



ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥
Ik oāṅkār saṭ nām kartā purakh nīrbhā'o nirvair akāl mūrati ajūnī saibhā'n gur parsād.



THE SIKH BULLETIN GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI

ਚੇਤ-ਵੈਸਾਖ ੫੪੭ ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ

ਜੇਠ-ਹਾੜ ੫੪੭ ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ

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I HAVE NO RELIGION

My Journey of Finding Guru Nanak (1469-1539)
The One and Only

Peace on Earth will not prevail until all the manmade Religions and their Gods are DEAD and mankind learns to live within Hukam.

First time I said that was at age twelve. Fifty years later, when a responsibility to operate a Gurdwara was thrust upon me, I tried my best to become a Gursikh; but eighteen years into that effort made me realize that a Gursikh has no place in Sikhism. That was a great disappointment but not for long because I soon discovered that I was in excellent company of no other than Guru Nanak himself, the One and Only gift of the Creator to mankind, and under whose name Sikhism as a religion is being touted.

Truth is that Guru Nanak rejected the existing three **Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)** and three **Indian religions of his time (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism)** and **their Gods** and he was not about to start a yet another religion to add to them. Religions divide people whereas Guru Nanak was a uniter who devoted his entire life to make mankind realize that humanity is One.

His **first** pronouncement to this effect came upon his return from across the **Vein River** that oral tradition quotes him uttering his first words as **“Na Ko Hindu Na Mussalman”; (there is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim),** meaning we are all members of the human family. His **second** pronouncement came during his visit to Mecca during his dialogue with Qazi Ruknuddin when Guru Nanak was found sleeping with his feet towards Kaaba. To Qazi Ruknuddin's question to Guru Nanak about his religion the Guru responded, **“I am a man of The Creator, and belong to no religion”.** The **third** pronouncement is by **Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan**, on p.1136 of Adi Granth, **“Na Ham Hindu Na Mussalman’ (We are neither Hindus nor Muslims).** He is using plural ‘WE’ because by this time the number of people believing in teachings of Guru Nanak had become substantial and distinct enough group to be reckoned by the state. **Note that he does not say ‘We the Sikhs’.**

However, Guru Nanak was not the first person to reject religion as an institution. **Rumi (1207-1273)**, a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic who inherited and expanded a centre for Sufism in **Konya in Turkey** wrote: **“I’m not from the East or the West. I’m not Christian or Jew or Muslim. I’m not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen. I don’t belong to any established religion or any cultural system. I’m neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my beloved.”**
Hardev Singh Shergill

A LABOUR OF RESPECT: WORKING WITH DEVINDER SINGH CHAHAL, PHD

Jesse Schell, New Zealand

Sometimes, I wonder what I'm doing all this work for. I'm not a Sikh and have absolutely no desire to be one. I think the Sikh religion is moribund, with little to no hope of revival. Sure, I like a good curry and a bowl of basmati rice as well as the next person but I'm not terribly interested in Indian culture. I am an older Westerner, a far cry from the Punjab. To top it all off, I am an atheist and **I hate all religions**. Add all this up and it comes out as I'm the most unlikely person to be **assisting Dr Chahal in his recent literary endeavors** – or am I?

About two years ago, I accidentally happened upon Sikhism. Prior to that, I'd never even given the religion any thought. Yes, I knew about the Indian men in turbans who fought alongside the British in the old movies. Other than that, **I don't think I even knew that Sikhi was a religion separate from Hinduism**. This was odd because I have been a seeker after things spiritual all my life and I've read about or studied many different and little-known religions. The only person in a turban I'd ever met was a shopkeeper in the local tea shop and I always thought he was a Muslim.

One day, while doing a Google search I came upon a listing for **Nitnem** and I had a look at it. I felt immediately attracted to the texts and wanted to learn more. I began an **intensive study of Sikhism**, reading everything I could get my hands on. After many hours on the computer and reading lots of books, **I discovered that Sikhism was no better than any other religion**. Indeed, **I liked the key concepts of gender and social equality, service, compassion, meditation, the definition of the Supreme Entity and the lack of a priestly caste**.

However, the pristine concepts once propounded by Guru Nanak have over time

degenerated into just another religion which preached one thing and did quite another. I am convinced that Guru Nanak wouldn't recognize his own teachings if he could come back to see what the situation has become.

The best part of my exposure to Sikhi has been the **Commencing Verse** of the **Adi Granth**. I was lucky to have read it first in a modern version which did not parrot the traditional conservative translations. **It substituted the word “Energy” for “God” and translated the last two words as “enlightener” and “bounteous”.**

“Well,” I thought, “I can believe in this Entity even though I can't believe in the current God”.

This propelled me to read the entire **Adi Granth** more than once (in fact I still read and study it for several hours each day). I probably know more about the **Adi Granth** than the majority of people who call themselves practicing Sikhs. Why do I call it the **Adi Granth** instead of the **Sri Guru Granth Sahib**? This isn't the place for a long dissertation about that, so I'll just say that **I don't believe it is a “living guru”**. **Nor do I believe that it is the divinely revealed word of God and as such, inerrant and infallible.** I can only say that it speaks to a place deep inside me but I don't take everything written in it as the truth. That said, I do see myself reading it for many years to come.

By now you must be wondering why in the world I'm working with Dr Chahal on his writings on Sikh topics. That's a good question; let's see if I can explain it for you. In doing so, I will take some liberties in paraphrasing Dr Chahal and interpreting what I believe he is trying to accomplish. What I say here are my thoughts and opinions and he has not been consulted in the writing of this article. Suffice it to say he may write a future article, repudiating what I write here!

I first met Dr Chahal through his book *Nanakian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity*

when it was reprinted serially in the Sikh Bulletin. At that time I was fed-up with traditional Sikhi and I was searching the internet for sites with a non-conservative approach. **I googled “Sikh heretic” and came across the site for the Sikh Bulletin.** I made contact with Mr Hardev Shergill and read all the back issues of the e-zine.

Reading Dr Chahal's work excited me and gave me pause to wonder if there might be hope for Sikhism after all. Through Mr Shergill who had by this time become a friend, I was put in contact with Dr Chahal. He told me of his plans for his latest books, the first being the booklet *Nanak: The Guru – Founder of Sikhi* (reprinted in the last issue of the *Sikh Bulletin* and his current work yet to be completed on the bani of Nanak.

Dr Chahal is a dedicated Sikh who has spent most of his adult life trying to live in line with the teachings in the Adi Granth. He is a scientist by education and professional career. There is no way I would call him a radical. Certainly, his ideas are not traditional but his perspective comes from grounding in traditional Sikhi coupled with a **lifetime of scientific and rational thinking.**

He dreams of a reformation of Sikhi through a modern scientific approach to the teachings in the Adi Granth. He gears his work to those who are familiar with Sikhi and know Punjabi (Gurmukhi). He has confidence that if he can put this information to the Sikh public, people will come to the realisation that the **traditional interpretations of the teachings of the Gurus have been corrupted and now are incorrect** and they will then adopt new ways of approaching Sikhi.

Sadly, I don't share his enthusiasm or his high expectations. Personally, I believe it will be impossible to reform the religion (just because it's solidified into a religion) and that his efforts will bear little fruit.

That said, **I do think there is hope to retrieve and rejuvenate the original teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors. I feel this can only be done by repackaging them in western format and presenting them to the world outside the Punjab. Remove the cultural trappings and give the Gurus a chance to breathe and to speak once again.**

Now, this begged the question: how can I assist this gentleman in his work? I share his ideals and I think the **Adi Granth is worth trying to rescue from its cultural prison.** I actually was enthusiastic to do something to advance this project. I read his book again and I noticed all the errors in English syntax, grammar and usage. The errors were distracting at best and irritating at worst. Sometimes, it was difficult to understand what was written and at other times it was impossible to decipher it. I am a qualified teacher of English as a second language; I don't pretend to be an expert at grammar and punctuation, but, I have always been an avid reader and a good public speaker. I understand what it takes to communicate an idea to others. I hit on the idea to do the editing (however poorly) to correct all the mistakes and to make the writing comprehensible. In addition, as a westerner, trained in the sciences and a life-long student of different religious paths, I could edit what Dr Chahal wrote so that westerners would find it attractive and interesting to read.

I volunteered my services and my offer was accepted.

The process is both tedious and arduous. Dr Chahal writes the chapter and then sends it to me for the first editing. I return it with my corrections, re-writes, suggestions and requests for clarifications. I imagine when he receives this first corrected draft and sees all the yellow and blue highlighting along with all the red letters, he wonders if he did the correct thing bringing me on board! The corrected draft comes back to me for another review for things I missed the first time

and then back to the author. A third review is usually done.

I am well-suited for this job for reasons other than my ESOL qualifications. As I said at the beginning of this article, **I don't have any time for God and I consider all religions to be poison.** Consequently, I look at what he writes with an eye which is looking for religious biases and I point them out. I am neither a Punjabi nor a Sikh so I don't carry all that cultural and religious baggage collected over a life time. I don't speak Punjabi and I can't read Gurmukhi script so I always have to tell him not to assume I can understand what he is talking about but insist that he include translations into English.

I have read the Adi Granth enough times to spot the difference between cultural accretions and what the Gurus taught. Whenever I find a discrepancy or contradiction, I bring it to his attention. **At times I consider myself to be the grain of sand in the oyster, trying to make a pearl.**

I challenge Dr Chahal to re-think certain concepts. For example, **my most recent recommendation was to replace the word "God" with "Entity" or "Reality".**

I explained that I based this on the fact that the inevitable cultural Christian/Jewish connotations associated with the word "God" are not what Guru Nanak was describing in his Commencing Verse.

Using this word "God" contradicts the adjectives used in the Commencing Verse to describe the "Entity".

Dr Chahal has yet to respond to my recommendation so I don't know what he will have to say; I do know he will approach my suggestion with an open mind. Dr Chahal is trying to reach current Sikhs and so he spends a lot of time discussing the etymology of Punjabi words.

I would suggest that in his next book he writes it entirely in English (with roman transliterations of the Punjabi words), forgets all these etymological arguments and presents the teachings directly to a western audience.

What's in this for me? I certainly did not want my name listed on the book but Dr Chahal overrode my wishes. So, I get a few seconds of fame. But, more than that, I get two big rewards. **First, I am privileged to learn directly from this scholar. I have learned so much about Nanakian Philosophy since I began this work. I can't just read what Dr Chahal writes, I have to think about it carefully and understand it completely. It is so humbling to have this opportunity to study under Dr Chahal, to drink the refreshing nectar of his interpretations.**

Second, I am honoured to work alongside a great man; indeed, I do consider him to be great. Dr Chahal is in his 80's, a time when most would be enjoying in retirement the fruits of a long life. However, he believes that this work is according to the Divine plan for him. His mission to make known the purified teachings of the Gurus motivates him to work diligently.

This undertaking has placed him squarely in the firing line, being the target of slander, name-calling, accusation, ridicule and threats of excommunication. These come from his brother and sister Sikhs as well as from the political/religious power brokers who know that in order to maintain their power base they cannot afford to have anyone rock the boat by modernizing the religion.

Dr Chahal is a dangerous man to these men and he must be silenced somehow. Fortunately, he lives in Canada, a western secular society, far advanced from the theocracies of India. In spite of it all, he soldiers on, "worshiping the feet of the Guru". In my dealings with Dr Chahal I do not see any lust after anything but the truth. He never says any

angry words against his critics. He is humble in his approach, recognizing his short failings as a scholar. His goal is not about self-aggrandizement but rather he puts the teachings first. He is not attached to what he writes, often stating that his work will need validation by future research and study. He understands that everything changes. In his life, **Dr Chahal demonstrates being attuned to the teachings of the Gurus.**

I am grateful to publicly express my gratitude for the opportunity to study with Dr Chahal. **For those readers who have doubts about the current state of Sikhi and who long for the wind of change to blow, I hope that I have given you encouragement to speak up.**

You are a kindred spirit and can contact me via the editor.

As for those who are content to be conservative religious fundamentalists, don't bother sending me your opinions and outrage. I've heard them all and I have found **they do not pass the test for reason and intellectual honesty** that Guru Nanak so strongly stressed in his teachings. Your goal is nothing more than to preserve the status quo; it's a hopeless cause and I don't have the time or the interest to pay any attention.

Let me end this article with a dose of heresy: **Perhaps Dr Chahal is a modern-day guru and I am his Sikh.**

Jesse Schell
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NOTE:

Sikh Virsa International & Singh Sabha International Canada had organized a conference on **Gurbani Science and Logic & Universal Humanitarian Message of Gurbani in Calgary**, Alberta, Canada on Saturday April 11, 2015 as part of their Sikh awareness seminars in which Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal and I participated. Following is a brief outline that Dr. Chahal used at

the Conference in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He is preparing a lengthier paper that we will publish in the May-June 2015 issue of The Sikh Bulletin.

I had used a table of contemporaries of Guru Nanak plus some others to place Guru Nanak in the period known by all as period of Renaissance in Europe. The fact that Guru Nanak single handedly brought renaissance to India at the same time has been lost on all. Additionally I had used pictures of Guru Nanak as three different faiths, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, viewed him. My presentation was oral, the written form, much longer, appears on page 10 as 'Finding Guru Nanak: (1469-1539) My Journey.'

GURBANI, LOGIC AND SCIENCE

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Very few theologians and *kathakaars* (the narrators of Gurbani with stories) discuss this topic, ***“Gurbani, Logic and Science.”*** in Gurdwaras. Same is the case with many Sikh theologians that there is very little emphasis on the

use of logic and scientific information to explain Gurbani. Many of them are against the use or application of logic and science to explain Gurbani even in the 21st century of Science Age.

This attitude of theologians initiated a conflict between scientists and theologians during the Period of Renaissance (between 14th century and 17th century) in Europe. The scientists discovered that many religious concepts taught in Europe cannot stand either logical or scientific test. **On the other hand, during the same period it was Guru Nanak (1469-1539), who started to formulate a philosophy based upon his observations about nature, universe, and behavior of humans to challenge the wrong religious concepts and ritualism in the South Asia and Middle East.** The terms Gurbani, Science and Logic are defined as follows:

Gurbani

Bhai Khan Singh defines Gurbani as follows (*Gurmat Martand*):

The bani (Sabd) uttered by the mouth of Guru Nanak and his successors (to the House of Nanak) Satgurus under the intuition of the God is called Gurbani.

He further emphasized in a note that although Bhai Gurdas uses this term for the bani of all other Atam Gianis, however, this term is reserved, especially, for the Bani of our Satgurus.

Logic (*dictionary.com*)

- A particular method of reasoning or argumentation.

Science

The intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment:

Oxford Dictionaries. Oxford University Press

Religion

Religion is a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.

Faith

Strong or unshakeable belief in something, esp. without proof or evidence.

FAITH / BELIEF

For a long time people of the world were holding a 'faith' that earth was flat. They also thought that Columbus will fall from the end of earth when he sailed into sea to reach India. Nevertheless, he discovered America instead of reaching India without falling of the end of the earth. There are still some societies they do believe that earth is flat, although, it has been confirmed by various experimentations that it is round.

Now scientific discoveries have shown us that our earth is one of the nine (9) planets revolving around our sun. Our sun is one among thousands of billions of suns in our galaxy, Milky Way. Moreover, our Galaxy is one among thousands of billions of galaxies in the universe. Therefore, our earth is insignificant planet and is not the center of the universe. If any religions preach or teach that the earth is flat and sun revolves around it nobody is going to accept that. **We are now living in Science Age of 21st century, therefore, no religious concept will be accepted which cannot stand the test of logic and science.**

During the time of Guru Nanak people were accepting the falsehood easily and did not care to find the truth since they were taught to have FAITH without raising any question. This situation has been explained by Guru Nanak as follows:

Falsehood Dominates:

Guru Nanak had observed that people accept falsehood easily whereas the truth is not easily understood by many:

ਖੋਟੇ¹ ਕਉ ਖਰਾ² ਕਹੈ ਖਰੇ³ ਸਾਰ⁴ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ॥

People readily accept falsehood¹ as the truth² but do not care to know⁴ the truth³. AGGS, M 1, p 229.

Guru Nanak also observed:

That is why people did not understand Gurbani in its real perspective because falsehood had become truth in their minds under the faith system:

ਬਾਣੀ¹ ਬਿਰਲਉ² ਬੀਚਾਰਸੀ³ ਜੇ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ⁴ ਹੋਇ ॥

Only rare persons², who are Guru-oriented⁴, contemplate³ the Bani (Word)¹. AGGS, M 1, p 935.

Anybody who would speak truth is ridiculed or punished or excommunicated or killed. It happened even with Guru Nanak also. He was prisoned when he spoke truth about the cruelty of Babar in Eminabad.

ਸਚ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ¹ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ²

ਸਚੁ³ ਸੁਣਾਇਸੀ⁴ ਸਚ⁵ ਕੀ ਬੋਲਾ⁶ ॥

Nanak speaks² truth¹ and will speak⁴ the truth³ at the right⁵ (appropriate) time⁶. AGGS, M 1, p 723.

Consequently, Guru Nanak was called *Bhutana* (devil spirit) when he declared that God is One and Only:

ਸਾਹਿਬੁ¹ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ² ਹੈ ॥

My God¹ is One and Only^{2,3,4}, Hey Brother!
AGGS, M 1, p 350.

BASIC PRINCIPLES IN GURBANI TO DISCOVER THE TRUTH

Evaluating before Accepting

Guru Nanak advises not to have faith in any philosophy or suggestions or teachings before its proper evaluation:

ਪਹਿਲਾ⁷ ਵਸਤੁ⁸ ਸਿਵਾਣਿ⁹ ਕੈ ਤਾਂ ਕੀਚੈ¹⁰ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ¹¹ ॥

First⁷, evaluate⁹ everything⁸ then buy/accept/adopt^{10, 11}. AGGS, M 1, p 1410.

Use of Wisdom/Intellect (ਅਕਲਿ)

Guru Nanak emphasizes to use wisdom to find out what is right and what is wrong:

ਅਕਲੀ¹¹ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਹ¹² ਕੈ ਬੁਝੀਐ¹³ ਅਕਲੀ¹⁴ ਕੀਚੈ ਦਾਨੁ¹⁵ ॥

With the intellect¹¹, one should read¹² to discover¹³ the truth. In addition, one should use the intellect¹⁴ to evaluate the cause before donating to charity¹⁵ for that cause...

ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ¹⁶ ਰਾਹੁ¹⁷ ਏਹੁ ਹੋਰਿ¹⁸ ਗਲਾਂ¹⁹ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ²⁰ ॥੧॥

Nanak Says¹⁶:

This is the real path¹⁷; all other¹⁸ preachings (talks)¹⁹ lead to devilish actions²⁰. "

AGGS, M 1, p 1245.

ਵੀਚਾਰੁ (Vichaar): Deliberation of Sabd is highest act:

ਸਭਸੈ¹ ਊਪਰਿ² ਗੁਰ³ ਸਬਦੁ⁴ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ⁵ ॥

The act of highest¹ importance² is to deliberate / discuss⁵ the sabd (philosophy)⁴ of the Guru³.

AGGS, M 1, p 904.

ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ¹ ਸਬਦੁ² ਵੀਚਾਰੁ³ ॥

ਹਉਮੈ⁴ ਮਾਰੇ⁵ ਕਰਣੀ⁶ ਸਾਰੁ⁷ ॥੭॥

The service¹ to the Guru is to comprehend³ the philosophy² of the Guru.

What is that philosophy ?

Getting rid⁵ of ego⁴ and to do good⁷ deeds.⁶
AGGS, M 1, p 223

USE OF LOGIC IN GURBANI

Different Processes of Purification for Different Types of Pollutions

ਭਰੀਐ ਹਥੁ ਪੈਰੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ ॥ ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਉਤਰਸੁ ਖੇਹ

॥...If hands are soiled with dust

Then cleansing method is 'use of simple water'.

AGGS, Jap 20, p 4.

Bathing at Holy Places Not Recommended

ਤੀਰਥਿ¹ ਨਾਵਾ² ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ³ ਭਾਵਾ⁴ ਵਿਣੁ ਭਾਣੇ⁵ ਕਿ ਨਾਇ⁶ ਕਰੀ ॥

I would bathe² at holy places¹, if it pleases the God³. AGGS, Jap # 6, p

No Reward for Bathing at Holy Places

ਤੀਰਥੁ ਤਪੁ ਦਇਆ ਦਤੁ ਦਾਨੁ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਪਾਵੈ ਤਿਲ ਕਾ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

People practice pilgrimage, penance/austerity, compassion, and charity;

If there is any reward for such activities then, It is equivalent to sesame seed (means an insignificant

achievement). AGGS, Jap # 21, p 4.

LOGIC AND SCIENCE IN GURBANI

Hukm - Laws of Nature/Universe

Guru Nanak observed that every action and reaction (process) or phenomenon, happening in this universe and in all the living beings is governed under some laws/orders. Guru Nanak calls these laws/order as ਹੁਕਮ (hukm):

ਹੁਕਮੈ¹ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ² ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

Every action and reaction is going on under the Laws of Nature¹. Nothing can happen without these Laws of Nature². AGGS, Jap # 2, p 2.

Infiniteness of Universe

There were different concepts about the vastness of the universe in different religions. After explaining the old concepts Guru Nanak writes his own observations about the infiniteness of universe:

ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੈ ਹੋਇ ਵਿਣਾਸੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਵਡਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪੁ ॥

Number of celestial bodies cannot be counted. God is Great who knows the account (of the celestial bodies in the Universe). AGGS, Jap # 22, p 5.

Origin of Universe

Guru Nanak has very clearly mentioned that the universe came into existence with the forceful bursting of stored energy in ONE

(ਏਕੇ - ੴ). Forceful bursting of stored energy in

ONE (ਏਕੇ - ੴ) is very much comparable to the Big Bang Theory of the 20th century:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ¹ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ² ॥

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ³ ॥

The universe exploded with one sound² (bang) and started to expand¹. Thereafter, many things³ appeared. AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

Time of Origin of Universe

Guru Nanak says that no definite time of origin is known in any religion as explained in the following Sabd:

ਕਵਣੁ ਸੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਵਖਤੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਕਵਣ ਬਿਤਿ ਕਵਣੁ ਵਾਰੁ ॥

AGGS, Jap # 21.

CONCEPT OF GOD

Guru Nanak has given a unique definition of God, which is not found in any other religion:

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

The One and Only (Singularity) - That is Infinite; Exists; Source of every creation;

Without fear (Not governed by any other); Without enmity; Timeless (Without effect of time);

Takes neither birth nor dies; (Never comes into an anthropomorphic form); Originated by Itself;

Enlightener; and Bounteous.

Mantra System

The above phrase, Commencing Verse of the AGGS, is generally called as Mool Mantra. But there is no such system of Mantra in Nanakian Philosophy:

ਜਪੁ¹ ਤਪੁ² ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਸੰਜਮ³ ਥਾਕੀ⁴ ਰਠਿ⁵ ਨਿਗ੍ਰਹਿ⁶ ਨਹੀ
ਪਾਈਐ⁷ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਹਜਿ⁸ ਮਿਲੇ⁹ ਜਗਜੀਵਨ¹⁰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ¹¹
ਬੂਝ¹² ਬੁਝਾਈਐ¹³ ॥੨॥

By practicing recitation ,¹austerity ²and self-discipline ,³people have grown weary ;⁴even after stubbornly ⁵practicing these rituals, they still have not been able ⁶to realize God .⁷ God can only be realized⁹ steadily⁸ through the method¹² explained¹³ by the True Guru¹¹.

AGGS, M 1, p 436.

And

ਤੰਤੁ¹ ਮੰਤੁ² ਪਾਖੰਡੁ³ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਰਾਮੁ⁴ ਰਿਦੈ⁵ ਮਨੁ⁶ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥
ਅੰਜਨੁ⁷ ਨਾਮੁ⁸ ਤਿਸੈ ਤੇ ਸੂਝੈ⁹ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ¹⁰ ਸਚੁ¹¹ ਜਾਨਿਆ
॥੪॥

"I (Nanak) do not believe in magical formulae¹, magical hymns² (including diagrams of mystical characters - yantra-mantra) and religious hypocrisies³, because my mind⁶ is imbibed⁵ with the God⁴. The collyrium⁷ is the teachings of the Guru⁸, that made (me) capable to understand⁹ the Almighty¹¹ through the teachings of the Guru¹⁰." AGGS, M 1, p 766.

Only One Religion for the Humanity

Critical study of bani of Guru Nanak will reveal that he (Guru Nanak) applied 'Natural Theology' and 'Natural Philosophy' to formulate his philosophical religion:

ਏਕੇ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸੋਈ ॥

There is only one religion, which should be adopted by everyone. This is the philosophy (of the perfect Guru) for all the Ages.

AGGS, M 1, p 1188.

ORIGIN OF LIFE

About 15 billion (13.7 billion) years ago our universe originated from a very minute highly concentrated form of energy through big bang, now known as Big Bang Theory. The Sun and its planets were formed between 5 and 4.6 billion years ago when matter in our solar system began to coalesce because of gravitational pull. By about 3.9 billion years ago, one of its planets, the Earth, had an atmosphere that contained the right mix of Hydrogen, Oxygen, Carbon, Phosphorous, and Nitrogen to give rise to Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) which became the base for the origin of life.

By 680 million years ago, *eukaryotic cells* were beginning to become *multicellular organisms*. The ancestor of man, the primate, appeared about 40,000,000 years ago. *Ramapithecus*, who walked on his two feet, appeared about 14,000,000 years ago.

Homo erectus, the new genus, ***Homo***, appeared about 500,000 years ago. ***Homo sapiens***, the first form of wise man, appeared about 250,000 years ago. ***Homo sapiens sapiens***, the current species of wise man, appeared in Europe about 35,000 years ago.

But religions consider that man was created as man or Man in the Image of God from clay:

- According to [Genesis](#) 2:7 "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
- According to the [Qur'an](#) God created man from clay.
- According to Nanakian Philosophy first five Tatts (elements – Hydrogen, Oxygen, Carbon, Nitrogen and Phosphorus) appeared from **ੴ** (Singularity) /
- **ਸੁੰਨ** (Sunn): ਪੰਚ ਤਤੁ ਸੁੰਨਹੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਾ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 1038.

- *Thereafter, the human body appeared from these 5 Tatts (5 elements + more):*

ਪੰਚ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਕੀਨੀ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 1030.

It is evident from the above discussion that application of logic and scientific knowledge to interpret Gurbani makes it more ennobled and profound as mentioned by Einstein:

After religious teachers accomplish the refining process indicated, they will surely recognize with joy that true religion has been ennobled and made more profound by scientific knowledge."

Albert Einstein

CONTEMPORARIES OF GURU NANAK PLUS:

1. **GURU NANAK** (APRIL 15, 1469 – NANKANA SAHIB- SEPTEMBER 22, 1539) KARTAR PUR, PAKISTAN
2. **NICOLAUS COPERNICUS** (FEBRUARY 19, 1473, TORUN - MAY 24, 1543) FROMBORK, POLAND MATHEMATICIAN, ASTRONOMER)
3. **BABUR**, 1ST MUGHAL EMPEROR (FEBRUARY 14, 1483, ANDIJAN, UZBEKISTAN - DECEMBER 26, 1530, AGRA, INDIA
4. **MARTIN LUTHER** (NOVEMBER 10, 1483, - FEBRUARY 18, 1546, EISLEBEN) GERMANY (CHRISTIAN PRIEST & PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY) PROTESTANT MOVEMENT.
5. **VASCO DA GAMA** (1460S SINES, PORTUGAL– 23 DECEMBER 1524, KOCHI, INDIA) PORTUGUESE COUNT AND EXPLORER

6. **MICHELANGELO** (MARCH 6, 1475, CAPRESE - 18 FEBRUARY 1564, ROME, ITALY) SCULPTOR, ARTIST

7. **KING HENRY VIII** (JUNE 28, 1491, PALACE OF PLACENTIA, GREENWICH - JANUARY 28, 1547, PALACE OF WHITEHALL, LONDON, UK

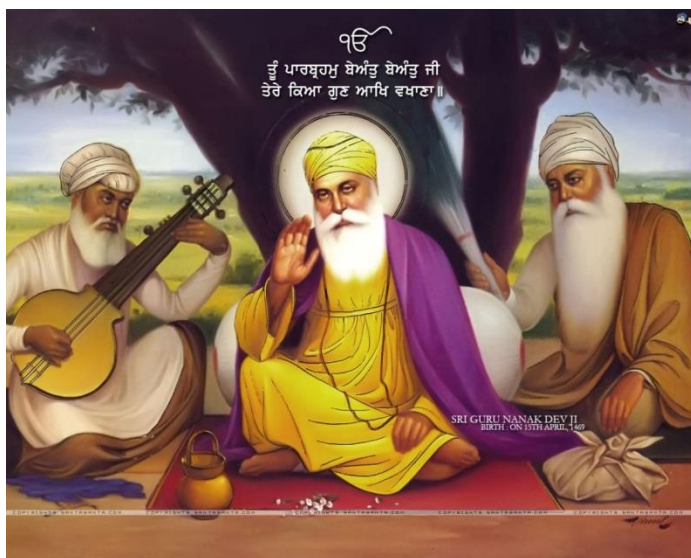
8. **CHARLES DARWIN** (FEBRUARY 12, 1809, THE MOUNT, SHREWSBURY - APRIL 19, 1882) DOWN HOUSE, DOWNE, UK **THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES**

9. **ALFRED WEGENER** (NOVEMBER 1, 1880, BERLIN, GERMANY - NOVEMBER 1930, CLARINETANIA, GREENLAND THEORY OF CONTINENTAL DRIFT

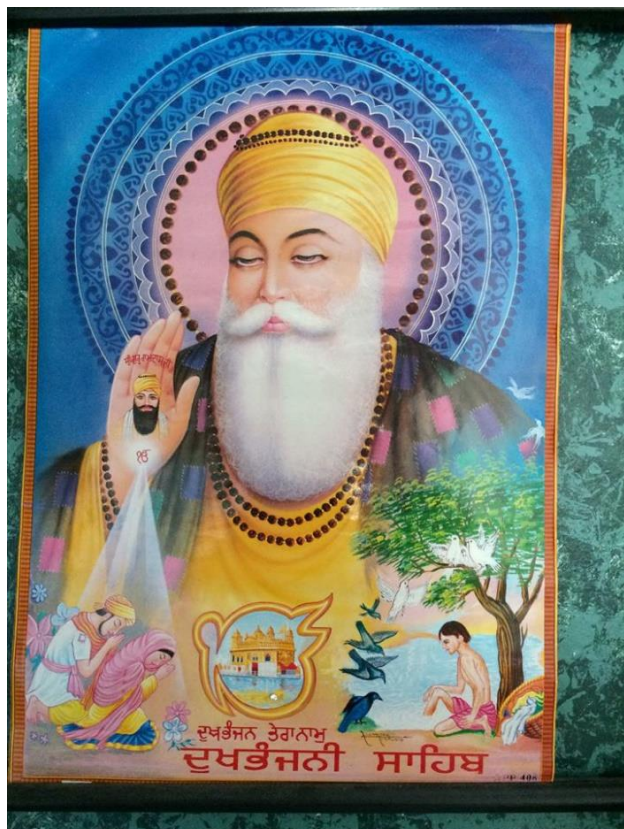
10. **PROPHET MOHAMMAD** (570-632), Founder of Islam

11. **MOSES** (1391-1271 BCE), Author of Ten Commandments.

Pictures of and about Guru Nanak used by me at Calgary, Alberta, Canada Conference on April 11, 2015.



**Guru Nanak, Bala and Mardana.
Companionship of Bala is disputed.**



Hindu Nanak

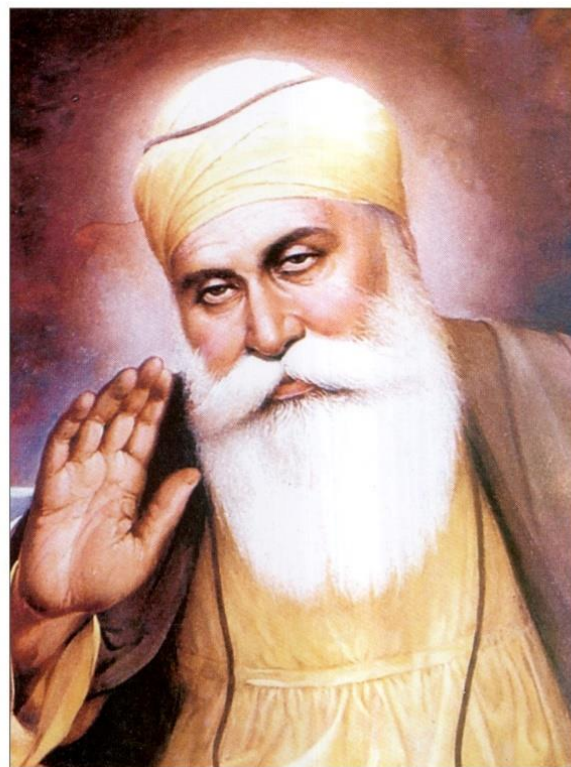


Fig. 2-7. Guru Nanak. In this type of paintings rosaries (*malas*) around the turban, in the hand and around the neck are clearly shown. This type of painting is very common in Gurdwaras and in houses of many Sikhs.

Sikh Nanak by Sobha Singh



Fig.2-5. Haji Bektashi with turban on Kula (cap). The end of his turban coming out is not seen in the painting, it may be on the other side. The facial expression resembles with that of Guru Nanak in Fig. 2-3.

Haji Bektashi, Turkey

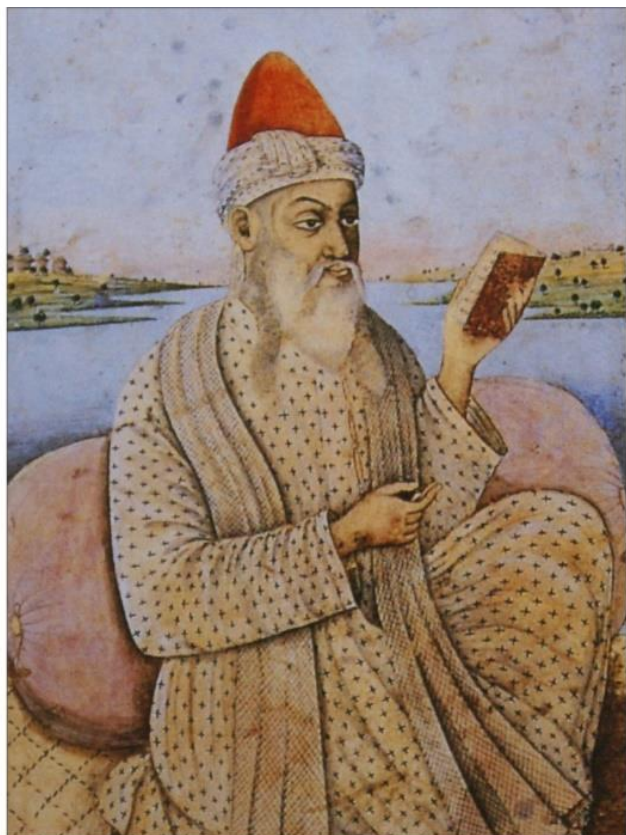


Fig. 2-3. Guru Nanak with a turban on *Kula* (cap) and one end of his turban is coming out. The turban style is very similar to that of Maulana Jallaluddin Rumi of Konya, Turkey (Fig.2-4). Guru Nanak is shown holding a notebook in which he used to write his Bani. The most prominent feature to be noted is that there is no *tilak* (frontal mark), no rosary (*mala*) in his hand or around his neck or around his turban. (Reproduced with permission from Rooli Books from *The Sikhs* by Khushwant Singh and Raghu Rai)



Fig. 2-4. Maulana Jallaluddin Rumi of Konya, Turkey with turban on *Kula* (cap) and one end of his turban is coming out.

Rumi

Sufi Nanak

Background landscape is very similar to
Istanbul, Turkey



ਕਰਤਾਰ ਪੁਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪੀਰ ਦੀ ਮੁਬਾਰਕ ਕਬਰ
Muslim Memorial to Guru Nanak at Kartar Pur



ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਸਮਾਧ
Hindu Memorial to Guru Nanak at Kartar Pur



Sikh Memorial to Guru Nanak at Kartar Pur



ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ
ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਖੂਹ ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਹੁਣੇ ਮੁਰੰਮਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ

Persian Wheel Memorial to Guru Nanak at Kartar Pur

**FINDING GURU NANAK
(1469-1539)
THE ONE & ONLY
MY JOURNEY**
Hardev Singh Shergill



Hardev Singh Shergill, Publisher of the Sikh Bulletin

My journey began on January 3rd 1934 at my Nanke village Sakruli of Hoshiarpur District of Panjab, India, in the same house where my mother was born. Born into a khande-di- pahul dhari Sikh household, I had turned agnostic by the time I turned twelve. Being educated in a Hindi medium state, my mother had taught me Gurmukhi at home when I was in 3rd grade. For practice I read my father's books, among them ***Bale-dian-Sakhian*** and ***Bachittar Natak***.

Although village Gurdwara always had a resident Granthi, my father used to perform all the religious services such as monthly Sangrands, Gurpurabs, weddings etc. I grew up knowing people addressing him as Giani Ji. So I had a fair

understanding that Sikh faith started with Guru Nanak, followed by nine other Gurus who were considered Guru Nanak's jyote and that the tenth Guru declared an end to bodily Guru and assigned Guruship to Adi Granth now called Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

I did not believe a word in those two books.

Most galling thing I remember is the writer taking us for fools, when talking about God coming to Guru Gobind Singh while he was doing tapasya at Hemkunt in his previous life and wanting to send him to earth (*maatloke*) to save the mankind. Two questions arose in my ten year old mind: Hemkunt was already on this earth in Himalayas, so Guru Gobind Singh was already on this earth. Secondly, if this Guru was to be deputed by God to save the humanity then which God had sent Guru Nanak, ten generations earlier, whose message Guru Gobind Singh was propagating?

For 5th grade I was sent to a boarding school. Since English in Bikaner State started in 3rd grade and village teachers knew no English, the curriculum for the grades 1 to 5 had two streams, one for village schools and another for city schools. Village 4th grade pass students were enrolled in a class called Special Class in which they studied only English; grade 3 and 4 English during the first half of the year and grade 5 English during second half. Other 5th grade city subjects were mastered in the 3rd and 4th grades of village schools. So I had plenty of time in my 5th grade to read all the Hindu granths in the middle school library, including **Mahabharat and Ramayan**.

My strongest memory from all that reading is the wonderment in my mind about God. Any time a tapasvee had done enough tapasya to reach God, God would send an Apasra (I called them heavenly prostitutes) and the poor tapasvee would fall from grace. To a twelve year old there was no difference between Hinduism and Sikhism. I turned agnostic, although I did not know this term

then. I just could not see any difference between Hinduism and Sikhism nor could I believe in God that seemed the same in both the religions.

Gurbani stresses '*bibek-budhi*'. I did not know it then but I was unconsciously using it when I rejected what I read in *Bale-dian-Sakhian*, *Bachittar Natak*, and *Hindu Granths* by the ripe old age of twelve.

I was not confused; I was turned off religion.

Any lingering doubts were cleared by the 1947 riots in India and Pakistan which preceded the partition in the Punjab region in the west and Bengal on the east; between 200,000 to 500,000 people were killed in the retributive genocide in the name of religion. Estimated 14 million Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were displaced during the partition. The home land of two communities with same history, language and culture, who had lived in harmony for centuries, Bengal in the east and Panjab in the west, were dismembered with a pen into two. It was the largest mass migration in human history.

The only reason for this partition of a country was religion.

I had no use for any religion. During my seven years of university education in Panjab where I received my Masters and Bachelor of Education degrees and three years of teaching in Panjab and Delhi, I visited no Gurdwara, other than Gurdwara Sis Ganj in New Delhi, once, for its historical interest, where Muslim Mughal rulers had put to death 9th Nanak, Guru Tegh Bahadur, for purely religious reasons.

Around age sixty, under the influence of Hindu granths read in my childhood and having helped raise my younger siblings and my own children I wanted to do something for the community that I was born into. But I could never have dreamt what a traumatic experience that desire would put me through. Gurdwaras do not do what I wanted to do

but I was introduced to a Sant Baba who turned out to be a world class con artist, scoundrel and a sociopath.

After acquiring the Gurdwara building through Court Order in April 1996 and learning the meaning of the Commencing Verse of Adi Granth in English I said to myself that **Guru Nanak's 'God' I could believe in** because it was not human at all. In fact the verse says clearly that Ek Onkar is Nirbhau, Nirvair, Akaal Murat, Ajuni, all the attributes that humans don't possess. To the best of my understanding Guru Nanak's '*God*' was some mysterious and all powerful (Shakti) ENERGY, mother of all the forces, that cannot be described and there was only one of its kind and self-created.

I could not bring myself to run this Gurdwara as the other Gurdwaras were run. I wanted to understand what entire Adi Granth meant. I searched for and met some practicing Sikhs; but they were so few. In 2002 we started a Sikhi Reform movement as was the case with Singh Sabha movement during the British occupation of Panjab. Year 2004 was the second most audacious attempt when Prof. Gurtej Singh and I went around the world for six weeks and held six major and three minor conferences in six countries, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, USA, UK and India.

All that came to naught when the Amritsar, Panjab based Sikh religious establishment first tried desperately to deny us a venue for the 2003 conference in Chandigarh. We had to obtain a court order to hold our conference, less than 24 hours hence. The judge had to hold court in his house on Diwali day, Saturday, before our Sunday conference to reinstate our third venue.

October 2003 conference report appears in December 2003 issue of The Sikh Bulletin. Please go to www.sikhbulletin.com

Report on 2004 conferences was published in November-December 2004 Sikh Bulletin. Please go to www.sikhbulletin.com

By the time I came back home from the 2003

conference two weeks later, there was a new Gurdwara in our vicinity, established on short order and with three year lease at \$8,300.00 per month. Upon return home after six worldwide conferences in 2004 I found that the 2003 Gurdwara had split into two, a very common occurrence in the history of Gurdwaras in North America. The second group was paying over \$5,000.00 monthly rent. I was charging no rent for the 7,900.00 square foot building being used as Sikh Center, Roseville, California.

By this time we had banned from our Gurdwara everything from Dasam Granth, including three khande-di-pahul banis and beloved Chaupai, dropped Bhagauti from Ardas, adopted Nanakshahi calendar before SGPC or Akal Takhat approved it and best of all stopped the practice of Akhandpaths.

We closed doors on Vaisakhi day in 2005 for lack of sangat.

Seventy years later I have not only come full circle but also gone beyond. **I have now become a confirmed Atheist.**

Or am I a Deist?

I came across '**Deist**' term only in January 2015 when I was reading '**Nanak: The Guru**', published by the **Institute for Understanding Sikhism** for publication in Jan-Feb 2015 issue of the Sikh Bulletin. This publication is authored by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal, Dr. Kulbir Singh Thind and Dr. A. S. Dhaliwal and **edited by Jesse Schell of New Zealand.**

I first got to know Jesse in January 2014 when he wrote to me for some issues of **The Sikh Bulletin**. It turned out that he had been studying all the world's religions and lately had come upon Sikhism on the internet. What he found on the internet about Sikhism was very confusing and contradictory. Then he had a brilliant idea. He googled '**heretic Sikh**' and found The Sikh

Bulletin and me. He started reading The Sikh Bulletin from its first issue on the internet but soon learned what to skip. Correspondence between us then commenced in earnest.

He came across to me as someone with very keen and inquiring mind and I felt an immediate kinship with him. We seemed to hold some very similar views. **Inquiring mind is what Guru Nanak preached in his hymns.**

Guru Nanak practiced what he preached. He critiqued religious philosophy of Hindus and Muslims and rejected their concepts of Gods and religions unequivocally.

It was in the write up about Jesse in '**Nanak: The Guru**' (Published in the January-February 2015 issue of The Sikh Bulletin) that I came to read, "**He now describes himself as a secular humanist with Deist leanings.**" That sent me immediately to the dictionary because this term was new to me.

It struck me that **Guru Nanak**, as I have understood, was definitely not an atheist but the term '**secular humanist with Deist leanings**' could be applied to him and he certainly was the first **Deist without any religious connotations, two centuries before it emerged in Europe.**

Deism is a theological position concerning the relationship between "**the Creator**" and the **natural world**. Deistic viewpoints emerged during the scientific revolution of 17th-century Europe and came to exert a powerful influence during the eighteenth century enlightenment.

"Deism combines a rejection of religious knowledge as a source of authority with the conclusion that **reason and observation of the natural world** are sufficient to determine the existence of a **single creator of the universe**." For Deists, human beings can **only know God via reason and the observation of nature, but not by revelation or supernatural manifestations (such as miracles).**

- Creator exists and created the universe.
- Creator gave humans the ability to reason.

It was the use of reason and observation that led Guru to write:

ਧਵਲੈ ਉਪਰਿ ਕੇਤਾ ਭਾਰੁ ॥
 D̥havlai upar ketā bhār.
 ਧਰਤੀ ਹੋਰੁ ਪਰੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਹੋਰੁ ॥
 D̥hartī hor parai hor hor.
 ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਭਾਰੁ ਤਲੈ ਕਵਣੁ ਜੋਰੁ ॥

Tis tē bhār ṭalai kavaṇ jor.
*What a great load there is on the bull!
 There are countless earths beyond this earth.
 What power holds them, and supports their
 weight? AGGS M1, p 3*

Hindu philosophy believed that earth is supported by a mythical bull. Whenever that bull shifts the weight of the earth from one horn to the other, earthquakes result. But Guru says this is not the only earth. There are countless earths. What power supports their weight?

He then answers his own question:

ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
*Everything is subject to the Laws of Nature;
 nothing is beyond the Laws of Nature.*
 AGGS M1, p 1

ਸੈਲ ਪਥਰ ਮਹਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਏ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਆਗੈ ਕਰਿ
 ਧਰਿਆ ॥੧॥

*The Creator provides sustenance for every form
 of life it created in water, on earth and even
inside the rocks.*

That was Guru Nanak's message two hundred years before the term Deist was coined. If he were born in Europe every one now would know about him. In the Indian sub-continent

every new philosophy is, sooner or later, smothered under the shade of Brahmanical tree. That is what happened to Buddhism and now it is Sikhism's turn. Even Islam got brahmanized. Three countries of the Indian Sub-Continent, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, that were one country until 1947, are the only examples in the world where Muslims practice caste system.

I came across a book on Buddhism in a Singapore hotel room. As I read it I was surprised how close to Guru Nanak's philosophy it was until I got through halfway. Then suddenly it made an about face and became Vedantic philosophy that Sikhism has become.

Guru Nanak says there is no heaven or hell after life. We make our life heaven or hell by our own actions and any punishment or reward that is due to us is given during our mortal stay on Earth.

"Deism holds that God does not intervene with the functioning of the natural world in any way, allowing it to run according to the laws of nature.

How similar it is to my SB May-June 2012 editorial: "Guru Nanak's God is bountiful God of the entire universe and all the creation in it. It does not micro manage Its Creation; nor It applies its laws selectively."

This similarity between my editorial and Deism belief has another companion:

"Once I understood God as described by Guru Nanak I had no problem accepting it. My beef was with the God/Gods of all the other religions that laid claim to divine revelation and proclaimed man to be created in the image of God. In reality what they have done is create God in the image of man. [SB Sept-Oct 2011 Editorial]

We had started publishing chapters from Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal's book **"Nankian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity"** starting with the November-December 2011 issue of the Sikh Bulletin. In the March-April 2012 issue we were going to publish Chapter 12 **'Concept of God'**. In preparation for that I decided to look for a book on evolution of the concept of God. The book that I chose to read on this subject was **"The Evolution of God" by Robert Wright**, published in June 2009 by Little, Brown and Company. This book put into words my thoughts that I had developed over time. It was also gratifying to learn that I shared a basic belief with **Aristotle**. **"According to the book of Genesis, God created man in his own image, but according to Aristotle, men create gods after their own image."**

God and religion are the two worst farces ever committed on mankind.

Religions cannot be reformed and that includes Sikhism. Martin Luther (1483-1546), a contemporary of Guru Nanak and, some even think they met, tried to reform Christianity. Result is Catholic Church just as strong but Protestant Churches have multiplied.

Maryada Dilemma

Mr. Gurbachan Singh Tohra, President of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak for a quarter century, was once asked by the Sikh ladies from the United States why women are not allowed to do sewa at Darbar Sahib. His answer was that sewa by men only had become a tradition. Fact that he was administering the affairs of the institution established to perpetuate the teachings of a person who had rejected all the traditions of the religion and society he was born into was inconsequential.

Maryadas (established traditions) that Guru Nanak rejected:

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu household but with that faith Sikhism shares almost nothing, not even the concept of One God. At a very young age Nanak refused to wear the janeu (Hindu sacred thread worn by high caste males); discarded the caste system (a religiously sanctioned discrimination still entrenched in the 21st century democratic India); preached against idol worship; recognized the equality of mankind; asserted the equality of men and women; condemned the Hindu practice of *Sati* (live immolation of widow on her husband's funeral pyre); instructed the women to discard veil; allowed widow and widower remarriage; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell (after death), incarnation, 84 lakh juni (8,400,000 life forms) *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses; and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*' (wishing well being of all, not just of oneself, one's own family or one's own country) in his prayers.

His was a faith of Secular Humanism and is a faith for this Scientific Age.

Gurbani has nothing comparable to **Ten Commandments or Sharia law**. Instead the Guru simply says:

- 1. Do not commit an act that you will later regret and;**
- 2. Do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind.**

In both cases Guru wants you to use your **bibek-budhi** (discerning mind) that evolution has equipped you with.

Origins of religion:

Religion was created to bring order to the social organization in the absence of secular codes of conduct and means to enforce their implementation. God did not appear on Mount Sinai to Moses (1391–1271 BCE). Moses himself

chiseled the Ten Commandments on a slab of stone to put fear of God to control the desperate and increasingly unruly people.

Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy
5. Honour thy father and thy mother
6. Thou shalt not kill
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not steal
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour
10. Thou shalt not covet (neighbor's house, wife, servants, animals, or anything else)

Moses's flock believed in multiple Gods, made their idols, showed no respect to their elders, engaged in murderous and immoral acts, stole, lied, practiced slavery and were treating all women as personal property, not as equal humans.

One does not need God to come up with the above commandments. In today's society they are common sense. But they do tell a great deal about that society. They show the social mindset of those people at that time that was very destructive to the fabric of the society.

They worshipped multiple Gods and their idols, their living was not truthful, and they showed disrespect to their elders, engaged in murder and took by force or stealth what was not their own, a lawless group of people.

They also held other humans as slaves and treated their women as property as they would their house, servants, animals, or anything else. So Moses invoked God.

That is what religion does, puts fear of God in people's minds to control their behaviour.

Evolution of God and religion also came in handy for the powerful to stay powerful and for ambitious and charismatic characters like Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805 – 1844), the founder of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Like Mohammed he too was led to God's word by an Angel, Gabriel for former and Moroni for the latter, and if God was accessible to Moses and Mohammed then why not to Joseph Smith and he got witnesses to prove it although they would not have witnessed anything.

Today there are plentiful Evangelical Christian preachers who claim to have been commandeered by God himself to do His work.

Human nature, governed by evolution, being the same prompted the Shamans, Medicine men, Chiefs and Kings, from the Pharaohs to rulers of more recent times and some even today, with their divine right to rule, to use religion and God to perpetuate their special and superior status. Kings of Egypt, Mayan Kings and more recently English Kings claimed to be the sole agents of the Gods. Henry VIII in England dissolved the monasteries and abbeys of Roman Catholic Church in 1536 and set the Anglican Church apart from the Roman Catholic Church. Constantine the Great (272-337) became the first Roman Emperor (306-307) to convert to Christianity that his predecessors persecuted because it suited his political ambitions. Mohammed was a political ruler. His moral compass made necessary adjustments depending upon the circumstances.

Beginning of **monotheism** is generally attributed to **Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.**

But here is an interesting point to ponder.

The concept of Indo-European Languages, and therefore people, is well accepted. This is the largest language family group with three billion

speakers. Of the twenty languages with the largest numbers of native speakers twelve are Indo-European, English and Punjabi among them. Take the English word **CREATOR** and Punjabi word **KARTAR** that Guru Nanak used to address 'God'. Word sounds come from consonants. So when we remove the vowels from both of these words we are left with **C R T R** and **K R T R**. Now C and K in English produce the same sound unless they are followed by letter H which is not the case here. Would it be a stretch to suggest that perhaps, at least among the Indo European speaking people, monotheism preceded the concept of multiple Gods? It is very tempting to have exclusively your own God. In ancient Israel each city state had its own Yahweh until the most powerful tribe's Yahweh triumphed over the other weaker Yahwehs.

It might not be too far out to speculate that the Indo-European people, before they spread to the present geographical expanse from British Isles through Europe and Iran to the Indian sub-continent, developed the concept of a single Creator but as the time went on it evolved into multiple private single Gods.

The man first showed his audacity by first creating a God and then having that God create man in HIS image.

I strongly believe that Guru Nanak discarded the concept of religion and God as preached by all the prevalent religions. If Guru Nanak were to be here today he will surely say he is neither Hindu, nor Muslim nor Sikh or any of the Semitic religions.

Oral tradition has it that when Guru Nanak received his enlightenment, when he had disappeared across the Vein River for three days of intense introspection, the first words he uttered were 'Na Ko Hindu Na Mussalman'.

Guru Nanak had come to the conclusion that root cause of all the conflict in the society,

which in his time consisted of two majority religions, Hinduism and Islam, was the religion. To Guru Nanak religion was a divisive force, each with its own God; whereas he wanted his mission to bring people together, unite humanity, because we are all children of One Creator.

Syed Mushtaq Hussain, a young man from Kashmir, had been left behind in Mecca to study Quran for a period of three years from 1927 to 1930 by his parents during a Hajj pilgrimage. There this young man came across two manuscripts, one by **Taajudin Naqshabandhi**, who had joined Guru Nanak and remained with him for roughly one-and-a-half to two years and **Khwaja Jainul Abdin**, the author of *Tarikhe Arab*, who wrote the first-person account of Guru Nanak Dev ji's Arabian journey.

During Guru Nanak's visit to Mecca, **Qazi Ruknuddin** was among the first batch of Muslims who had extensive dialogue with him. After the **incident in which Nanak was found sleeping with his feet pointing in the "wrong" direction**, several Hajjis or pilgrims to Mecca-Medina gathered around Guru Nanak, seeking a dialogue:

In his Arabic book, *Tarikhe Arab*, **Khwaja Jainul Abdin** writes, "I was with Guru Nanak Dev Ji when Guru Ji met **Qazi** (an Islamic religious judge) **Rukn-ud-din**." As they came face-to-face **Rukn-ud-din** offered his Salam, and the Guru replied, "Sat Shri Akal, Gurbar Akal" (The Lord immortal is the sole truth; the all-powerful timeless God).

Qazi Ruknuddin then asked Nanak:
"Fala Allah mazabo"? (What is your religion?)

To that Guru Nanak responded:
"Abdulla Allah la mazaboo" (I am a man of God and belong to no religion.)

"This was one of some 360 questions and answers from Guru Nanak's dialogues during his Middle-

East Visit."

This response by Guru Nanak reminded me of a similar utterance I heard in a scene of a play, '**Bulleshah' (1680-1757)** performed in Chandigarh by a Pakistani group in 2004. Two of his disciples were accosted by the religious police while eating during daylight during the month of Ramadan. When asked what religion they belonged to they had responded that they were Muslims. Bulleshah told them that with their response they asked for that treatment because a Muslim is not supposed to eat during the day time during the month of Ramadan fasting; that their answer should have been 'we are men of God'.

The incident in which Nanak was found sleeping with his feet pointing in the "wrong" direction i.e. towards Kaaba, is illustrative of Guru's unique method of getting his message across.

Appearing at Hardwar where Hindus were performing the ritual of throwing water up towards the sun in the east for their deceased ancestors, instead of questioning them, Guru waded into the Ganges and started throwing water towards the west. When they questioned him he nonchalantly replied that he was watering his fields in Panjab. When they questioned what made him think his water would get there his response was a teaching moment. If their water could reach their deceased ancestors in another world his could certainly reach another place on this world.

Compare this with similar incident involving **St. Thomas, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus**, who founded the first Christian church in India, in A.D. 52, at Parur, Kerala, on the west coast of southern India:

"At Palayur Church in Guruvayur, Kerala, Thomas is said to have raised the first cross in India and performed one of his earliest miracles: When he encountered a group of Brahmans throwing water into the air as part of a ritual, he asked why the water fell back to earth if it was

pleasing to their deity. My God, Thomas said, would accept such an offering. He then flung a great spray into the air, and the droplets hung there in the form of glistening white blossoms. Most onlookers converted on the spot; the rest fled." [From the National Geographic March 2012 p52]

Guru Nanak's mission was to spread the message of common origins and brotherhood of mankind and importance of truthful living. *Truth is higher than everything; but higher still is truthful living.* //5// AGGS, M 1, p 62. Religions can be changed, voluntarily or by inducements as in Christianity and by the sword as in Islam, but truthful living does not have to change with change in faith.

I firmly believe that Guru Nanak and Guru Granth are not for starting a new religion. Sikhism is a way of life. Whereas religions compartmentalize people, Sikhism breaks those barriers.

An excellent example of that is the incorporation of writings of both Hindus and Muslims that are compatible with gurbani.

It is true that the Christian Bible incorporates the Old Testament, the Jewish scripture, and Mohammed accepted the Jewish and Christian prophets; but that is all among the one family of Semitic people who shared common origins, culture and history. Christ himself was a Jew. His was a crusade for reform in the practice of Jewish faith that had come to be controlled by the Temple Priests.

It was the rejection of Christ by the establishment Judaism that gave an impetus to what came to be known as Christianity. Islam, on the other hand, was an alien faith in the Indian sub-continent, with no common history or bond with the native religions of India. But Guru Nanak found fellow interpreters of Koran among Muslims and incorporated their writings to reinforce his views which had universal application.

The strongest evidence of Guru Nanak's aversion towards religion is found on P. 1136 of AGGS.

ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥

Nā am Hindū nā Musalmān.

We are neither Hindus, nor Muslims. AGGS M5, p 1136

To fully understand the immense significance of the above quote the entire hymn is reproduced below:

ਵਰਤ¹ ਨ ਰਹਉ² ਨ ਮਹ ਰਮਦਾਨਾ³ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ⁴ ਸੇਵੀ⁵ ਜੇ ਰਖੈ ਨਿਦਾਨਾ⁶ ॥੧॥

ਏਕੁ⁷ ਗੁਸਾਈ⁸ ਅਲਹੁ⁹ ਮੇਰਾ ॥

ਹਿੰਦੂ¹⁰ ਤੁਰਕ¹¹ ਦੁਹਾਂ ਨੇਬੇਰਾ¹² ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਹਜ¹³ ਕਾਬੈ ਜਾਉ ਨ ਤੀਰਥ¹⁴ ਪੂਜਾ¹⁵ ॥

ਏਕੇ ਸੇਵੀ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੨॥

ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਉ ਨ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਉ¹⁶ ॥

ਏਕ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ¹⁷ ਲੇ ਰਿਚੈ¹⁸ ਨਮਸਕਾਰਉ¹⁹ ॥੩॥

ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥

ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡੁ²⁰ ਪਰਾਨ²¹ ॥੪॥

ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਇਹੁ ਕੀਆ ਵਖਾਨਾ²² ॥

ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰ ਮਿਲਿ²³ ਖੁਦਿ²⁴ ਖਸਮੁ²⁵ ਪਛਾਨਾ ॥੫॥੩॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 1136.

I do not practice² the fasts¹ (of Hindus), nor do I observe the month of Ramadaan³ (the Roza³). I serve⁵ only the One⁴, who protects all till the end of life⁶. 1.

My God is only One⁷, Who is called Gosain⁸ (by the Hindus) and Allah⁹ (by the Muslims). I have separated¹² myself from (religious practices) of them both, the Hindus¹⁰ and the Muslims¹¹. Pause.

I do not make pilgrimages¹³ to Mecca, nor do I worship¹⁵ at Hindu sacred shrines¹⁴. 4.

I serve no other than the Only One. 2. I do not perform Hindu worship, nor do I offer¹⁶ the Muslim prayers.

I have understood in my mind¹⁸ and pay my obeisance¹⁹ to the One, the Formless¹⁷. 3.

We are neither Hindus, nor Muslims. My body²⁰ and life²¹ belong to the One (who is) Allah (for Muslims) and Ram (for Hindus). 4.

Oh Kabir! This is what I say²²: That the one-self²⁴ can realize²⁶ the God²⁵ through Guru - Pir (Spiritual Teacher)²³. 5. 3.

AGGS, M 5, p 1136.

Quotes above are from the Bani of Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev Ji. Guru Ji is stressing that whole Human Race is one big Family. He is expressing, succinctly, the views of Guru Nanak. When he started compiling the Adi Granth he had access to all the writings of Guru Nanak that had survived the ravages of Gurus travels and time. Any hymn he found intact he recorded it in Adi Granth as Guru Nanak's bani but there was enough other material which could not be entered in a hymn format. Guru Arjan incorporated those views into his hymns. Then he set upon to select hymns that were collected by Guru Nanak from Hindu and Muslim bhagats that were compatible with Guru Nanak's views and incorporated them into Adi Granth. Adi Granth is the only scripture that incorporates writings from people professing other faiths.

Guru Nanak preached to his Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Muslim audiences in India and the Middle East and to the Christian and Jewish audiences whom he must have come across during his visit to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad, that human race is one, created by the same Creator, out of the same elements. So why should there be any conflict based on manmade institution of religion? Scientific research on human origins confirms the same thing. In fact it even pin points origin of human race to an 'African Mother'.

During Guru Nanak's period his followers were identified as **Nanakpanthis**. But by the time of 3rd

Nanak, Guru Amar Das, the word **Sikh**, from Sanskrit word ‘**Shishya**’ (Student) had crept into the vocabulary just as ‘**Taliban**’ in Pashto in Afghanistan means student of Islam. [It is noteworthy that the Indian government, especially after 1984, tried to equate Sikhs, whom it does not even recognize as distinct from Hinduism in its Constitution, with Taliban as terrorists and even United States State Department succumbed to that trap by including several seconds of Indian army’s attack on Darbar Sahib as an act to drive Sikh Terrorists’ out in its post 9/11 video on terrorism distributed in nations’ schools.]

Guru Nanak’s concept of what other religions call ‘God’ in the opening verse of Adi Granth:

First three words of the Commencing Verse in Adi Granth, *Ek Onkar, Satnam, Karta purakh*, to me mean there is only one entity whose True Name is Karta purakh, The Creator that created Itself.

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

The opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib, shown above, is accepted as Guru Nanak’s description or definition of God. English translation of the above verse by Manmohan Singh in ‘Sri Guru Granth Sahib’, published by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee is as follows:

There is but one God. True is His name, creative His personality and immortal His form. He is without fear, sans enmity, unborn and self-illuminated. By the Guru’s grace (He is obtained).

Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal’s translation which prompted me to accept Guru Nanak’s description of God back in 1999:

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ
ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ik oa’nkār sat̃ nām kartā purakh̃ nirbh̃aṁo nirvair
akāl mūrāt̃ ajūnī saibh̃a’n gur parsād̃.

The One and Only, Oh the Infinite; Exists; Creator; Without fear (Not governed by any other-Not under any Law of University); Without enmity; Timeless (Without effect of time and space); Neither takes birth nor dies; (Never comes into any anthropomorphic form); Created by Itself; Enlightener; and Bounteous.

My definition as published in the January-February 2015 issue of the Sikh Bulletin:

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ
ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ik oa’nkār sat̃ nām kartā purakh̃ nirbh̃aṁo
nirvair akāl mūrāt̃ ajūnī saibh̃a’n gur parsād̃.

There is One and Only, a Singular Reality, whose True Name is The Creator, that created Itself; It has no human attributes such as fear, enmity, limited life span, an image and therefore it does not communicate with the Prophets directly or through others, as the Semitic religions claim, nor does it incarnate as a human as Hinduism claims. IT can only be comprehended through knowledge.

What does it really mean? What does it describe? Certainly it is not anything akin to a human. It is formless and timeless and yet is self-existent. It does not incarnate in any human or other form.

In the opening line of ‘Jap’ that immediately follows the above opening verse the Guru doubles down. He unequivocally reasserts his firm belief that what he is saying is an absolute truth.

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1|| AGGS M1 p1

It was there before the Creation, at the time of

Creation, now and it will be there in the future, for ever and ever. It was there when there was *sun*, nothingness. Out of this nothingness It created the cosmos, in an instant.

There is a single English word that describes what Guru is saying and that word is *ENERGY*.

Guru Nanak is quite certain that ‘God’ is a singularity, unlike Hindu or Christian Trinity, and says its true name is **Creator**. It is the Creator of everything, visible and invisible. It created itself but unlike its creation It is timeless and formless.

But then he mentions two attributes that are purely human, fear and enmity, but says God does not show either. Then why mention it unless Guru Nanak also wishes man to aspire to be God like. If one treats others as he would like to be treated then there would be no enmity. **If there is no enmity, there is no hostility and fear will disappear. That is a strong indication of life course that Guru Nanak would like us to follow.**

Origin of Universe according to Guru Nanak:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ ॥

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥

The universe exploded from one source of energy (One - Singularity) and started to expand. Thereafter many things appeared.
AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

Does that sound like ‘Big Bang’ theory? Yet we do not perceive Guru Nanak as a scientist but we do consider his contemporary, **Copernicus**, as a scientist. Alfred Wegener published his Theory of Continental Drift in 1912 but he was not believed because he was unable to provide a convincing explanation for the physical processes which might have caused this drift. But he was right nevertheless. **Similarly Guru Nanak was right about the origin of universe. It took only 500 years for the ‘scientists’ to propose that theory.**

Not only that, Guru Nanak also says that everything that has been created will die including this universe, only Creator never dies:

The Cosmos has coalesced and reformed several times according to the *Hukam*:

ਕਈ ਬਾਰ ਪਸਰਿਓ ਪਸਾਰ ॥

ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਇਕੁ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ॥

The Cosmos has coalesced and reformed several times but the Creator is eternal. AGGS, M 5, p. 276.

Long before the modern scientific thought developed Guru Nanak sowed the seeds of it in the opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib and the bani ‘Jap’ that follows it.

Evolution of Life!

The Cosmos is continuously evolving, be it the Earth and the life on it. Guru Nanak postulates that life evolved in water and water is essential for the survival of life:

ਸਾਚੇ ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੈ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮੋਇ ॥

The True One created the air; air produced water and it is water wherein evolved the world of life with Cosmic-consciousness (God-consciousness).
AGGS, M 1, p. 19.

Similarly Guru Nanak turned the Hindu concept of transmigration into ‘**Origin of Species**’ attributed to **Charles Darwin**, 400 years after **Guru Nanak**.

Homo sapiens evolved through countless forms of life like other species - ants, worms, moths, fish, elephants, deer, snakes and domestic animals like horses and bullocks - starting from inanimate matter, the basic elements. Moreover, he goes on to say that basic elements were recycled as inanimate matter like rocks and mountains before the creation of the “building blocks of life” for the

evolution of a living cell:

ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਭਏ ਕੀਟ ਪਤੰਗਾ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗਜ਼ ਮੀਨ ਕੁਰੰਗਾ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਪੰਖੀ ਸਰਪ ਹੋਇਓ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਹੈਵਰ ਬ੍ਰਿਖ ਜੋਇਓ ॥
 ਮਿਲੁ ਜਗਦੀਸ਼ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੀ ਬਰੀਆ
 ਚਿਰੰਕਾਲ ਇਹ ਦੇਹ ਸੰਜਰੀਆ ॥ ਰਹਾਓ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਸੈਲ ਗਿਰਿ ਕਰਿਆ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗਰਭ ਹਿਰਿ ਖਰਿਆ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖ ਕਰਿ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥
 ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਜੋਨਿ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਇਆ ॥

Many births (different evolutionary stages of life) created worm and insect. Many births created elephant, fish and deer. Many births created bird and snake. Many births created ox and horse, which are yoked. Similarly, it took a very long time for the human body to evolve through many evolutionary stages of life. Now is your time to meet the Master of the universe, the Creator. Pause. The matter constituting the human body was recycled many times as rocks and mountains. Many births resulted in abortion (defective mutations resulting in death of the species). Many births produced plant life. It took innumerable births to produce a human body. AGGS, M 5, p. 176.

The discovery of deoxyribonucleic acids (DNA) and the principle of the double helix have shown how self regenerating molecular chains evolve naturally from nonliving matter.

Guru Nanak also postulated that there are other places with life in the cosmos:

ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਜੀਆ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਲੋਆ ਆਕਾਰਾ ਆਕਾਰ॥

There are living beings in water, on land and in the Cosmos. AGGS, M 1, p. 466.

To the above we should add that Guru Nanak was an environmentalist half a millennium ahead of his time.

ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥

Air is like a Guru, water like a father and the Earth like the great mother (which provides all types of resources and food).

AGGS, M 1, p. 8.

The quote above is taken from the article 'EARTH DAY, ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ, EARTH, THE GREAT MOTHER' by Prof Devinder Singh Chahal.

The positions of Guru, Father and Mother are the most highly regarded in Indian culture. By associating those with the three most essential life support elements Guru Nanak wants people to show the same consideration to these elements as they do to the three human relationships. In other words, do nothing that will pollute them.

Guru Nanak's God is inside every living cell of our bodies. Truth be told that our bodies are made of stardust, as **Carl Sagan** would say, with a spark of the Creator. You may call it **SOUL** but it is not located in any specific part of the body; it permeates the body.

That is why Guru Nanak can say to a Muslim, and for that matter to an 'amritdhari' Sikh, that if you can see God in every face that in itself is your five daily prayers or recitation of five banis, respectively. **In simplest language Guru Nanak's God is 'Mother of all the Forces of Nature'.**

Yes, I do believe in God but only of Guru Nanak's and not of any other religion. **Most powerful instrument Guru Nanak had was his mind, bibek budhi.** Even most of our scientists are so hide bound as to ignore what should be obvious to them under the negative influences of their formative years.

I am told by one knowledgeable source that in Guru Nanak's time the greetings were '**Sat Kartar**'. The fact that Guru Nanak named his

settlement **Kartar Pur**, the 'place to practice righteousness', further reinforces that and also the fact that he chose his own name for Bhagwan, Ishwer, Allah and God and that name was '**Karta Purakh**'.

Guru says:

ਸੇ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੇਨੀ ॥੩॥

ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੪॥੧॥

Let that mouth be burnt, which says that He is subject to birth. ||3||

He is not born, and He does not die; He does not come and go in reincarnation.

The God of Nanak is pervading and permeating everywhere. ||4||1|| AGGS M5 P 1136.

What is Death?

Referring to death Guru asks what has died. Then he answers his own question; nothing has died. Body has simply gone back to its elements. The breath mixes with air, body becomes dust and the spark of ENERGY merges with the ENERGY.

I see seeds of $E=MC^2$:

The following quotes are from Dr. Baldev Singh's manuscript 'Nankian Philosophy (Gurmat): The Path of Enlightenment that we published in the January-February 2009 Sikh Bulletin:

ਦੇਹੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਬੋਲੈ ਪਉਣੁ॥
ਬੁਝੁ ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਮੂਆ ਹੈ ਕਉਣੁ॥
ਮੂਈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਬਾਦੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ॥
ਓਹ ਨ ਮੂਆ ਜੋ ਦੇਖਣਹਾਰੁ॥

The body is made of earth (various elements) and it is the air (breath) that keeps it alive. O wise one, then tell me who died because the body and the air it breathed are still here? It is consciousness that died along with disputes

caused by egotistical pride, but the One (Creator) who takes care of all does not die. AGGS, M 1, p. 152.

The meaning of the four pithy verses becomes abundantly clear when we consider that God is both manifest as Cosmos and un-manifest as omnipresent Hukam. Death of the body affects only the manifest form of God - the matter (elements) that constitutes the body. The matter goes back to earth and is recycled to create new life. The Omnipresent One (Hukam), which operates in all living beings and pervades everywhere is Everlasting. It is remarkable that **Guru Nanak defines death as the loss of consciousness**, which is similar to the modern understanding of death, medically speaking. Cosmos is the manifest form of God, which is continuously changing, but it does not change in Its total content.

Guru Arjan elaborates on this issue further. In the AGGS ghumar (potter), bhandra (pot) and miti (clay, earth) are used metaphorically for the Creator, being and the material that makes the being, respectively:

ਪਵਨੈ ਮਹਿ ਪਵਨੁ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥

ਜੋਤੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥

ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਹੋਈ ਏਕ ॥

ਰੋਵਨਹਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਕਵਨ ਟੇਕ ॥

ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ਰੇ ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਚਲਤੁ ਭਇਆ ॥

ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਅਗਲੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਖਬਰਿ ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥

ਰੋਵਨਹਾਰੁ ਭਿ ਉਠਿ ਸਿਧਾਈ ॥

ਭਰਮ ਮੋਹ ਕੇ ਬਾਂਧੇ ਬੰਧ ॥

ਸੁਪਨੁ ਭਇਆ ਭਖਲਾਏ ਅੰਧ ॥

ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਿਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ ॥

ਆਵਤ ਜਾਵਤ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਅਪਾਰਿ ॥

ਨਹ ਕੋ ਮੂਆ ਨ ਮਰਣੈ ਜੋਗੁ ॥

ਨਹ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਹੋਗੁ ॥

ਜੋ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਸੋ ਇਹੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

ਜਾਨਣਹਾਰੇ ਕਉ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਉ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਇਆ ॥
ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇਆ ॥

After death air [breath] merges into air, light merges into light (consciousness is lost when Hukam stops operating in the body) and the earth (lifeless body) becomes one with earth. What support is there for the one who cries over this loss? Who has died? O' who has died? O' enlightened beings get-together and ponder over this question. This is indeed a puzzle! Pause. Without any information about what happened to the dead, the one who was crying also dies. The ignorant fools shackled by doubts and attachments babble about death as if dreaming. This world is the creation of the Creator (Hukam). Coming (birth) and going (death) is controlled by the infinite Hukam. No one dies as no one is capable of dying. The Eternal One does not perish. It is not what people think about "soul." I am awestruck by the one who understands this reality. Says Nanak, the Guru has dispelled my doubts. No one dies or no one comes and goes. AGGS, M 5, p. 885.

On Meat and Vegetables:

Addressing the High Caste Pandits who looked down on meat eaters the Guru says:

ਮਾਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਝਗੜੇ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣੈ ॥

ਕਉਣੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਉਣੁ ਸਾਗੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਕਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਪੁ ਸਮਾਣੈ ॥

ਗੈਡਾ ਮਾਰਿ ਹੋਮ ਜਗ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੈ ॥

ਮਾਸੁ ਛੇਡਿ ਬੈਸਿ ਨਕੁ ਪਕੜਹਿ ਰਾਤੀ ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੈ ॥

ਫੜੁ ਕਰਿ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਦਿਖਲਾਵਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਸੁਝੈ ॥

.....

ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿੰਮੇ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਜੰਮੇ ਹਮ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ॥

.....

ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤੁ ਸਭਿ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਹੋਏ ਜੀਇ ਲਇਆ ਵਾਸੇਰਾ ॥

.....

ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿੰਮੇ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਜੰਮੇ ਹਮ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ॥

.....

ਮਾਸੁ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਤੇਬੀ ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗਿ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਮਾਣਾ ॥

ਜਜਿ ਕਾਜਿ ਵੀਆਹਿ ਸੁਹਾਵੈ ਓਥੈ ਮਾਸੁ ਸਮਾਣਾ ॥

Only fools argue about flesh and meat, because of utter ignorance.

What is meat, and what is vegetable? What is sin in eating either? They are both made of the same ingredients.

It was the practice of the Hindu gods to kill the rhinoceros, and make a feast of the burnt offering.

Those who renounce meat, and hold their noses when sitting near it, devour men at night. (Take advantage of poor and ignorant).

They practice hypocrisy, and make a show before other people, but they themselves are steeped in ignorance.

.....

In the flesh we are conceived, and in the flesh we are born; we are vessels of flesh.

.....

All beings and creatures are flesh; the soul has taken up its home in the flesh.

.....

In the flesh we are conceived, and in the flesh we are born; we are vessels of flesh.

.....

Meat is allowed in the Puraanas, meat is allowed in the Bible and the Koran. Throughout the four ages, meat has been consumed.

It is featured in sacred feasts and marriage festivities; meat is used in them.

Human race is one.

Quotes from Sri Guru Granth Sahib:

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥

Ēk piṭā ekas ke ham bārik tū merā gur hāī.

The One God is our father; we are the children of the One God.

You are our Guru. AGGS M5, P 611

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ

ਆਈ ॥੧॥

No one is my enemy, and no one is a stranger.

I get along with everyone. AGGS M5, p 1299

Now notice the conflict with Guru's teachings in Sikh practices:

Quotes from 'Sikh Reht Maryada:

The Code of Sikh Conduct & Conventions',
Published by Dharam Parchar Committee
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
December 2000 (English version)

"Only a Sikh may perform kirtan in a congregation".

(Chapter V Article VI c) p.15

"A Sikh daughter must be married to a Sikh".

(Chapter XI Article XVIII b) p.26

Two questions arise:

1. Why the distinction between daughter and son when Gurbani gives both sexes an equal status?
2. If the entire humanity is child of one God then why discriminate in the name of religion which is manmade?

Guru Nanak's Bani does not have much in common with either Hinduism or Islam but Sikh practices do:

Quotes from Sharia Law:

A Muslim man can marry only a Muslim, Christian or Jewish woman. He cannot marry an atheist, agnostic or polytheist.

A Muslim woman can marry only a Muslim man.
She cannot marry a Christian, Jew, atheist, agnostic or polytheist.

Here are three interesting incidents in my personal experience that highlight the tragedy of conflict between what Guru Nanak preached and what Sikhism has become today:

1. Soon after we started publishing The Sikh Bulletin in November 1999, I received an email from a teenager from one of the

Eastern Seaboard States. He wanted all the the material on Sikhism that I could send him. I did not have much but whatever I had I sent that to him including a couple copies of Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal's magazine that he had started publishing around the same time as we did. I also put him on the mailing list. Some years later I received an email from him telling me that he had converted to Islam because he had found contradiction between Sikh scriptures and Sikh practices and Sikhs practiced caste system. I wish he had turned agnostic because what he got into was the worst of the lot. If he ever visits India he will find Muslims practicing the same caste system.

2. A lady from Brazil also asked for literature on Sikhism and expressed strong desire to see Sikh missionaries in Brazil but without the zeal for propagating the requirement for uncut hair and carrying sword.
3. Bawa Singh Jagdev of Australia narrated an incident where a School Girl asked for material on Sikhism for her school project. Her younger brother read everything she received and expressed to her his desire to become a Sikh until she told him that he will have to keep long hair and carry a sword. That put a damper on his desire.

It would be appropriate here to quote from my May-June 2012 Sikh Bulletin editorial:

"Here I would like to confess to my personal belief that might be considered a blasphemy and offend most people, even those who know me well. That is that Guru Nanak did not initiate another religion.

There were too many religions and divisions among them in his time as is the case today. Today he will surely say that 'I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim; neither a Sikh nor a

Christian. *He showed mankind a path to life and living.*

The tragedy is that 'well-meaning people', which would be 99.9% of us all, have turned it into yet another divisive and suffocating faith."

Sikhism is not a revealed religion.

Another issue that concerns me is the prevalent effort to claim Sikhism to be a **revealed religion** in league with the **three religions of the Middle East** that are based on **false claims** by mortals. In my judgment, that does neither add any prestige to Sikhism nor recognize the singularly unique contribution of Guru Nanak to smooth and harmonious functioning of the human society.

For there to be peace on Earth religions have to disappear and take their Gods to their graves.

In fact no religion is a revealed religion. All those claims are based on falsehood. Just think about it with your *Bibek Buddhi* (discerning mind).

There should be concerted effort to expose the myth of revealed religions and their Gods as based on falsehood. There in lies the salvation of Humanity.

Let us take the three Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), only ones that claim divine revelation and only ones that have brought carnage on humanity:

These three religions do believe in one God but each one has its own one God.

Jewish God discriminates among people as the **Jews claim to be God's chosen people**. This God, like other Semitic and Hindu Gods, demands human sacrifice, like Abraham's son; and when Abraham prepares to sacrifice his son, God becomes kinder and gentler God and asks Abraham to slaughter a lamb instead. **Guru Nanak's God does not favour one group over the other.**

Christian God fathered a child from Mary and his son, Jesus, established his own religion, Christianity, and proclaimed that **only those who believe in him will achieve salvation**. Then his 'FATHER' allowed for him to be crucified for the sins of others; but then HE raises Jesus from the dead, on the third day, and gives him life.

Guru Nanak rejects all three fundamentals of Christian faith. Foundation of this faith is so shaky I am surprised it lasted so long and was allowed to decimate nature based cultures of so many people around the world.

Guru Nanak's Creator neither goes around fathering children from virgins, nor does anybody die for sins of others; each is responsible to face the consequences of his or her own actions and that too in this life because there is no second coming because once anyone dies, it is **dead**, it cannot be reversed, even by the Creator.

According to Guru Nanak only The Creator never dies but **anything that has been created will surely die, even this Cosmos.** As to the second coming who are you kidding?

Mohammed's God chose not to talk to Mohammed directly but through an Angel, just as in the 19th century **Joseph Smith** who founded Mormon faith was to claim. But Allah did not instruct Mohammed to bring equal justice to women in Arabia, such as one man one wife.

When people, including Sikhs, proclaim that there are similarities between Sikhism and other faiths on basic concepts they should take a second look.

Guru Nanak's concept of God is not the same as in the Middle Eastern religions where God (Male) dictates the Law and gives direction to the prophets (Male) nor is it like Hindu Gods who incarnate as humans (Men specifically).

Although he incorporated into his Bani the multiple names for God in other religions, to make

him understood by the masses, his personal word for the 'God' entity is 'Karta Purakh' or 'KARTAR' (Creator), formless, ageless, and everlasting and devoid of human attributes.

NANAK: The One and Only of His Kind

Before Nanak's coming there had been no body like him, including the founders of world's largest faiths, and nobody since.

During the age of European Renaissance of the 14th–17th centuries Guru Nanak was the only person who brought renaissance to the Indian sub-continent. Human mind, that Gurbani calls '*dasam duar*', is so unique that at any given time more than one person can arrive at the same conclusion about the fundamental truths of the physical world.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and Copernicus (1473-1543), a Polish Mathematician called the founder of modern Astronomy, thousands of miles apart and unknown to each other, arrived at the **same conclusion about the cosmos, including that it is in constant change.** He was the first to shatter the prevalent belief, supported by the Church, that Earth is the center of the universe and that Sun revolves around the Earth. Galileo, who concurred with Copernicus concept, was jailed by the Pope for disobeying the Church doctrine that Sun revolves around the Earth, **because The Bible says so.**

It is shameful that no literary, historical, religious or political writer or leader in India has acknowledged Guru Nanak's contribution to Indian culture, literature and philosophy and development of scientific thought. Those who claim to be successors to his message (The Sikhs) have almost reversed themselves 180 degrees in the opposite direction from where the Guru was taking us.

So, those who claim that Sikhi is also a revealed religion, like the other religions, are doing a grave

disservice to Guru Nanak. Would they also say that Copernicus received divine revelation too? Copernicus himself makes no such claim. **The fact of the matter is that there is no such thing as revelation. Any religion making that claim is false.**

Guru Nanak and Copernicus both used their *bibek-budhi*, an evolutionary gift that only humans possess, even though they share 90% of their DNA with mice and 98% with chimpanzees. Copernicus published his theory in 1530; Guru Nanak put his view of Universe more than a decade earlier in ਜਪੁ (Jap).

Guru Nanak also planted the seeds of the future successes to come in the field of science, such as: the Big Bang theory, EMC², origin of life in water, Evolution of Species and from the point of view of nurturing the body, no difference between meat and vegetables.

These were world changing pronouncements and yet the world never heard about them; not then, not now.

I so wish that Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was born in Europe and could call a three man summit with Copernicus (1473-1543) and Martin Luther (1483-1546). Deism would have arrived two centuries earlier, development of scientific thought would have been speeded up, and Martin Luther, instead of reforming the Church, would have joined forces with Nanak in abolishing it and all other manmade religions.

Guru Nanak:

Born as baby Nanak, because he was born at his mother's paternal house, he died known as Guru Nanak. **He gave a priceless gift to mankind but it was not a religion. Guru Nanak wanted to rid the masses of conflicts in the name of religion rather than introduce still another religion.** What Guru Nanak gave was *jeevan-jaach* (How to

live). His philosophy got distorted and ritualized into a traditional religion by lesser people who came to inherit it.

Since Nanak himself rejected the concept of Second Coming, the corner stone of the world's largest ritual filled religion, we just have to hope and wish that the world will produce, sometime down into the future, another personality like him, to implement what he started, **a universal concept of mankind living in a righteous, peaceful and prosperous world as one family, marked by brotherly love, tolerant of our petty differences, enlightened citizenry conscious of its responsibility towards the animal and vegetation kingdom as the highest form of life on this little speck of star dust that we call planet Earth.**

That just might delay the eventual oblivion of life on this planet that the cosmic law is speeding us towards.

Nanak was a child prodigy; he was a born genius.

At the very young age he mastered the religious and philosophical literature of both the Hindu and Muslim faiths of his time and he yearned for knowledge in search for which he went to the scholars of that period and engaged in intellectual discourses. **Neither God Himself nor his Angel appeared to give Guru Nanak his philosophy.** That is a myth propagated by the world's religions for their founders.

He was also an accomplished linguist.

He mastered **Persian**, the official language and **Sanskrit** and **Arabic**, the languages of scriptures of the two dominant religions of the country in his young age. He practiced the Panjabi folk saying '*pehniye jag bhaunda and khaiye man bhaunda*' (Wear clothes of the people you are among but eat what you like.) Otherwise how could he have

communicated with all those diverse people in and around the Indian sub-continent?

He formulated his philosophy by use of his keen observation and use of his *bibek budhi* (discerning mind). Once his mission was clear to him he took leave of his young family and travelled to four corners of the globe from Tibet in the north, to Burma in the east, Ceylon in the south and Mecca in the west. He accomplished all that on foot and by boat. No flying carpets and no magic tricks for him. One can imagine the criticism he must have endured from family and friends. But there was a much larger family that needed to hear him, the human family.

It pains me a lot that **W. H. McLeod (1932-2009)**, 'an acknowledged scholar of Sikhism' who mentored many of our Sikh Scholars currently occupying Sikh Study Chairs in American Universities rejected any and all travels of Guru Nanak. See it yourself on page 40 of this issue under:

A BIGOT IS DEAD: LONG LIVE BIGOTRY

W. H. McLeod (1932-2009)

[From July-August 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

In His book '*Nanak, an Introduction*', Purushottam Nijhaawan writes, "**In the 15th century, Indian society was a disturbing picture of rank ritualism, superstition, bigotry and social decay. The birth of Nanak in 1469 in the little village of Talwandi near Lahore, however, came as a miracle. The deteriorating Indian society had now found a redeemer**".

It would be correct to say that the **world at large** had found a redeemer.

He had simple and straightforward messages for all the world's religions. To those who sought salvation in after life but went begging for food at the door of a householder in this life, Nanak prescribed the **life of a householder and to seek**

salvation in this life.

To those who walked the earth bare feet with their mouths covered (**Jainism**) so as not to harm minute life, he made them aware of plenty of such life already swarming inside their bodies.

To those who worshipped stone images of multitudes of Gods and Goddesses (**Brahmanism**), Guru advised that there is only One God and it has no image.

To those who faced towards a specific direction while praying (**Muslims**) Guru revealed that God is not confined to one spot; It is everywhere and permeates everything.

If Guru had come across the faith that holds its redeemer to be the only son of God (**Christians**) and who was resurrected from death for a second coming sometime in the future he would have rejected that belief by saying that for the birth of a human to take place it needs a man's semen and a woman's egg inside her womb and the clock of death cannot be turned back.

Guru Nanak emphasized human equality, dignity, right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੂੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ॥
One could attain liberation while enjoying life (laughing, playing, eating good food and wearing good clothes). AGGS, M 5, p. 522.

Guru Nanak places emphasis on individual human dignity and intellect. His message has nothing like the Ten Commandments or the Sharia Law. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind. **Guru Nanak** rejected the concepts of virgin birth, resurrection, specific times or directions for prayer. Starving the body for a day time (as fast) and then gorging it at night fall was abhorrent to him. Pilgrimage for spiritual gain and feeding the

Brahman to sustain deceased relatives had no value infor him.

No one place is holier than the other because all places are created by God and God permeates everywhere. The place where you live is just as holy as Hardwar, Banaras, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Salt Lake City. No one time or day is more auspicious than another. Only the time spent in honest productive work and thoughtfulness is considered blessed.

Women constitute one half of humanity but no religion accords women the status that Guru Nanak demands for women:

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥
ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥
ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥
ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨੁ ॥
ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਲਾਹੀਐ ਭਾਗਾ ਰਤੀ ਚਾਰਿ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਊਜਲੇ ਤਿਤੁ ਸਚੈ ਦਰਬਾਰਿ ॥

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her bad? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all. O Nanak, only the True Lord is without a woman. That mouth which praises the Lord continually is blessed and beautiful. O Nanak, those faces shall be radiant in the Court of the True Lord. //
2 //Guru Granth Sahib page 473.

This hymn is a rebuke to the patriarchal culture, as it is addressed to men, especially rulers/leaders who were the guardians of the socio-religious order. Further, he declares that woman is the hub of humanity, the lifeline of humanity. It is woman

who conceives, it is woman who nurtures humanity from birth to death. Moreover, he puts woman at the apex of “human evolution” by declaring that only God is independent of woman. To sink deeper Guru Nanak’s message in a suffocating and corrosive patriarchal society, Guru Amar Das [3rd Nanak] declared female and male equality in a very forceful way:

ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਏਕ ਹੈ ਹੋਰ ਸਗਲੀ ਨਾਰਿ ਸਬਾਈ॥

ਸਭਿ ਘਟ ਭੋਗਵੈ ਅਲਿਪਤੁ ਰਹੈ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਲਖਣਾ ਜਾਈ ॥

In this world there is one “Husband,” all other beings are His brides. He enjoys being in all hearts and yet He remains detached. He is invisible and indescribable.

AGGS, M 3, p. 591.

Further the Guru denounced the inhuman practice of sati (burning of a living woman on her husband's funeral pyre), ill-treatment of women and female infanticide:

ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮੜਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨਿ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ॥

A sati is not the one who burns herself on the funeral pyres of her husband. O Nanak, she alone is sati for whom the agony due to separation from her husband is like death.

AGGS, M 3, p. 787.

ਭੀ ਸੋ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਰਹੰਨਿ ॥

ਸੇਵਨਿ ਸਾਈ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਿਤ ਉਠਿ ਸੰਮੁਲੰਨਿ ॥

She is also a sati who abides in modesty and contentment, and loves her husband and gets up daily to take care of the family. AGGS, M 3, p. 787.

ਕੰਤਾ ਨਾਲਿ ਮਹੇਲੀਆ ਸੇਤੀ ਅਗਿ ਜਲਾਹਿ ॥

ਜੇ ਹਾਣਹਿ ਪਿਰੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਤਾ ਤਨਿ ਦੁਖ ਸਹਾਹਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਕੰਤ ਨ ਜਾਨਣੀ ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਅਗਿ ਜਲਾਹਿ ॥

ਭਾਵੈ ਜੀਵਉ ਕੈ ਮਰਉ ਦੁਰਹੁ ਹੀ ਭਜਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥

Wives struggle and face hardships in life along with their husbands. They endure physical pain because they love their husbands. O Nanak, if

the husband does not care for his wife and is unconcerned whether she is happy or miserable then why should she suffer for him? AGGS, M 3, p. 787.

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਕੈਲੀ ਘਾਤੁ ਕੰਵਕਾ ਅਣਚਾਰੀ ਕਾ ਧਾਨੁ ॥

ਫਿਟਕ ਫਿਟਕਾ ਕੋੜ ਬਦੀਆ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਅਭਮਾਨੁ ॥

The Brahman worships the cow but approves the killing of innocent young girls and accepts food/donations from evil doers. Shame on such a Brahman! He is afflicted with the leprosy of vices, and yet he is filled with the egotistical pride of caste superiority forever and ever. AGGS, M 3, p. 1413.

Furthermore, it is remarkable that in the sacred hymns of the AGGS there are roughly 100 verses starting with the word “mother” whereas the hymns starting with the word “father” number about twenty. This is quite amazing considering the patriarchal cultural milieu of the Guru’s time when the mention of women was absent in public discourses and she was looked down upon as an impediment in the path of the spiritual growth of a man.

Besides, God is gender neutral, both man and woman and Its creative aspect is portrayed as that of a mother:

ਆਪੇ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਨਾਰੀ॥

God is both man and woman. AGGS, M 1, p. 1020.

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੰਧੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਭ੍ਰਾਤਾ ॥

You (God) are my father, You are my mother, You are my relative and You are my sibling. AGGS, M 5, p. 103.

ਆਪੁਨੇ ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰੇ॥

ਜਿਉ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੰਮਾਰੇ॥

God takes care of all Its creatures, the way a mother nurtures her children.

AGGS, M 5, p. 105.

Furthermore, the Gurus condemned polygamy and approved only of monogamy:

ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਪਰਹਰ ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ॥
ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਤਜਿ ਹੋਹੁ ਨਿਚਿੰਦਾ ॥

Control your lust and anger, and renounce slandering others. Giving up greed and possessiveness brings peace of mind. AGGS, M 1, p. 1041.

ਕਾਮਵੰਤ ਕਾਮੀ ਬਹੁ ਨਾਰੀ ਪਰ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਜੋਹ ਨ ਚੁਕੈ॥

The lustful and lecherous desires many women and never stops peeking into others' homes. AGGS, M 5, p. 672.

ਪਰ ਧਨ ਪਰ ਦਾਰਾ ਸਿਉ ਰਚਿਓ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਸਿਰਾਵੈ॥

The manmukh (self-centered man) wastes away his life devouring others' wealth and in sexual pleasure with others' women. AGGS, M 9, p. 632.

ਬਨਿਤਾ ਛੇਡਿ ਬਦ ਨਦਿਰ ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ।
ਵੇਸਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਹਾ ਦੁਖਿਆਰੀ।

A mere religious garb won't bring salvation to the one (yogi) who leaves his wife and then covets another's. Such a person faces much suffering. AGGS, M 5, p. 1348.

ਪਰ ਧਨ ਪਰ ਦਾਰਾ ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਇਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਨਿਵਾਰਿ॥

Renounce slandering others and coveting another's wife and wealth. AGGS, M 5, p. 379.

Truthful living is higher than truth.

Sikhism openly states: -*"Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful living" because that is union with God*. (Guru Granth Sahib page 62)

WAS GURU NANAK OR ONE OF HIS FOLLOWERS IN BAKU, AZERBAIJAN?



Fig. 2-2. The inscription of 'Commencing Verse' of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (commonly called as 'Mool Mantra' by many Sikhs) found on a wall in a temple in Baku, Azerbaijan. Reproduced with permission from Dr Joseph H. Peterson's

Web site: <http://www.avesta.org/modi/baku.htm>

(Modi, Jivanji Jamshedji. 1924. My Travels outside Bombay, Iran, Azerbaijan, Baku.

<http://www.avesta.org/modi/baku.htm>)

What you see here is the **Commencing Verse** of the Adi Granth, courtesy Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal. It is inscribed in stone above a doorway of a temple that originally was a prominent centre of Zoroastrianism that fell into disrepair after onset of Islam. Long ago, traders from India managed to get permission to convert a small portion of this complex of Zoroastrian Temples as their place of worship.

I first saw it in Dr. Chahal's magazine and then on web under "My Travels outside Bombay: Iran, Azerbaijan. Baku" by Ervad Shams-UI-Ulama Dr. Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, B. A., Ph. D. C. I. E. (1854-1933). He had gone on a pilgrimage to the places associated with his Zoroastrian ancestors.

My latest exposure to this came in 2014 when I read, "A Journey from Bengal to England, through The Northern Part of India, Kashmire, Afghanistan, And Persia, And into Russia, by the Caspian-Sea" By George Forster. In the Civil Service of The Honourable The East India Company. Printed for R. Faulder, New Bond-Street, London, 1978. (Original Edition).

George Forester had left Bengal for this overland Journey from Calcutta on March 23, 1782 arriving in London on March 31, 1784. Quite a feat! On March 27, 1784 he visited this temple complex in Baku, saw these inscriptions both in Gurmukhi and Devnagri script and met a group of aging 'Moulton Hindu Traders' who told him that they were the last ones because their children are not interested in following in their footsteps.

Now this is something worth researching by a Sikh scholar. Did Guru Nanak visit Konya and Istanbul in Turkey and perhaps Baku in Azerbaizan where he ran into Traders from Multan from his backyard in Panjab? After all these carvings were there in 1784 only two and a half century after Guru Nanak

It is time for us to bring the teachings of Guru Nanak to the notice of the outside world. Best way to do that is through the medium of English first and then translation from English into other languages. What I think we need to concentrate on is to take advantage of the electronic media and use the pages of The Sikh Bulletin to coordinate the translation of the Bani of Guru Nanak into English. For sure there are several versions of it already but none of them do justice to what the Guru is saying.

I ask the readers of The Sikh Bulletin in the Diaspora to create a *dharamsal* in their own homes, become *missionaries* for Guru Nanak and let their computer be the channel of communication and Social Media the Courier Pigeon.

Email to me one hymn of Guru Nanak and its English translation that you think is worthy of being brought to the notice of the population in the countries of our residences. We will invite our readers' opinions, arrive at a consensus and then make it available for everyone to use.

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MY EDITORIALS ON GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI IN THE SIKH BULLETIN

[For all of my editorials in The Sikh Bulletin please go to <http://sikhbulletin.com> SelectedEditorials]

EDITORIAL GURU NANAK

[From November-December 2004 Sikh Bulletin]

Nanak was not only a great Guru but also a great missionary. At a time when there were no means of convenient and fast transportation and media was nonexistent, the Guru developed a strategy of being present at Hindu and Muslim places of pilgrimage to find maximum audience for maximum impact. He also used a unique system of arousing curiosity of the pilgrims about his out of the ordinary actions to gather an attentive audience. Several of those became his followers for whom he established a string of Dharamsals along his routes of travel.

Nanak traveled to various Hindu and Muslim places of pilgrimage and debunked the priests and Qazis for misleading and fleecing the gullible. Debunking is precisely what is needed in the case of our current so called Jathedars who are globetrotting very frequently, especially this year on the pretext of 400th Anniversary celebrations. Net result of their travels is not gurmat parchar but intensification of split in the Diaspora communities, because they are invited by and rub shoulders with the wrong people. Why would a Sikh in his right mind invite abroad those who pronounce so called irreversible and divisive non-issue Hukamnamas, make statements such as our Gurus being descendants of Luv and Kush and silence critics of the so called Sri Guru Dasam Granth at the same time giving license to the promoters of it to carry on its 'parchar' with gusto?

When Nanak went around to Hindu places of pilgrimage he spoke against the empty rituals and exposed the hypocrisy and falsehood of the priestly class. The people listened and followed

him. Just as the time was ripe then for someone like Guru Nanak to free the masses from empty ritualism, it is time, once again, for understanding and propagating Guru Nanak's real message since same ritualism has made heavy inroads into Sikhism today. **Singh Sabha International came into existence with that goal in mind.** Unless we come back to practice what Guru Nanak preached, ours will be the same fate as that of other religions i.e. being hijacked by extremists.

Even a cursory study of the situation today and during the lifetime of Guru Nanak makes a shocking revelation. When I read Kahn Singh Nabha's book '**Ham Hindu Nahin**' I was shocked to realize that not only have we not advanced Sikhi or Sikh way of life in the last one hundred years or so since this book was written but we have regressed into the pits that Gurus, during their period, had pulled us out of. Similarly, if we make even a cursory comparison of the period of Guru Nanak and the times today the picture of same shocking similarity emerges. Only characters have changed.

In His book 'Nanak, An Introduction', Purushottam Nijhaawan writes, "In the 15th century, Indian society was a disturbing picture of rank ritualism, superstition, bigotry and social decay. The birth of Nanak in 1469 in the little village of Talwandi near Lahore, however, came as a miracle. The deteriorating Indian society had now found a redeemer". How is the situation different today? Have we discarded ritualism, superstition, bigotry and stemmed social decay? Sikhism, meant to be a way of truthful living, has been shackled by ritualism much the same way as Hinduism and Islam of Guru Nanak's period. We are told that when Nanak came back after his disappearance into or beyond the river the first words he uttered for his listeners were, "Na Mai Hindu Na Mussalman". If he were to appear again today would he rephrase himself, "Na Mai Hindu, Na Mussalman, and Na Mai Sikh"?

He lectured Pundits on the real significance of

Janaeu and to the Qazis on real significance of Namaaz five times a day. Would he not today lecture Sikh Priests (High and Low), who are not even supposed to exist in Guru Nanak's scheme of things, on the real significance of Gatra and five Baanis? Would he even be allowed to speak his mind at Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat Sahib as, apparently, Hindu priests and Muslim Qazis allowed him to speak at their Holy Places? What would Guru Nanak say to the Sikh 'High Priests' for the treatment they mete out to those few brave Gursikhs who dare to question the anti gurmat practices and pronouncements of the so called guardians of Guru's message?

Just as Nanak proclaimed Ram of Hindus and Rahim of Muslims to be one and the same, today he would say the same thing about Allah of Muslims and Lord of Christians. That is the relevance of Guru Nanak's universal message today that is the uniqueness of Guru Nanak's God.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL DOWN TO EARTH COMMON SENSE SIMPLICITY OF GURU NANAK'S MESSAGE

[From March-April 2007 Sikh Bulletin]

This Vaisakhi day I wish we were celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday by spreading his true teachings rather than the hinduised version being preached and practiced in the Gurdwaras today; but knowing all the world's Gurdwaras and the Sikh religious leadership in Amritsar have already celebrated it in 'Katak' (October) I am obviously living in a fool's paradise.

The other day when I read that a researcher in Italy has probably identified the person whose portrait is the famous Mona Lisa, I could not help but marvel at the Roman civilization and its legacy. This researcher found the birth and death records of the subject of Mona Lisa. She was born ten

years after Guru Nanak's birth. Legacy our Gurus have left us is the GGS. But what have we done? We have accepted a rival Granth, 'Sri Dasam Guru Granth Sahib Ji' without questioning its historical authenticity or examining its very controversial contents with the touch stone of Gurbani. A non-practicing attorney, D. S. Gill, even has the stupidity of asserting that he had difficulty understanding Gurbani in GGS until he happened to read Dasam Granth first. He would have us believe that the key to Gurbani is not the writings of Bhai Gurdas but what some of us call '*kanjar kahani*' and '*kanjar kavita*'.

He is even a bigger fool than I thought when I first got to know him in 1995. And why would the leadership not correct this error about the birth of Guru Nanak? It has become the accepted practice '*maryada-ban-chucki-hai*' so why upset the apple cart? Not even for a moment do they think that they are talking about a person who threw away centuries old *maryada*. At a very young age he refused to wear the janeu; discarded the caste system; preached against idol worship; recognized the equality of mankind; asserted the equality of men and women; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell, incarnation, transmigration, 84 lakh juni, *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses; and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*'. **We have neither Ten Commandments nor Sharia. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind. Simple as that!**

One example of increasing brahmanical influence on Sikhi was in the Sacramento Bee newspaper recently – the controversy about Guru Nanak's picture in a California School textbook. But the opposition by some members of the Sikh community was not to the presence of the picture but the version of the picture. They wanted to replace the version selected by the publisher according to their standards of authenticity by a

more recent version that they preferred. For a Sikh 'gur murat gur shabad hai'. Rest is 'moorakh jhagra'.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL NANKIAN PHILOSOPHY

[From January-February 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

"Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) originated a unique philosophy and challenged the existing concepts about God, heaven/hell, reincarnation/transmigration, idol worship, caste system, astrology, mantra systems, etc. in Southeast Asia." Amen! Halleluia! This quote came to me from a Sikh scholar who is doing a great service to the cause of Sikhi and I could not help but compliment him and told him that I agreed with his quote whole heartedly.

To that I added that Guru Nanak was not a prophet in the sense of Biblical or Muslim prophets who claimed to speak to or spoken to by God, directly as in the case of Moses or indirectly, as in the case of Mohammed who had an Angel as an intermediary. When Bani talks about '*dhur-ki-bani*' it is not God talking to Nanak; **Sikhi is not a 'revealed' religion**; it is born out of Guru's life experience; it is Guru's own inspiration and thought process that inspires him to seek and speak fundamental truths. He wrote back that he was pleased to read my response but observed, "No Sikh scholar could dare to say what you have said." He is right and therein lays the tragedy. I am not afraid to say it precisely because I am not a scholar. The tragedy is that Sikh scholars are too fearful of consequences if they break with the established tradition; as Mr. Tohra had explained away the unsikh practice of denial of sewa to the women at Harmander Sahib because of the long established tradition. The fact that Guru Nanak had broken many traditions going back centuries was inconsequential.

Bhai Ardaman Singh, a Sikh scholar of yore, in his book 'Thoughts of Bhai Ardaman Singh' writes, **"In Sikhism, certain philosophical interpretations are common with Hindu thought, like life after death,...while such concepts as Oneness of God...Sikhism is nearer to Islam than to Hinduism."** Unfortunately, he is dead wrong on both counts.

As for the comparison with Hinduism Dr. Baldev Singh's article, which is this entire issue, explodes that myth. Comparison with Islam and the other two Middle Eastern religions, Judaism and Christianity, all three the people of the Book and believers in One God, is also not kosher. Although all three believe in One God and share historical personalities, **each one of them has their own separate One God**. Jews claim to be the chosen people of their God who bequeathed for eternity strictly for them the lands of Palestine and they are still waiting for their Messiah. Christian God delivered his own son to die for the sins of only those who will accept his son as their savior and had him crucified but only to raise him from the dead to come back to the earth for the second and the last time. Muslim God declared Mohammed the last prophet among the peoples of the book, with no more to come.

Guru Nanak does not agree with any of it. His God is loving and merciful God of the entire universe and all the creation in it.

In this issue we are presenting a revolutionary interpretation of Gurbani by Dr. Baldev Singh. It will, no doubt, cause controversy. We would welcome reasoned response to further the intellectual discussion that involves the use of '**bibek budhi**'.

Hardev Singh Shergill

[Editor's Note: Entire January-February 2009 issue of The Sikh Bulletin was devoted to the writings of Dr. Baldev Singh. It can be accessed at www.sikhbulletin.com Sikh Qaum suffered a great loss when Dr. Baldev Singh passed away on October 1, 2009 at Yuba City, California.]

EDITORIAL WHO IS A SIKH?

[From March-April 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

“A person, who follows Sikhi (Gurmat/Sikhism) that is based on Gurbani, incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Arjan, and Guru Gobind Singh, the Fifth and Tenth Gurus in succession to the ‘House of Nanak’ (Mahla), respectively, is a Sikh. Consequently, that person is the follower solely of Sikhism and does not practice any other religion simultaneously.” This is the suggested definition of a Sikh by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal in his article on page 2 in which he details various definitions as enshrined in the Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925, Mahan Kosh, SGPC Rehit Maryada, and Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) Constitution, and to which this writer can subscribe.

Notable omission in this definition is the issue of hair that started the current controversy in Panjab over denial of admission to SGPC operated Medical College to a Sikh girl because she trims or plucks her eye brows. But even so, only one of four legal definitions, DSGMC’s, includes the requirement of unshorn hair. But why get lost in manmade definitions. Why not look to Guru Granth Sahib for guidance in defining a Sikh? That is precisely what Avtar Singh Missionary has done on page 27. He points out one relevant statement from GGS: ਕਬੀਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਏਕ ਸਿਉਂ ਕੀਏ ਆਨ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਜਾਇ॥ ਭਾਵੈ ਲਾਂਬੇ ਕੇਸ ਕਰੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਘਰਿ ਮੁਡਾਇ॥ GGS ਪ। 1365।

In the past I used to hear the words *"Saabat soorat dastaar sira"* from the GGS in defense of uncut hair requirement in Sikhi. Lately I have come across another phrase, *"Hukam rajai chalnaa Nanak likhia naal"*. Now that is really a stretch. As for ‘saabat soorat’, it clearly did not have Sikhs in mind. It was addressed by Guru Arjan Dev to a Muslim holy man of Abdaal order about Islamic beliefs and practices. In it, referring to the five prayers the Muslims are required to perform daily, the Guru advises that rather than

performing the ritual five times a day bring about a positive change in your thought and actions. Seeing God in all is your perpetual prayer. (See *shabad and its explanation by Dr. Baldev Singh on page 27*).

Sikh writers and speakers do not get tired of proclaiming Sikhism to be the most universal and the fifth largest religion in the world. But as Dr. Sarjeet Singh Sidhu points out in his article on page 5, with the standard for a Sikh being set in Panjab there are not any Sikhs in Malaysia and to which I might add, anywhere else.

I often get approached by clean shaven, nattily dressed young men in pairs, of Mormon faith, volunteering their time to proselytize. I do engage them and end up telling them two fundamental truths, that their faith is false Christianity but their dedication is what Guru Nanak’s message needed and I wish it had been entrusted to them because we certainly are not deserving of this honor.

Guru Nanak had spoken against the practice of Janaeu. Now we have hog tied Sikhi with ‘gatra’ and imprisoned it inside a net made of unshorn hair. What was a purely voluntary step, necessitated by that time, by able bodied followers of the Guru has become the touchstone to be a Sikh. It is time, at least in the Diaspora, to liberate Sikhi from the politics of Panjab. To convert to Islam the simple requirement is *‘shahadah’*, the statement, “There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet”.

Our ‘shahadah’ could be “I believe only in the teachings enshrined in the GGS and no other scripture, and I proclaim myself to be a Sikh; and my name is Barack Hussein Obama, Nicolas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel, Gordon Brown, Dmitry Medvedev, Hu Jintao, Manmohan Singh...”. It is sad to say that blind are leading the blind in Sikhi today.

Hardev Singh Shergill

A BIGOT IS DEAD: LONG LIVE BIGOTRY**W. H. McLeod (1932-2009)**

[From July-August 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

Dictionary defines a bigot as, “a person who is utterly intolerant of any creed, belief or opinion that differs from his own”. Despite his assertion that he never really believed in any religious system or held any belief in God, and that he really has always been an unbeliever, the fact still remains that he was born into a Christian family, was a student of Christianity, his education was funded by the Church, was an ordained Christian Minister, overseas Christian Missionary, who never ever not only did not renounce his birth and professional religion, he never wrote anything critical about Christianity. He seems to have saved his venom for Guru Nanak. If any of his students has any of his writings that deny Jesus’ virgin birth, resurrection, second coming, that Jesus multiplied fish, walked on water, gave eyesight to the blind and limbs to the crippled, God made the world in six days, made man in His image and woman from man’s rib, there is life after death in heaven or hell (other than during this life and on this earth, as Guru Nanak preached) and a Minister can forgive someone’s sins, I would love to receive them and promise to publish them in the Sikh Bulletin.

That he went after Guru Nanak to belittle and denigrate him becomes clear from the following quotations from his book, “Sikhs and Sikhism”, Oxford University Press 1999 edition:

P. 6 “If he (man) refuses (life of meditation on the divine self-revelation and of conformity to it) he follows the path of spiritual death and remains firmly bound to the wheel of transmigration.”

In Guru Nanak’s message ‘meditation’ was only one among three commandments: “kirat karo, wand chhako, naam japo” Transmigration, along with reincarnation, are Hindu beliefs. There is no belief in either of these in Sikhism.

P. 13 “Of the four Janamsakhis the least reliable is the Bala tradition, but its influence has been immense.”

Immense, indeed; this Bala was a fiction, his image, along with Guru Nanak’s and Mardana’s above the entrance to Darbar Sahib notwithstanding. It was this Janamsakhi that turned me off from Sikhi even before my teenage years. Having received my elementary and middle school education through Hindi medium in the former Bikaner State, I learnt Panjabi at home by reading books like ‘Bale dian sakhian’. I did not believe a single karamaat ascribed to Guru Nanak and to me Guru Nanak became just another mythical Hindu Devta that I had read about in Hindu granths. Dr. McLeod should have debunked this Janamsakhi completely.

P. 39 “In response to Mardana’s inquiry concerning the inequalities of the human condition Baba Nanak replied, ‘joy and pain come in accordance with the deeds of one’s previous existence’.” (From Puratan Janamsakhi)

Sikhism does not subscribe to the Hindu concept of previous life which is an excuse for the caste system that Guru Nanak condemned.

But Dr. McLeod is not quoting from the various Janamsakhis to elaborate on Guru Nanak’s philosophy. After devoting pp. 34-110 to the details in Janamsakhis, he concludes:

P. 111 About Guru’s visit to Assam, “It must, however, be both challenged and rejected”.

P. 112 About Guru’s visit to Dacca, “The tradition must, however, be summarily dismissed”.

P. 117 About Guru’s visit to Ceylon, “The tradition that Guru Nanak visited Ceylon must accordingly be rejected”.

P. 119 Guru’s encounter with Sajjan Thug, “As it

stands, however, it must be classified with the improbable Sakhis”.

P. 120 The discourse on Mount Sumeru, “In this case, however, the arguments which must be brought against the tradition do compel us to reject it”.

P. 125 Visits to Mecca and Medina, “The Mecca and Medina Sakhis must accordingly be classified as highly improbable”.

*[One of the arguments he has used to support his conclusion is that Guru, being a non-Muslim would not have been allowed to visit. **“Guru Nanak would doubtless have been sufficiently conversant with Muslim belief and practice to have sustained the disguise, but it would have been a violation both of his manifest honesty and of his customary practice of plain speaking”.** We should be grateful to Dr. McLeod for considering Guru Nanak to be honest and plain speaking.]*

P. 132 The visit to Baghdad, “The Janamsakhis traditions offer insufficient evidence and the support hitherto claimed on the basis of the inscription must be withdrawn. Although there remains a possibility that Guru Nanak visited Baghdad we are now compelled to regard it as an unsubstantiated possibility. The tradition may be classified with the possible Sakhis, for Baghdad was certainly not beyond the range of a traveler from India and access to the city would not have been refused as in the case of Mecca. The weakness of the evidence indicates, however, a remote possibility, not a strong one”.

P. 138 Babur and the sack of Saidpur, “...but the nature of the reference points to the 1524 capture of Lahore, not to the 1520 sack of Saidpur...The same cannot, however, be said for the claim that Guru Nanak actually met Babur...It cannot be ruled out as completely impossible, but it certainly appears to be most unlikely”.

P. 142 Visits to Multan, “As they stand, however, all of the accounts which describe Multan visits must be rejected”.

kindest comment I can make is that Mr. McLeod studied the philosophy of Guru Nanak not from the only authentic source we have, the Guru Granth Sahib, but observing as it was incorrectly practiced by the Sikhs when he was in Punjab and unfortunately incorrectly practiced today in every Gurdwara in the world and the worst of all places, Darbar Sahib in Amritsar. He compounded this error by failing to recognize the fallacy in and relying on the Janamsakhis that had distorted Guru Nanak’s message by miraculous tales that had turned me off Sikhism in my early teenage years since these Janamsakhis were the source for me to learn Panjabi at home because the regular school education was in Hindi, the place of my early childhood education being District Ganganagar of Bikaner State of a Hindu Raja, Maharaja Ganga Singh.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

A tale of two ‘Sikhs’

[From November-December 2010 Sikh Bulletin]

YOUR RELIGION IS NOT IMPORTANT

Leonard Boff

A brief dialogue between a Brazilian theologian, Leonard Boff, and the Dalai Lama; Leonardo is one of the renovators of the Theology of Freedom.

In a roundtable discussion about religion and freedom in which Dalai Lama and myself were participating, at recess, I maliciously and also with interest, asked him: “Your Holiness, what is the best religion?” I thought he would say: “The Tibetan Buddhism” or “The Oriental Religions, much older than Christianity.”

Dalai Lama paused, smiled and looked me in the eyes, which surprised me because I knew of the malice contained in my question. He answered:

“The best religion is the one that gets you closest to God. It is the one that makes you a better person.”

To get out of my embarrassment with such a wise answer, I asked: “What is that makes me better?” He responded: “Whatever makes you more compassionate, more sensible, more detached, more loving, more humanitarian, more responsible, more ethical. The religion that will do that for you is the best religion.” I was silent for a moment, marveling and even today thinking of his wise and irrefutable response.

“I am not interested, my friend, about your religion or if you are religious or not. What really is important to me is your behavior in front of your peers, family, work, community, and in front of the world. Remember, the universe is the echo of our actions and our thoughts. The law of action and reaction is not exclusively for physics. It is also of human relations. If I act with goodness, I will receive goodness. If I act with evil, I will get evil.”

“What our grandparents told us is the pure truth. You will always have what you desire for others. Being happy is not a matter of destiny. It is a matter of options.”

Finally he said: **“Take care of your Thoughts because they become Words. Take care of your Words because they will become Actions. Take care of your Actions because they will become Habits. Take care of your Habits because they will form your Character. Take care of your Character because it will form your Destiny, and your Destiny will be your Life and there is no religion higher than the Truth.”**

EDITORIAL

[From January-February 2011 Sikh Bulletin]

WHO ARE THE SIKHS?



1 GOD

A Sikh is a believer in and a follower of **Guru Nanak's** teachings.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was born in what is now Pakistan Punjab. There were two dominant religions in India at that time, Hinduism and Islam. He was born in a Hindu family but his lifelong companion was a Muslim, Mardana, as were many of his other followers. The Guru wrote hymns and sang to the music of Mardana's Rabab, a folk stringed instrument of that time. He was well versed in both Hindu and Muslim scriptures and in his writings he commented on both. To spread his message of oneness of God, the Creator, and oneness of humanity, he traveled to Muslim places of worship as far west as Mecca in Saudi Arabia and Hindu and Buddhist places of worship to the borders of Tibet in the North, Burma in the East, and Ceylon in the South.

Guru Nanak rejected centuries old ritualistic and discriminatory practices that had crept into the Indian society and ushered in a new movement of universal brotherhood, regardless of one's birth in a particular caste or religion. By doing so he gravely hurt the feelings of not only his family but also the entire high caste Hindu society and the Muslim administration, the establishments of the day.

Sikhism is unique among the world's religions because it is unlike any of them, except certain principles of ethics and moral norms which are common to all religions as well as the atheists. Like the three Semitic religions of, 'The Torah', 'The Holy Bible' and 'The Holy Quran' the Sikhs believe in their own scripture, Guru Granth Sahib. But the similarity ends right there. There are three

fundamental differences:

1. The [Sikh](#) religion differs as regards the authenticity of its [Scriptures](#) from all other major world religions. None of their founders have left a line of their own composition and we only know what they taught through tradition or second-hand information put in writing long after they were gone and obviously influenced by the writers' interpretations. All 1430 pages of Guru Granth Sahib are poetry, set to Indian musical notes, and every word and verse can be attributed to **Guru Nanak**, five of his successor Gurus and 29 others, among them fifteen Hindu and Muslim Saints. These were godly men belonging to whole range of social and religious backgrounds, including those dubbed untouchables by the society.

In the Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, the core concepts are **Guru Nanak's** but they are supported, elaborated and reinforced by all these other writers of diverse backgrounds, religions and regions of India. This makes Guru Granth Sahib a truly universal scripture. The following verse from Guru Granth Sahib on the subject of **Creation and Oneness of Humanity** is by one of those Saints. His name is Bhagat **Kabir**, whose pedigree is unknown but as an orphan he was brought up by a family of **Muslim weavers**:

First, Allah created the Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up.

So who is good, and who is bad? //1//

O people, O Siblings of Destiny, do not wander deluded by doubt.

The Creation is in the Creator, and the Creator is in the Creation, totally pervading and permeating all places.

//1//Pause//

The clay is the same, but the Fashioner has fashioned it in various ways.

There is nothing wrong with the pot of clay – there is nothing wrong with the Potter. //2//

The One True Lord abides in all; by His making, everything is made. Whoever realizes the Hukam of His Command, knows the One Lord.

He alone is said to be the Lord's slave. //3//

The Lord Allah is Unseen; He cannot be seen.

The Guru has blessed me.

*Says **Kabeer**, my anxiety and fear have been taken away;*

I see the Immaculate Lord pervading everywhere. //4//3//

[Guru Granth Sahib page 1349]

2. Sikhism is a philosophy which has validity for all cultures and religions. Sikh Scriptures speak to a person of every religion or no religion. Anyone who agrees with and practices the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib is a Sikh, regardless of the faith of his/her birth. This makes the Sikhs welcome people of all faiths as brothers and sisters. However if there is a conflict between the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib and of the other faith, the Sikh will only follow his Guru.

3. The Sikh concept of God is also unique. Most world religions believe in one God, but which one? God of Jews favours only his chosen people who are still waiting for their Messiah; Christian God would save only those who believe in his son Jesus Christ, the Messiah who has already come, and the Muslim God has the last word because Mohammed is the last Messiah and there shall be no more. President Bush has a different God than Osama-bin-Laden.

Guru Nanak's God is the God of the entire humanity. In a Sikh place of worship (called a Gurudwara - Guru's door), people of all races, colours, sexes, religions and nationalities are welcomed as equals without any question about their faith. No effort is made here at proselytization. Another unique feature of Sikhism is the '**Langar**', (food prepared in the community kitchen by volunteers and served to all those who enter the Guru's door. [See page 4](#)). Everybody is invited to it without any distinction of caste, creed, colour or nationality

Guru Nanak's God is the God of entire creation, *"God is ONE. His name is Truth. He is the creator. He is fearless and not inimical. He is without death and without birth. He is self-existent. Humans can attune to him through Guru's grace. God existed in the beginning; He existed when time started running its course; He exists even now and He shall exist forever and ever".* *Guru Granth Sahib* page 1.

Sikhism is a modern, scientific, and practical religious way of life. It abhors asceticism and advocates an active life of a married house-holder in a classless and casteless society. It commands its followers to:

1. Earn their living by doing honest and productive work;
2. Share the fruit of their honest labour with the needy and those unable to help themselves; and
3. Remember the Lord, the Creator, at all times.

When the Pope had **Galileo (1564-1642)** jailed for advocacy of **Copernicus' (1473-1543)** theory, that earth revolves around the sun, condemned by the Roman Catholic Church as heretical, **Guru Nanak (1469-1539)** was postulating views on the origin of the Universe that will make the Big Bang theorists proud. He stated unambiguously that there were countless Earths, Moons and Suns. He called the natural laws that govern their motions in space His '*hukam*' (Cosmic Law). Cosmos is the manifest form of God and *hukam* (Cosmic Law) is the invisible form that pervades the cosmos.

Long before **Darwin's (1809-1882)** theory of origin of species, **Guru Nanak** had declared that life began in water and evolved through many life forms. Later it spread in the water, over and under the land and in the air. Human beings are the ultimate life form. Death is a loss of consciousness. When a person dies he/she does not go to heaven or hell, because heaven and hell exist only in our imagination. It is we who make a

heaven or hell of our lives, here on this earth, during our life time. Upon death, the spark, we call soul, merges with the cosmic Consciousness and our physical body turns to dust of which it is made.

Although **Guru Nanak** was born into a Hindu household he shares not even the concept of God with Hinduism. At a very young age he refused to wear the janeu (Hindu sacred thread worn by high caste males); discarded the caste system (a religiously sanctioned discrimination still entrenched in the 21st century democratic India); preached against idol worship; recognized the dignity and equality of every human being; asserted the equality of men and women; condemned the Hindu practice of *Sati* (live immolation of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre); instructed the women to discard veil; allowed widow and widower remarriage; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell (after death), incarnation, transmigration, 84 lakh juni (8,400,000 life forms) *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses. He preached '*sarbat da bhala*' (*good of everybody*) which is unique only to Sikhism. **His was a faith of Universal Humanism and is a faith for this Scientific Age.**

Sikhism places emphasis on individual human dignity and intellect. It has nothing like the Ten Commandments or the Sharia Law. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind. Simple as that! **Guru Nanak** rejected the concepts of virgin birth, resurrection, specific times or directions for prayer. Starving the body for a day time (as fast) and then gorging it at night fall was abhorrent to him. Pilgrimage for spiritual gain and feeding the Brahman to sustain deceased relatives has no value in Sikhism

In Sikhism, no one place is holier than the other because all places are created by God and God

permeates everywhere. The place where you live is just as holy as Hardwar, Banaras, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Salt Lake City. No one time or day is more auspicious than another. Only the time spent in honest productive work and prayers is considered blessed.

Women constitute one half of humanity but no religion accords women the status that **Guru Nanak** demands for women:

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her bad? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all. O Nanak, only the True Lord is without a woman. That mouth which praises the Lord continually is blessed and beautiful. O Nanak, those faces shall be radiant in the Court of the True Lord. // 2 *//Guru Granth Sahib page 473.*

Sikhism openly states:- "**Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful living**" because **that is union with God**'. (*Guru Granth Sahib page 62*)

Hardev Singh Shergill

[Please feel free to copy, translate into other languages and distribute this very brief introduction to Sikhism. ED.]

EDITORIAL

BIBEK BUDHI-SO ELUSIVE

[From September-October 2011 Sikh Bulletin]

Gurbani lays so much emphasis on the importance of *bibek budhi* (discerning mind) yet the people who inherited Gurbani, whose heritage Gurbani is; refuse to use their *Bibek budhi*. Regardless of what some say, Gurbani is not easy to comprehend, even in the language it is written in. Even the English translations, flashed on the large screens in many Gurdwaras, carry glaring errors in

translation. One of the three English translations I have translates Bhagat Kabir's ਗੁਰਿ ਗੁੜ ਦੀਨਾ ਮੀਠਾ (P.1350) as "**God gave me molasses**". It is easy to assume that there would be countless other gems like this. For Panjabi speaking people English is common second language. Just imagine someone reading Gurbani in any other foreign language! This kind of translation and interpretation would drive those in search of new thoughts away from Gurbani.

As a rule I do not go to Gurdwaras because for me it is a very hurtful experience. But the other day I attended a Gurdwara function for my grand niece's first birthday. Kirtania Singh sang ਰਾਮ ਜਪਉ ਜੀਅ ਐਸੇ ਐਸੇ॥ ਧੂ ਪ੍ਰਹਿਲਾਦ ਜਪਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਜੈਸੇ॥ (P. 337). When he started the explanation I gave him my rapt attention. He explained how Prahlad was evicted from his father's lap by his step mother, how his mother explained to him that the kingdom on earth is nothing compared to the kingdom of heaven and he, at the age of five, leaves his father's home for the forest to do tapasya. In the forest he has just met a holy man when the Kirtania drops the name of Baba Isher Singh, winner against his rival bihangams, to succeed to the Gaddi at Nanaksar, but at the barrel of a gun. I immediately got up in disgust and walked out. Later at home I looked up Prof. Sahib Singh's interpretation. In his '*shabad da bhav*' he avoids 'tapasya in the forest' theme to reach the kingdom of heaven but he does not explain what Gurbani has to say about '*japna*'. May be he has done it somewhere else. But a Kirtania cannot be excused of this omission because for the *sangat* this half hour is the best opportunity to be connected to Gurbani.

In the October 24, 2011 issue of our local newspaper, The Sacramento Bee, I read the following in connection with the "occupy Wall Street movement" in the United States: "**Every movement for social change that has really made a difference has included the power of God, the power of the spirit and the power of**

the people of conscience” said the Rev. Stephanie Sellers, one of the Episcopalian “protest chaplains” praying with protesters at different sites.” Notice that she has enunciated **three powers.** Guru Nanak would say that these are not three separate powers; God and the Spirit are both inside and integral part of those people who have the conscience.

Although born in Panjab at my *nanke* home, being the first born, I grew up in Hindi speaking Bikaner state. I learned to write and read Panjabi during my 3rd and 4th grades at home from my mother and practiced reading on various granths my father had. One of those granths was ‘*Bale-dian-Sakhian*’ and another ‘*Bachittar Natak*’. From 5th grade I was sent to a boarding school. A novel feature, and a good one, of Bikaner State’s education system was called ‘Special Class’ in the 5th year where in the Middle Schools children from village schools were placed. They were taught only English, grades 3rd and 4th level in the first half of the school year and grade 5th in the second half. In the sixth grade village and city students were brought together. Village students had completed math, geography, history and other subject of 5th grade city students in the 3rd and 4th grades. So, in this special class I had plenty of spare time and used that to read Hindu granths, including Ramayan and Mahabharat. I found similar myths in them as I had found in ‘*Bale-dian-Sakhian*’ and ‘*Bachittar Natak*’. Besides it seemed that every time a rishi muni was succeeding in his tapasya, God would send an *apasra* (heavenly prostitute) and the inevitable outcome would be tapasvee’s fall from grace.

That experience turned me into a confirmed agnostic before I turned thirteen. It remained that way until late 1990’s when I acquired ownership of a Gurdwara building through court order. In this case a Nanaksaria thug, ‘Sant Baba’ Amar Singh Barundi, had reneged on returning a large sum of loan which he now claimed was a donation. Building was awarded to me by the court in lieu of what he owed me plus the attorney fees and court

costs. For three years I operated this Gurdwara at my expense hoping that the community would buy it from me but that did not materialize. Three years into it I decided to start learning about Sikhism. **That is when I read Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal’s explanation of ‘Manglacharan’, commonly referred to as ‘Moolmantar’.** Once I understood God as described by Guru Nanak I had no problem accepting it. My beef was with the God/Gods of all the other religions that laid claim to divine revelation and proclaimed man to be created in the image of God. **In reality what they have done is create God in the image of man.** Within four years I had contact with enough concerned Sikhs from many countries who also felt the same need to reform Sikhi. Our efforts culminated in a World Conference in Chandigarh in October 2003.

While preparing for my speech for this conference I thought to look into European contemporaries of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) because that was the period of renaissance in Europe. To my delight I found Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543), a Polish Mathematician, called the founder of modern Astronomy. He was the first to shatter the prevalent belief, supported by the Church, that Earth is the center of the universe and that Sun revolves around the Earth. **Here were two contemporaries, thousands of miles apart, one a scientist and the other a prophet but both saying the same thing.** So, those who claim that Sikhi is also a revealed religion, like the other religions, are doing a grave disservice to Guru Nanak. Would they also say that Copernicus received divine revelation too? Copernicus himself makes no such claim. **The fact of the matter is that there is no such thing as revelation. Any religion making that claim is false.** Guru Nanak and Copernicus both used their *bibek-budhi*, an evolutionary gift that only humans possess, even though they share 90% of their DNA with mice and 98% with chimpanzees. Copernicus published his theory in 1530; Guru Nanak put his view of Universe more than a decade earlier in ਜਪੁ (Jap).

One of the strongest arguments presented in

support of Gurbani as revealed is reference to ਪੁਰ-ਕੀ-ਬਾਣੀ. S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu, in an article on that topic appearing in this issue (p.28), makes an argument that that is not so. Also appearing in this issue is a review by Dr. D. P. Singh of a book by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal, '**Nanakian Philosophy: Basics for humanity**'. In this book Dr. Chahal repudiates the views of copycat scholars who claim Guru Nanak's teachings to be based on Vedantic philosophy, the very view being heavily emphasized, unfortunately, by the University in Amritsar that carries Guru's name.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From March April 2012 Sikh Bulletin]

EVOLUTION OF GOD

By the time I stepped into my teenage years I had become a confirmed agnostic. I did not know much about religion and concept of God to deny the existence of the latter so I could not be an atheist. But I did know enough from observation and reading literature that God, as being described and worshipped, could not exist. In the mostly Hindu literature that I read it seemed that any time someone with a long and hard tapasya got within reach of God, he would send a heavenly prostitute (apasra) to make them fall from grace.

It was in my sixties that I got introduced to Guru Nanak's concept of God and that God, I thought, I could accept because it was unlike any other God and whom everyone could accept. More on Guru Nanak's concept of God will be the subject of next issue of The Sikh Bulletin.

One of the writings that explained the meaning of Moolmantar/Manglacharan, the very first words in Guru Granth Sahib, was that of Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal. Starting with the September-October 2011 issue of The Sikh Bulletin, in which we published a review of his book "Nankian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity", we have begun

publishing chapters from that book in every successive issue. This issue has Chapter 12, '**Concept of God**'. In preparation for that I decided to look for a book on evolution of the concept of God.

The book that I chose to read on this subject was "**The Evolution of God**" by **Robert Wright**, published in June 2009 by Little, Brown and Company. This book put into words my thoughts that I had developed over time. It was gratifying to learn that I shared a basic belief with Aristotle. **According to the book of Genesis, God created man in his own image, but according to Aristotle, men create gods after their own image.**

Religion was created to bring order to the social organization in the absence of secular codes of conduct and means to enforce their implementation. God did not appear on Mount Sinai to Moses. Moses himself chiseled the Ten Commandments on a slab of stone to put fear of God to control the desperate and increasingly unruly people. Evolution of God and religion also came in handy for the powerful to stay powerful and for ambitious and charismatic characters like Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805 – 1844), the founder of [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#). Like Mohammed he too was led to God's word by an Angel, Gabriel for former and Moroni for the latter, and if God was accessible to Moses and Mohammed then why not to Joseph Smith and he got witnesses to prove it although they had not witnessed anything. Today there are plentiful Evangelical Christian preachers who claim to have been commandeered by God himself to do His work.

Human nature, governed by evolution, being the same prompted the Shamans, Medicine men, Chiefs and Kings, from the Pharaohs to rulers of more recent times and some even today, with their divine right to rule, to use religion and God to perpetuate their special and superior status. Kings of Egypt, Mayan Kings and more recently English

Kings claimed to be the sole agents of the Gods. Henry VIII in England dissolved the monasteries and abbeys of Roman Catholic Church in 1536 and set the Anglican Church apart from the Roman Catholic Church. Constantine the Great (272-337) became the first Roman Emperor (306-307) to convert to Christianity that his predecessors persecuted because it suited his political ambitions. Mohammed was a political ruler. His moral compass made necessary adjustments depending upon the circumstances.

Beginning of monotheism is generally attributed to Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. But here is an interesting point to ponder. The concept of Indo-European Languages, and therefore people, is well accepted. This is the largest language family group with three billion speakers. Of the [twenty languages with the largest numbers of native speakers](#) twelve are Indo-European, English and Punjabi among them. Take the English word CREATOR and Punjabi word KARTAR that Guru Nanak used to address 'God'. Word sounds come from consonants. So when we remove the vowels from both of these words we are left with C R T R and K R T R. Now C and K in English produce the same sound unless they are followed by letter H which is not the case here. Would it be a stretch to suggest that perhaps, at least among the Indo European speaking people, monotheism preceded the concept of multiple Gods? It is very tempting to have exclusively your own God. In ancient Israel each city state had its own Yahweh until the most powerful tribe's Yahweh triumphed over the other weaker Yahwehs.

While reading this book I also came across a couple of Hebrew words that carry the same meaning in Punjabi. Hebrew word for RIVER is NAHAR (flowing water) and Hebrew God of death is called MOT (ਮੌਤ).

Whether multiple Gods preceded or followed the One God the fact remains that idols were an

integral part of that belief system. Mohammed pitted himself against idol worship in the Arab world and was successful. Christianity had the same effect in Greece where the stone images of Gods lie in ruin. But stone Gods are alive and well in Hindu India. Over centuries nothing has changed. There is so much in common between Greek and Hindu mythology and human and animal mix in their Gods that it is hard to miss.

Finally, the concept of Miri Piri in Sikhism is the tail end of the ancient concept of religion and politics, being the flip sides of the same coin. Its impracticality is shown by the current control of SGPC by the Badal clan in Punjab.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From May-June 2012 Sikh Bulletin]

GURU NANAK'S GOD

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ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ
ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

The opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib, shown above, is accepted as Guru Nanak's description or definition of God. English translation of the above verse by Manmohan Singh in 'Sri Guru Granth Sahib', published by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee is as follows:

There is but one God. True is His name, creative His personality and immortal His form. He is without fear, sans enmity, unborn and self-illuminated. By the Guru's grace (He is obtained).

Guru Nanak is quite certain that God is a singularity, unlike Hindu or Christian Trinity, and calls it Truth. It is the Creator of everything, visible and invisible. It created itself but unlike its creation It is timeless and formless. But then he mentions two attributes that are purely human, fear and enmity, but says God does not show

either. Then why mention it unless Guru Nanak wishes man to aspire to be God like. If one treats others as he would like to be treated then there would be no enmity. If there is no enmity, there is no hostility and fear will disappear. That is a strong indication of life course that Guru Nanak would like us to follow.

Here I would like to confess to my personal belief that might be considered a blasphemy and offend most people, even those who know me well. That is that Guru Nanak did not initiate another religion. There were too many religions and divisions among them in his time as is the case today. Today he will surely say that 'I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim; neither a Sikh nor a Christian'. He showed mankind a path to life and living. The tragedy is that 'well-meaning people', which would be 99.9% of us all, have turned it into yet another divisive and suffocating faith.

Guru Nanak's belief in One God was so absolute that the very next thing that follows the opening verse is:

ਅਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. //1//

Of all the creatures in Its Creation only human species is equipped with *budhi* (brain, mind, intelligence, wisdom). Guru Nanak puts so much importance on *bibek budhi* (discerning mind) that he wants us to use it even when listening to him.

Unfortunately, when it comes to understanding Gurbani, 99.9% of us do not use *bibek budhi* and they end up as mindless *sangat* listening to fables in the Gurdwaras or devoted *chelas* in *deras* which are more numerous than the villages in Panjab.

Those who do use *bibek budhi*, use it in two different ways. Those who think intuitively do not perceive God as Guru Nanak would want

them to. For them God is traditional to whom they can pray for Its protection, largesse and favoritism. It also requires no effort. Rare are those individuals who think of God analytically, the way Guru Nanak did, that requires more effort.

Guru Nanak's God is bountiful God of the entire universe and all the creation in it. It does not micro manage Its Creation; nor It applies its laws selectively.

So how can we describe in simple easy to understand words Guru Nanak's God? We will have to elaborate on the traditional interpretation of the opening verse. It describes God definitely not human or any other life form because it has neither a form nor any human attributes such as fear and enmity. It was there before the Creation, at the time of Creation, now and it will be there in the future, for ever and ever. It was there when there was *sunni*, nothingness. Out of this nothingness It created the cosmos, in an instant.

Does that sound like 'Big Bang' theory? Yet we do not perceive Guru Nanak as a scientist but we do consider his contemporary, Copernicus, as a scientist. [Alfred Wegener](#) published his Theory of Continental Drift in 1912 but he was not believed because he was unable to provide a convincing explanation for the physical processes which might have caused this drift. But he was right nevertheless. Similarly Guru Nanak was right about the origin of universe. It took only 500 years for the 'scientists' to propose that theory. Similarly Guru Nanak turned the Hindu concept of transmigration into 'Origin of Species' attributed to Charles Darwin, 400 years after Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak's God is inside every living cell of our bodies. Truth be told that our bodies are made of stardust with a spark of the Creator. You may call it soul but it is not located in any specific part of the body; it permeates the body. That is why Guru Nanak can say to a Muslim, and for that matter to an 'amritdhari' Sikh, that if you can see

God in every face that in itself is your five daily prayers or recitation of five banis, respectively. In simplest language Guru Nanak's God is **'Mother of all the Forces of Nature'**.

Yes, I do believe in God but only of Guru Nanak's and not of any other religion. Most powerful instrument Guru Nanak had was his mind, *bibek budhi*. Even most of our scientists are so hide bound as to ignore what should be obvious to them under the negative influences of their formative years.

Following excerpt from the Jan-Feb 2009 Sikh Bulletin editorial is appropriate here:

"Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) originated a unique philosophy and challenged the existing concepts about God, heaven, hell, reincarnation, transmigration, idol worship, caste system, astrology, mantra systems, etc. in Southeast Asia."

Amen! Halleluia! This quote came to me from a Sikh scholar who is doing a great service to the cause of Sikhi and I could not help but compliment him and told him that I agreed with his quote whole heartedly.

To that I added that Guru Nanak was not a prophet in the sense of Biblical or Muslim prophets who claimed to speak to or spoken to by God, directly as in the case of Moses or indirectly, as in the case of Mohammed who had an Angel as an intermediary. When Bani talks about 'dhur-ki-bani' it is not God talking to Nanak; Sikhi is not a 'revealed' religion; it is born out of Gurus life experience; it is Guru's own inspiration and thought process that inspires him to seek and speak fundamental truths. He wrote back that he was pleased to read my response but observed, "No Sikh scholar could dare to say what you have said."

He is right and therein lays the tragedy. I am not afraid to say it precisely because I am not a

scholar. The tragedy is that Sikh scholars are too fearful of consequences if they break with the established tradition, as Mr. Tohra had explained away the unsikh practice of denial of sewa to the women at Harmander Sahib because of the long established tradition. The fact that Guru Nanak had broken many traditions going back centuries was inconsequential."

In a random email exchanges on the internet among many, the following caught my attention: ***"Do the Sikhs really know who the Nanak is? Is he Guru or mystic or reformer or philosopher or scientist or something else?"*** The person who wrote that was also the person who triggered my response above. That was Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal, whose book 'Nanakian Philosophy' we are serializing in The Sikh Bulletin.

Freed Zakaria, in his book 'The Post American World, Release 2.0' writes, "Indeed, the hundred years between 1450 and 1550 marked the most significant break in human history – between faith, ritual and dogma, on the one hand and observation, experimentation and critical thought, on the other. And it happened in Europe..."

Freed is referring to the period of Renaissance in Europe. One of the personalities of that period in Europe was Copernicus (1473-1543) who went against the teachings of Catholic Church by asserting that it was the earth that was revolving around the Sun and not the other way around. At the same time in India Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was challenging the Hindu concept of cosmos by asserting that there are countless earths, moons and suns and that their movements were governed by Laws of Nature.

Freed Zakaria does not know that Nanak existed; nor did Jawahar Lal Nehru. But we, the Sikhs, cannot lay entire blame on Zakarias and Nehrus. The religious scholars and religious leaders that we have produced have mostly been copy cats and influenced by right wing Hindu organizations such as Rashtriya Sikh Sangat and institutions of

learning such as Banaras Hindu University. One of our recent and notorious in terms of ethics 'Jathedar' was a Vedanti, not a scholar of Gurbani. Central government, which is basically a Hindu government, whether Congress or BJP, has also done everything in its power to deny us our true faith; Indian constitution pronounces us Hindus as does most of the world.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL [II]

[From the July-August 2012 Sikh Bulletin]

GURBANI & SIKH REHT MARYADA SOME CONTRADICTIONS

Quotes from Guru Granth Sahib:

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥

The One God is our father; we are the children of the One God. You are our Guru. GGS Page 611

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ

॥੧॥

No one is my enemy, and no one is a stranger. I get along with everyone. GGS Page 1299

Both quotes above are from the Bani of Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev Ji. Guru Ji is stressing that whole Human Race is one big Family. Guru Nanak preached the same thing to his Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Muslim audiences in India and the Middle East and to the Christian and Jewish audiences whom he must have come across during his visit to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad. Scientific research on human origins confirms the same thing. In fact it even pin points origin of human race to an 'African Mother'.

Quotes from
'Sikh Reht Maryada:

K. T. F. of N. A. Inc. 3524 Rocky Ridge Way, El Dorado Hills, CA. 95762

**The Code of Sikh Conduct & Conventions',
Published by
Dharam Parchar Committee
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
December 2000 (English version)**

*"Only a Sikh may perform kirtan in a congregation".
(Chapter V Article VI c) p.15*

*"A Sikh daughter must be married to a Sikh".
(Chapter XI Article XVIII b) p.26*

Two questions arise:

3. Why the distinction between daughter and son when Gurbani gives both sexes an equal status?
4. If the entire humanity is child of one God then why discriminate in the name of religion which is man made?

It is logical to assume from the above quotes that a Sikh can be recognized by his appearance alone. A key determinant of that is unshorn hair. Yet there is no mention of the requirement for a Sikh to keep unshorn hair in Guru Granth Sahib. If anything, it says that it makes no difference to the creator whether we keep long hair or a bald head; what counts are our deeds, our conduct in our daily lives.

ਕਬੀਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਏਕ ਸਿਉਂ ਕੀਏ ਆਨ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਜਾਇ॥
ਭਾਵੈ ਲਾਬੇ ਕੇਸ ਕਰੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਘਰਿ ਮੁਛਾਇ॥ GGS ਪ। 1365।

If the Gurus kept unshorn hair, covered with a turban, they were simply following one of the then prevalent Indian customs that also included completely shorn and partially shorn hair. It were Hindus and Muslims, in various forms of appearance, who came to listen to the Gurus and none was barred based on their appearance or for any other reason.

Mardana, a Muslim, perhaps should be considered first among Guru Nanak's Sikhs because he spent his entire adult life in Guru's company and

provided music for Guru's hymns. Today his descendants are not allowed to perform kirtan at Darbar Sahib or any other Gurdwara.

The requirement of keeping unshorn hair started with the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, but only for those who volunteered to partake 'khande-di-pahul' and alongwith unshorn hair they were also required to carry four more articles of faith. At no time were the non-pahuldhari Sikhs considered any lesser.

In time the children of pahuldhari Sikhs, and many others, started keeping long hair without taking pahul, and now we are at a point where non-kesadhari Sikh is not just looked down upon but not even considered a Sikh. There is one kesadhari and pahuldhari sect among us that does not consider as Sikhs even those kesadhari and pahuldhari Sikhs who have not been baptized by their ritual and do not agree with their interpretation of Gurbani. Members of this group have resorted to violence in UK, Canada and USA to stop missionaries trained in Gurmat Gian Colleges from performing katha in our gurdwaras.

It is an interesting coincidence that both terms, **Sikh** and **Taliban**, literally mean the same thing, 'the student'. Unfortunately, we have seen the emergence of Sikh Taliban in the Diaspora. **We should never forget that a Sikh is one who lives by the teachings enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib that embodies the philosophy of Guru Nanak. Gurus lived their lives as they preached. There was no difference in their kathani and karni and they did not expect anything less from their Sikhs.**

It would be appropriate here to quote from my May-June 2012 Sikh Bulletin editorial:

"Here I would like to confess to my personal belief that might be considered a blasphemy and offend most people, even those who know me well. That is that Guru Nanak did not initiate another religion. There were too many religions

and divisions among them in his time as is the case today. Today he will surely say that 'I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim; neither a Sikh nor a Christian'. He showed mankind a path to life and living. The tragedy is that 'well meaning people', which would be 99.9% of us all, have turned it into yet another divisive and suffocating faith."

Several days after this issue of the Sikh Bulletin was released on the internet, Dr. Harbans Lal sent me an article for publications about the findings of **Syed Mushtaq Hussain Mirpuri**, a Kashmiri Muslim, during his stay at a madrassa in Mecca from 1927-1930. Following quote is from that article to be published in the September-October 2012 issue of the Sikh Bulletin:

*"Siyah to Baba Nanak Shah Faqir, by **Haji Tajjuddin Naqshbandhi**, who had met Guru Nanak during the hajj. Tajjuddin caught up with Guru Nanak in the town of Undlas located between Erar and Bagdad and travelled thereafter with him as a member of his entourage. **He thus remained with Guru Nanak during the years of 1504-06.***

*During Guru Nanak's visit to Mecca, **Qazi Ruknuddin** was among the first batch of Muslims who had extensive dialogue with him. After the incident in which Nanak was found sleeping with his feet pointing in the "wrong" direction, several Hajjis or pilgrims to Mecca-Medina gathered around Guru Nanak, seeking a dialogue.*

***Qazi Ruknuddin then asked Nanak:**
"Fala Allah mazabo"? (What is your religion?)*

To that Guru Nanak responded:

"Abdulla Allah la mazaboo" (I am a man of God and belong to no religion.)

This was one of some 360 questions and answers from Guru Nanak's dialogues during his Middle-East Visit."

This response by Guru Nanak reminded me of a similar utterance I heard in a scene of a play, 'Bulleshah' (1680-1757) performed in Chandigarh by a Pakistani group, about ten years ago. Two of his disciples were accosted by the religious police while eating during daylight during the month of Ramadan. When asked what religion they belonged to they responded that they were Muslims. Bulleshah told them that with their response they asked for that treatment because a Muslim is not supposed to eat during the day time during the month of Ramadan fasting; that their answer should have been 'we are men of God'.

Guru period and Mughal period were contemporary periods. There should be a wealth of original information in the archives of the Mogul Empire in Persian, the official language of the court. We need to train future researchers, proficient in Panjabi, Persian and English.

Hardev S. Shergill

EDITORIAL NANAK (1469-1539)

The One and Only of His Kind

(From November-December 2012 Sikh Bulletin)

Before Nanak's coming there had been no body like him, including the founders of world's largest faiths, and nobody since.

During the age of European Renaissance of the 14th–17th centuries Guru Nanak was the only person who brought renaissance to the Indian sub-continent. Human mind, that Gurbani calls '*dasam duar*', is so unique that at any given time more than one person can arrive at the same conclusion about the fundamental truths of the physical world. **Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and Copernicus (1473-1543)**, thousands of miles apart and unknown to each other, arrived at the **same conclusion about the cosmos, including that it is in constant change.**

Guru Nanak also planted the seeds of the future successes to come in the field of science, such as: the Big Bang theory, EMC², origin of life in water, Evolution of Species and from the point of view of nurturing the body, no difference between meat and vegetables. These were world changing pronouncements and yet the world never heard about them; not then, not now.

First article in this issue is "Origin of Universe", Chapter 15 of Dr Devinder Singh Chahal's book, 'Nanakian Philosophy'. It is worth repeating here the first two paragraphs in his introduction to this chapter to illustrate the above point:

"I would like to quote the following statement of Carl Sagan before describing the origin of universe according to Nanakian Philosophy: *"A religion, old or new, that stressed the magnificence of the universe as revealed by modern science, might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths. Sooner or later, such a religion will emerge"*. Carl Sagan, Pale Blue Dot (1995) [17].

"I was wonder-struck when I came across the above statement of Carl Sagan. I immediately went back to the 15th century, when the science was just emerging as a powerful tool to find the truth; Guru Nanak was describing the origin of universe, which appears to be very close to scientific version of today. And he laid the foundation of a new religion, Sikhi (Sikhism), which is now being envisioned by Carl Sagan as above".

Magnificence of the universe described with reverence and awe and that too through poetry is what Carl Sagan wanted a religion to stress; how sad that we who claim to be the lawful recipients of this priceless gift have it hidden from every Carl Sagan of this world.

Born as baby Nanak, because he was born at his

mother's paternal house, he died known as Guru Nanak. **He gave a priceless gift to mankind but it was not a religion.** Advocate Surinder Singh Kanwar, in his article in this issue, '*sikh-di-pehchaan*' makes the same point that **Guru Nanak wanted to rid the masses of conflicts in the name of religion rather than introduce still another religion.** What Guru Nanak gave was what **S. Parminder Singh Parmar** in his article in this issue calls *jeewan-jaach* (**How to live**). His philosophy got distorted and ritualized into a traditional religion by lesser people who came to inherit it.

Since Nanak himself rejected the **concept of Second Coming**, the corner stone of the world's largest ritual filled religion, we just have to hope and wish that the world will produce, sometime down into the future, another personality like him, to implement what he started, **a universal concept of mankind living in a righteous, peaceful and prosperous world as one family, marked by brotherly love, tolerant of our petty differences, enlightened citizenry conscious of its responsibility towards the animal and vegetation kingdom as the highest form of life on this little speck of star dust that we call planet Earth.** That just might delay the eventual oblivion of life on this planet that the cosmic law is speeding us towards.

In a random email exchanges on the internet, among many, the following had caught my attention: *"Do the Sikhs really know who the Nanak is? Is he Guru or mystic or reformer or philosopher or scientist or something else?"* The person who wrote that was **Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal**, and that triggered our serialization of his book '**Nanakian Philosophy**' in The Sikh Bulletin.

I humbly submit, and beseech discerning minds among us, to consider that Guru Nanak was all of these. As **Principal Sawan Singh Gogia** aptly states in his article in this issue, '*Guru Nanak Dev about Muslims*': **"His tenets preach liberation of**

humanity from social, political, religious and economic exploitation."

Blinded by our egos we have turned a pipe dream of life after death into an article of blind faith and invented Gods and Goddesses as impeccable witnesses to it. And then some of us have the audacity to claim that God created mankind in His image. But unfortunately it is all based on falsehood and this falsehood is the basis of all the world's religions. **Blind have been and are leading the Blind.**

In this country, the United States of America, a Republican Medical Doctor can unashamedly claim the world to be 6,000 years old (younger than Chinese history) because The Bible says so. A young and University educated type, Republican potential 2016 Presidential candidate, when cornered about the same question hee-hawed but did not commit himself to the answer by alleging not being a scientist. All this because a sizeable majority of the 47% who voted for Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney believe in that kind of falsehood being preached in multiple denominational Christian Churches and over radio waves. They also oppose teaching of Theory of Evolution in their schools; God created man in his image; this in a country that claims to be the leader of the world.

Nanak was a child prodigy; he was a born genius. At the very young age he mastered the religious and philosophical literature of both the Hindu and Muslim faiths of his time and he yearned for knowledge in search for which he went to the scholars of that period and engaged in intellectual discourses. **Neither God Himself nor his Angel appeared to give Guru Nanak his philosophy.** That is a myth propagated by the world's religions for their founders.

He was also an accomplished linguist. Otherwise how could he have communicated with all those diverse people in and around the Indian sub-continent? As **Dr Sarbjit Singh** of Mumbai states

in his article in this issue, '*Guru Nanak Sahib knew more than hundred languages*'.

He formulated his philosophy by use of his keen observation and use of his *bibek budhi* (discerning mind). Once his mission was clear to him he took leave of his young family of a wife and two teenage sons and travelled to four corners of the globe from Tibet in the north, to Burma in the east, Ceylon in the south and Mecca in the west. He accomplished all that on foot and by boat. No flying carpets and no magic tricks for him. One can imagine the criticism he must have endured from family and friends. But there was a much larger family that needed to hear him, the human family.

In His book '*Nanak, an Introduction*', Purushottam Nijhaawan writes, "In the 15th century, Indian society was a disturbing picture of rank ritualism, superstition, bigotry and social decay. The birth of Nanak in 1469 in the little village of Talwandi near Lahore, however, came as a miracle. The deteriorating Indian society had now found a redeemer".

It would be correct to say that the world at large had found a redeemer.

He had simple and straightforward messages for all the world's religions. To those who sought salvation in after life but went begging for food at the door of a householder in this life, Nanak prescribed the **life of a householder and to seek salvation in this life.**

To those who walked the earth bare feet with their mouths covered (Jainism) so as not to harm minute life, he made them aware of plenty of such life already swarming inside their bodies.

To those who worshipped stone images of multitudes of Gods and Goddesses (Brahmanism), Guru advised that there is only One God and it has no image.

To those who faced towards a specific direction while praying (Muslims) Guru revealed that God is not confined to one spot; It is everywhere and permeates everything.

If Guru had come across the faith that holds its redeemer to be the only son of God (Christians) and who was resurrected from death for a second coming sometime in the future he would have rejected that belief by saying that for the birth of a human to take place it needs a man's semen and a woman's egg inside her womb and the clock of death cannot be turned back.

Long before the modern scientific thought developed Guru Nanak sowed the seeds of it in the opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib and the bani 'Jap' that follows it. This editorial is followed by some selections from GGS to illustrate these points.

The opening verse:

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

"God is ONE. His name is Truth. He is the creator. He is fearless and not inimical. He is without death and without birth. He is self-existent. Humans can attune to him through Guru's grace."

What does it really mean? What does it describe? Certainly it is not anything akin to a human. It is formless and timeless and yet is self-existent. In the opening line of 'Jap' Guru unequivocally reasserts his firm belief that what he is saying is an absolute truth.

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਮੁੱਢ ਤੋਂ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਜੁਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਤੋਂ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਭੀ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਅਗਾਂਹ ਨੂੰ ਭੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਰਹੇਗਾ। ੧।

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1||

There is a single English word that describes what Guru is saying and that word is **ENERGY**.

Referring to death Guru asks what has died. Then he answers his own question; nothing has died. Body has simply gone back to its elements. The breath mixes with air, body becomes dust and the spark of **ENERGY** merges with the **ENERGY**. I see seeds of **E=MC²**.

Hardev Singh Shergill

VERSES FROM GURBANI

[The selections from Gurbani below are in support of the thesis in the November-December 2012 editorial. Only Prof. Sahib Singh's translation in Panjabi is included because in the opinion of this writer there is no authentic translation of Gurbani into English. Besides, this editorial is meant for the 'practioners' of Sikhi and not non-Sikhs. ED.]

ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੁੰਧੁਕਾਰਾ

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥

ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੁੰਧੁਕਾਰਾ ॥

ਧਰਣਿ ਨ ਗਗਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥

ਨਾ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਨ ਚੰਦੁ ਨ ਸੂਰਜੁ

ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਲਗਾਇਦਾ ॥੧॥

ਅਰਥ:- (ਜਗਤ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸਮਾ ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਦੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ) ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ (ਲਫਜ਼ ਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਵਰਤੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ, ਐਸੀ) ਘੁੰਪ ਹਨੇਰੇ ਦੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਸੀ (ਭਾਵ, ਅਜੇਹੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਬਾਬਤ ਕੁਝ ਭੀ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ)। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਧਰਤੀ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਕਿਤੇ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਚੱਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਦਿਨ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਰਾਤ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਚੰਦ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਸੂਰਜ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ (ਮਾਨੋ ਐਸੀ) ਸਮਾਧੀ ਲਾਈ ਬੈਠਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਫੁਰਨਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ੧।

ਖਾਣੀ ਨ ਬਾਣੀ ਪਉਣ ਨ ਪਾਣੀ ॥

ਓਪਤਿ ਖਪਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਣ ਜਾਣੀ ॥

ਖੰਡ ਪਤਾਲ ਸਪਤ ਨਹੀ ਸਾਗਰ

ਨਦੀ ਨ ਨੀਰੁ ਵਹਾਇਦਾ ॥੨॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਜਗਤ-ਰਚਨਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਚਾਰ ਖਾਣੀਆਂ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਸਨ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਹਵਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਉਤਪੱਤੀ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਪਰਲੋ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਜੰਮਣ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਮਰਨ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਨੌਂ ਖੰਡ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਸਤ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਨਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਹਿ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ੨।

ਨਾ ਤਦਿ ਸੁਰਗੁ ਮਛੁ ਪਇਆਲਾ ॥

ਦੇਜਕੁ ਭਿਸਤੁ ਨਹੀ ਖੈ ਕਾਲਾ ॥

ਨਰਕੁ ਸੁਰਗੁ ਨਹੀ ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਆਇ ਨ ਜਾਇਦਾ ॥੩॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਸੁਰਗ-ਲੋਕ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਮਾਤ-ਲੋਕ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਪਤਾਲ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਦੋਸ਼ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਬਹਿਸ਼ਤ ਸੀ, ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਮੌਤ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਕਾਲ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਸੁਰਗ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਨਰਕ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਜੰਮਣ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਮਰਨ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜੰਮਦਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਮਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ੩।

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੀਸੈ ਏਕੇ ਸੇਈ ॥

ਨਾਰਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਜਨਮਾ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਦੁਖੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਦਾ ॥੪॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਇਕ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਹੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਸੀ, ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਦਿੱਸਦਾ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਇਸ਼ਤ੍ਰੀ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਮਰਦ ਸੀ ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜਾਤਿ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਜਾਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਜਨਮ ਹੀ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਦੁੱਖ ਭੋਗਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਜੀਵ ਹੀ ਸੀ। ੪।

ਨਾ ਤਦਿ ਜਤੀ ਸਤੀ ਬਨਵਾਸੀ ॥

ਨਾ ਤਦਿ ਸਿਧ ਸਾਧਿਕ ਸੁਖਵਾਸੀ ॥

ਜੋਗੀ ਜੰਗਮ ਭੇਖੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਨਾਥੁ ਕਹਾਇਦਾ ॥੫॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜਤੀ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਸਤੀ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਤਿਆਗੀ ਸੀ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਸਿੱਧ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਸਾਧਿਕ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਸਤੀ ਸਨ। ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜੋਗੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜੰਗਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਭੇਖ ਸੀ, ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਜੋਗੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਖਵਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ। ੫।

ਜਪ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਨਾ ਬ੍ਰਤ ਪੂਜਾ ॥

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਆਖਿ ਵਖਾਣੈ ਦੂਜਾ ॥

ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਵਿਗਸੈ

ਆਪੇ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਇਦਾ ॥੬॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਜਪ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਤਪ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਸੰਜਮ ਸਾਧੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਵਰਤ ਰੱਖੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਐਸਾ ਜੀਵ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਜੋ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ । ਤਦੋਂ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਡੱਪਣ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਪਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ । ੬।

ਨਾ ਸੁਚਿ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਮਾਲਾ ॥

ਗੋਪੀ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਨ ਗਊ ਗ+ਆਲਾ ॥

ਤੰਤੁ ਮੰਤੁ ਪਾਖੰਡੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਵੰਸੁ ਵਜਾਇਦਾ ॥੭॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਸੁੱਚ ਰੱਖੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਜਮ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਕਿਤੇ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਦੀ ਮਾਲਾ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਗੋਪੀ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਗਊ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਗਊਆਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਤੰਤੂ ਮੰਤੂ ਆਦਿਕ ਪਖੰਡ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਬੰਸਰੀ ਵਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ । ੭।

ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਮਾਖੀ ॥

ਜਾਤਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਨਹੀ ਦੀਸੈ ਆਖੀ ॥

ਮਮਤਾ ਜਾਲੁ ਕਾਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਮਾਥੈ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਕਿਸੈ ਧਿਆਇਦਾ ॥੮॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕਰਮ-ਕਾਂਡ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਮਿੱਠੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੋਈ (ਉੱਚੀ ਨੀਵੀਂ) ਜਾਤਿ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਜਾਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਜਨਮ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਅੱਖੀਂ ਦਿੱਸਦਾ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਮਮਤਾ ਦਾ ਜਾਲ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਉਤੇ ਕਾਲ (ਕੂਕਦਾ ਸੀ) । ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜੀਵ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਸਿਮਰਨ-ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰਦਾ ਸੀ । ੮।

ਨਿੰਦੁ ਬਿੰਦੁ ਨਹੀ ਜੀਉ ਨ ਜਿੰਦੇ ॥

ਨਾ ਤਦਿ ਗੋਰਖੁ ਨਾ ਮਾਛਿੰਦੇ ॥

ਨਾ ਤਦਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਕੁਲ ਓਪਤਿ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਗਣਤ ਗਣਾਇਦਾ ॥੯॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਨਿੰਦਿਆ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਖੁਸ਼ਾਮਦ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜੀਵਾਤਮਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਜਿੰਦ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਗੋਰਖ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਮਾਛਿੰਦੇ

ਨਾਥ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ (ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਦੀ) ਗਿਆਨ-ਚਰਚਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਸਮਾਧੀ-ਇਸਥਿਤ ਧਿਆਨ ਸੀ, ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੁਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਤਪੱਤੀ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਕੋਈ (ਚੰਗੀ ਕੁਲ ਵਿਚ ਜੰਮਣ ਦਾ) ਮਾਣ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ । ੯।

ਵਰਨ ਭੇਖ ਨਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਖੜੀ ॥

ਦੇਉ ਨ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਗਊ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ॥

ਹੇਮ ਜਗ ਨਹੀ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਣੁ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਪੂਜਾ ਲਾਇਦਾ ॥੧੦॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਖੜੀ ਆਦਿਕ ਵਰਨ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਜੋਗੀ ਜੰਗਮ ਆਦਿਕ ਭੇਖ ਸਨ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਦਾ ਮੰਦਰ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਗਊ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਸੀ । ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਹਵਨ ਸਨ ਨਾਹ ਜੱਗ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਤੀਰਥਾਂ ਦਾ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ (ਦੇਵ-) ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ । ੧੦।

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਮੁਲਾ ਨਾ ਕੇ ਕਾਜੀ ॥

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਸੇਖੁ ਮਸਾਇਕੁ ਹਾਜੀ ॥

ਰਈਅਤਿ ਰਾਉ ਨ ਹਉਮੈ ਦੁਨੀਆ

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਕਹਣੁ ਕਹਾਇਦਾ ॥੧੧॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਮੌਲਵੀ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕਾਜੀ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ੇਖ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਹਾਜੀ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਪਰਜਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਾਲੀ ਹਉਮੈ ਹੀ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਇਹੋ ਜਿਹੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੀ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ । ੧੧।

ਭਾਉ ਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਨਾ ਸਿਵ ਸਕਤੀ ॥

ਸਾਜਨੁ ਮੀਤੁ ਬਿੰਦੁ ਨਹੀ ਰਕਤੀ ॥

ਆਪੇ ਸਾਹੁ ਆਪੇ ਵਣਜਾਰਾ

ਸਾਚੇ ਏਹੇ ਭਾਇਦਾ ॥੧੨॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਚੇਤਨ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਸੱਜਣ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਸੀ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਦਾ ਵੀਰਜ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੱਤ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਸੀ, ਆਪ ਹੀ ਵਣਜ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ, ਤਦੋਂ ਉਸ ਸਦਾ-ਥਿਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹੋ ਕੁਝ ਚੰਗਾ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਸੀ । ੧੨।

ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਨ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ ॥

ਪਾਠ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਉਦੈ ਨਹੀ ਆਸਤ ॥

ਕਹਤਾ ਬਕਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ

ਆਪੇ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਦਾ ॥੧੩॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਵੇਦ ਸਨ, ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਅੰਜੀਲ ਆਦਿਕ ਸ਼ਾਮੀ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਸਨ । ਤਦੋਂ ਕਿਤੇ ਪੁਰਾਣਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ ਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ । ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਸੂਰਜ ਦਾ ਚੜ੍ਹਨਾ ਸੀ ਨਾਹ ਡੁੱਬਣਾ ਸੀ । ਤਦੋਂ ਗਿਆਨ-ਇੰਦ੍ਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਚਾਲਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ, ਆਪ ਹੀ ਅਵ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਗਟ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੀ । ੧੩।

ਜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਣਾ ਤਾ ਜਗਤੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥

ਬਾਝੁ ਕਲਾ ਆਡਾਣੁ ਰਹਾਇਆ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸੁ ਉਪਾਏ

ਮਾਇਆ ਮੇਹੁ ਵਧਾਇਦਾ ॥੧੪॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਜਦੋਂ ਉਸ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਚੰਗਾ ਲੱਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਜਗਤ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ । ਇਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗਤ-ਖਿਲਾਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਨੇ (ਕਿਸੇ ਦਿੱਸਦੇ) ਸਹਾਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੀ (ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੇ ਥਾਂ) ਟਿਕਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ । ਤਦੋਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਭੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ, (ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ) ਮਾਇਆ ਦਾ ਮੋਹ ਭੀ ਵਧਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ । ੧੪।

ਵਿਰਲੇ ਕਉ ਗੁਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ ॥

ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖੈ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਸਬਾਇਆ ॥

ਖੰਡ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਅਰੰਭੇ

ਗੁਪਤਹੁ ਪਰਗਟੀ ਆਇਦਾ ॥੧੫॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਜਿਸ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ (ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝ ਆ ਗਈ ਕਿ) ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਜਗਤ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਚੱਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ । ਉਸ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਖੰਡ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਆਦਿਕ ਬਣਾਏ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਗੁਪਤ ਹਾਲਤ ਤੋਂ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ । ੧੫।

ਤਾ ਕਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਈ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਚਿ ਰਤੇ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੀ

ਬਿਸਮ ਭਏ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇਦਾ ॥੧੬॥੩॥੧੫॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 1035-1036}

ਅਰਥ:- ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਭੀ ਜੀਵ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਦਾ ਅੰਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਸਕਦਾ । ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! ਜੇਹੜੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਉਸ ਸਦਾ-ਬਿਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ (ਦੇ ਨਾਮ-ਰੰਗ) ਵਿਚ ਰੰਗੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ (ਉਸ ਦੀ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਤਾਕਤ ਦੇ ਕੌਤਕ ਵੇਖ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ) ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੀ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਂਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ । ੧੬।੩।੧੫।

ਸਲੋਕ ॥

ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥

ਦਿਵਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ

ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲ ਜਗਤੁ ॥

ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਰੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥

ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ ॥

ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ

{ਪੰਨਾ 8}

ਅਰਥ:- ਪ੍ਰਾਣ (ਸਰੀਰਾਂ ਲਈ ਇਉਂ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ) ਗੁਰੂ (ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਤਮਾ ਲਈ) ਹੈ, ਪਾਣੀ (ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦਾ) ਪਿਉ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਤੀ (ਸਭ ਦੀ) ਵੱਡੀ ਮਾਂ ਹੈ। ਦਿਨ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਤ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਖਿਡਾਵਾ ਤੇ ਖਿਡਾਵੀ ਹਨ, ਸਾਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਖੇਡ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, (ਭਾਵ, ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਜੀਵ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਸੌਣ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਨੇ ਕਾਰ-ਵਿਹਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਚੇ ਪਏ ਹਨ)।

ਸਾਚੇ ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੇ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮੇਇ ॥

ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲ ੧ ॥

ਤਨੁ ਜਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਮਾਟੀ ਭਇਆ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਮਨੂਰੁ ॥

ਅਉਗਣ ਫਿਰਿ ਲਾਗੂ ਭਏ ਕੂਰਿ ਵਜਾਵੈ ਤੂਰੁ ॥

ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਭਰਮਾਈਐ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਡੋਬੇ ਪੂਰੁ ॥੧॥

ਮਨ ਰੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਤਰਹੁ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇ ॥

ਜਿਨਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਮਰਿ ਜਨਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ॥੧॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ (ਮੇਰੇ) ਮਨ! ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਚਿੱਤ ਜੋੜ (ਤੇ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੰਸਾਰ-ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ) ਪਾਰ ਲੰਘ। ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਪੈ ਕੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਈ, ਉਹ ਮਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੰਮਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੰਮਦਾ ਹੈ ਮਰਦਾ ਹੈ । ੧। ਰਹਾਉ।

(ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਿਮਰਿਆ, ਉਸ ਦਾ) ਸਰੀਰ (ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ) ਸੜ ਬਲ ਕੇ ਮਿੱਟੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ (ਰੁਲ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ) ਉਸ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਮੋਹ ਵਿਚ (ਫਸ ਕੇ, ਮਾਨੋ) ਸੜਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਲੋਹਾ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਵਿਕਾਰ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਖ਼ਲਾਸੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ, ਉਹ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਕੂੜ ਵਿਚ ਮਸਤ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ (ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਮੋਹ ਦਾ) ਵਾਜਾ ਵਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਗੁਰ-ਸ਼ਬਦ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਂਜਿਆਂ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਉਹ ਭਟਕਣਾ ਵਿਚ ਪਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ । ਦੁਬਿਧਾ

ਉਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ (ਗਿਆਨ-ਇੰਦ੍ਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ) ਸਾਰਾ ਹੀ ਪਰਵਾਰ (ਮੋਹ ਦੇ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਵਿਚ) ਡੋਬ ਦੇਂਦੀ ਹੈ ।੧।

ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਤਨੁ ਸੂਚਾ ਸੇ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥

ਭੈ ਸਚਿ ਰਾਤੀ ਦੇਹੁਰੀ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਸਚੁ ਸੁਆਉ ॥

ਸਚੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲੀਐ ਬਹੁੜਿ ਨ ਪਾਵੈ ਤਾਉ ॥੨॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਜੇਹੜਾ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸਰੀਰ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਅਦਬ-ਪਿਆਰ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਿਚ ਰੰਗਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਜੀਭ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਹੀ (ਆਪਣੀ ਹਸਤੀ ਦਾ) ਅਸਲ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਸਦਾਬਿਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਟਿਕਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹੀ ਸਰੀਰ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਅਖਵਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ । ਜਿਸ ਉਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਮੁੜ ਮੁੜ (ਚੌਰਾਸੀ ਦੇ ਗੇੜ ਦੀ ਕੁਠਾਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਪੈ ਕੇ) ਤਾਅ (ਸੇਕ) ਨਹੀਂ ਸਹਾਰਦਾ ।੨।

ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਰੰਗੇ ਹੋਏ ਨੂੰ (ਲੋਕ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਵਿਚ) ਆਦਰ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਸਦਾ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੈਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਦੀ ।

ਸਾਚੇ ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੇ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮੇਇ ॥ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ

ਮੈਲਾ ਨਾ ਬੀਐ ਸਬਦਿ ਰਤੇ ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥

ਅਰਥ:- (ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਯਕੀਨ ਬਣਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ) ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਤੋਂ (ਸੂਖਮ ਤੱਤ) ਪਵਨ ਬਣਿਆ, ਪਵਨ ਤੋਂ ਜਲ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ, ਜਲ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਰਾ ਜਗਤ ਰਚਿਆ ਗਿਆ, (ਤੇ, ਇਸ ਰਚੇ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੇ) ਹਰੇਕ ਘਟ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ।੩।

ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਸਾਚਿ ਸੰਤੋਖਿਆ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

ਪੰਚ ਭੂਤ ਸਚਿ ਭੈ ਰਤੇ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਚੀ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਅਉਗਣ ਵੀਸਰੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਰਾਖੇ ਪਤਿ ਤਾਹਿ ॥੪॥੧੫॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 19-20}

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਰਾਖੀ ਕੀਤੀ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ (ਲੋਕ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਵਿਚ) ਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਮਿਲੀ, ਵਿਕਾਰ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਹਟ ਗਏ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਸਦਾ-ਬਿਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਵਿਚ ਟਿਕ ਕੇ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਉਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਕਰੀ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਸਰੀਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੇ ਅਦਬ ਵਿਚ ਰੰਗਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਸਦਾ-ਬਿਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਦਾ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਟਿਕੀ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ।੪।੧੫।

ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਕਾ ਫਿਰਿ ਪਾਣੀ ਸਭੁ ਖਾਇ ॥੨॥

ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਚੁਲੀਆ ਸੁਚੀਆ ਜੇ ਭਰਿ ਜਾਵੈ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਸੁਰਤੇ ਚੁਲੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਾ ਜਤੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਚੁਲੀ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਕੀ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਕਾ ਸਤੁ ਦਾਨੁ ॥

ਰਾਜੇ ਚੁਲੀ ਨਿਆਵ ਕੀ ਪੜਿਆ ਸਚੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥

ਪਾਣੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਨ ਧੋਪਈ ਮੁਖਿ ਪੀਤੈ ਤਿਖ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਕਾ ਫਿਰਿ ਪਾਣੀ ਸਭੁ ਖਾਇ ॥੨॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 1240}

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! (ਨਿਰਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਚੁਲੀਆਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ ਸੁੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਆ ਸਕਦੀ, ਪਰ) ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਮਨੁੱਖ (ਸੱਚੀ ਚੁਲੀ) ਭਰਨੀ ਜਾਣ ਲਏ ਤਾਂ ਸੁੱਚੀਆਂ ਚੁਲੀਆਂ ਇਹ ਹਨ—

ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਚੁਲੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੀ ਹੈ (ਭਾਵ, ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਦੀ ਵਿੱਦਵਤਾ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਭੀ ਹੈ)

ਜੋਗੀ ਦਾ ਕਾਮ-ਵਾਸ਼ਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਚੇ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਜੋਗੀ ਲਈ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਚੁਲੀ ਹੈ,

ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਲਈ ਚੁਲੀ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਹੈ ਤੇ

ਗ੍ਰਿਹਸਤੀ ਲਈ ਚੁਲੀ ਹੈ ਉੱਚਾ ਆਚਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ।

ਰਾਜੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਇਨਸਾਫ਼ ਚੁਲੀ ਹੈ ।

ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ (ਚੁਲੀ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ) ਮਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਧੁਪ ਸਕਦਾ, (ਹਾਂ) ਮੂੰਹ ਨਾਲ ਪਾਣੀ ਪੀਤੀਆਂ ਤ੍ਰਿਹ ਮਿਟ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ; (ਪਰ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਚੁਲੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰਤਾ ਆਉਣ ਦੇ ਥਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਸੂਤਕ ਦਾ ਭਰਮ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ) ਪਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਹੀ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ।੨।

ਬੁਝੁ ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਮੂਆ ਹੈ ਕਉਣੁ ॥

ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥

ਪਉਣੈ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਕਾ ਮੇਲੁ ॥

ਚੰਚਲ ਚਪਲ ਬੁਧਿ ਕਾ ਖੇਲੁ ॥

ਨਉ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ ਦਸਵਾ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਬੁਝੁ ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਏਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥੧॥

ਕਥਤਾ ਬਕਤਾ ਸੁਨਤਾ ਸੋਈ ॥

ਆਪੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੇ ਸੁ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਹੋਈ ॥੧॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! ਜਿਹੜਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ (ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਪੈ ਕੇ) ਆਪਣੇ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਨੂੰ ਪੜਤਾਲਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ (ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਸਮਝ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ) ਉਹ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਹੀ (ਹਰੇਕ ਜੀਵ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੋ ਕੇ) ਬੋਲਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ ਸੁਣਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ ।੧। ਰਹਾਉ।

ਹੇ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਵਾਲੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ! (ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਪੈ ਕੇ) ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਸਮਝ ਲੈ (ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ) ਹਵਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਅੱਗ (ਆਦਿਕ ਤੱਤਾਂ ਦਾ) ਮਿਲਾਪ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ (ਤਦੋਂ ਇਹ ਸਰੀਰ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ) ਚੰਚਲ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਥਾਂ ਨਾਹ ਟਿਕਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਬੁੱਧੀ ਦੀ ਦੋੜ-ਭੱਜ (ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ) । (ਸਰੀਰ ਦੀਆਂ) ਨੌਂ ਹੀ ਗੋਲਕਾਂ (ਇਸ ਦੋੜ-ਭੱਜ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਰਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਸਿਰਫ਼) ਦਿਮਾਗ਼ (ਹੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਪੈ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ) ।੧।

ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਦੇਹੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਬੋਲੈ ਪਉਣੁ ॥

ਬੁਝੁ ਰੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਮੂਆ ਹੈ ਕਉਣੁ ॥

ਮੂਈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਬਾਦੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਓਹੁ ਨ ਮੂਆ ਜੇ ਦੇਖਣਹਾਰੁ ॥੨॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਗਿਆਨਵਾਨ ਮਨੁੱਖ! ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝ (ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਿਲ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਦੋਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਆਪਾ-ਭਾਵ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਂਵ) ਹੋਰ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਰਦਾ, ਮਿੱਟੀ ਆਦਿਕ ਤੱਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਣੇ ਇਸ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਆਸ ਚੱਲਦਾ ਹੀ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ । (ਹਾਂ, ਗੁਰੂ ਮਿਲਿਆਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਮਾਇਆ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਦੀ) ਖਿੱਚ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ, (ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਖ਼ਾਤਰ ਮਨ ਦਾ) ਝਗੜਾ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ (ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਮਾਇਆ ਦਾ) ਅਹੰਕਾਰ ਮਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਪਰ ਉਹ (ਆਤਮਾ) ਨਹੀਂ ਮਰਦਾ ਜੋ ਸਭ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਅੰਸ਼ ਹੈ ।੨।

ਜੈ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਤਟਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਜਾਹੀ ॥

ਰਤਨ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਮਾਹੀ ॥

ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਪੰਡਿਤੁ ਬਾਦੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ॥

ਭੀਤਰਿ ਹੋਦੀ ਵਸਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ॥੩॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! ਜਿਸ (ਨਾਮ-ਰਤਨ) ਦੀ ਖ਼ਾਤਰ ਲੋਕ ਤੀਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਢੇ ਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਕੀਮਤੀ ਰਤਨ (ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ) ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਵੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ । (ਵੇਦ ਆਦਿਕ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ) ਪੰਡਿਤ (ਵੇਦ ਆਦਿਕ ਧਰਮਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ) ਪੜ੍ਹ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਕੇ (ਭੀ) ਚਰਚਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ । ਉਹ ਪੰਡਿਤ (ਆਪਣੇ) ਅੰਦਰ ਵੱਸਦੇ ਨਾਮਪਦਾਰਥ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਂਦਾ ।੩।

ਹਉ ਨ ਮੂਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਮੂਈ ਬਲਾਇ ॥

ਓਹੁ ਨ ਮੂਆ ਜੇ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ॥

ਮਰਤਾ ਜਾਤਾ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਇਆ ॥੪॥੪॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 152}

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! ਆਖ—(ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ) ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦਿੱਸ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਜੰਮਦਾ ਮਰਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ । (ਉਸ ਨੂੰ) ਇਹ ਦਿੱਸ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੀਵਾਤਮਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਰਦਾ, (ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ) ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਮਮਤਾ-ਰੂਪ ਚੁੜੇਲ ਹੀ ਮਰਦੀ ਹੈ । ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਰਦਾ ।੪।੪।

ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ਰੇ ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ॥

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥

ਪਵਨੈ ਮਹਿ ਪਵਨੁ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥

ਜੇਤੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੇਤਿ ਰਲਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥

ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਹੋਈ ਏਕ ॥

ਰੇਵਨਹਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਕਵਨ ਟੇਕ ॥੧॥

ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ਰੇ ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ॥

ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਚਲਤੁ ਭਇਆ ॥੧॥

ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਅਗਲੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਖਬਰਿ ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥

ਰੇਵਨਹਾਰੁ ਭਿ ਊਠਿ ਸਿਧਾਈ ॥

ਭਰਮ ਮੇਹ ਕੇ ਬਾਂਧੇ ਬੰਧ ॥

ਸੁਪਨੁ ਭਇਆ ਭਖਲਾਏ ਅੰਧ ॥੨॥

ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਿਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਿ ॥

ਆਵਤ ਜਾਵਤ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਅਪਾਰਿ ॥

ਨਹ ਕੇ ਮੂਆ ਨ ਮਰਣੈ ਜੇਗੁ ॥

ਨਹ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਹੇਗੁ ॥੩॥

ਜੇ ਇਹੁ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਸੇ ਇਹੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

ਜਾਨਣਹਾਰੇ ਕਉ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਉ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਇਆ ॥

ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇਆ ॥੪॥੧੦॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 885}

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! (ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ) ਕੋਈ ਭੀ ਜੀਵਾਤਮਾ ਮਰਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਹ ਪੱਕੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ । ਜੇਹੜਾ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨਾਲ ਡੂੰਘੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਪਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ (ਬੇ-ਸ਼ੱਕ) ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰ ਲਵੋ, (ਜੰਮਣ ਮਰਨ

ਵਾਲੀ ਤਾਂ) ਇਹ ਇਕ ਖੇਡ ਬਣੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ।੧।ਰਹਾਉ ।

(ਹੇ ਭਾਈ ! ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਮਰ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ-ਤੱਤੀ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ) **ਸੁਆਸ** ਹਵਾ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, (ਸਰੀਰ ਦੀ) **ਮਿੱਟੀ** (ਧਰਤੀ ਦੀ) **ਮਿੱਟੀ** ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ, **ਜੀਵਾਤਮਾ** (ਸਰਬ-ਵਿਆਪਕ) **ਜੋਤਿ** ਨਾਲ ਜਾ ਰਲਦਾ ਹੈ ।(ਮੁਏ ਨੂੰ) ਰੋਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੀ ਰੋਂਦਾ ਹੈ ।੧।

ਮਾਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਝਗੜੇ

ਸਲੋਕ ਮ: ੧ ॥

ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿਮਿਆ ਮਾਸੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵਾਸੁ ॥
ਜੀਉ ਪਾਇ ਮਾਸੁ ਮੁਹਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹਡੁ ਚੰਮੁ ਤਨੁ ਮਾਸੁ ॥
ਮਾਸਹੁ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਕਢਿਆ ਮੰਮਾ ਮਾਸੁ ਗਿਰਾਸੁ ॥
ਮੁਹੁ ਮਾਸੈ ਕਾ ਜੀਭ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੀ ਮਾਸੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਾਸੁ ॥
ਵਡਾ ਹੋਆ ਵੀਆਹਿਆ ਘਰਿ ਲੈ ਆਇਆ ਮਾਸੁ ॥
ਮਾਸਹੁ ਹੀ ਮਾਸੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਸਭੇ ਸਾਕੁ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਤਾਂ ਕੇ ਆਵੈ ਰਾਸਿ ॥
ਆਪਿ ਛੁਟੇ ਨਹ ਛੂਟੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਚਨਿ ਬਿਣਾਸੁ ॥੧॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 1289}

ਅਰਥ:- ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਮਾਸ (ਭਾਵ, ਪਿਤਾ ਦੇ ਵੀਰਜ) ਤੋਂ ਹੀ (ਜੀਵ ਦੀ ਹਸਤੀ ਦਾ) ਮੁੱਢ ਬੱਝਦਾ ਹੈ, (ਫਿਰ) ਮਾਸ (ਭਾਵ, ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੇਟ) ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਵਸੋਬਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ; ਜਦੋਂ (ਪੁਤਲੇ ਵਿਚ) ਜਾਨ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਵੀ (ਜੀਭ-ਰੂਪ) ਮਾਸ ਮੂੰਹ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ (ਇਸ ਦੇ ਸਰੀਰ ਦੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਹੀ ਘਾਤਤ) ਹੱਡ ਚੰਮ ਸਰੀਰ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਮਾਸ (ਹੀ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ) ।ਜਦੋਂ (ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੇਟ-ਰੂਪ) ਮਾਸ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਭੀ ਮੰਮਾ (-ਰੂਪ) ਮਾਸ ਖੁਰਾਕ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ; ਇਸ ਦਾ ਮੂੰਹ ਭੀ ਮਾਸ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੀਭ ਭੀ ਮਾਸ ਦੀ ਹੈ, ਮਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਹ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਜਦੋਂ ਜੁਆਨ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਵਿਆਹਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਭੀ (ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ-ਰੂਪ) ਮਾਸ ਹੀ ਘਰ ਲੈ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ; (ਫਿਰ) ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ (ਬੱਚਾਰੂਪ) ਮਾਸ ਜੰਮਦਾ ਹੈ; (ਸੋ, ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਸਾਰਾ) ਸਾਕ-ਸੰਬੰਧ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਹੈ ।(ਮਾਸ ਖਾਣ ਜਾਂ ਨਾਹ ਖਾਣ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਨਾ ਸਮਝਣ ਦੇ ਥਾਂ) ਜੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਮਿਲ ਪਏ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਰਜਾ ਸਮਝੀਏ ਤਾਂ ਜੀਵ (ਦਾ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣਾ) ਨੇਪਰੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਦਾ ਹੈ (ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਜੀਵ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਸ ਨਾਲ ਜੰਮਣ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਮਰਨ ਤਕ ਇਤਨਾ ਡੂੰਘਾ ਵਾਸਤਾ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ) ਆਪਣੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ

ਬਚਿਆਂ ਖ਼ਲਾਸੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ; ਤੇ, ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ ! (ਇਸ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀ) ਚਰਚਾ ਨਾਲ (ਨਿਰੀ) ਹਾਨੀ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ।੧।

ਮ: ੧ ॥ ਮਾਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਝਗੜੇ

ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣੈ ॥
ਕਉਣੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਉਣੁ ਸਾਗੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ
ਕਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਪੁ ਸਮਾਣੈ ॥
ਗੈਡਾ ਮਾਰਿ ਹੋਮ ਜਗ ਕੀਏ
ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੈ ॥
ਮਾਸੁ ਛੇਡਿ ਬੈਸਿ ਨਕੁ ਪਕੜਹਿ
ਰਾਤੀ ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੈ ॥
ਫੜੁ ਕਰਿ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਦਿਖਲਾਵਹਿ
ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਸੂਝੈ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਧੇ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਕਹੀਐ
ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਬੂਝੈ ॥
ਅੰਧਾ ਸੇਇ ਜਿ ਅੰਧੁ ਕਮਾਵੈ
ਤਿਸੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਿ ਲੋਚਨ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਕੀ ਰਕਤੁ ਨਿਪੰਨੇ
ਮਛੀ ਮਾਸੁ ਨ ਖਾਂਹੀ ॥
ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਪੁਰਖੈ ਜਾਂ ਨਿਸਿ ਮੇਲਾ
ਓਥੈ ਮੰਧੁ ਕਮਾਹੀ ॥
ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿੰਮੇ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਜੰਮੇ
ਹਮ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ॥
ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਕਛੁ ਸੂਝੈ ਨਾਹੀ
ਚਤੁਰੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਪਾਂਡੇ ॥
ਬਾਹਰ ਕਾ ਮਾਸੁ ਮੰਦਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ
ਘਰ ਕਾ ਮਾਸੁ ਚੰਗੇਰਾ ॥
ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭਿ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਹੋਏ
ਜੀਇ ਲਇਆ ਵਾਸੇਰਾ ॥
ਅਭਖੁ ਭਖਹਿ ਭਖੁ ਤਜਿ ਛੇਡਹਿ

ਅੰਧੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਨ ਕੇਰਾ ॥
 ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿੰਮੇ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਜੰਮੇ
 ਹਮ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ॥
 ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਕਛੁ ਸੂਝੈ ਨਾਹੀ
 ਚਤੁਰੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਪਾਂਡੇ ॥
 ਮਾਸੁ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਤੇਬੀ.
 ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗਿ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਮਾਣਾ ॥
 ਜਜਿ ਕਾਜਿ ਵੀਆਹਿ ਸੁਹਾਵੈ
 ਓਥੈ ਮਾਸੁ ਸਮਾਣਾ ॥
 ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਿਪਜਹਿ ਮਾਸਹੁ
 ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ਸੁਲਤਾਨਾਂ ॥
 ਜੇ ਓਇ ਦਿਸਹਿ ਨਰਕਿ ਜਾਂਦੇ
 ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹ ਕਾ ਦਾਨੁ ਨ ਲੈਣਾ ॥
 ਦੋਦਾ ਨਰਕਿ ਸੁਰਗਿ
 ਲੈਦੇ ਦੇਖਹੁ ਏਹੁ ਧਿਛਾਣਾ ॥
 ਆਪਿ ਨ ਬੂਝੈ ਲੋਕ ਬੁਝਾਏ
 ਪਾਂਡੇ ਖਰਾ ਸਿਆਣਾ ॥
 ਪਾਂਡੇ ਤੂ ਜਾਣੈ ਹੀ ਨਾਹੀ
 ਕਿਥਹੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਉਪੰਨਾ ॥
 ਤੇਇਅਹੁ ਅੰਨੁ ਕਮਾਦੁ ਕਪਾਹਾਂ
 ਤੇਇਅਹੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਗੰਨਾ ॥
 ਤੇਆ ਆਖੈ ਹਉ ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ
 ਹਛਾ ਤੇਐ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਬਿਕਾਰਾ ॥
 ਏਤੇ ਰਸ ਛੇਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ
 ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹੈ ਵਿਚਾਰਾ ॥੨॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 1289-1290}

ਅਰਥ:- (ਆਪਣੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਮਾਸ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗੀ) ਮੂਰਖ (ਪੰਡਿਤ) ਮਾਸ ਮਾਸ ਆਖ ਕੇ ਚਰਚਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਨਾਹ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਨਾਹ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੈ (ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਚਾਰੇ ਕਿ) ਮਾਸ ਤੇ ਸਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਹ ਫਰਕ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਕਿਸ (ਦੇ ਖਾਣ) ਵਿਚ ਪਾਪ ਹੈ । (ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਸਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਭੀ, ਲੋਕ)

ਦੇਵਤਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸੁਭਾਉ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ (ਭਾਵ, ਦੇਵਤਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ) ਗੈਂਡਾ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਹੋਮ ਤੇ ਜੱਗ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ । ਜੋ ਮਨੁੱਖ (ਆਪਣੇ ਵਲੋਂ) ਮਾਸ ਤਿਆਗ ਕੇ (ਜਦ ਕਦੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਮਾਸ ਵੇਖਣ ਤਾਂ) ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਨੱਕ ਬੰਦ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ (ਕਿ ਮਾਸ ਦੀ ਬੋ ਆ ਗਈ ਹੈ) ਉਹ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਖਾਂ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ (ਭਾਵ, ਲੁਕ ਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਲਹੂ ਪੀਣ ਦੇ ਮਨਸੂਬੇ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਦੇ ਹਨ); (ਮਾਸ ਨਾਹ ਖਾਣ ਦਾ ਇਹ) ਪਖੰਡ ਕਰਕੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਖਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਂਵ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪ ਨਾਹ ਸਮਝ ਹੈ ਨਾਹ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੈ । ਪਰ, ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! ਕਿਸੇ ਅੰਨ੍ਹੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਲਾਭ ਨਹੀਂ, (ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ) ਸਮਝਾਵੇ (ਭੀ), ਤਾਂ ਭੀ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ । (ਜੇ ਕਹੋ ਅੰਨ੍ਹਾ ਕੌਣ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ) ਅੰਨ੍ਹਾ ਉਹ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਅੰਨ੍ਹਿਆਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ (ਭਾਵ, ਜੋ ਸਮਝ ਤੋਂ ਸੱਖਣਾ ਹੈ), (ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਸੋਚਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਆਪ ਭੀ ਤਾਂ) ਮਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਿਉ ਦੀ ਰੱਤ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਮੱਛੀ (ਆਦਿਕ) ਦੇ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਰਹੇਜ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ (ਭਾਵ, ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਰਹੇਜ਼ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਕੀਹ ਭਾਵ? ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਭੀ ਤਾਂ ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਦੇ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਰੀਰ ਪਲਿਆ ਹੈ) । (ਫਿਰ), ਜਦੋਂ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਨਾਨੀ ਤੇ ਮਰਦ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਦੋਂ ਭੀ (ਮਾਸ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ) ਮੰਦ (ਭਾਵ, ਭੋਗ) ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ । ਅਸੀਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਾਸ ਦੇ ਪੁਤਲੇ ਹਾਂ, ਸਾਡਾ ਮੁੱਢ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਬੱਝਾ, ਅਸੀਂ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਏ, (ਮਾਸ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗੀ) ਪੰਡਿਤ (ਮਾਸ ਦੀ ਚਰਚਾ ਛੇੜ ਕੇ ਐਵੇਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ) ਸਿਆਣਾ ਅਖਵਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, (ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ) ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਹ ਸਮਝ ਹੈ ਨਾਹ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੈ । (ਭਲਾ ਦੱਸੋ,) ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ! (ਇਹ ਕੀਹ ਕਿ) ਬਾਹਰੋਂ ਲਿਆਂਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਮਾਸ ਮਾੜਾ ਤੇ ਘਰ ਦਾ (ਵਰਤਿਆ) ਮਾਸ ਚੰਗਾ? (ਫਿਰ) ਸਾਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ, ਜਿੰਦ ਨੇ (ਮਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ) ਡੇਰਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ; ਸੋ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਹ ਦੱਸਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਆਪ ਅੰਨ੍ਹਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਨਾਹ ਖਾਣ-ਜੋਗ ਚੀਜ਼ (ਭਾਵ, ਪਰਾਇਆ ਹੱਕ) ਤਾਂ ਖਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਖਾਣ-ਜੋਗ ਚੀਜ਼ (ਭਾਵ ਜਿਸ ਚੀਜ਼ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਮੁੱਢ ਬੱਝਾ ਤਿਆਗਦੇ ਹਨ । ਅਸੀਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਾਸ ਦੇ ਪੁਤਲੇ ਹਾਂ, ਅਸਾਡਾ ਮੁੱਢ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਬੱਝਾ, ਅਸੀਂ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਏ, (ਮਾਸ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗੀ) ਪੰਡਿਤ (ਮਾਸ ਦੀ ਚਰਚਾ ਛੇੜ ਕੇ ਐਵੇਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ) ਸਿਆਣਾ ਅਖਵਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, (ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ) ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਹ ਸਮਝ ਹੈ ਨਾਹ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੈ । ਪੁਰਾਣਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਸ (ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ), ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੀ ਮਜ਼ਹਬੀ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਭੀ ਮਾਸ (ਵਰਤਣ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ); ਜਗਤ ਦੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਮਾਸ ਵਰਤੀਂਦਾ ਚਲਾ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ । ਜੱਗ ਵਿਚ, ਵਿਆਹ ਆਦਿਕ ਕਾਜ ਵਿਚ (ਮਾਸ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ) ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਹੈ, ਉਹਨੀਂ ਥਾਈਂ ਮਾਸ ਵਰਤੀਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ । ਜ਼ਨਾਨੀ, ਮਰਦ, ਸ਼ਾਹ, ਪਾਤਿਸ਼ਾਹ...ਸਾਰੇ ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ । ਜੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੇ (ਮਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਨ ਕਰਕੇ) ਨਰਕ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਂਦੇ ਦਿੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ (ਮਾਸ-ਤਿਆਗੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨੂੰ) ਦਾਨ

ਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ । (ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ) ਵੇਖੋ, ਇਹ ਅਚਰਜ ਧੱਕੇ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦਾਨ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨਰਕੇ ਪੈਣ ਤੇ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸੁਰਗ ਵਿਚ । (ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ) ਹੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ! ਤੂੰ ਢਾਢਾ ਚਤੁਰ ਹੈਂ, ਤੈਨੂੰ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ (ਮਾਸ ਖਾਣ ਦੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਦੀ) ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ, ਪਰ ਤੂੰ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਂਦਾ ਹੈਂ । ਹੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ! ਤੈਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਹੀ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਮਾਸ ਕਿਥੋਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ । (ਵੇਖ,) ਪਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਅੰਨ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕਮਾਦ ਗੰਨਾ ਉੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕਪਾਹ ਉੱਗਦੀ ਹੈ, ਪਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਾਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ । ਪਾਣੀ ਆਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਕਈ ਤਰੀਕਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਭਲਿਆਈ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ (ਭਾਵ, ਜੀਵ ਦੇ ਪਾਲਣ ਲਈ ਕਈ ਤਰੀਕਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਖੁਰਾਕ-ਪੁਸ਼ਾਕ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ), ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਤਬਦੀਲੀਆਂ (ਭਾਵ, ਬੇਅੰਤ ਕਿਸਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਦਾਰਥ) ਪਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਹਨ । ਸੋ, ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ (ਕਿ ਜੇ ਸੱਚਾ ਤਿਆਗੀ ਬਣਨਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ) ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਚਸਕੇ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਤਿਆਗੀ ਬਣੇ (ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮਾਸ ਦੀ ਉਤਪੱਤੀ ਭੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਅੰਨ ਕਮਾਦ ਆਦਿਕ ਦੀ ਉਤਪੱਤੀ ਭੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਹੈ) । ੨।

ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਭਏ ਕੀਟ ਪਤੰਗਾ ॥

ਗਉੜੀ ਗੁਆਰੇਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਭਏ ਕੀਟ ਪਤੰਗਾ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗਜ ਮੀਨ ਕੁਰੰਗਾ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਪੰਖੀ ਸਰਪ ਹੋਇਓ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਹੈਵਰ ਬ੍ਰਿਖ ਜੋਇਓ ॥੧॥
 ਮਿਲੁ ਜਗਦੀਸ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥
 ਚਿਰੰਕਾਲ ਇਹ ਦੇਹ ਸੰਜਰੀਆ ॥੧॥
 ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਸੈਲ ਗਿਰਿ ਕਰਿਆ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗਰਭ ਹਿਰਿ ਖਰਿਆ ॥
 ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖ ਕਰਿ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥
 ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਜੋਨਿ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਇਆ ॥੨॥
 ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਭਇਓ ਜਨਮੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ॥
 ਕਰਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਭਜੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ॥
 ਤਿਆਗਿ ਮਾਨੁ ਬੂਨੁ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥
 ਜੀਵਤ ਮਰਹਿ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਰਵਾਨੁ ॥੩॥
 ਜੇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੋਆ ਸੁ ਤੁਝ ਤੇ ਹੋਗੁ ॥
 ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜਾ ਕਰਣੈ ਜੋਗੁ ॥

ਤਾ ਮਿਲੀਐ ਜਾ ਲੈਹਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ॥੪॥੩॥੨॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 176}

ਅਰਥ:- (ਹੇ ਭਾਈ!) ਚਿਰ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਇਹ (ਮਨੁੱਖ-) ਸਰੀਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਗਤ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨੂੰ (ਹੁਣ) ਮਿਲ, (ਇਹੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਜਨਮ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨੂੰ) ਮਿਲਣ ਦਾ ਸਮਾ ਹੈ । ੧। ਰਹਾਉ ।

(ਹੇ ਭਾਈ!) ਤੂੰ ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਤੇ ਪਤੰਗੇ ਬਣਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ, ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹਾਥੀ ਮੱਛ ਹਿਰਨ ਬਣਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ । ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੂੰ ਪੰਛੀ ਤੇ ਸੱਪ ਬਣਿਆ, ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੂੰ ਘੋੜੇ ਬਲਦ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਜੋਇਆ

ਗਿਆ । ੧। (ਹੇ ਭਾਈ!) ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਪੱਥਰ ਚਿਟਾਨਾਂ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ, ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ (ਤੇਰੀ ਮਾਂ ਦਾ)

ਗਰਭ ਹੀ ਛਣਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ । ਕਈ ਜਨਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੈਨੂੰ (ਕਿਸਮ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ) ਰੁੱਖ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ, ਤੇ (ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ) ਚੌਰਾਸੀ ਲੱਖ ਜੂਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਭਵਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ । ੨। (ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! ਹੁਣ ਤੈਨੂੰ) ਮਨੁੱਖ ਜਨਮ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੈ, ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਵਿਚ (ਆ), ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਮਤਿ ਲੈ ਕੇ (ਖਲਕਤਿ ਦੀ) ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰ ਤੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਭਜਨ ਕਰ । ਮਾਣ, ਝੂਠ ਤੇ ਅਹੰਕਾਰ ਛੱਡ ਦੇਹ । ਤੂੰ (ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ) ਦਰਗਾਹ ਵਿਚ (ਤਦੋਂ ਹੀ) ਕਬੂਲ ਹੋਵੇਂਗਾ ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਉਂਦਾ ਹੀ ਆਪਾ-ਭਾਵ ਵਲੋਂ ਮਰੇਂਗਾ । ੩।

ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! (ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਅੱਗੇ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰ ਤੇ) ਆਖ—(ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਤੇਰਾ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਜੀਵ ਨੂੰ ਕੀਹ ਸਮਰੱਥਾ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ?) ਜੇ ਕੁਝ (ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ) ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਤੇਰੇ (ਹੁਕਮ) ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ । (ਤੈਥੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ) ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਭੀ ਕੁਝ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਸਮਰੱਥਾ ਵਾਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ । ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਤੈਨੂੰ ਤਦੋਂ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਆਪ ਜੀਵ ਨੂੰ (ਆਪਣੇ ਚਰਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ) ਮਿਲਾ ਲਏਂ, ਤਦੋਂ ਹੀ ਜੀਵ ਹਰਿ-ਗੁਣ ਗਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ

। ੪। ੩। ੨।

ਨੋਟ:- ਇਥੇ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਨੰਬਰ ੨੩ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ।

[Author gratefully acknowledges the help of S. Avtar Singh Dhami, a member of our Editorial Board, and S. Avtar Singh Missionary, who is a regular contributor to The Sikh Bulletin in searching for the appropriate passages from GGS. ED]

EDITORIAL

PRAYER - ARDAAS

[From the January-February 2013 Sikh Bulletin]

Practice of prayer has a universal presence in all societies, primitive to very advanced and in all the religions. Whether it helps or not is another matter and depends upon an individual's beliefs. One thing is certain, however, prayer might help a person if it is about self and that not because of

any divine intervention but because of the placebo effect, well known in the field of medicine. To pray for someone else's good health and rainfall during drought is a fruitless exercise.

Dr. Chahal, in his article on Ardaas (p.2) with extensive quotes from Gurbani has come to the conclusion that Guru Nanak's belief about prayer was different from what his followers are now proclaiming and practicing, and it is best summed up by his quote by Albert Einstein, "Scientific research is based on the idea that everything that takes place is determined by laws of nature, and therefore this holds for the actions of people. For this reason, a research scientist will hardly be inclined to believe that events could be influenced by a prayer, i.e. by a wish addressed to a supernatural Being."

Had Albert Einstein read the philosophy of Guru Nanak he would have said that same advice was given by Guru Nanak during the 15th century (the Period of Renaissance in Europe) to the people of the Indian Sub-continent and the Middle East.

Prayer is an essential component of all the faiths but in the Sikh prayer that is recited in Gurdwaras and homes there are glaring words and phrases that are in conflict with Gurbani. Commencing word, 'Bhagauti' and 'meditate then on revered Hari Krishan on seeing whom all suffering vanishes' are just two examples.

Dr. Chahal has correctly pointed out that a Sikh's Ardaas is found in the Guru Granth Sahib itself. **This Ardaas begs for nothing from the Creator** because the Creator has already provided all the means of sustaining all the living things, including mankind. In this Ardaas a Sikh offers thanks to the Creator for Its bountiful blessings and describes Creator's characteristics.

The Ardaas that Dr. Chahal chose from the Guru Granth Sahib is from page 268. He has given a better English rendition than the literal ones you

will find. Same Ardaas is presented below with meanings in Panjabi by Professor Sahib Singh:

ਤੂੰ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥

ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ ॥

ਤੁਮ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੇਰੇ ॥

ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਮਹਿ ਸੁਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ॥

ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਅੰਤੁ ॥

ਊਚੇ ਤੇ ਊਚਾ ਭਗਵੰਤੁ ॥

ਸਗਲ ਸਮਗ੍ਰੀ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਸੂਤ੍ਰਿ ਧਾਰੀ ॥

ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ॥

ਤੁਮਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ॥੮॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 268}

ਅਰਥ:- (ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ!) ਤੂੰ ਮਾਲਿਕ ਹੈਂ (ਸਾਡੀ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ) ਅਰਜ਼ ਤੇਰੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਹੀ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਜਿੰਦ ਤੇ ਸਰੀਰ (ਜੋ ਤੂੰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ) ਸਭ ਤੇਰੀ ਹੀ ਬਖਸ਼ੀਸ਼ ਹੈ ।
ਤੂੰ ਸਾਡਾ ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਹੈਂ, ਅਸੀਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਬਾਲ ਹਾਂ, ਤੇਰੀ ਮੋਹਰ (ਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ) ਵਿਚ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸੁਖ ਹਨ ।

ਕੋਈ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾ ਸਕਦਾ, (ਕਿਉਂਕਿ) ਤੂੰ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਚਾ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਹੈਂ ।

(ਜਗਤ ਦੇ) ਸਾਰੇ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਤੇਰੇ ਹੀ ਹੁਕਮ ਵਿਚ ਟਿਕੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ; ਤੇਰੀ ਰਚੀ ਹੋਈ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੇਰੀ ਹੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਤੁਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ।

ਤੂੰ ਕਿਹੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਹੈਂ ਤੇ ਕੇਡਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਹੈਂ—ਇਹ ਤੂੰ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈਂ । ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! (ਆਖ, ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ!) ਤੇਰੇ ਸੇਵਕ (ਤੈਥੋਂ) ਸਦਾ ਸਦਕੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ।੮।੪।

English translation by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal;

Part 1: First Stanza deals with the Ardaas (prayer) or Thanksgiving

Our prayer is before You, Oh God.
Our lives and bodies, granted to us, are Your

creations (blessings).

You are our Mother and Father and we are Your children.

With Your blessings, we have numerous joys.

Part 2: Who is that God to Whom we pray or thank?

Nobody knows Your limits (You are infinite).

You, the God, are the highest of the high.

Everything (matter and antimatter) in this universe is under Your Laws (Laws of Nature/Universe).

Everything is happening under Your Laws (the Laws of Nature/Universe).

It is only You, Who knows Your State of Being and Limits (Infiniteness).

Nanak, the servant, sacrifices himself on you, the God. AGGS, M 5, p268.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From March-April 2013 Sikh Bulletin]

RECASTING OF THE SIKH BULLETIN November-December 1999 – March-April 2013 AS GURU NANAK MISSION

The Sikh Bulletin commenced publication in November 1999 with the sole objective of bringing about reformation in Sikhi. But it has become clear; to me at least, that Sikhi cannot be reformed. After considerable soul searching it became obvious why not. A look back at the history of all the world's major religions reveals that no religion has ever been reformed. In fact there has been only one, initially successful, attempt at reformation when Martin Luther (1483-1546) ushered Protestant Reformation with his 95 Theses followed by Edict of Worms in 1521. Today Catholic Church is still one but Protestant Churches have multiplied. Interestingly, in the same period, in his own unique way, Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was trying to bring about

simultaneous reformation in Hinduism and Islam in the Indian sub-continent. **He did not succeed and I strongly believe that he did not start a new religion.** Sikhi just happened, in due time, in response to evolving social and political circumstances.

In this last issue of The Sikh Bulletin I would like to acknowledge the selfless contribution, from the goodness of their hearts, by several people and record a synopsis of the very brief life of this publication in its original direction.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From May-June 2013 Sikh Bulletin]

SAT KARTAR

At the Singh Sabha International Canada conference in Brampton in September 2012, when the Constitution and By-Laws were being voted upon, only four of us among about sixty participants, voted against the requirement that all members of the Executive Committee be kesadhari.

In an earlier editorial I have expressed my views that on one hand we make a case, and rightly so, that in matters of religious scriptures there is nothing like the Guru Granth Sahib. All other scriptures were written by many authors and that too after the founders' passing. Guru Granth Sahib not only has the original scriptures by Guru Nanak and some of his successor Gurus but also the writings of Hindu and Muslim writers, who were not kesadhari. Guru Nanak's lifelong companion, a Muslim, Mardana, was also most likely a non-kesadhari, as his descendants are today.

We can truly describe GGS as a universal message. But over time the outward appearance for a Sikh has gained precedence. Hair has become so sacred that the SGPC went to court to get the

definition of a Sikh as Kesadhari to deny admission to one of its Medical Colleges to a Sikh daughter who plucked her eyebrows and succeeded. SGPC should really have gone to Guru Granth Sahib instead.

Upon reflection, though, the decision of that conference made sense. It reminded me of Mr. Tohra's response when asked why women were not allowed to participate in sewa at Darbar Sahib. His prompt and honest answer was that it has become '*maryada*' (tradition) now. He did not have a moment's hesitation in giving that response even though he must have known that the person whose institutions he was managing broke most of the '*maryadas*' of the religion and the society that he was born into.

That event in that conference did put me on a course of serious thinking. The idea of Singh Sabha International had germinated at Roseville, California in December 2000. There it died but in Ontario, Canada it is doing a positive job of funding missionary graduates of the Missionary College in Ludhiana and preparing CD's on gurbani and other religious literature for mass distribution. Their work is confined primarily to Punjab and few other parts of India. Any attempt on their part to negate the significance of uncut hair would impede their effort back '*home*'.

In another editorial I have stated that I became a confirmed agnostic at the age of twelve after reading '*Bachittar Natak*' and '*Bale-dian-Sakhian*' to practice reading and writing Panjabi at home and reading '*Mahabharat*' and '*Ramayan*' from the middle school library. Being born into a Sikh household I had uncut hair when I arrived in this country in 1960 at the age of twenty-six but within four months I was clean shaven.

That lasted until 1997 when Bhai Jeewan Singh and Ripudaman Singh Malik of Satnam Education Society of British Columbia, Canada came to the Roseville, California Gurdwara to hold summer gurnat camp. It was their earnest

desire that I should serve the congregation in '*Sikhi Sarup*'. I complied and even though now I have definite views on the matter and the Roseville Gurdwara has been closed since April 2005, because the *sangat* was not supportive of the reforms that we were introducing, I have no intention of cutting my hair because I consider them part of my culture, not a religious requirement.

I cannot reconcile with many practices of Sikhism today with what they ought to be, key among them the issues of *kes* and definition of a Sikh. These, just like any religion, are divisive. Guru Nanak was not a divider; he was a uniter. In an age when you ventured away from your neighborhood at your peril he travelled far and wide to every corner of India and to Ceylon, Tibet and Mecca beyond, regardless of what W. H. McLeod and his students assert.

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu household but with that faith Sikhism shares almost nothing, not even the concept of One God. At a very young age he refused to wear the janeu (Hindu sacred thread worn by high caste males); discarded the caste system (a religiously sanctioned discrimination still entrenched in the 21st century democratic India); preached against idol worship; recognized the equality of mankind; asserted the equality of men and women; condemned the Hindu practice of *Sati* (live immolation of widow on her husband's funeral pyre); instructed the women to discard veil; allowed widow and widower remarriage; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell (after death), incarnation, 84 lakh juni (8,400,000 life forms) *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses; and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*' (wishing well being of all, not just of oneself, one's own family or one's own country) in his prayers.

His was a faith of Universal Humanism. I,

therefore' am a Nanakpanthi as represented by the Gurbani of Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji.

To the above we should add that Guru Nanak was an **environmentalist** half a millennium ahead of his time.

ਪਵਣੁ¹ ਗੁਰੂ² ਪਾਣੀ³ ਪਿਤਾ⁴ ਮਾਤਾ⁵ ਧਰਤਿ⁶ ਮਹਤੁ⁷ ॥

Pavan gurū pānī piṭā mātā dharat mahat.
Air¹ is like a Guru², water³ like a father⁴ and the Earth⁶ like the great⁷ mother⁵ (which provides all types of resources and food).

The quote above is taken from the article 'EARTH DAY, ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ, EARTH, THE GREAT MOTHER' by Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD in the following pages of this issue.

The positions of Guru, Father and Mother are the most highly regarded in Indian culture. By associating those with the three most essential life support elements Guru Nanak wants people to show the same consideration to these elements as they do to the three human relationships. In other words, do nothing that will pollute them.

His mission was to spread the message of common origins and brotherhood of mankind and importance of truthful living. *Truth is higher than everything; but higher still is truthful living.* //5// AGGS, M 1, p 62. Religions can be changed, voluntarily or by inducements as in Christianity and by the sword as in Islam, but truthful living does not have to change with change in faith.

I firmly believe that Guru Nanak and Guru Granth are not for starting a new religion. Sikhism is a way of life. Whereas religions compartmentalize people, Sikhism breaks those barriers.

An excellent example of that is the incorporation of writings of both Hindus and Muslims that are compatible with gurbani. It is true that the Christian Bible incorporates the Old Testament, the Jewish scripture, and Mohammed accepted the Jewish and Christian prophets; but that is all

among the one family of Semitic people who shared common origins, culture and history. Christ himself was a Jew. His was a crusade for reform in the practice of Jewish faith that had come to be controlled by the Temple Priests. It was the rejection of Christ by the establishment Judaism that gave an impetus to what came to be known as Christianity. Islam, on the other hand, was an alien faith in the Indian sub-continent, with no common history or bond with the native religions of India. But Guru Nanak found fellow interpreters of Koran among Muslims and incorporated their writings to reinforce his views which had universal application.

Another issue that concerns me is the prevalent effort to claim Sikhism to be a revealed religion in league with the three religions of the Middle East. In my judgment that does not add any prestige to Sikhism. These three religions do believe in one God but each one has its own one God.

Jewish God discriminates among people as the Jews claim to be God's chosen people. This God, like other Semitic and Hindu Gods, demands human sacrifice, like Abraham's son; and when Abraham prepares to sacrifice his son, God becomes kinder and gentler God and asks Abraham to slaughter a lamb instead.

Christian God fathered a child from Mary and his son, Jesus, established his own religion, Christianity, and proclaimed that only those who believe in him will achieve salvation. Then his 'FATHER' allowed for him to be crucified for the sins of others; but then HE raises Jesus from the dead, on the third day, and gives him life.

Guru Nanak rejects all three fundamentals of Christian faith. Guru Nanak's Creator neither goes around fathering children from virgins, nor does anybody die for sins of others; each is responsible to face the consequences of his or her own actions; and once anyone dies it cannot be reversed, even by the Creator. According to Guru Nanak only The Creator never dies but anything that has been

created will surely die, even this Cosmos.

Mohammed's God chose not to talk to Mohammed directly but through an Angel, just as in the 19th century Joseph Smith who founded Mormon faith was to claim. But Allah did not instruct Mohammed to bring equal justice to women in Arabia, such as one man one wife. Nor did God forbid him to marry a child which in the 21st century would be called pedophilia, a criminal act. Mohammed not only had many a women as sex slaves but also was married to a dozen of them, including marriage to a six year old child and consummated that marriage when she was nine.

When people proclaim that there are similarities between Sikhism and other faiths on basic concepts, it makes me cringe.

Guru Nanak's concept of God is not the same as in the Middle Eastern religions where God (Male) dictates the Law and gives direction to the prophets (Male) nor is it like Hindu Gods who incarnate as humans (Men specifically). Although he incorporated into his Bani the multiple names for God in other religions, his personal word for the 'God' entity is '**Karta Purakh**' or '**KARTAR**', formless, ageless, and everlasting and devoid of human attributes.

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ik oaṅkār saṭ nām kartā purakhḥ nirbhā'o nirvair
akāl mūraṭ ajūnī saibhā'n gur parsād.

I would interpret this phrase, called 'Moolmantar'/Gurmantar' as:

'There is One and Only, a Singular Reality, called The Creator, that created Itself; It has no human attributes such as fear, enmity, limited life span, an image and therefore it does not communicate with the Prophets directly or through others, as the Semitic religions claim, nor does it incarnate as a human as Hinduism (actual term should

really be Brahmanism) claims. IT can only be comprehended through knowledge.'

Thus Guru Nanak discarded the pre Nanak God concept completely and unequivocally. Not only that, to press his point home even more strongly, in the very first verse in Jap that immediately follows the above 'Moolmantar' the Guru reasserts the basic truth:

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1||

The word **KARTAR** in Punjabi and **CREATOR** in English come from the parent language, Indo-European. If one removes the vowels from both, the consonants in both languages are the same 'KRTR' and 'CRTR' and sound exactly the same. It might not be too far out to speculate that the Indo-European people, before they spread to the present geographical expanse from British Isles through Europe and Iran to the Indian sub-continent, developed the concept of a single Creator but as the time went on it evolved into multiple private single Gods. The man first showed his audacity by first creating a God and then having that God create man in HIS image.

I am told by one knowledgeable source that in Guru Nanak's time the greetings were '**Sat Kartar**'. The fact that Guru Nanak named his settlement **Kartar Pur**, the 'place to practice righteousness', further reinforces that and also the fact that he chose his own name for Bhagwan, Ishwer, and God and that name was '**Karta Purakh**'.

It is time for us to bring the teachings of Guru Nanak to the notice of the outside world. Best way to do that is through the medium of English first and then translation from English into other languages. What I think we need to concentrate on is to take advantage of the electronic media and use the pages of The Sikh

Bulletin to coordinate the translation of the Bani of Guru Nanak into English. For sure there are several versions of it already but none of them do justice to what the Guru is saying.

I ask the readers of The Sikh Bulletin in the Diaspora to create a *dharamsal* in their own homes, become *missionaries* for Guru Nanak and let their computer be the channel of communication. Email to me one hymn of Guru Nanak and its English translation that you think is worthy of being brought to the notice of the population in the countries of our residences. We will invite our readers' opinions, arrive at a consensus and then make it available for everyone to use.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From November-December 2014 Sikh Bulletin]

TRANSITION FROM THE SIKH BULLETIN TO GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI

Guru Nanak cut through the fog of multiple religions and multiple Gods by his simple statement of 'Ek Onkar' symbolized as **ੴ**.

The following excerpt from the March-April 2013 Sikh Bulletin is appropriate here to begin the new direction for the future issues of this publication:

EDITORIAL

RECASTING OF THE SIKH BULLETIN

November-December 1999 – March-April 2013

AS

GURU NANAK MISSION

"The Sikh Bulletin commenced publication in November 1999 with the sole objective of bringing about reformation in Sikhi. But it has become clear; to me at least, that Sikhi cannot be reformed. After considerable soul searching it became obvious why not. A look back at the history of all the world's major religions reveals

that no religion has ever been reformed. In fact there has been only one, initially successful, attempt at reformation when Martin Luther (1483-1546) ushered Protestant Reformation with his 95 Theses followed by Edict of Worms in 1521. Today Catholic Church is still one but Protestant Churches have multiplied. Interestingly, in the same period, in his own unique way, Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was trying to bring about simultaneous reformation in Hinduism and Islam in the Indian sub-continent. He did not succeed and I strongly believe that he did not start a new religion. Sikhism just happened, in due time, in response to evolving social and political circumstances."

Our focus in the future issues of this publication is not going to be reformation in Sikhism. Rather the **focus will be on Guru Nanak, his life and times and his Bani.** We invite our readers to send us articles relevant to that, in English only, and good English translations of Guru Nanak's Bani. It is our hope that all English speaking people, including the Sikhs, might benefit from it.

EDITORIAL

[From January-February 2015 Sikh Bulletin]

COMMENCING VERSE IN ADI GRANTH

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ik oāṅkāṛ saṭ nām kartā purakhḥ nirbhā'o nirvair
akāl mūrāṭ ajūnī saibhā'n gur parsād.

I would interpret this opening verse in Guru Granth Sahib as:

'There is One and Only, a Singular Reality, whose True Name is The Creator, that created Itself; It has no human attributes such as fear, enmity, limited life span, an image and therefore it does

not communicate with the Prophets directly or through others, as the Semitic religions claim, nor does it incarnate as a human as Hinduism claims. IT can only be comprehended through knowledge."

That is also why Guru Nanak named the commune he established in his later life, 'Kartar Pur' and salutation as 'Sat Kartar'. His followers were called 'Nanakpanthi'.

Hardev Singh Shergill

**I HAVE NO RELIGION
My Journey of Finding
Guru Nanak (1469-1539)
The One and Only**

**Peace on Earth will not prevail until all the
manmade Religions and their Gods are DEAD
and mankind learns to live within Hukam.**

First time I said that was at age twelve. Fifty years later, when a responsibility to operate a Gurdwara was thrust upon me, I tried my best to become a Gursikh; but eighteen years into that effort made me realize that a Gursikh has no place in Sikhism. That was a great disappointment but not for long because I soon discovered that I was in excellent company of no other than Guru Nanak himself, the One and Only gift of the Creator to mankind, and under whose name Sikhism as a religion is being touted.

Truth is that Guru Nanak rejected the existing three **Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)** and three **Indian religions of his time (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism)** and **their Gods** and he was not about to start a yet another religion to add to them. Religions divide people whereas Guru Nanak was a uniter who devoted his entire life to make mankind realize that humanity is One.

His **first** pronouncement to this effect came upon his return from across the **Vein River** that oral

tradition quotes him uttering his first words as **"Na Ko Hindu Na Mussalman"; (there is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim)**, meaning we are all members of the human family.

His **second** pronouncement came during his visit to Mecca during his dialogue with Qazi Ruknuddin when Guru Nanak was found sleeping with his feet towards Kaaba. To Qazi Ruknuddin's question to Guru Nanak about his religion the Guru responded, **"I am a man of The Creator, and belong to no religion"**.

The **third** pronouncement is by **Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan**, on p.1136 of Adi Granth, **"Na Ham Hindu Na Mussalman' (We are neither Hindus nor Muslims)**. He is using plural 'WE' because by this time the number of people believing in teachings of Guru Nanak had become substantial and distinct enough group to be reckoned by the state. **Note that he does not say 'We the Sikhs'.**

However, Guru Nanak was not the first person to reject religion as an institution. **Rumi (1207-1273)**, a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic who inherited and expanded a centre for Sufism in **Konya in Turkey** wrote: **"I'm not from the East or the West. I'm not Christian or Jew or Muslim. I'm not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen. I don't belong to any established religion or any cultural system. I'm neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my beloved."**

Hardev Singh Shergill

ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸੋਈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ: 1188)
ਬੋਲੀਐ ਸਚੁ ਧਰਮੁ, ਝੂਠੁ ਨ ਬੋਲੀਐ ॥ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਸੈ ਵਾਟ, ਮੁਰੀਦਾ ਜੋਲੀਐ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ: 488)

Sikh

Awareness Seminar

*Lectures, Discussion & Question Answer on
Gurbani, History & Science*

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਤੋਂ ਉਲਟ ਫੈਲੇ ਵਹਿਮ-ਭਰਮ, ਕਰਮ-ਕਾਂਡ ਅਤੇ ਭੇਦਵਾਦ ਬਾਰੇ ਇੱਕ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੈਮੀਨਾਰ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਸ਼-ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਘੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲੈ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਸਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਅਤੇ ਸਮੂਹ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ ਦਾ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹਾ ਸੱਦਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ 'ਤੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਚਰਚਾ ਜਾਂ ਸਵਾਲ-ਜਵਾਬ ਵੀ ਕਰ ਸਕੋਗੇ।

-: ਪਹੁੰਚ ਰਹੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ :-

**HARDEV SINGH
SHERGILL**

(Editor : Sikh Bulletin)



**DR. DEVINDER
SINGH CHAHAL**

(Writer & Editor of Understanding
Sikhism A Research Journal)

**ਦਾਖਲਾ
ਮੁਫਤ**

What: Sikh Awareness Seminar
When: Saturday, April. 11th, 2015, 12:30pm-4:00pm
Where : Temple Community Hall, Calgary

Topics : 1. Gurbani, Science & Logic
2. Universal Humanitarian Message of Gurbani.

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Organized by Sikh Virsa International & Singh Sabha International (Canada)