



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



THE SIKH BULLETIN GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI

September-October 2017

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In This Issue/ਤਤਕਰਾ

Editorial: Sikhi is not a Religion; Nor is it based on Mix of Hinduism & Islam.....1	
Religion Declining; Secularism Surging by Phil Zuckerman.....5	
Losing Ground: Religions or Evolving Religiosities? Harbans Lal, PhD., D.Lit. (Hons)....21	
Meaning of prayer: by Harbans Kandola Burnaby, B. C. Canada.....25	
The Interfaith Guru: by Yoginder S. Sikand.....28	
ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨਾ ਆਇਆ:ਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ...29	
Did you not feel compassion? Translation of S. Gurcharan Singh Brar's article above in Gurmukhi script by S. Hakam Singh, Sacramento Ca.....33	
The Black Prince :Maharajah Duleep Singh.....35	

Technical Associate Amrinder Singh

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EDITORIAL

SIKHI IS NOT A RELIGION NOR IS IT BASED ON MIX OF HINDUISM & ISLAM

Speaking at the occasion of 2017 Vaisakhi Celebrations at the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar Dubai, Navdeep Singh Suri, India's ambassador to U.A.E. said this:

“Sikhism itself is distinguished as being perhaps the most modern Indian religion, only four hundred years old, but more important modern in its thinking and outlook. It is a religion that evolved as the best of prevailing Islam and Hinduism, taking the better of two faiths and creating a synthetic faith which truly attempts to create a non-discriminatory, equal, casteless society”.

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 book, _____ explodes _____ that _____ myth. <http://sikhbulletin.com/Books/GurmatGuruNanaksPanthofEnlightenment.pdf> 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 and it does not micromanage individual lives.

The **resurrection of the dead** is a core tenet of Judaism, Christianity and Islam: every person who ever lived brought back to life in judgment—for salvation and eternal life, or for punishment and torment.

This is what Guru Nanak says about Death:

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 $E=MC^2$

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), bhandā (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.

Religions are based on faith, what is termed Sikhism is based on reason. Guru Nanak did not start a religion. His was a lesson in '*jeevan-jaach*', how to live one's life.

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 who would not listen to him.

Ten Commandments are nothing to gloat about. See for yourself:

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.**

Pay attention to the **10th Commandment**. Half the population in the world should be women. **Does this Commandment not condemn them to become the property of their husbands like houses and animals?** To add insult to the injury this **God also permits slavery.**

Christ did not start Christianity. He raised his voice against corrupt priesthood of Judaism, who were in collusion with Roman occupiers. He paid for that with his life and an attempt at reformation of Judaism as a religion led to the birth of **first violent Semitic religion, Christianity**, which proved extremely harmful for humanity primarily because of **twelve zealot Apostles of Christ.**

Christ himself did not leave behind a single written word of his philosophy. Christianity today is based on what **some of the successors** of those **Apostles** chose to select **from the writings of some of them.** Christian missionaries tailing the European explorers and conquerors destroyed the nature based cultures around the globe, all in the name of Christianity, based on falsehood.

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.**

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 in these United States, especially in the South, who claim to have been commandeered by God himself to do His work, including electing Donald Trump, who is personification of all that is evil in this world, as Prersident of these United States.

Hardev Singh Shergill

RELIGION DECLINING, SECULARISM SURGING

By Phil Zuckerman

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An ongoing spate of recent studies - looking at various countries around the world - all show the same thing: religion is in decline. From Scandinavia to South America, and from Vancouver to Seoul, the world is experiencing an unprecedented wave of secularization. Indeed, as a recent *National Geographic* report confirms, the world's newest religion is: No Religion.

Consider the latest facts:

- * For the first time in Norwegian history, there are more atheists and agnostics than believers in God.
- * For the first time in British history, there are now more atheists and agnostics than believers in God. And church attendance rates in the UK are at an all-time low, with **less than 2% of British men and women attending church on any given Sunday.**
- * A recent survey found that **0% of Icelanders** believe that God created the Earth. That's correct: 0%. And whereas **20 years ago, 90% of Icelanders** claimed to be religious, today less than 50% claim to be.
- * Nearly **70% of the Dutch** are not affiliated with any religion, and approximately 700 Protestant churches and over 1,000 Catholic churches are expected to close within the next few years throughout the Netherlands, due to low attendance.
- * According to a recent Eurobarometer Poll, 19% of Spaniards, 24% of Danes, 26% of Slovenians, 27% of Germans and Belgians, 34% of Swedes, and 40% of the French, claim to not believe in "any sort of spirit, God, or life-force."
- * In the United States, somewhere between **23% and 28%** of American adults have no religious affiliation, and these so-called "nones" are not only growing in number, but they are becoming increasingly secular in their behaviors and beliefs.
- * Among Millennials - Americans in their 20s - over 35% are non-religious, constituting the largest cohort of secular men and women in the nation's history.
- * In Canada, back in 1991, 12% of adults stated "none," when asked their religion - today that is up to 24%.
- * In Australia, 15% of the population said they had no religion in 2001, and it is up to at least 22% today.
- * In New Zealand, 30% of the population claimed no religion in 2001, but it had risen to 42% in 2013.
- * In South America, 7% of men and women in Mexico, 8% in Brazil, 11% in Argentina, 12% in El Salvador, 16% in Chile, 18% in the Dominican Republic, and 37% in Uruguay are non-religious — the highest such rates of Latin American secularity ever recorded.
- * In Japan, about 70% of adults claimed to hold personal religious beliefs sixty years ago, but today, that figure is down to only about 20%. In 1970 there were 96,000 Buddhist temples throughout Japan, but in 2007, there were 75,866 - and around 20,000 of those were un-staffed, with no resident priest. In the 1950s, over 75% of Japanese households had a kamidana (Shinto altar), but by 2006 this was down to 44% nationwide, and only 26% in major cities.
- * While 11% of South Koreans were atheists in 2005, that has increased to at least 15% as of late, and the percentage of South Koreans who described themselves as religious has dropped from 58% to 52% over the past decade.
- * Over **50% of Chinese** adults are secular (although in Communist dictatorships where religion is

officially oppressed, valid information on people's religiosity is always hard to come by).

* In Africa, while religiosity remains high, there are none the less growing pockets of irreligion: over 5% of the those in Ghana claim to have no religion, and 9% of people in Madagascar and Tanzania, and 11% of people in Gabon and Swaziland are now non-religious.

* Approximately 20% of Botswanans now claim to have no religion.

* Over 20% of Jamaicans are now non-religious.

Many other nations contain significant populations of nonreligious people, such as Slovenia, Israel, Finland, Hungary, Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, etc. — but a nation-by-nation breakdown is not possible here. Suffice it to say that most countries have experienced notable degrees of secularization over the past century, and for the first time in the world's history, there are now many societies where being secular is more common than being religious.

Although openly supporting atheism is sometimes punished in some Muslim-majority countries - in fact, in 13 Islamic nations, atheism is a crime warranting the death penalty— there are still numerous signs of growing secularism throughout the Muslim world, although reliable numbers are hard to come by.

Finally, the sheer number of secular men and women on planet earth is unprecedented — according to the Pew Research Center's latest estimates, there were **over 1.1 billion non-religious people in the world** in 2010, and that number is expected to increase to over 1.2 billion by the year 2020.

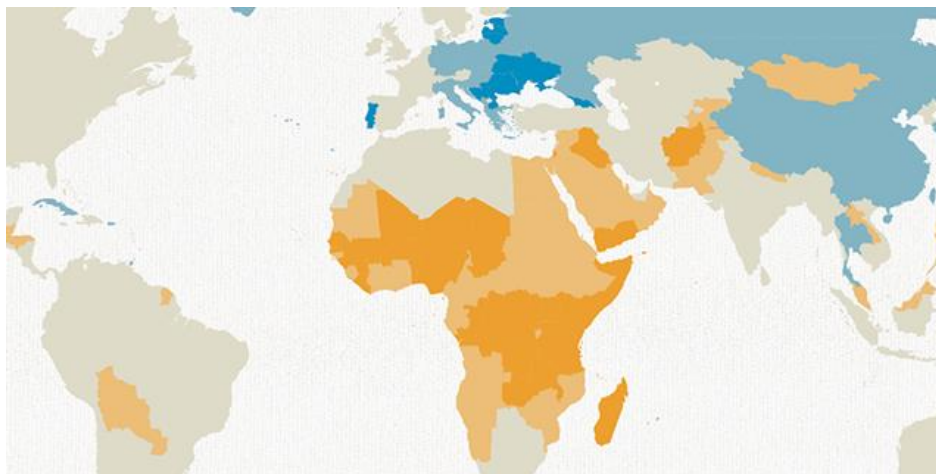
Will this tidal wave of secularization continue to wash over planet earth? Hard to say for sure. On the one hand, we know that socialization is the number one engine that drives religiosity: **children are raised to become religious by their religious parents**. And thus, as more and more people stop being religious, it is quite likely that they won't raise their children to be religious, and thus the inter-generational spread of religion will weaken in the decades ahead. Additionally, secularization is highly correlated with internet access and usage. And thus, as the web becomes more ubiquitous in more people's lives, secularism will continue to grow.

On the other hand, religious people have more kids than secular people. And those nations today with the highest birthrates are the most religious, while those nations today with the lowest birthrates tend to be among the most secular - so demographically, in terms of who has more babies, the religious have the breeding advantage. And this is why, according to Pew's latest predictions, the growth of secularity will most likely level off within a few decades, while Islam will continue to grow, becoming the world's largest religion by 2050.

But for now, churches are closing across the world, faith is fading, and those men and women who live their lives according to secular values and humanist principles are on the rise.

The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

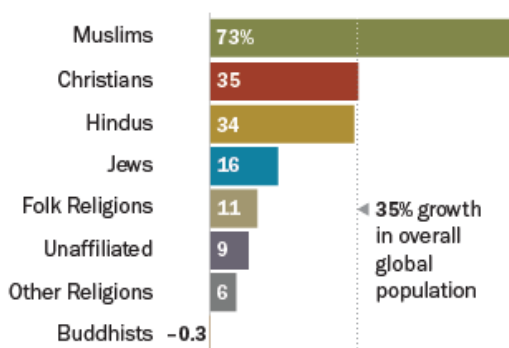
Why Muslims Are rising Fastest and the Unaffiliated Are Shrinking as a Share of the World's Population. The religious profile of the world is rapidly changing, driven primarily by differences in fertility rates and the size of youth populations among the world's major religions, as well as by people switching faiths. Over the next four decades, Christians will remain the largest religious group, but Islam will grow faster than any other major religion. If current trends continue, by 2050 ...



Islam Growing Fastest

Muslims are the only major religious group projected to increase faster than the world's population as a whole.

Estimated change in population size, 2010-2050



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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- The number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians around the world.
- Atheists, agnostics and other people who do not affiliate with any religion – though increasing in countries such as the United States and France – will make up a declining share of the world's total population.
- The global Buddhist population will be about the same size it was in 2010, while the Hindu and Jewish populations will be larger than they are today.
- In Europe, Muslims will make up 10% of the overall population.
- India will retain a Hindu majority but also will have the largest Muslim population of any country in the world, surpassing Indonesia.
- In the United States, Christians will decline from more than three-quarters of the population in 2010 to two-thirds in 2050, and Judaism will no longer be the largest non-Christian religion. Muslims will

be more numerous in the U.S. than people who identify as Jewish on the basis of religion.

- Four out of every 10 Christians in the world will live in sub-Saharan Africa.

These are among the global religious trends highlighted in new demographic projections by the Pew Research Center. The projections take into account the current size and geographic distribution of the world's major religions, age differences, fertility and mortality rates, international migration and patterns in conversion.

As of 2010, Christianity was by far the world's largest religion, with an estimated 2.2 billion adherents, nearly a third (31%) of all 6.9 billion people on Earth. Islam was second, with 1.6 billion adherents, or 23% of the global population.

If current demographic trends continue, however, Islam will nearly catch up by the middle of the 21st century. Between 2010 and 2050, the world's total population is expected to rise to 9.3 billion, a 35% increase.¹ Over that same period, Muslims – a comparatively youthful population with high fertility rates – are projected to increase by 73%. The number of Christians also is projected to rise, but more slowly, at about the same rate (35%) as the global population overall. As a result, according to the Pew Research projections, by 2050 there will be near parity between Muslims (2.8 billion, or 30% of the population) and Christians (2.9 billion, or 31%), possibly for the first time in history.² With the exception of Buddhists, all of the world's major religious groups are poised for at least some growth in absolute numbers in the coming decades. The global Buddhist population is expected to be fairly stable because of low fertility rates and aging populations in countries such as China, Thailand and Japan.

Worldwide, the Hindu population is projected to rise by 34%, from a little over 1 billion to nearly 1.4 billion, roughly keeping pace with overall population growth. Jews, the smallest religious group for which separate projections were made, are expected to grow 16%, from a little less than 14 million in 2010 to 16.1 million worldwide in 2050.

Adherents of various folk religions – including African traditional religions, Chinese folk religions, Native American religions and Australian aboriginal religions – are projected to increase by 11%, from 405 million to nearly 450 million.

And all other religions combined – an umbrella category that includes Baha'is, Jains, Sikhs, Taoists and many smaller faiths – are projected to increase 6%, from a total of approximately 58 million to more than 61 million over the same period.³

While growing in absolute size, however, folk religions, Judaism and “other religions” (the umbrella category considered as a whole) will not keep pace with global population growth. Each of these groups is projected to make up a smaller percentage of the world's population in 2050 than it did in 2010.⁴

Similarly, the religiously unaffiliated population is projected to shrink as a percentage of the global population, even though it will increase in absolute number. In 2010, censuses and surveys indicate, there were about 1.1 billion atheists, agnostics and people who do not identify with any particular religion.⁵ By 2050, the unaffiliated population is expected to exceed 1.2 billion. But, as a share of all the people in the world, those with no religious affiliation are projected to decline from 16% in 2010 to 13% by the middle of this century.

At the same time, however, the unaffiliated are expected to continue to increase as a share of the population in much of Europe and North America. In the United States, for example, the unaffiliated are projected to grow from an estimated 16% of the total population (including children) in 2010 to 26% in 2050.

As the example of the unaffiliated shows, there will be vivid geographic differences in patterns of religious growth in the coming decades. One of the main determinants of that future growth is where each group is geographically concentrated today. Religions with many adherents in developing countries – where birth rates are high, and infant mortality rates generally have been falling – are likely to grow quickly. Much of the worldwide growth of Islam and Christianity, for example, is expected to take place in sub-Saharan Africa. Today's religiously unaffiliated population, by contrast, is heavily concentrated in places with low fertility and aging populations, such as Europe, North America, China and Japan.

Size and Projected Growth of Major Religious Groups

	2010 POPULATION	% OF WORLD POPULATION IN 2010	PROJECTED 2050 POPULATION	% OF WORLD POPULATION IN 2050	POPULATION GROWTH 2010-2050
Christians	2,168,330,000	31.4%	2,918,070,000	31.4%	749,740,000
Muslims	1,599,700,000	23.2	2,761,480,000	29.7	1,161,780,000
Unaffiliated	1,131,150,000	16.4	1,230,340,000	13.2	99,190,000
Hindus	1,032,210,000	15.0	1,384,360,000	14.9	352,140,000
Buddhists	487,760,000	7.1	486,270,000	5.2	-1,490,000
Folk Religions	404,690,000	5.9	449,140,000	4.8	44,450,000
Other Religions	58,150,000	0.8	61,450,000	0.7	3,300,000
Jews	13,860,000	0.2	16,090,000	0.2	2,230,000
World total	6,895,850,000	100.0	9,307,190,000	100.0	2,411,340,000

Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Projected Change in the Unaffiliated Population, 2010-2050

While the unaffiliated are projected to increase by more than 100 million, their share of the global population is projected to decrease as a result of the faster growth in world population.

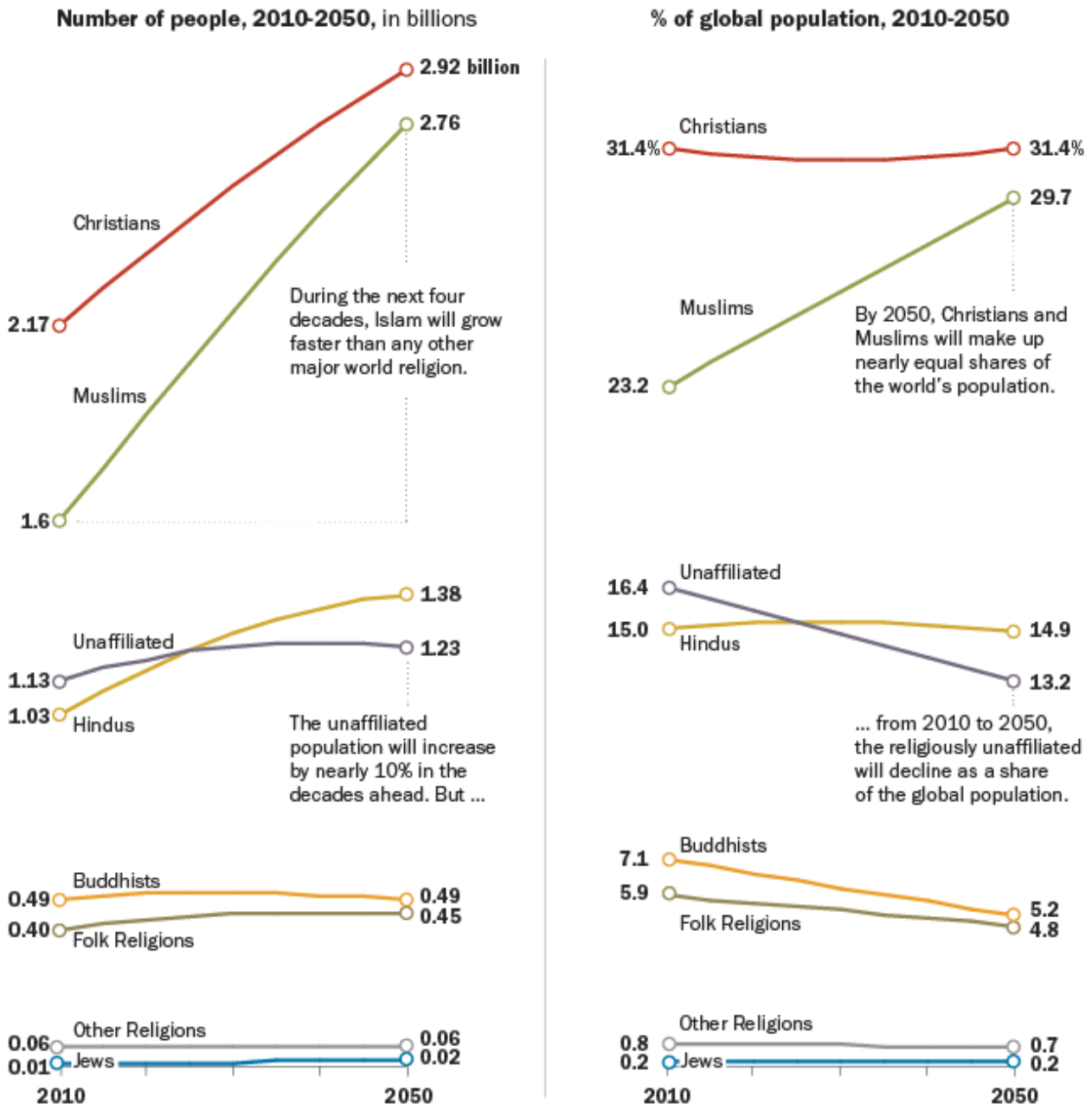


Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Projected Change in Global Population

With the exception of Buddhists, all of the major religious groups are expected to increase in number by 2050. But some will not keep pace with global population growth, and, as a result, are expected to make up a smaller percentage of the world's population in 2050 than they did in 2010.



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Projected Cumulative Change Due to Religious Switching, 2010-2050

	Switching in	Switching out	Net change
Unaffiliated	97,080,000	35,590,000	+61,490,000
Muslims	12,620,000	9,400,000	+3,220,000
Folk Religions	5,460,000	2,850,000	+2,610,000
Other Religions	3,040,000	1,160,000	+1,880,000
Hindus	260,000	250,000	+10,000
Jews	320,000	630,000	-310,000
Buddhists	3,370,000	6,210,000	-2,850,000
Christians	40,060,000	106,110,000	-66,050,000

Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Age Distribution of Religious Groups, 2010

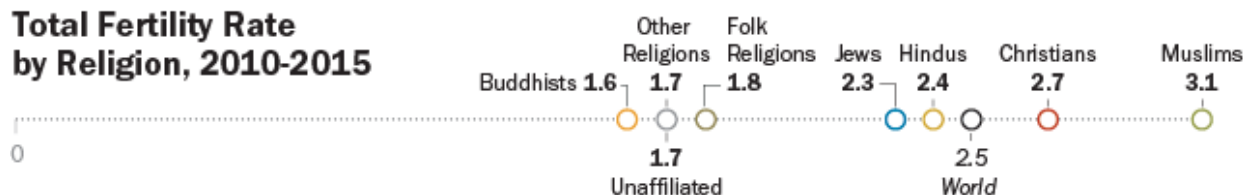
	% under 15	% ages 15 to 59	% ages 60 and older
Muslims	34%	60%	7
Hindus	30	62	8
Christians	27	60	14
Folk Religions	22	67	11
Other Religions	21	65	14
Jews	21	59	20
Buddhists	20	65	15
Unaffiliated	19	68	13
World	27	62	11

Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Total Fertility Rate by Religion, 2010-2015



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Globally, Muslims have the highest fertility rate, an average of 3.1 children per woman – well above replacement level (2.1), the minimum typically needed to maintain a stable population.⁶ Christians are second, at 2.7 children per woman. Hindu fertility (2.4) is similar to the global average (2.5). Worldwide, Jewish fertility (2.3 children per woman) also is above replacement level. All the other groups have fertility levels too low to sustain their populations: folk religions (1.8 children per woman), other religions (1.7), the unaffiliated (1.7) and Buddhists (1.6).

Another important determinant of growth is the current age distribution of each religious group – whether its adherents are predominantly young, with their prime childbearing years still ahead, or older and largely past their childbearing years. In 2010, more than a quarter of the world's total population (27%) was under the age of 15. But an even higher percentage of Muslims (34%) and Hindus (30%) were younger than 15, while the share of Christians under 15 matched the global average (27%). These bulging youth populations are among the reasons that Muslims are projected to grow faster than the world's overall population and that Hindus and Christians are projected to roughly keep pace with worldwide population growth.

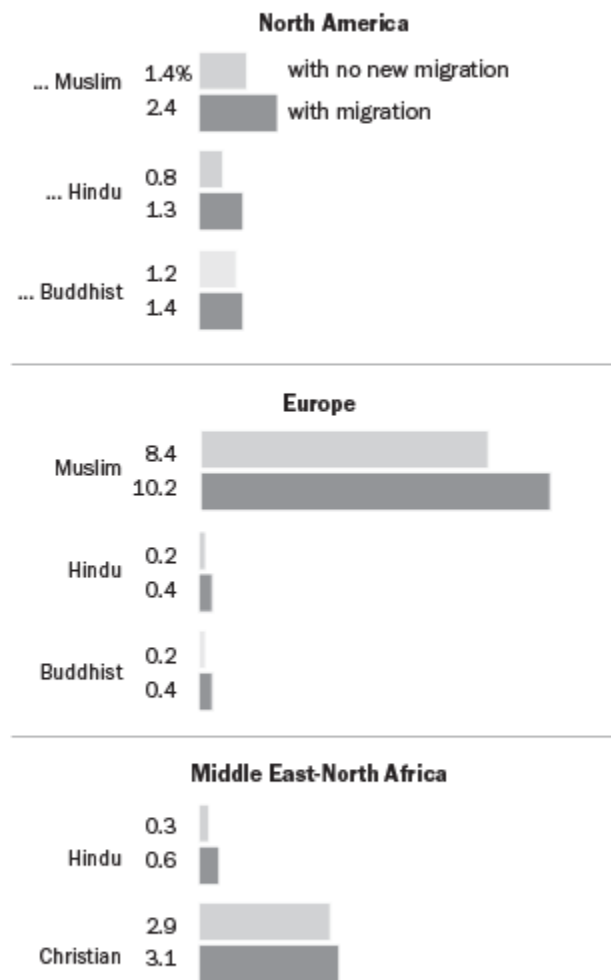
All the remaining groups have smaller-than-average youth populations, and many of them have disproportionately large numbers of adherents over the age of 59. For example, 11% of the world's population was at least 60 years old in 2010. But fully 20% of Jews around the world are 60 or older, as are 15% of Buddhists, 14% of Christians, 14% of adherents of other religions (taken as a whole), 13% of the unaffiliated and 11% of adherents of folk religions. By contrast, just 7% of Muslims and 8% of Hindus are in this oldest age category. In addition to fertility rates and age distributions, religious switching is likely to play a role in the growth of religious groups. But conversion patterns are complex and varied. In some countries, it is fairly common for adults to leave their childhood religion and switch to another faith. In others, changes in religious identity are rare, legally cumbersome or even illegal.

The Pew Research Center projections attempt to incorporate patterns in religious switching in 70 countries where surveys provide information on the number of people who say they no longer belong to the religious group in which they were raised. In the projection model, all directions of switching are possible, and they may be partially offsetting. In the United States, for example, surveys find that some people who were raised with no religious affiliation have switched to become Christians, while some who grew up as Christians have switched to become unaffiliated. These types of patterns are projected to continue as future generations come of age. (For more details on how and where switching was modeled, see the [Methodology](#). For alternative growth scenarios involving either switching in additional countries or no switching at all, see [Chapter 1](#).)

Over the coming decades, Christians are expected to experience the largest net losses from switching. Globally, about 40 million people are projected to switch into Christianity, while 106 million are projected to leave, with most joining the ranks of the religiously unaffiliated. All told, the unaffiliated are expected to add 97 million people and lose 36 million via switching, for a net gain of 61 million by 2050. Modest net gains through switching also are expected for Muslims (3 million), adherents of folk religions (3 million) and members of other religions (2 million). Jews are expected to experience a net loss of about 300,000 people due to switching, while Buddhists are expected to lose nearly 3 million.

Impact of Migration on Population Projections, by Region

% of population in 2050 that is expected to be ...



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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International migration is another factor that will influence the projected size of religious groups in various regions and countries. Forecasting future migration patterns is difficult, because migration is often linked to government policies and international events that can change quickly. For this reason, many population projections do not include migration in their models. But working with researchers at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria, the Pew Research Center has developed an innovative way of using data on past migration patterns to estimate the religious composition of migrant flows in the decades ahead. (For details on how the projections were made, see [Chapter 1](#).)

The impact of migration can be seen in the examples shown in the graph, which compares projection scenarios with and without migration in the regions where it will have the greatest impact. In Europe, for instance, the Muslim share of the population is expected to increase from 5.9% in 2010 to 10.2% in 2050 when migration is taken into account along with other demographic factors that are driving population change, such as fertility rates and age. Without migration, the Muslim share of Europe's population in 2050 is projected to be nearly two percentage points lower (8.4%). In North America, the Hindu share of the population is expected to nearly double in the decades ahead, from 0.7% in 2010 to 1.3% in 2050, when migration is included in the projection models. Without migration, the Hindu share of the region's population would remain about the same (0.8%).

In the Middle East and North Africa, the continued migration of Christians into the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) is expected to offset the exodus of Christians from other countries in the region.⁷ If migration were not factored into the 2050 projections, the estimated Christian share of the region's population would drop below 3%. With migration factored in, however, the estimated Christian share is expected to be just above 3% (down from nearly 4% in 2010).

Beyond the Year 2050

This report describes how the global religious landscape would change if current demographic trends continue. With each passing year, however, there is a chance that unforeseen events – war, famine, disease, technological innovation, political upheaval, etc. – will alter the size of one religious group or another. Owing to the difficulty of peering more than a few decades into the future, the projections stop at 2050.

Readers may wonder, though, what would happen to the population trajectories highlighted in this report if they were projected into the second half of this century. Given the rapid projected increase from 2010 to 2050 in the Muslim share of the world's population, would Muslims eventually outnumber Christians? And, if so, when?

The answer depends on continuation of the trends described in Chapter 1. If the main projection model is extended beyond 2050, the Muslim share of the world's population would equal the Christian share, at roughly 32% each, around 2070. After that, the number of Muslims would exceed the number of Christians, but both religious groups would grow, roughly in tandem. By the year 2100, about 1% more of the world's population would be Muslim (35%) than Christian (34%).

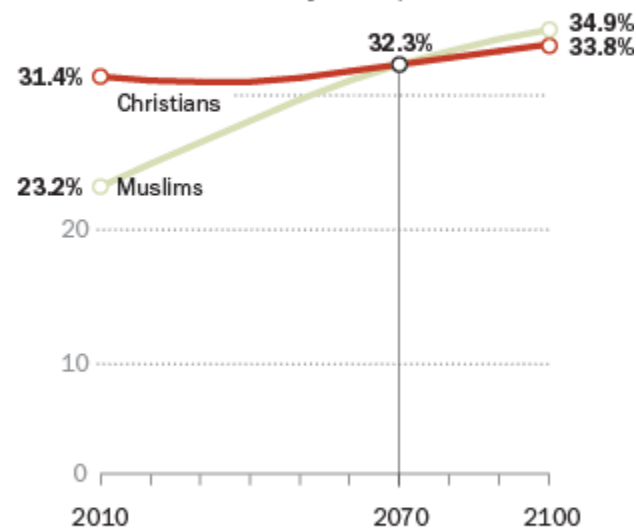
The projected growth of Muslims and Christians would be driven largely by the continued expansion of Africa's population. Due to the heavy concentration of Christians and Muslims in this high-fertility region, both groups would increase as a percentage of the global population. Combined, the world's two largest religious groups would make up more than two-thirds of the global population in 2100 (69%), up from 61%

in 2050 and 55% in 2010.

It bears repeating, however, that many factors could alter these trajectories. For example, if a large share of China's population were to switch to Christianity (as discussed in this [sidebar](#)), that shift alone could bolster Christianity's current position as the world's most populous religion. Or if disaffiliation were to become common in countries with large Muslim populations – as it is now in some countries with large Christian populations – that trend could slow or reverse the increase in Muslim numbers.

Long-Term Projections of Christian and Muslim Shares of World's Population

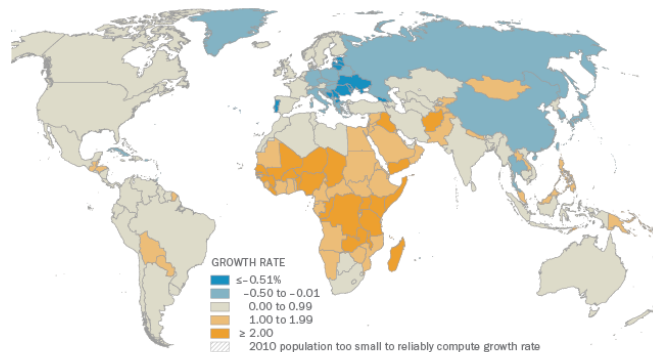
If current trends continue, Muslims would outnumber Christians after 2070



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Projected Annual Growth Rate of Country Populations, 2010-2050



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Regional and Country-Level Projections

In addition to making projections at the global level, this report projects religious change in 198 countries and territories with at least 100,000 people as of 2010, covering 99.9% of the world's population. Population estimates for an additional 36 countries and territories are included in regional and global totals throughout the report. The report also divides the world into six major regions and looks at how each region's religious composition is likely to change from 2010 to 2050, assuming that current patterns in migration and other demographic trends continue.⁸

Due largely to high fertility, **sub-Saharan Africa** is projected to experience the fastest overall growth, rising from 12% of the world's population in 2010 to about 20% in 2050. The **Middle East-North Africa** region also is expected to grow faster than the world as a whole, edging up from 5% of the global population in 2010 to 6% in 2050. Ongoing growth in both regions will fuel global increases in the Muslim population. In addition, sub-Saharan Africa's Christian population is expected to double, from 517 million in 2010 to 1.1 billion in 2050. The share of the world's Christians living in sub-Saharan Africa will rise from 24% in 2010 to 38% in 2050.

Meanwhile, the **Asia-Pacific** region is expected to have a declining share of the world's population (53% in 2050, compared with 59% in 2010). This will be reflected in the slower growth of religions heavily concentrated in the region, including Buddhism and Chinese folk religions, as well as slower growth of Asia's large unaffiliated population. One exception is Hindus, who are overwhelmingly concentrated in India, where the population is younger and fertility rates are higher than in China or Japan. As previously mentioned, Hindus are projected to roughly keep pace with global population growth. India's large Muslim population also is poised for rapid growth. Although India will continue to have a Hindu majority, by 2050 it is projected to have the world's largest Muslim population, surpassing Indonesia.

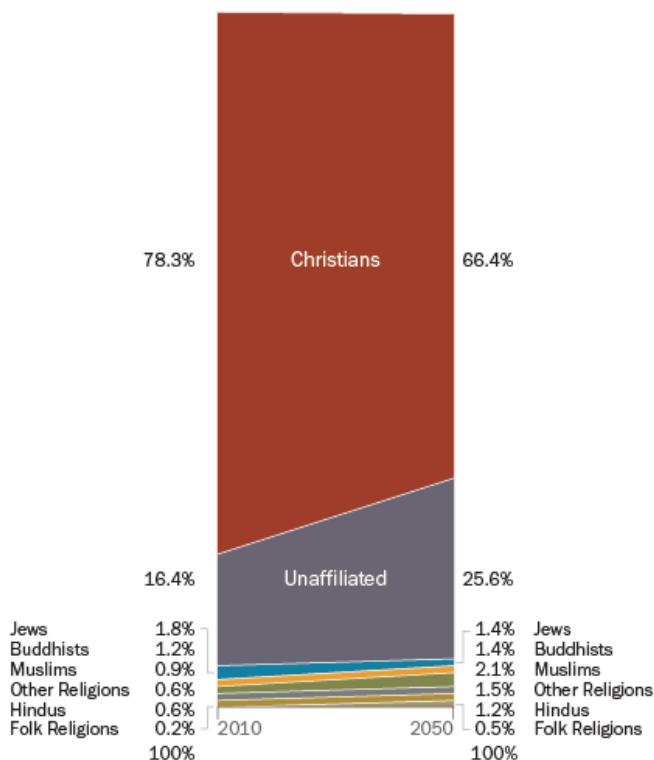
The remaining geographic regions also will contain declining shares of the world's population: Europe is projected to go from 11% to 8%, Latin American and the Caribbean from 9% to 8%, and North America from 5% to a little less than 5%.

Europe is the only region where the total population is projected to decline. Europe's Christian population is expected to shrink by about 100 million people in the coming decades, dropping from 553 million to 454 million. While Christians will remain the largest religious group in Europe, they are projected to drop from three-quarters of the population to less than two-thirds. By 2050, nearly a quarter of Europeans (23%) are expected to have no religious affiliation, and Muslims will make up about 10% of the region's population, up from 5.9% in 2010. Over the same period, the number of Hindus in Europe is expected to roughly double, from a little under 1.4 million (0.2% of Europe's population) to nearly 2.7 million (0.4%), mainly as a result of immigration. Buddhists appear headed for similarly rapid growth in Europe – a projected rise from 1.4 million to 2.5 million.

In **North America**, Muslims and followers of “other religions” are the fastest-growing religious groups. In the United States, for example, the share of the population that belongs to other religions is projected to more than double – albeit from a very small base – rising from 0.6% to 1.5%.⁹ Christians are projected to decline from 78% of the U.S. population in 2010 to 66% in 2050, while the unaffiliated are expected to rise from 16% to 26%. And by the middle of the 21st century, the United States is likely to have more Muslims (2.1% of the population) than people who identify with the Jewish faith (1.4%).¹⁰

In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, Christians will remain the largest religious group, making up 89% of the population in 2050, down slightly from 90% in 2010. Latin America's religiously unaffiliated population is projected to grow both in absolute number and percentage terms, rising from about 45 million people (8%) in 2010 to 65 million (9%) in 2050.¹¹

Religious Composition of the United States, 2010-2050



Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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Changing Religious Majorities

Several countries are projected to have a different religious majority in 2050 than they did in 2010. The number of countries with Christian majorities is expected to decline from 159 to 151, as Christians are projected to drop below 50% of the population in Australia, Benin, Bosnia-Herzegovina, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Republic of Macedonia and the United Kingdom.

Muslims in 2050 are expected to make up more than 50% of the population in 51 countries, two more than in 2010, as both the Republic of Macedonia and Nigeria are projected to gain Muslim majorities. But Nigeria also will continue to have a very large Christian population. Indeed, Nigeria is projected to have the third-largest Christian population in the world by 2050, after the United States and Brazil. As of 2050, the largest religious group in France, New Zealand and the Netherlands is expected to be the unaffiliated.

Countries That Will No Longer Have a Christian Majority in 2050

	MAJORITY RELIGION 2010	% OF POPULATION 2010	MAJORITY/LARGEST RELIGION 2050	% OF POPULATION 2050
Australia	Christians	67.3%	Christians	47.0%
United Kingdom	Christians	64.3	Christians	45.4
Benin	Christians	53.0	Christians	48.5
France	Christians	63.0	Unaffiliated	44.1
Republic of Macedonia	Christians	59.3	Muslims	56.2
New Zealand	Christians	57.0	Unaffiliated	45.1
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Christians	52.3	Muslims	49.4
Netherlands	Christians	50.6	Unaffiliated	49.1

Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

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About These Projections

While many people have offered predictions about the future of religion, these are the first formal demographic projections using data on age, fertility, mortality, migration and religious switching for multiple religious groups around the world. Demographers at the Pew Research Center in Washington, D.C., and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Laxenburg, Austria, gathered the input data from more than 2,500 censuses, surveys and population registers, an effort that has taken six years and will continue.

The projections cover eight major groups: Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, adherents of folk religions, adherents of other religions and the unaffiliated (see Appendix C: Defining the Religious Groups). Because censuses and surveys in many countries do not provide information on religious subgroups – such as Sunni and Shia Muslims or Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christians – the projections are for each religious group as a whole. Data on subgroups of the unaffiliated are also unavailable in many countries. As a result, separate projections are not possible for atheists or agnostics.

The projection model was developed in collaboration with researchers in the Age and Cohort Change Project at IIASA, who are world leaders in population projections methodology. The model uses an advanced version of the cohort-component method typically employed by demographers to forecast population growth. It starts with a population of baseline age groups, or cohorts, divided by sex and religion. Each cohort is projected into the future by adding likely gains (immigrants and people switching in) and by subtracting likely losses (deaths, emigrants and people switching out) year by year. The youngest cohorts, ages 0-4, are created by applying age-specific fertility rates to each female cohort in the childbearing years (ages 15-49), with children inheriting the mother's religion. For more details, see the [Methodology](#).¹²

In the process of gathering input data and developing the projection model, the Pew Research Center previously published reports on the current size and geographic distribution of major religious groups, including [Muslims](#) (2009), [Christians](#) (2011) and [several other faiths](#) (2012). An initial set of projections for one religious group, Muslims, was published in 2011, although it did not attempt to take religious switching into account.

Some social theorists have suggested that as countries develop economically, more of their inhabitants will move away from religious affiliation. While that has been the general experience in some parts of the world, notably Europe, it is not yet clear whether it is a universal pattern.¹³ In any case, the projections in this report are not based on theories about economic development leading to secularization.

Rather, the projections extend the recently observed patterns of religious switching in all countries for which sufficient data are available (70 countries in all). In addition, the projections reflect the United Nations' expectation that in countries with high fertility rates, those rates gradually will decline in coming decades, alongside rising female educational attainment. And the projections assume that people gradually are living longer in most countries. These and other key input data and assumptions are explained in detail in Chapter 1 and the Methodology ([Appendix A](#)).

Since religious change has never previously been projected on this scale, some cautionary words are in order. Population projections are estimates built on current population data and assumptions about demographic trends, such as declining birth rates and rising life expectancies in particular countries. The projections are what will occur if the current data are accurate and current trends continue. But many events – scientific discoveries, armed conflicts, social movements, political upheavals, natural disasters and changing economic conditions, to name just a few – can shift demographic trends in unforeseen ways. That is why the projections are limited to a 40-year time frame, and subsequent chapters of this report try to give a sense of how much difference it could make if key assumptions were different.

For example, China's 1.3 billion people (as of 2010) loom very large in global trends. At present, about 5% of China's population is estimated to be Christian, and more than 50% is religiously unaffiliated. Because reliable figures on religious switching in China are not available, the projections do not contain any forecast for conversions in the world's most populous country. But if Christianity expands in China in the decades to come – as some experts predict – then by 2050, the global numbers of Christians may be higher than projected, and the decline in the percentage of the world's population that is religiously unaffiliated may be even sharper. (For more details on the possible impact of religious switching in China, see [Chapter 1](#).)

Finally, readers should bear in mind that within every major religious group, there is a spectrum of belief and practice. The projections are based on the number of people who *self-identify* with each religious group, regardless of their level of observance. What it means to be Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or a member of any other faith may vary from person to person, country to country, and decade to decade.

Acknowledgements

These population projections were produced by the Pew Research Center as part of the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures project, which analyzes religious change and its impact on societies around the world. Funding for the Global Religious Futures project comes from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the John Templeton Foundation.

Many staff members in the Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life project contributed to this effort. Conrad Hackett was the lead researcher and primary author of this report. Alan Cooperman served as lead editor. Anne Shi and Juan Carlos Esparza Ochoa made major contributions to data collection, storage and analysis. Bill Webster created the graphics and Stacy Rosenberg and Ben Wormald oversaw development of the interactive data presentations and the Global Religious Futures website. Sandra Stencel, Greg Smith, Michael Lipka and Aleksandra Sandstrom provided editorial assistance. The report was number-checked by Shi, Esparza Ochoa, Claire Gecewicz and Angelina Theodorou.

Several researchers in the Age and Cohort Change project of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis collaborated on the projections, providing invaluable expertise on advanced ("multistate") population modeling and standardization of input data. Marcin Stonawski wrote the cutting-edge software used for these projections and led the collection and analysis of European data. Michaela Potančoková standardized the fertility data. Vegard Skirbekk coordinated IIASA's research contributions. Additionally, Guy Abel at the Vienna Institute of Demography helped construct the country-level migration flow data used in the projections.

Over the past six years, a number of former Pew Research Center staff members also played critical roles in producing the population projections. Phillip Connor prepared the migration input data, wrote descriptions of migration results and methods, and helped write the chapters on each religious group and geographic region. Noble Kuriakose was involved in nearly all stages of the project and helped draft the chapter on demographic factors and the Methodology. Former intern Joseph Naylor helped design maps, and David McClendon, another former intern, helped research global patterns of religious switching. The original concept for this study was developed by Luis Lugo, former director of the Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life project, with assistance from former senior researcher Brian J. Grim and visiting senior research fellow Mehtab Karim.

Others at the Pew Research Center who provided editorial or research guidance include Michael Dimock, Claudia Deane, Scott Keeter, Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn. Communications support was provided by Katherine Ritchey and Russ Oates.

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While the data collection and projection methodology were guided by our consultants and advisers, the Pew

Research Center is solely responsible for the interpretation and reporting of the data.

Roadmap to the Report

The remainder of this report details the projections from multiple angles. The first chapter looks at the demographic factors that shape the projections, including sections on fertility rates, life expectancy, age structure, religious switching and migration. The next chapter details projections by religious group, with separate sections on Christians, Muslims, the religiously unaffiliated, Hindus, Buddhists, adherents of folk or traditional religions, members of “other religions” (consolidated into a single group) and Jews. A final chapter takes a region-by-region look at the projections, including separate sections on Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, North America and sub-Saharan Africa.

LOSING GROUND:

Religions or Evolving Religiosities?

Harbans Lal, PhD., D.Lit. (Hons).



Women in India giving water from the River Ganga to the Sun, in a belief that it will reach their ancestors.

RELIGIOSITY IS ONLY RITUALS

To distinguish the Religion from the Religiosity may mean many things but I am using the term religiosity here for the practices that, with time, creep up as being superficially religious. Usually, they are inappropriate superstitions that give birth to a variety of religious rituals. They may be dated customs or practices, and evolving traditions that, over time, wrongfully crop up in every religion.

Consequently, over the years, the faithful begin to substitute their religiosities falsely for their religion. In other words, the rituals alone start to take the form of worships as well as to serve as false surrogates for a true religion. Thus, they are termed as religiosity as opposed to the practices of true religions.

PEW RESEARCH ON FUTURE OF WORLD RELIGIONS

A recent report released by the Pew Research Center showed a definite decline in people surveyed who described themselves as religiously affiliated. Pew researchers attributed these drops to the dying off older believers, and a growing number of Millennial — those born between 1981 and 1996. Those millennial claimed no religious affiliation in the surveys.

Another **study by the Pew Research Center**, released in 2015, showed that millennials had been leaving Catholic and mainline Protestant churches in droves since at least 2007. But, they did not necessarily lose their belief in God. In fact, more than half **said they were still religious or spiritual**.

The researchers also found that as religiosity in America faded, a more general spirituality went on the rise, with 6 in 10 adults saying they regularly felt a “deep sense of spiritual peace and well-being.” Also increasing was the number of people who experience a “deep sense of wonder” about the universe.

These trends, though alarming, make sense, said Andrew Walsh, a historian of American religion, in, that religious affiliation in America today is “increasingly shaped by individual choice and less by inheritance from a family or community.” In the millennials’ custom, the offspring customarily adapted the traditional religion of their family, often with no question asked. That is indeed changing, and such change will keep on gathering momentum with the growth of science and technology.

IN CONTRARY: SOME RELIGIONS ARE EXPLODING

The point of today’s essay is about what it was that Guru Nanak did right so that he began to gather new religious followers. Further, the followers of his path ever kept growing in numbers. It is a fact that, whereas organized religions of the world began to decline, Guru Nanak’s way of life has been on the upsurge. Let me explain.

At the time of his death in 1539, Nanak left behind his followers numbering in thousands, but still only in thousands. However, in the two centuries that followed, the number of Nanak’s followers kept mounting to reach **25% of the Indian subcontinent that expanded from Afghanistan to Myanmar, and Ceylon to China**. Such is evident from the reports published at the times of Guru Gobind Singh (**1667 – 1708**) or soon after.

Today, the followers of Guru Nanak’s teachings are swelling in numbers to over three hundred fifty million according to some estimates. I will dwell on the specifics of those estimates on another occasion, but they are pleasantly heartening for people troubled with the declining future of religion.

In arriving at the growing numbers, I am counting all those admirers who value Guru Nanak’s religion that he summarized very wisely in his three doctrinal expressions. According to written records engraved in the verses of the Guru Granth, and those of other authorities on the Sikh theology like Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal, Guru Nanak’s doctrinal expressions were:

1. **“NAAM”** meaning “Mindful Awareness of Divine Presence.”
2. **“DAAN”** meaning “Cultures of Altruism.”
3. **“ISHNAAN”** meaning, “Ethics of Good Deeds.”

The answer to the concerns created by the PEW reports may lie in Guru Nanak’s visions on “religion.” Let me cite an unusual and often quoted response of Guru Nanak to every question on his religion. People he met asked such questions of him frequently.

NANAK STATED SO AFTER A PROLONGED MEDITATIVE INTROSPECTION

Guru Nanak confronted religious leaders of the time just after a few days of intense meditation and introspection in the jungle around sacred Vein River in India. The religious leaders heard Nanak pronounce

publically as, ***'na-ko-Hindu' 'na-ko Musalman.'*** Nanak said that he would not profile people as Hindus or Muslims, or by affiliation to any other religion. He was asking people not to look at a person with spectacles of Hindu or Muslim religiosity; rituals they practiced or traditions they had accumulated over centuries.

Since that most cited instance, Guru Nanak continued this theme throughout his life.

DIALOGUE AT MAKKAH

During Guru Nanak's pilgrimage to Islamic holy place, Makkah in Saudi Arabia, the following deliberation took place. Saudi author named **Taajudin Naqshabandhi** documented this dialogue. Taajudin accompanied Guru Nanak for roughly two years during the Guru's travels through the Middle East around 1510 AD. He titled his manuscript as, *Sihayato Baba Nanak Shah Fakir*. According to Taajudin, a prominent Mullah of Makkah at the time, Qazi Rukn-ud-Din posed a question to Nanak. The question was obvious but with profound implication to the religious world. ***"Fala Allah mazabo"?*** (*What is your religion?*), asked **Qazi Rukn-ud-Din**.

Guru Nanak replied,

"Abdulla Allah la mazaboo" (*I am a person of God without belonging to any religion*).

That was the profound answer, but it was not new to Nanak's teaching. There are many examples. Let me illustrate a few more examples.



ACCOUNT OF MUSLIM BELIEVERS FROM INDIA

A prominent Muslim, Ubare Khan of village Jorian near Dera Baba Nanak, had heard of Guru Nanak and his influence in the area. To observe for himself, Mr. Khan came to visit Guru Nanak at the bank of river Raavi that separates Pakistan from India. There, he asked the similar question to Guru Nanak, whether Nanak was Hindu or Muslim.

The Guru replied, "That the question was irrelevant since only God is eternal, and neither Hindus nor Muslims is." What it meant was that the love of Divine in the creation and the living according to that belief was essential and not any label that indicated membership to any organized religion. Ubare Khan was pleased with this answer. He fell at the Guru's feet and sought his blessing. The Guru said 'God will bless him.'

Similar is the story of another prominent Muslim, Abdul Rehman who met the Guru and asked him what his religion was whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim. The Guru replied that the Name Divine was his religion. At this, Abdul Rehman further inquired if the beloved of God needed any religion.

The Guru again replied that the lovers of God loved God. They did not permit themselves to entangle in the controversies of religion or those of Hindu and Muslim scriptures. The entire creation of God was essentially the same. Both wealthy and poor, the good and the bad were the Creator's making. The same Divine Light was resplendent in all. We failed to see this Light because of our narcissism, the Guru continued. Hearing this, Abdul Rehman fell at the Guru's feet.

WHEN GURU NANAK LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE

Guru Nanak lived last 18 years of his life in the town of Kartarpur that lies in Pakistan at its border with India. There he established institutions of learning side by side with the living examples of serving the community with what later became a Sikhi value.



The writer, Harbans Lal, with Sikh journalist Parminder Singh Soch and late Dr. Kuldip Singh Hanjan at Guru Nanak mausoleum at Kartarpur Sahib.

There is a record of hordes of people coming to Kartarpur to seek out Nanak, and to have dialogues with him on his new wisdom. They were scholars, saints, and everyday folks from all over South Asia. They spent time with the Guru and his congregations at Kartarpur.

However, when the time of his death came near, no one knew as to the followers of which religion should claim the Guru's remains for Nanak's funeral rites.

Today, the Hindu cremation ground and the Muslim's burial place, both claiming the Guru's last rites, exist side by side in the town of Kartarpur. Thus, from his birth to his death, all religions of the time claimed Guru Nanak as their own.

CONCLUSION

There could not be any more powerful illustration of the universality of the Guru Nanak's teachings than

those touched upon in the above discussion. When we articulate them as “Mindful Awareness of Divine Presence, Culture of Altruism, and Ethics of Good Deeds,” nothing would seem more relevant to the future world. For day-to-day applications, these teachings are further implicit in the 1430 pages of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in the form of Gurbani meaning verses of Guru’s wisdom. Our scholars, our educationists, and our clergy need to develop exegeses of these verses. Then, there is no doubt in my mind that the future generations of the world would find it striking.

The additional appeal to the new age generations would be Nanak’s vehement opposition to any religiosity that is driving people apart and away from the organized religions of today. However, when some of the old organized religions may be losing ground per PEW data, others that are more spiritual and universal may be gaining ground in the future civilizations.

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MEANING OF PRAYER

Harbans Kandola

Burnaby, B. C. Canada

Prayer means a request, appeal, communication or petition before God. Humans perform millions of prayers every day. All our prayers are addressed to God, and we ask for security, safety and to learn the meaning of life. Every faith has different ways to please God through prayer. Two things are fundamentally common in every prayer.

First, prayers are made to an external deity, God, that is outside humanity, has supernatural powers, is omnipotent and can do anything and everything for us on demand.

Second, because God is believed to be external, all of our prayers are for outer or external, i.e., worldly, things.

Our prayers in fact reflect our conception of God; in other words, we ask an “external” God for worldly things. Based on that conception of God, common requests in our prayers may include:

- Asking for rain when there is drought;
- Asking for a safe journey before we travel;
- Praying for victory in our personal challenges, e.g. an election or court case;
- Asking for success in a business endeavor;
- Praying for a cure for a disease that we or loved ones suffer from;
- Asking for a child;
- Praying for academic successes for our child, e.g., university admission;
- Expressing gratitude to God for everything He has given us.

If we conceptualize God as an external being that is omnipotent or almighty and who can perform miracles

in violation of the laws of nature, we believe God can answer every prayer. This belief system is thousands of years old and has not changed till today. Even though humans have intellectually advanced so much to be able to land on the moon, our conception of God and our system of prayer has not changed.

In the age of scientific and technological advances, today's youth no longer accepts unquestioned obedience to religious dogmas. They demand logic, reason and facts in religious discourse. Today we find that the God we worshipped for thousands of years is failing to answer our prayers. God is failing to bring rain upon prayer, cure our disease, protect us from hurricane, or gift us a child. For these reasons, our faith in God today is drastically waned. There is no living connection with God. A lack of belief in the God we worshipped for years is rising. Questions are raised as to the very existence of God. The youth of today is walking away from faith because they believe God has little or no relevance in their daily lives. What is the meaning of prayer? Who do we then pray to for spiritual security and salvation? Where do we go from here?

Guru Nanak (1469—1539) in Sikh scriptures (AAD GURU GRANTH SAHIB) says BIRTHEE KADE NA HOWAEE JAN KI ARDAS, meaning the prayer of the spiritually awakened follower is always answered. God never fails a devotee. How does Nanak claim that? What is the God that Nanak prayed to? Nanak says **God is one universal truth, one reality**. God is SHABAD GURU, BANI GURU meaning God is divine wisdom, knowledge, intellect, a treasure of virtues, the embodiment of laws of nature. Nanak called the will of God, HUQAM, BHANNA. God has no size, shape or color. God does not take human form. Most importantly God is not external, outside the humanity. God is within all of us, a divine spark of enlightenment that is our true nature, our true self. When we understand Nanak's concept of God, the meaning of prayer completely changes. We find the true meaning of prayer. The most important point is this: prayer has nothing to do with outer purpose, or the material world. Prayer has everything to do with internal purpose, realizing our true nature, and experiencing a conscious transformation. The path to happiness, peace and joy is inward.

Prayer is communication, a dialogue with God that is within. **Prayer is communication with myself, a commitment to inspire myself.** It is about my commitment to spiritual awakening, finding my true nature, and who I am. It is about surrendering to God within, realizing that I had enough of this egoistic miserable life, a life full of worries, anxiety, stress, depression. It is my commitment to walk the spiritual journey. Guru says WINN TUDH HOR JE MANGNA SIRR DUKHAN KAI DUKH meaning God my only prayer before you is for divine wisdom, knowledge, godly virtues and to learn to live in the present and find meaning of life. Guru says the cause of our life pains and suffering is that we continue praying for worldly comforts, outer purpose.

It is not that we do not have desires for worldly comforts, conveniences and business success. We do have these ambitions, however research show that these are never a source of inner peace, or lasting happiness and joy. These should not be our priorities of life. It is our fear, ignorance and superstitious beliefs that we continue praying for outer purpose, material things. We are so stuck in our belief systems that are thousands of years old and have failed us in every spiritual aspect of life, but we are not prepared to make the shift from seeking outer purpose from an external deity, to seeking inner purpose, with an inner God.

Prayer is not a one-way communication. When we go to places of worship we have a list of demands to be passed on to the priest so that he may pass these onto God. It is all about external purpose. Nanak says HAU TUMREE KARAU NIT AAS PRABH MOHAI KAB GAL LAWAINGAI meaning O God I have only one desire, give me the gift of divine wisdom and knowledge so that I can realize my true self, my true

nature here and now. But that is not what we pray for at GURDWARA, TEMPLE, MOSQUE OR CHURCH. Nanak says AISA JAG WEHKIA JUARI SABH SUKH MANGAI NAAM VISARI meaning that the sad story of human race is we desire more and more material wealth, comforts and conveniences of life . That is what we pray for. Spiritual awakening is not even our goal. Craving for more and more is the objective. Realizing who am I, my true self is not what we pray for. **There is not a single hymn in Sikh Scriptures (AGGS) where Nanak prayed for material things.** Nanak prayed EK SHABAD IK BHIKHIA MANGAI meaning my prayer is only for divine wisdom, divine knowledge so that I can find meaning and purpose of life.

Sikh Nation prays million times a day SIKHAN NU SIKHI DAAN NAAM DAAN meaning God give us wisdom to live truthful life, life of contentment, tolerance, kindness, love, humility, peace and happiness, life guided by spiritual teachings of Gurus. The reality is, hardly one percent live according to teachings of Gurbani. As I discussed before, Nanak says BIRTHEE KADE NA HOWAEE JAN KI ARDAS meaning God answers every prayer. Where is the problem. Our prayer is a one-way communication, it is not a commitment with God within, a commitment with myself to be SACHIARA a person of compassion, to show kindness, tolerance, humility, unconditional love. As Sikhs we make a serious mistake of praying to God as if God is an external deity, sitting up in the sky, OOPARWALA. Worst of all, our prayers are for external purposes. Nanak says SAT SANTOKH HOWAI ARDAS TA SUNN SAD BAHALAI PAS meaning God give me wisdom to realize the meaning of life, find my true self, truthful living, to live a life of contentment, and not attachment to material world, form. When this is my communication with God within and is my commitment with myself, my prayer will certainly be answered. My life will change. I will be at peace with me. Nanak further says NANAK BIRTHA KOE NA HOE ASEE DARGAH SACHA SOE meaning when we pray for divine wisdom, knowledge, godly virtues, living the will of God and we have commitment to follow through, our prayer is always answered . We are never disappointed. Nanak says WINN TUD HOR JE MANGNA SIRR DUKHAN KAI DUKH meaning our pain, suffering , worries, stress and anxieties begin when we pray for external, outer purposes and do not pray for inner change, conscious transformation.

When I visit Gurdwara on Sunday I commonly hear this hymn JO MANGAI THAKUR APNE TE SOEE SOEE DEWAI meaning upon prayer God fulfill all your worldly desires. Then there is long list of demands from members of congregation. Focus is never on inner change, conscious transformation. Then I hear a complete misinterpretation of hymn by Saint Dhannaji to justify that God fulfils worldly desires, hymn that is in AGGS. GHAR KEE GIHAN CHANGI JAN DHANNA LAVAI MANGI literal meaning Saint Dhanna asked God to give him beautiful and homely wife. God obliged him with such a wife. The real meaning of GHAR KEE GIHAN is divine wisdom, divine knowledge. The irony is that praying for worldly things is against the basic spiritual doctrine of AGGS. This has been going on for years in every faith.

The relevance of prayer and religion in our daily life is how to be a good human, to find the meaning of life, realize who am I, and be spiritually enlightened. It is about finding peace , happiness, joy in life, live life free of worries, anxiety, stress and depression. This can only happen when we focus our prayer on inner change, inner purpose. I ask you to pray for divine wisdom, knowledge, be a person of godly virtues, to be a person of compassion, humility, kindness, tolerance, concern for others and unconditional love. Pray to learn to live the way of surrender to will of God. Our true nature is we are each an ocean of peace and happiness , that can be pleasant and spread pleasantness all around . We have found the meaning of prayer.

THE INTERFAITH GURU

By Yoginder S. Sikand

In the various secular disciplines no writer ever thinks twice about quoting an author who happens to belong to a religion or community different from his. A scholar editing a book on, say, anatomy or sociology, would not hesitate to include in it a well-researched article by someone just because this person believes in a different faith or is a member of a different ethnic group. His religion or ethnicity is not considered a barrier to acknowledging and gaining from his wisdom. In these disciplines, beneficial knowledge is freely and unhesitatingly adopted, no matter what the source may be.

But that is not very often the case when it comes to religious writings. This point can easily be verified by doing a content analysis of such writings. If you take a sample of magazines published by various religious groups, you would discover that, barring in the case of some mystically-oriented and therefore more open-minded ones, almost all of those who write in them belong to the particular religious community that the magazine is associated with. You would also find that in these writings, authors rarely, if ever, approvingly cite the religious views of writers who happen to belong to a faith community other than their own.

This marked tendency of restricting the understanding of religious truth to just the understandings of members of one's own particular religious community works to solidify inter-religious and inter-community divides. It reinforces the unfortunate tendency to imagine that truth is the monopoly of just one faith tradition—the one that one claims to follow. It also deprives people of the rich spiritual treasures that are contained in traditions other than the one that they may identify with.

We live today at a time when at the global level members of faith communities are in greater proximity than ever before. Hence, the pressing need for actively promoting harmonious relations between people of different faiths. This, in turn, critically depends on our ability and willingness to discover and appreciate goodness and wisdom no matter where we find it; even among members of communities other than the one we might consider our own.

In this regard, the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh scripture, has some very valuable lessons to teach us. Long before the advent of the modern interfaith movement that began to encourage people to appreciate wisdom from people outside their own faith community; this scripture set a beautiful example of true universality: it incorporated devotional verses by numerous devotees of God from different caste and community backgrounds. All these verses taken together form the Shri Guru Granth Sahib.

In his aptly-titled booklet, *The Interfaith Guru: Shri Guru Granth Sahib*, Nanak Singh Nishtar, director of a Sikh centre for interfaith relations based in Hyderabad, writes that **“Oneness of religions, oneness of mankind, and oneness of God” is “the basic theme” of the Shri Guru Granth Sahib.** This scripture consists of verses by many devotees of God—**six Sikh Gurus, seven saints of Muslim background, twenty saints of Hindu background** (born into different castes and in different parts of India), some saints of so-called ‘low’ caste background, and one Sikh. If you consider the fact that at the time when the Shri Guru Granth Sahib was compiled, Hindu-Muslim conflict was rife in large parts of India and so was discrimination against the so-called ‘low’ castes, **the fact of the multi-religious and multi-caste composition of the Sikh scripture appears as nothing short of revolutionary.**

Rooted in love for God and for all His creatures, the common message of the saints whose compositions are included in the Shri Guru Granth Sahib is of course eminently noteworthy, being of perennial relevance. But what is equally remarkable is the very fact of the compositions of these men of God from diverse religious and caste backgrounds being accepted as equally Divinely-inspired so that they were brought together in a single volume as a scripture that is regarded as a Guru. This aspect of the Sikh scripture is a beautiful expression of a very basic teachings of the Sikh Gurus—the **oneness of all humankind, transcending manmade boundaries of creed and caste**. In itself this feature of this scripture sends out some incredibly powerful messages: that **Truth is universal and One, and that although Truth may be expressed in different ways by people from different social backgrounds, it transcends humanly-constructed divisions of language, name and form, and caste, community and creed; that spiritual wisdom should be honoured wherever it may be found; that in God's eyes there is no special caste or religious community; that true devotees of God can be found in any and every caste, ethnic, religious and linguistic community; that caste and creed are no barrier in realizing God; that even though we may have been born into some or the other caste or religious community, we are essentially the same, being creatures of the One God.**

The fact of the multi-caste and multi-religious background of the saints whose compositions are included in the Shri Guru Granth Sahib is of immense contemporary significance, at a time when bridge-building between different communities has become a global necessity. It can inspire us to go beyond narrow concern with the particular faith communities that we may identify with and to willingly acknowledge the ample goodness in people of other communities too. It can lead us to discover, appreciate and consider as our own the great wisdom to be found in diverse spiritual paths, in traditions and communities other than the ones we may identify with.

If all of this happens on a sufficiently large scale, imagine what a beautiful impact it could have on inter-community relations, and on the state of the world in general!

ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦ ਨਾ ਆਇਆ

ਅੱਜ ਤਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਚੱਲਤ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਦੇ ਜੋ ਅਰਥ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਸੱਭ ਨੇ ਏਹੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਨ੍ਹਾ ਗਰੀਬਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਨੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਰੱਬਾ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਦਰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਇਆ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਜਿਤਨੀ ਕੁ ਸਮਝ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਹਜ਼ਮ ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਪਰ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਠੀਕ ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਦਿਕਤ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਸਮਝ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਤਰਸ ਜਾਂ ਦਰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦਾ। ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਸਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ। ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਤਕੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਉਣ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮਾੜੇ ਨੇ ਖਤਮ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਮਾੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਸਹਿਣਾ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਗਦ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਖੰਡੂਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਮੱਲ ਅਖਾੜੇ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰੀਰਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਤਕੜਾ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਤੇ ਇਸੇ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮਾਰ ਖਾਣੀ ਕੌਮ ਨੇ ਸਤਾਰਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਅਖੀਰਲੇ ਅੱਧ ਵਿਚ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਦੇ ਸੱਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਤਾਕਤਵਰ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਦੇ ਵੀ ਦੰਦ ਖੱਟੇ ਕੀਤੇ। ਦੂਸਰਾ ਕਾਰਣ ਪ੍ਰਚੱਲਤ 'ਅਬਦਾਲੀ'-ਅਰਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਮੰਨਣ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਹਨਾਮਿਹਣਾ ਮਾਰ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੇ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਸੌ ਫੀ ਸਦੀ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਮਸਰਪਤ ਹਨ। ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਦਾਸੁ ਹੈ ਬਿੰਦ ਬਿੰਦ ਚੁਖ ਚੁਖ ਹੋਇ ॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 660}। ਦਾਸ ਮਾਲਕ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਹਨਾ-

ਮਿਹਣਾ ਮਾਰਨ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਦਾ। ਮਾਲਕ ਵੱਡਾ ਤੇ ਦਾਸ ਛੋਟਾ ਹੈ। ਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਮੰਨਣਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਨੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਕਰਨਾ। ਇਹ ਨਿਯਮ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਅਖੀਰ ਤਕ ਪੁਰੇ ਸਿਦਕ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਭਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਮੈਂ ਬੰਦਾ ਬੈ ਖਰੀਦੁ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥
ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤਿਸ ਦਾ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੈ ਤੇਰਾ ॥੧॥
ਮਾਣੁ ਨਿਮਾਣੇ ਤੂੰ ਧਣੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਭਰਵਾਸਾ ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਚੇ ਅਨ ਟੇਕ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਕਾਚਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ {ਪੰਨਾ 396}

ਸਾਰੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੱਭ ਬਾਣੀਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਹੀ ਸਮਝਾਇਆਂ ਹੇ ਕਿ ਰੱਬ ਦੇ ਨਿਯਮ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕੋਈ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਕੁੱਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਬੈਖਰੀਦ ਬੰਦਾ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ। - ਖਰੀਦਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ। ਬੈ ਖਰੀਦ ਦਾ ਮਤਲਬ ਹੈ ਸਦਾ ਵਾਸਤੇ-ਝੇਵੇਂ ਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਬੈ-ਐਵੇਂ ਤੇਰੀ ਮਾਲਕੀ ਪੱਕੀ।

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ ਮੁਲ ਖਰੀਦੀ ਲਾਲਾ ਗੋਲਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਉ ਸਭਾਗਾ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਚਨੀ ਹਾਟਿ ਬਿਕਾਨਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਲਾਇਆ ਤਿਤੁ ਲਾਗਾ ॥੧॥
ਤੇਰੇ ਲਾਲੇ ਕਿਆ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ॥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਰਣਾ ਜਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਮਾ ਲਾਲੀ ਪਿਉ ਲਾਲਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਉ ਲਾਲੇ ਕਾ ਜਾਇਆ ॥
ਲਾਲੀ ਨਾਚੈ ਲਾਲਾ ਗਾਵੈ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਉ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਇਆ ॥੨॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 991}।

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਕੋਈ ਕਸਰ ਛੱਡਦੇ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸੌ ਫੀ ਸਦੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਰਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਮੇਰੀ ਮੱਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਗੋਲੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਰੂਪੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੈਂ ਜਾਇਆਂ ਹਾਂਗੁਲਾਮ /ਵੀ ਤੇਰੇ ਹੀ ਗੋਲੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਖਰੀਦਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਗੋਲਾ , ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਗੋਲਾ ਸਮ ,ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਬਾਨੀ ,ਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਚੰਗੇ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਹਾਂ। ਐਸੇ ਵੀਚਾਰਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਪਰਮ ਮਨੁੱਖਝਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਮਿਹਣਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਾਰ ਸਕਦਾ।-ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਹਨਾ ,

ਹੁਣ ਆਈਏ ਪ੍ਰਚੱਲਤ ਮੁਹਾਵਰੇ ਵੱਲ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੇ ਬਾਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਾਬਰ ਕਿਹਾ। ਸਾਰੇ ਇਹ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਜੇਕਰ ਪੁੱਛ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਤੂੰ ਇਹ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ। ਕੁੱਝ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜਵਾਬ ਹੈ। ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ ॥੧॥ਪੰਨਾ 360॥ ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਦਾ ਪਛਲੇਰਾ ਅੱਧ ”ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ“ ਬਾਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਬਾਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਗਰੀਬਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਐਨੀ ਮਾਰ ਮਾਰੀ ਹੈ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਦਰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਇਆ। ਇਹ ਹੈ ਬਾਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਾਬਰਕਹਿਣਾ।

ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਵੀ ਗਲਤ ਹਨ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਤਾਂ ਸੈਦਪੁਰ ਦੀ ਤਬਾਹੀ ਤੋਂ ਕਾਫੀ ਦੇਰ ਬਾਅਦ ਉੱਥੇ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ ਹਨ। ਹਵਾਲਾ ”167 ਸਿੱਖ ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਪੰਨਾ“ਅਤੇ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ ਪ੍ਰੰਪਰਾ। ਬਾਬਰ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਜੇਲ ਵਿਚ ਸੁੱਟ ਦਿੱਤਾ ,ਚੱਕੀ ਪੀਸਣ ਲਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ,ਚੱਕੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਚੱਲੀ ਜਾਵੇ। ਇਹ ਕਰਮਾਤ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਸੱਭ ਝੂਠੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਦਰਅਸਲ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਲੋਕ ਸਦੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਮਾਰ ਖਾਈ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਹਰ ਮਾਰ ਦਾ ਦੋਸ਼ ਉਹ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਈ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ

ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਖਾਤਬ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸੱਚਾ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ“ ,ਅਗੋਂ ਦੇ ਜੇ ਚੇਤੀਐ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਇਤੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ ॥{ਪੰਨਾ 417}ਜੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤਿਆਰੀ ”
ਕੀਤੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਜਾ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣੀ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ।।ਆਪੈ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਚੜਾਇਆ ॥ ਲੋਕ ਆਪਣੇ
ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਦੋਸ਼ੀ ਨਾ ਠਹਿਰਾ ਕੇ ਦੋਸ਼ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਮੁਗਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਬ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਓਹੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ
ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਜੁਆਨ ਬੱਚਾ ਮਰ ਜਾਵੇ ਤੇ ਲੋਕ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਰੱਬਾ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਸਾਡਾ ਹੀ ਘਰ ਦਿਸਿਆ ਐ। ਜੁਆਨ ਬੱਚਾ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਨਸ਼ੇ
ਕਰਕੇ ਭਰਮ ਤੇ ਵਹਿਮ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਰਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਪਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਮੂਰਖ ਲੋਕ ਦੋਸ਼ੀ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ -ਬ ਪੀ ਕੇ ਐਕਸੀਡੈਂਟ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਂ ਲਾਲਚਸ਼ਰਾ ,
।ਮੰਨ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਰੱਬ ਨਾ ਐਕਸੀਡੈਂਟ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਰਣ ਕਰਕੇਕਸੂਰ ਬੰਦੇ ਦਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ
ਤੇ ਥੋਪਦੇ ਆਪਾਂ ਰੱਬ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਤੇ।

ਦਦੈ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਉ ਕਿਸੈ ਦੋਸੁ ਕਰੰਮਾ ਆਪਣਿਆ ॥
ਜੋ ਮੈ ਕੀਆ ਸੋ ਮੈ ਪਾਇਆ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੀਜੈ ਅਵਰ ਜਨਾ ॥੨੧॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 433}
ਏਤੇ ਕੂਕਰ ਹਉ ਬੇਗਾਨਾ ਭਉਕਾ ਇਸੁ ਤਨ ਤਾਈ ॥
ਭਗਤਿ ਹੀਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜੇ ਹੋਇਗਾ ਤਾ ਖਸਮੈ ਨਾਉ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 795}।

ਇਸ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਸਲ ਕਸੂਰਵਾਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਉਦਾਹਰਣਾਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।
ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਸੈਦਪੁਰ 360 ਅਤੇ ਪੰਨਾ 37 ਤੇ ਸਲੋਕ ਨੰਬਰ 359 ਐਮਨਾਬਾਦ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਉਦਾਹਰਣ ਹੀ ਲਈ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਪੰਨਾ/
ਸਵਾਲ ਹਨ।-ਤਾਂ ਭਰਥਰ ਜੋਗੀ ਦੇ ਚੇਲਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਜਵਾਬ 38 ਤੇ ਸਲੋਕ ਨੰਬਰ
ਹੁਣ ਆਪਾਂ ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰੱਬ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਂ ਦੁੱਖ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇਕਰ ਰਾਜਾ ਰਾਜੇ ਨਾਲ ਭਿੜੇਲੜਾਈ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਰੇ ਜਾਂ ਜੀਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ,
ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਰੋਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਰੋਸ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਸੋਈ ॥
ਜੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਸਕਤੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਰੋਸੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਰਾਜਾ ਤਾਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਬਾਬਰਾ ਤੂੰ ਨਿਰਦੋਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੈਦਪੁਰ ,
ਵਿਚ ਕੁਚਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। (ਪਿਛਲੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਐਮਨਾਬਾਦ)ਸਕਤਾ ਸੀਹੁ ਮਾਰੇ ਪੈ ਵਗੈ ਖਸਮੈ ਸਾ ਪੁਰਸਾਈ ॥{ਪੰਨਾ 360}॥ ਜੇ ਕਿਤੇ
ਤਕੜਾ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਗਾਈਆਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਗ ਤੇ ਆ ਪਵੇ ਤੇ ਕੁੱਝ ਕੁ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਦੇਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਗਾਈਆਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਵੱਗ ਦੇ ਖਸਮ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ
ਕਰਨਗੇ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਸੂਰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਬੈਠੇ ਰਾਜੇ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪੁੱਛ ਗਿੱਛ ਉਸਦੀ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ।-ਰਤਨ ਵਿਗਾੜਿ ਵਿਗੋਏ ਕੁਤੀਂ ਮੁਇਆ
ਸਾਰ ਨ ਕਾਈ ॥ ਹੀਰਿਆਂ ਵਰਗੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੁਤਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਮਾਰ ਮੁਕਾ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਸਾ (ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ)ਰ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਲਾ
ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਚਿਆ। ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਕਿਤਨਾ ਵੀ ਵੱਡਾ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਾ ਬਣ ਜਾਵੇਜਿਤਨੇ ਮਰਜੀ ਮਨ ਭਾਉਂਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਤਮਾਸ਼ੇ ਕਰੇ ,
ਪਰ ਉਸ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਕ ਕੀੜੇ ਦੇ ਸਮਾਨ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਉਜਾੜੇ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਲੋਕ
ਤਾਲਾ ਦ-ਭਲਾਈ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗ ਪਵੇਂ ਤਾਂ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਅੱਲ੍ਹੇ ਦੇਰ ਤੋਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈਂ ?ਜੇ ਕੋ ਨਾਉ ਧਰਾਏ ਵਡਾ
ਸਾਦ ਕਰੇ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਣੇ ॥ ਖਸਮੈ ਨਦਰੀ ਕੀੜਾ ਆਵੈ ਜੇਤੇ ਚੁਗੈ ਦਾਣੇ ॥ ਮਰਿ ਮਰਿ ਜੀਵੈ ਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਪਾਏ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੇ
॥੩॥੫॥੩੯॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 360}

ਆਪੇ ਜੋੜਿ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਆਪੇ ਵੇਖੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥੨॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 360}॥

ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਵੀ ਅਕਸਰ ਇਹ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਹੀ ਮਰਜ਼ੀ ਹੈ ਚਾਹੇ ਉਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਬਚਾ ਲਵੇ ਚਾਹੇ ਮਾਰ ਦੇਵੇ। ਇਸਦਾ ਮਤਲਬ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਦੋਸ਼ ਰੱਬ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਮੜਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਤੇ ਅਗਲੀ ਪੰਗਤੀ

“ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਦੇ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਜੇ ਭਾਵੈ ਦੇਇ ਸਜਾਇ ॥੪॥

ਅਗੋ ਦੇ ਜੇ ਚੇਤੀਐ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਇਤੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ ॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 417}”

ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਵਡਿਆਈਆਂ ਬਖਸ਼ਦਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਜਾ। ਭਾਵ ਰੱਬ ਵੱਖਰੇਵਾਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਰੱਬ ਤਾਂ ਸੱਭ ਦਾ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਹੈ। ਐ ਬੰਦੇ ਜੇ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਜਾ। ਜੇ ਇਸ ਨਿਯਮ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦੇ ਰਾਜੇ ਨੇ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਕਿ ਤਕੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਉਣ ਦਾ ਹੱਕ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮਾੜੇ ਨੇ ਖਤਮ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਫੌਜੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਾਬਰ ਦੇ ਦੰਦ ਖੱਟੇ ਕਰਦਾ। ਮਤਲਬ ਸਜਾ ਬਾਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੰਦਾ। ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਕੋਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਵਡਿਆਈਆਂ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਸਜਾ ਹੀ ,ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ , ਮਿਲਣੀ ਸੀ।

ਤੂੰ ਸਾਝਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਬਾਪੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥... ॥

ਸਭੇ ਸਾਝੀਵਾਲ ਸਦਾਇਨਿ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦਿਸਹਿ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੩॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 97}

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਰੱਬ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਤੋੜਦਾ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦਾ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ , ਉਹ ਇਕ ਸਾਰ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਵੱਖਰੇਵਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ। । ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਜਾ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਵਡਿਆਈਆਂ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਦਾ ਹੈ ,ਮਾਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਪਰ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਤਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਉਹ ਰੱਬ ਤਾਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਸੱਵੇਂ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਲਾ ਰੱਬ ਸੱਤਵੇਂ ਅਸਮਾਨ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਬੈਠਾ ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ,

“ਫਰੀਦਾ ਜੰਗਲੁ ਜੰਗਲੁ ਕਿਆ ਭਵਹਿ ਵਣਿ ਕੰਡਾ ਮੋੜੇਹਿ ॥

ਵਸੀ ਰਬੁ ਹਿਆਲੀਐ ਜੰਗਲੁ ਕਿਆ ਢੁਢੇਹਿ ॥੧੯॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 1378}॥ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ।

ਮੁੱਕਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਹਨਾ ਮਿਹਣਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਾਰਦੇ ਸਗੋਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਹਨਤਾਂ ਪਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਲੋਕੋ ਜੇ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਨਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੀਹੜੀ ਦਰ ਪੀਹੜੀ ਹਮਲਾਅਵਰਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਕੁੱਟ ਖਾਂਦੇ ਹੀ ਰਹੋਗੇ। **ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ**, “ਜਿਸ ਕੌਮ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਮਰਨ ਦਾ ਵੱਲ ਆ ਗਿਆ ਉਸ ਕੌਮ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਉਣ ਦੀ ਜਾਂਚ ਆ ਗਈ ਸਾਰੀ।” ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀਭਗਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ , ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਬੰਦਾ ਬਣਨ ਦਾ ਵੱਲ ਸਿਖਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਛੇਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਉਣੀ ,ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਤਕ ਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਖੰਡਾ ਖੜਕਾਉਂਦੀ ਤੇ ਛਕਾਟੇ ਪਾਉਂਦੀ ਦਿਸਦੀ ਬੰ ,ਦਸਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਵੇਲੇ ਜ਼ੋਬਨ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਸਦੀ ਹੈ ,ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਮਿਸਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ,ਹੈਕਹਿਰ ਝੱਲਦੀ ਤੇ ਮਰਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰੀ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਹੋ ਲਹਿਰ ਮੁੜ ਸੁਰਜੀਤ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਲਹੌਰ ਤੇ ਕੇਸਰੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਝਲਾਉਂਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਦਿਸਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਹੁਣ ਇਸਨੇ “ਅਗੋ ਦੇ ਜੇ ਚੇਤੀਐ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਇਤੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 417}”। ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਡੀਂ ਹੰਡਾ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਬਾਪ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਪਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਪੁੱਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਉਣ ਦੀ ਜਾਂਚ ਆ ਗਈ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਦਾਸ, ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ 1079 449 810 ,3132 966 647 #

DID YOU NOT FEEL COMPASSION?

Gurcharan Singh Jiwanwala # 647 966 3132, 810 449 1079

The meaning assigned to this sentence by all the current expounding systems are not in conformity with Gurmat. Everyone has written that O God, all those poor people were so badly beaten, you did not feel compassion. Whatever little understanding I had, according to that I did not feel comfortable with this meaning but had difficulty understanding the correct meaning. I did understand that God does not show mercy or feel pain. In the form of laws of nature He is present in the perpetrator of the crime and the victim of the crime.

According to laws of nature the powerful has the right to live and the weak has to vanish. The weak has to bear the brunt of cruelty. For that reason Guru Angad Patshah ji tried to physically strengthen the nation by forming wrestling grounds at Khadoor Sahib and because of that effort the nation which had been suffering persecution for thousands of years thwarted Asia's most powerful General, Abdali in the second half of the seventeenth century. The second reason for not accepting the current meaning is also that Guru Nanak Pita cannot taunt God because he is hundred percent devoted to Him. ***"Nanak is His slave; from moment to moment he is sacrifice unto Him. [4]." [p. 660].*** The slave does not have the right to taunt the master. The master is great and the slave is insignificant. The slave has to obey the orders and the master has to give the orders. This principle has been faithfully observed in Gurbani from beginning to end.

"My Master is Everlasting, I am His bought slave. My body, life and everything is Yours, O Master. [1]. You are an honor to the dishonored; O Master, I depend on You. One, who depends on someone other than the True One, is considered unwise." [p. 396]. In the entire Gurbani all the creators of Bani have told us that no one can do anything by going against the will of God. Guru Sahib is not simply saying, "I am Your (God's) slave", instead he describes himself as a bought slave. Not a simple one but a bought slave. Bought slave means Your (God's) ownership is forever and permanent.

"Maru Mahala 1. I am Your bought slave; my name is fortunate. In exchange for Guru's Words I sold myself at Guru's shop; whatever Guru orders I do. [1]. Your slave has no cleverness. I cannot even carry out God's commands. [Pause]. My mother (mind) is Your slave, my father (contentment) is Your slave; I am the child of Your slaves. My slave mother (mind) dances, my slave (father) contentment sings and worships You, O my Ruler. [2] [p.991]. Guru Nanak Patshah does not leave any doubt that he is not hundred percent devoted to God. "My mind is your slave and my father like contentment, whose progeny I am, is also your slave. For that reason I am your bought slave/servant and I am a fortunate person."

A great man having such thoughts, the founder of Sikh religion, considering himself a slave of God, cannot taunt God. Now, let us consider the current idiom that Guru Nanak Patshah called Babur, a persecutor. All say so, but if it is asked, "Brother, where did you read this?" Then there is no answer. Some commentators say that there is an answer. "There was so much slaughter and outcry, did You not feel compassion, O Lord. [1]" [p.360]. The last part of the sentence, "Did you not feel compassion" is addressed to Babur and (Guru Sahib) is asking Babur, "You slaughtered so many poor people, did you not feel compassion?" This means calling Babur, a persecutor.

In fact, these meanings are also not correct because Guru Nanak Patshah had reached there much later than

the destruction of Saidpur, reference “Sikh Tawarikh, part 1, page 167” and Janam Sakhi Parampara. Babur put Guru Nanak Pita in jail, made him grind Chakki, Chakki started turning on its own. All these miraculous stories are false. In fact the truth is that the people had been bearing persecutions for centuries and they were putting the blame on God for every act of persecution. Guru Nanak Sahib is addressing the people and calling them that, “If one thinks (of the consequences) beforehand then why will one get punished?” [p.417]. “If you had made preparations in advance then you would not have got this punishment.” “One does not blame one’s self (but says that) the Creator sent the Mughal invaders as Angels of death.” Instead of fixing the blame on themselves the people are blaming God that He brought the Mughals in the garb of Yam. It is like, if a young child dies in some family then people say, “O God You saw our house only.” The young child may have died of drug use, alcoholism, accident, greed or illusions but we foolish people consider God to be the culprit. God neither kills anyone by causing accident nor for any other reason. The blame lies on the person himself, but we cast it on God’s name.

“Do not blame others, blame lies in our own acts. Whatever I did, I received its reward. Other persons should not be blamed. [21.]” [p.433]. “Among many dogs (temptations) I am an alien, I bark (beseech You) to save my body (from these tempting dogs). Even if Nanak does not worship You, Your name as a Protector will not be forgotten. [4.]” [p. 795].

In this world the real culprit is man only. In Gurbani many more examples can be found. In fact, only an example of Saidpur/Aimanabad has been taken because the Sloka number 37 at page 359 and Sloka number 38 at page number 360 are questions and answers with the followers of Bharthar Yogi.

Now we shall consider the sentence ending with pause then it becomes abundantly clear that God is of everyone. But Guru Nanak Patshah is troubled by this fact that if a ruler fights another ruler, dies or lives in a fight, then (Guru Nanak) says, “I have no indignation or there is no anger in my mind.” “O, Creator, You are the protector of all. If a powerful person beats another powerful person, then one does not get angry. 1. Pause.” Guru ji is saying that the ruler is sitting in Delhi, and Babur, “You are slaughtering innocent, ordinary and weak people in Saidpur” (previous name Aimanabad). “If a powerful tiger attacks a herd of cows to kill them then its owner has to answer for it.” [p. 360]. If a powerful tiger attacks a herd of cows and kills some of them, then the owners of the cows will talk to the cowherd’s keeper about compensation. For that reason the fault lies with the ruler sitting in Delhi. He should be questioned. (Gurbani says), “Jewels like men were killed and reduced to dust by the dogs (Mughal soldiers) and no one is there to take care of the dead.” “Young men, who were like diamonds, were killed by your dogs (soldiers) and no one survived even to care for them.” One may become very great person in one’s own estimation, indulge in varied revelries, but in the eyes of the God he will remain similar to a worm. If instead of uprooting people you start working for the good of the people then you can gain something from the door of Allah.” “If someone gets called great and indulge in pleasing revelries, to The Master, he will appear to be worm, picker of earth’s grains. To live by repeatedly killing one’s ego, one achieves something and chants Lord’s Name, O Nanak. 3.5.39.” [p. 360]. “You unite, You separate (by death), look, this is Your greatness. [2].” [p.360].

This sentence is often given the meaning that, brother, it is God’s will, He may save someone or kill someone. It means that we are putting the blame on God. And the next sentence, “If it pleases You, You bestow glory; if it pleases You, You give punishment. [4]. “If one thinks (of the consequences) beforehand then why will one get punished?” [p.417] is also given the meanings that if it pleases God, then He bestows greatness on you otherwise punishment. Means God discriminates. But Gurbani’s God is of everyone. O, man if you get an understanding of the laws of nature then you can achieve greatness otherwise punishment.

If Delhi's ruler had understood this principle that the powerful has the right to live and the weak must vanish then by making preparations for his defense he could have defeated Babur. Means punish Babur. Delhi's ruling class did not make any preparation, did not understand the laws of nature, instead of glory they had to receive punishment.

"You are the Common Father of us all..... All share in Your Grace, You do not appear to be outsider to anyone. [3]." [p.97].

Gurbani's God neither separates anyone from another nor joins anyone to another, neither saves anyone nor kills anyone, neither punishes anyone nor makes anyone great. He treats everybody equally and does not discriminate. All the acts mentioned in the two lines above can be performed by a God, who is sitting on the seventh sky but Gurbani's God is not sitting on the seventh sky, He is, "*Farida why are you wandering from jungle to jungle and crushing thorns, the God lives in the heart why search for Him in jungles. [19].*" [p. 1378]. He is in the heart.

To sum it up Guru Nanak Patshah does not taunt God but is cursing people that if you do not make preparations (for your defence) then you will be punished by aggressors from generation to generation.

Somebody has written, "The nation whose founder has learnt to die properly, the children of that nation has learnt the art of living." All the Gurbani, from Bhakats to Guru Sahiban, teaches man to become proper man, and this picture becomes visible to us during the time of Sixth Guru, appears to mature during the time of Tenth Guru, appears to sabre rattle and triumph in the time of Banda Bahadur, appears to bear atrocities and seem to be on the verge of death during the Misal period, but the same movement again rises in the form of Khalsa and is clearly seen unfurling the Kesri flag at Lahore. Because, now the nation has gone through the ordeal of "If one thinks (of the consequences) beforehand then one does not get punished" [p.417], the father has been martyred and the sons have learnt to live.

[Translation of S. Gurcharan Singh Brar's article above in Gurmukhi script by S. Hakam Singh, Sacramento Ca. ED]

THE BLACK PRINCE: MAHARAJAH DULEEP SINGH

THE BLACK PRINCE is a 2017 international film which tells the story of the last king of the Sikh Empire and the Punjab, Maharajah Duleep Singh and Queen Victoria. We thought it would be nice to share an article on 'Maharaja Duleep Singh and British Values'.

Maharaja Duleep Singh and British Values

Values are principles or standards of behaviour. It is ideal if personal and social life is organised around a constructive consistent and compelling system of values.

There is a consensus among political and religious leaders that fairness, equality, freedom of speech and tolerance are the most important British values.

They are grounded in Christianity. Practically all the politicians and priests tell the public that terrorists and

proponents of extremist ideologies should be taught British Values.

In this article, we shall be exploring if these values were adhered to or put aside from 1840 onwards in the Punjab by officials of the East India Company.

So first of all, let us try to understand the functions and the parameters of the East India Company.

East India Company (1600-1858) was chartered by Queen Elizabeth-I and given a monopoly of trade between England and the Far East. In the 18th century, the company became in effect the ruler of a large part of India and a dual control by the company and a committee responsible to Parliament in London was introduced by Pitt India Act 1784.

Let us now turn to the Punjab in the 1840s. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Lion of Punjab died in 1839. After his death came the inevitable fall, for there was no powerful leader to take over his rule as he had not trained and positioned anyone to succeed him.

Prince Duleep Singh, the youngest of the seven sons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was born in the Lahore Palace in 1838. He ascended the throne of Lahore after bloody struggles for succession at the tender age of 5 years and his mother Maharani Jind Kaur was to be his Regent.

The East India Company had refrained from having a direct clash with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, but after his demise, the first Anglo-Sikh war broke out in 1845. The British emerged victorious, but did not annex the state on practical grounds. At the same time, the Company did not want the Punjab to remain independent. So by the Treaty of Bharowal, of 1846, the British Resident had become the virtual ruler of the Punjab.

The Multan incident took place in 1848 just after the arrival of Lord Dalhousie as the Governor General of India. No action was taken for five months and it could have been easily put down. Dalhousie papers clearly indicate that immediate advance on Multan was neither perilous nor impracticable.

Instead, the British made military preparations for a full scale war in the Punjab and its final annexation were set afoot. The Governor General began to call the Multan revolt a national rising of the Sikhs. The “die is cast” declared Lord Dalhousie. On March 1849, the kingdom of the Punjab was annexed to the British Crown.

In other words, the East India Company held the Lahore Darbar responsible for the Second Anglo-Sikh war, when in fact the power behind the throne was the Resident according to the Treaty of Bharowal.

It must be stated here that some of the distinguished British civil servants like Sir Henry Lawrence and Fredrick Currie vehemently opposed the annexation and described it as ‘unwise and impolitic.’ This infuriated Dalhousie who removed Lawrence from the residence of Punjab and dispatched him to Rajputana. (*Maharaja Duleep Singh - The Last Sovereign Ruler of Punjab, p. 31*)

Duleep Singh was immediately removed from his mother, Maharani Jind Kaur - commonly known as Maharani Jinda, when he was only 11-12 years. Hence an eleven year old child was separated from his mother. Duleep Singh was taken to Fatehgarh, a small village in Farrukhabad district. His mother Maharani Jind Kaur was first held in the fort of Sheikhpura (now in Pakistan), and then sent to Benares.

Most psychologists agree that a mother or a significant other have a very significant part to play in the formative years of a child. A significant other should be one whom the child loves and the family trusts. A mother or father infuses in a child the confidence and courage to understand and face the dynamics of life.

What did the new rulers of Punjab do? They flagrantly violated the basic human decencies by depriving the young Duleep Singh of the loving and warm embrace of his mother.

Tolerance of Religions

The consensus in this country is that Tolerance is one of the top British values. Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of world's cultures, belief systems or religions. The young Duleep Singh knew only Christian friends, Christian tutors and Christian ethos. He had no access to a Gurdwara or a Granthi.

After weaning him away from the faith of his ancestors, Dalhousie claimed that, "with the conversion, the political influence of the Maharaja had been destroyed forever." (*Lord Dalhousie to Dr. Login, 23 July 1851*)

In his letter to Dr. Login, the Governor General of India was forthright in stating his aim, "I do not want to countenance any relations henceforth between the Maharaja and the Sikhs, either by alliance with a Sikh family or sympathy with Sikh feeling." (*13 April 1850, quoted in Maharaja Duleep Singh, edit. Prithipal Singh Kapur, p. 83*)

In March 1853, Duleep Singh was quietly baptized a Christian at a private ceremony at Fatehgarh. In April 1854, the Maharaja and his party sailed for England.

Koh-I-Noor Dimond and Fairness

To be fair, requires us to treat others equally, or - 'Not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.'

Below is an extract from an article by William Dairymple-co-author of *Koh-i-Noor –The History of the Word's Most Infamous Diamond in the Daily Telegraph*. Also quoted in *Sir John and Duleep Singh* by Lady Login, p. 342

In July 1854, Queen Victoria found herself faced with a conundrum. The Koh-i-Noor diamond had been presented to her four years earlier by the Governor-General of India, Lord Dalhousie, who had seized it from Sikh Maharaja Duleep Singh at the British conquest of the Punjab. Now, however, Duleep Singh was her guest at Osborne.

Characteristically, the queen decided to grab the nettle: "Maharaja," she said one afternoon, "I have something to show you." Duleep Singh moved forward towards her not knowing what to expect. The queen took the jewel from its box and dropped it into his hand.

The Maharaja held up the diamond to the sunlight. "For all his air of polite interest and curiosity," wrote one observer, "there was a passion of repressed emotion in his face...evident, I think, to her Majesty, who watched him with sympathy not unmixed with anxiety."

The awkwardness in the room grew. "At last, as if summoning his resolution after a profound strength, he raised his eyes from the jewel. I was prepared almost for anything," recalled his former guardian, Lena

Login, “even to seeing him in a sudden fit of madness, fling the precious talisman out of the window. My own and the other spectators’ nerves were equally on edge as he moved to where Her Majesty was standing.”

Bowing before her, he gently put the gem in Queen Victoria’s hand...The tale ultimately had much less happy end. The loss of the Koh-i-Noor continued to play on Duleep Singh’s mind and he ended up referring to the Queen as Mrs. Fagin - a receiver of stolen goods...

An Ethical Question which William Dalrymple answers without mincing his words:

“The story of the Koh-i-Noor is in many ways a touchstone for attitudes towards colonialism, posing the question: what is the proper response to imperial loot?

Do we shrug it off as part of the tough - and-tumble of history, or do we right the wrongs of the past? Few today would disagree that Jewish art stolen from its owners during the Holocaust of the 1940s should be returned, but we tend to treat as a very different case Indian treasures looted in the 1840s.”

Let us get back to Maharaja Duleep Singh again.

In 1861 Duleep Singh visited India, but was not permitted to go to the Punjab. Quite cautiously, he was restricted to Calcutta where his mother Maharani Jind Kaur, then living in Kathmandu in exile met him. Duleep Singh took her to England.

The arrival of Jind Kaur in England was described as “misfortune” for the Raj (*Lady Login*, pp 464-465) because the Maharaja was getting under his mother’s influence. In other words, the East India Company and the British government were interested only in maintaining their Raj in India and not happy when long parted mother and son met again.

The presence of Maharani Jind Kaur in England stirred the dormant patriotic urges of the Maharaja. Before her death in 1863, Maharani Jind Kaur had enlightened her son about his glorious royal heritage, and the insidious intrigues and conspiracies of the East India Company who had usurped the Sikh state. This rekindled him the urge to take the British government head on. He later on took Amrit and was baptised a Sikh.

To sum up, young Duleep Singh was deprived of his mother’s love and protection, coerced into signing some treaties that were used against him, deposed as a Maharaja, manipulated and westernized by his Christian advisers obeying the orders of people higher up and weaned away from his religious and cultural roots.

One wonders why the Empire builders did not remember their values when they had the power.

Sohan Singh England *Sohan Singh, a Sikh author, is also one of AWAT Editors*

Click [here](#) to watch “THE BLACK PRINCE - Official Trailer 2017” if you haven’t watched the movie yet.

Have something to say about today’s issue? Please post it here.
