the region. In order to share his unique spiritual message, Guru Nanak used terminology from the existing canvas, but redefined the existing terminology (and, hence, rejected existing concepts) along with adding new concepts, so that he could paint a portrait on the canvas that depicted Sikhi.

B. Reintroduction of Concepts Rejected by Guru Nanak into Mainstream Sikhi

Dr. K provides an explanation as to why the revolutionary redefining of terms associated with old spiritual beliefs is not grasped by many of today's Gurdwaras, religious leaders, and members of the Sikh community. He states that the redefining has gotten "lost in translation." Specifically, he points to a translation (likely the 1st full and annotated translation) of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji which was completed in 1883 entitled the Faridkoti Teeka. Rather than being prepared by Sikhs, the Faridkoti Teeka was prepared by Banares-trained scholars, who subscribed to the Vedantic beliefs that existed prior to Guru Nanak's arrival. Virtually all subsequent translations in Punjabi and English are based on the Faridkoti Teeka.

When compared to the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, scholars of Gurbani can see that the Faridkoti Teeka includes concepts that were discarded by Guru Nanak. Scholars of Gurbani can also see that the Faridkoti Teeka fails to include some of the new concepts introduced by Guru Nanak. Without getting into the motivations for the incorrect translations found in the Faridkoti Teeka, reliance on the Faridkoti Teeka for nearly all subsequent translations has caused these "errors to propagate." Thus, concepts rejected by Guru Nanak have crept back into mainstream Sikhi practiced in our Gurdwaras.

C. Returning to Authentic Sikhi by Using the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as our Source

Rather than relying on the Faridkoti Teeka, Dr. K returns to the authentic scripture of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in Parts 2-12 of this video series. By synthesizing many verses from Gurbani (not just relying on one verse here-and-there), Dr. K shows us Guru Nanak's revolutionary redefining of concepts from the old canvas and also shows us the new concepts that Guru Nanak introduced. By doing so, Dr. K helps us to obtain a clear understanding of concepts that are regularly misunderstood by our Gurdwaras and many members of the Sikh community.

So that viewers of the videos are not merely "taking Dr. K's word for it," the Gurbani discussed by Dr. K is shown in PowerPoint presentations. For each verse, citations to specific pages in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji are given. Furthermore, Dr. K demonstrates how he arrives at the proper English translations of verses in Gurbani and even walks the viewer through translations of each individual word in a verse, which leaves the viewer with the opportunity to double-check his work.

Now that we understand the premise of the videos, we'll embark on understanding individual concepts that were redefined by Guru Nanak. The next review will cover what Gurbani teaches us about Death, which is sure to be enlightening.

Sikhi Concepts

Part 1 /12
Guru
Nanak's
Canvas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jW5fPKS59go&list=PL_YigetSYIOVCUDb_yKLAhrMZMHEHW_rh&index=1

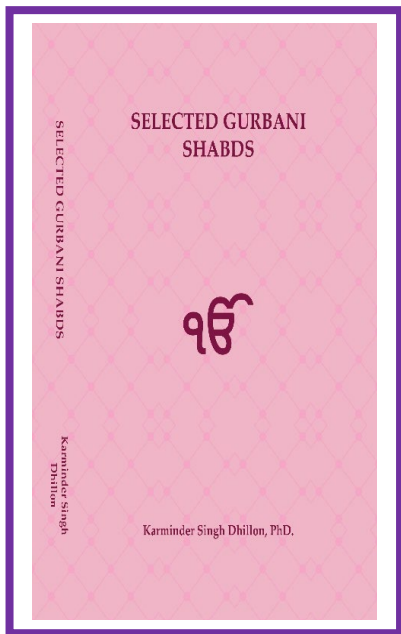


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Note to Contributors

The Sikh Bulletin invites articles on matters relating to *Sikhi*. Essays that adopt CRITICAL approaches towards Sikh matters and issues are given priority for publication. Articles devoted towards exploring the messages of Gurbani as contained within the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) are particularly welcome.

Manuscripts must be in English or Gurmukhi and must begin with a title page that includes the names, e-mail addresses, and affiliations of all authors. References must be properly cited.

Manuscripts need to be submitted online to editor@sikhbulletin.com or dhillon99@gmail.com and must be in Microsoft Word (.doc). The preferred font for English characters is Calibri font size 11. Gurbani and Gurmukhi characters must be in Unicode (Nirmla UI).

The maximum length for each article in a regular issue is 5,000 words.

Note on Use of Gurbani Verses and Translations by Authors

When quoting Gurbani in their articles, authors are required to provide the Gurmukhi version of the full verse and a romanised version. Mention must be made of the page where it is to be found in the AGGS. In line with the aspirations of *The Sikh Bulletin*, authors must provide translations of Gurbani verses that break from the mould of vedantic, yogic and literal slants prevalent in orthodox translations. Articles relying solely on Gurbani translations as provided by Sant Singh Khalsa MD's English Translation will NOT be published.

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The views expressed by authors are their own. Please send feedback at editor@sikhbulletin.com

Thank you for your continued support of The Sikh Bulletin. Editor.

One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon instead of enjoying the roses that are blooming outside our windows today.

Dale Carnegie, American Writer (1811 – 1955)