

# NANAK MY DISCOVERY

## FINDING GURU NANAK

(1469-1539)

### THE ONE & ONLY

### MY JOURNEY

Hardev Singh Shergill

## PREFACE

Do not feel offended by some statements. Please read the whole text twice before rejecting or accepting it. My conclusions are not only based on Gurbani but will also lead to awareness and acceptance of Guru Nanak's Philosophy by the world at large, **as long as it is not presented as yet another religion**. Religions are divisive; Guru Nanak was a uniter. He would have agreed with Rumi (1207-1273), a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic who said:

*"I'm not from the East or the west.*

*I'm not Christian or Jew or Muslim.*

*I'm not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen.*

*I do not belong to any established religion or any cultural system.*

*I'm neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my Beloved."*

I am convinced that I am not wrong when I say that the world has never seen another philosopher who can be compared to Nanak, Guru to Hindus and Baba to Muslims, and that includes:

1. Lord Krishna (July 21, 3227 BC – Feb. 18, 3102 BC) According to Bible the Earth then was only 3000 years old.
2. Abraham (1813 BC - 1638 BC)
3. Moses (1391 BC–1271 BC)
4. Buddha (8 April 563 BC – 483 BC)
5. Confucius (551 BC – 479 BC)
6. Jesus (6 BC – 30 AD) that is 6000 years after Bible says the Earth was created.
7. Mohammad (570 AD – 632 AD)
8. Nanak 15 April 1469 – 22 September 1539)

Of these eight only Buddha, Confucius and Nanak are the only ones who did not start a religion. They presented a social and ethical philosophy of living rather than religious dogmas. Of these eight Nanak is the least known yet he is the only one who opposed organized religion in no uncertain terms and preached *Jeevan Jaach*, how to live, and use of one's '*Bibek Buddhi*', discerning mind, to guide their daily activity instead of a list of dos and don'ts. Nanak says do not engage in an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that will harm your body and mind. No Ten Commandments for him, nor the Sharia Law.

As you may have noticed, the **BJP** government both in **1999** celebration of **300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Birth of Khalsa** which they claim to have been created to protect Hinduism and **2017** celebration of **350<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh**, spent hundreds of Crores of Rupees of a secular state's funds for celebrating events associated with a minority community whom they disdain. Do not be fooled by these shenanigans. There are serious questions about the veracity of what we have been led to believe about Vaisakhi of 1699 and meaning and purpose of Khalsa and authorship of Dasam Granth being promoted by BJP through its RSS as the creation of Guru Gobind Singh.

On one hand Sikhs claim that **1430-page Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji** was declared the **only Guru of Sikhs** by Guru Gobind Singh himself and then turn around and say **1428-page Sri Guru Dasam Granth Sahib Ji is also the Guru of Sikhs**. Two Takhats, Patna Sahib and Hazoor Sahib, even accord it equal status with AGGS. There is no comparison between the two Granths. Former is a universal world class philosophy of life and living including not only the writings of Gurus but also compatible writings of **Hindus and Muslims**, the only exception among world's scriptures. The other incorporates language that is vulgar, not fit to be uttered in a congregation or any civil society. It can only be described as '*kanjar Kavita and kanjar kahani*'.

<https://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/SikhBulletinNovDec2009.pdf>

### **Promoting Dasam Granth and affirming creation of Khalsa to protect Hinduism is the sole motive of BJP/RSS.**

The falsehood of Dasam Granth has been proven, beyond doubt, by **S. Dalbir Singh's** lengthy research published in his book "*Dasam Granth di Asleeyat*", "*Hard facts about Dasam Granth*". He identified poet Shyaam (**Kabi Shyaam**), poet Raam (**Kabi Raam**) and poet Kaal (**Kabi Kaal**) as the **three authors of Dasam Granth**, all worshippers of **Mahakal-Kalka**, but not Guru Gobind Singh and the following four Hindu granths as sources of everything included in the so called Dasam Granth:

1. **Shrimadd Bhagwat-sudha-sagar (Shuksagar), Gita Press**
2. **Shiv Puran, Gita Press**
3. **Markandey Puran, Gita Press**
4. **Shri Durga Sapatshiti, Gita Press**

I read '*Bachittar Natak*' in 1944, at the age of ten. **Dasam Granth** in its current form did not exist then. I did not believe in any of its tall tales. Besides my third-grade textbook told me **Hemkunt** was already in *maatloke* where God was sending Gobind Singh, after having sent Guru Nanak already. First of all, I had heard from my father that authorship of Guru Granth began with Guru Nanak who was succeeded by nine more Gurus, all as his jyote, who furthered his message and nothing new and it was Guru Gobind Singh who declared Guru Granth Sahib as Guru of Sikhs without adding any of his writings.

Until now many people, who did not acknowledge the entire Dasam Granth as the work of Guru Gobind Singh, believed some writings to be his because 'they did not conflict with Gurbani', a very poor excuse. If, inspite of this incontrovertible proof produced by S. Dalbir Singh, people in

position of authority still want to believe in the three banis used for *khande-di-pahul* and *nitnem*, I am afraid, there is not much hope for the renaissance in Sikhi which is urgently needed.

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

In **Discovery of India** by Jawahar Lal Nehru, **Guru Nanak**, just the name only, is mentioned only **once**, on page 240 alongside Amir Khusrau in the heading: **"The Indian Social Structure: Importance of the Group"**. Not a single other word is used about **Guru Nanak** or his **contribution to India's Social Structure**. There is not a word about **Guru Nanak** even though **Adi Granth** records in **Guru Nanak's** own words his eye witness account of **Babar's invasion** and atrocities for which in anguish **Nanak castigates the Indian rulers** for not protecting their subjects in the following words:

*Raje shih mukaddam kutte*  
**"The kings are tigers, and their officials are dogs." AGGS 1288**

**Who were these dogs? It could only be two high caste Hindus, Brahmans and Kshatriyas, who served their Hindu as well as Muslim masters. Some Rajputs even gave their daughters in marriage to the Muslim rulers.**

**Some Contemporaries of Guru Nanak and some who came later but developed their theories similar to Guru Nanak's on the basis of their own 'bibek budhi':**

**Guru Nanak (1469-1539)**

**Leonardo da Vinci (15 April, 1452 – May 2, 1519)**

**Mona Lisa (1479-1542)** Italians discovered her Birth Certificate but Sikhs cannot even agree on the D.O.B of **Guru Nanak**.

**Vasco da Gama, Portugal (1460-1524)**

**Nicolaus Copernicus, Poland, (1473-1543)** **Guru Nanak** and **Copernicus** shared the modern concept of **Cosmos**.

**Michelangelo, Italy (1475-1564)**

**Martin Luther, Germany (1483-1546).**

**Babur, Uzbekistan (1483-1530).** Started **Mogul dynasty** in **India**

**Henry VIII, England (1491-1547)**

**Galileo, Italy (1564-1642)** believer in **Copernicus** cosmic view; spent last nine years of his life under house arrest for violating the dictates of the Bible that **Sun** revolves around the **Earth**.

**Had Guru Nanak and Martin Luther** met, the former would have strongly advised the latter not to try to reform Catholicism that was being abused by **Pope Leo** to sell place in heaven to **Rich Roman merchants** for financial contributions to build the modern day **Vatican** that tourists from all over the world go to see, because religions cannot be reformed. **Evangelical Christians** in **USA** are the end product of **Martin Luther's Christianity** that gave the world **Donald Trump's Presidency** in 2016. Now history is a witness to that.

That is why I cry out that **Nanak** was born at the right time of **Renaissance in Europe**, was contemporary of men known all over the western world but unfortunately for the world not **Nanak** because he **was born in a country stinking with swamp of Hinduism and its curse the Caste System.**

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

**That is why no Hindu political leader or religious scholar talks about Guru Nanak and they also want Sikhs to forget about him. It is a matter of real loss to humanity that during the period of European Renaissance Nanak was born in India where nothing flourishes under the Brahminic tree and his philosophy fell in the hands of Sikhs who have not understood it at all, again under the Hindutva influence. How I wish Nanak's Philosophy was given to the Mormons. Imagine what they would have done with that gem considering what they did with Book of Mormon that I consider a badly written novel, not a divine word.**

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

*Dharṭī hor parai hor hor.  
There are countless earths beyond this earth.  
hukme under sabh ko bahay hikam na koi  
Everything is subject to the Laws of Nature; nothing is beyond the Laws of Nature.*

**Origin of Universe according to Guru Nanak:**

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ<sup>1</sup> ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ<sup>2</sup> ॥  
Kīṭā pasāo eko kavāo.  
ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ<sup>3</sup> ॥  
Tis te hoe lakh dārīāo.  
*The Universe exploded from one source of energy<sup>2</sup> (Singularity) with a Bang [the Swift release of a store of effective force or energy] and started to expand<sup>1</sup>. Thereafter many things<sup>3</sup> appeared. AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.*

ਕਈ ਬਾਰ ਪਸਰਿਓ ਪਸਾਰ॥  
ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਇਕੁ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ॥  
**The Cosmos has coalesced and reformed several times according to the *Hukam*:**

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

*Sache te pavna bhaya pavne te jal hoi*

ਸਾਚੇ ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੈ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮੋਇ ॥

*jal te tribhvan sajiya ghat ghat jyote smoi*

*The True One created the air; air produced water and it is water wherein evolved the world of life with Cosmic-consciousness (God-consciousness).*

#### **Evolution of life according to Guru Nanak:**

*Kai janam bhaye keet patanga*

*Many births (different evolutionary stages of life) created worm and insect.*

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

*Jal thal jeeya pooriya loa akara akar*

*There are living beings in water, on land and in the Cosmos.*

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

*Pavan guru pani pita mata dharat mahat*

*Air is like a Guru, water like a father and the Earth like the great<sup>7</sup> mother (which provides all types of resources and food). Show consideration to it.*

#### **Nanak on Death:**

*pavnai me pavan smiya*

*jyote me jyote ral jaiya*

*mati mati hoi ek*

*roven haray ki kavan tek*

*kaun mooa re kaun mooa*

*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?*

#### **Nanak on meat and vegetables:**

***Maas maas ker moorakh jhagre gyan dhyan nahin Janay***

***Kaun maas kaun saag kahaway kis may paap smane***

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

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

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**I HAVE NO RELIGION**  
**My Journey of Finding Guru Nanak (1469-1539)**  
**The One and Only**  
[Editorial from the Sikh Bulletin March-April 2015]

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

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

Truth is that Guru Nanak rejected the existing three **Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)** and three **Indian religions of his time (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism)** and **their Gods** and he was not about to start a yet another religion to add to them. Religions divide people whereas Guru Nanak was a uniter who devoted his entire life to make mankind realize that humanity is One. Guru Nanak's rejection of organized religions was very subtle. What he preached to the Hindus, Muslims and Yogis was the daily **conduct** that will make them better, Hindus, Muslims and Yogis.

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

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

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**FINDING GURU NANAK  
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Hardev Singh Shergill, Publisher of the Sikh Bulletin  
at Calgary, Alberta, Canada Conference on April 11, 2015.

My life journey began on January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1934 at my **Nanke village, Sakruli** of Hoshiarpur District of Panjab, India, in the same house where my mother was born. Born into a khande-di- pahul dhari Sikh household, I had turned agnostic by the time I turned twelve. Being educated in a Hindi medium state, my mother had taught me Gurmukhi at home when I was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. For practice I read my father's books, among them *Bale-dian-Sakhian* and *Bachittar Natak*, the latter now expanded from few pages long pamphlet then to 1428 pages thick '**SIRI DASAM GRANTH SAHIB JI**'.

Although village Gurdwara always had a resident Granthi, my father used to perform all the religious services such as monthly Sangrands, Gurburabs, weddings etc. I grew up knowing people addressing him as Giani Ji. So, I had a fair understanding that Sikh faith started with Guru Nanak, followed by nine other Gurus who were considered Guru Nanak's jyote and that the tenth Guru declared an end to bodily Guru and assigned Guruship to Adi Granth now called Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

### **I did not believe a word in those two books.**

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

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

My strongest memory from all that reading is the wonderment in my mind about **Hindu God**. Any time a tapasvee had done enough tapasya to reach God, God would send an **Apasra (Heavenly prostitute)** and the poor tapasvee would fall from grace. To a twelve-year-old there was no difference between Hinduism and Sikhism. I turned agnostic, although I did not know this term then. I just could not see any difference between Hinduism and Sikhism nor could I believe in God that seemed the same in both the religions. Islam, I did not even bother to study. If what I had heard about it was not enough, I was overwhelmed by the actions of Muslims in Pakistan against Hindus and Sikhs during India's partition that slaughtered and dispersed millions of people in the name of religion.

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



### **I was not confused; I was turned off religion.**

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

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

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

Around age sixty, under the influence of Hindu granths read in my childhood and having helped raise my younger siblings and my own children I wanted to do something for the community that I was born into. But I could never have dreamt what a traumatic experience that desire would put me through. Gurdwaras do not do what I wanted to do but I was introduced to a Sant Baba who turned out to be a world class con artist, scoundrel, rapist and a sociopath.

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

I could not bring myself to run this Gurdwara as the other Gurdwaras were run. I wanted to understand what entire Adi Granth meant. I searched for and met some practicing Sikhs; but they were so few. By chance I met Dr. Sulakhan Singh Dhillon of Berkeley, California, a retired Professor of Philosophy. He became my mentor. In 2001 we started a Sikhi Reform movement in earnest, as was the case with Singh Sabha movement during the British occupation of Panjab, followed by our First World Sikh Conference in Chandigarh in 2003. Year 2004 was the second most audacious attempt when Prof. Gurtej Singh and I went around the world for six weeks and held six major and three minor conferences in six countries, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, USA, UK and India.

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

October 2003 conference report appears in December 2003 issue of The Sikh Bulletin. Please click below:

[https://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/Bulletin\\_12\\_2003.pdf](https://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/Bulletin_12_2003.pdf)

2004 conferences was published in November-December 2004 Sikh Bulletin. Please click below:

[https://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/Bulletin\\_11\\_12\\_2004.pdf](https://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/Bulletin_11_12_2004.pdf)

By the time I came back home from the 2003 conference two weeks later, there was a new Gurdwara in our vicinity, established on short order and with three-year lease at \$8,300.00 per month, courtesy of Jathedar Joginder Singh Vedanti who had tried his utmost to deny us the venue of 2003 Conference. Upon return home after six worldwide conferences in 2004 I found that the 2003 Gurdwara had split into two, a very common occurrence in the history of Gurdwaras in North America. The second group was paying over \$5,000.00 monthly rent. I was charging no rent for the 7,900.00 square foot building being used as Sikh Center, Roseville, California.

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

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

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

### **Or am I a Deist?**

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

**I first got to know Jesse in January 2014** when he wrote to me for some issues of **The Sikh Bulletin**. It turned out that he had been studying all the world's religions and lately had come upon Sikhism on the internet. What he found on the internet about Sikhism was very confusing and contradictory. Then he had a brilliant idea. He googled '**Heretic Sikh**' and found The Sikh Bulletin and me. He started reading The Sikh Bulletin from its first issue on the internet but soon learned what to skip. Correspondence between us then commenced in earnest.

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

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

It was in the write up about Jesse in '**Nanak: The Guru**' (Published in the January-February 2015 issue of The Sikh Bulletin) that I came to read, "**He now describes himself as a secular**

humanist with Deist leanings.” That sent me immediately to the dictionary because this term was new to me.

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

**Deism** is a theological position concerning the relationship between "the Creator" and the natural world. Deistic viewpoints emerged during the scientific revolution of 17th-century Europe and came to exert a powerful influence during the eighteenth century enlightenment. “Deism combines a rejection of religious knowledge as a source of authority with the conclusion that reason and observation of the natural world are sufficient to determine the existence of a single creator of the universe.” For Deists, human beings can only know God via reason and the observation of nature, but not by revelation or supernatural manifestations (such as miracles).

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

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

ਧਵਲੈ ਉਪਰਿ ਕੇਤਾ ਭਾਰੁ ॥

Dhavlai upar ketā bhār.

ਧਰਤੀ ਹੋਰੁ ਪਰੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਹੋਰੁ ॥

Dhartī hor parai hor hor.

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਭਾਰੁ ਤਲੈ ਕਵਣੁ ਜੋਰੁ ॥

Tis te bhār talai kavan jor.

*What a great load there is on the bull!*

*There are countless earths beyond this earth.*

*What power holds them, and supports their weight? AGGS M1, p 3*

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

**He then answers his own question:**

ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

*Everything is subject to the Laws of Nature; nothing is beyond the Laws of Nature.*

*AGGS M1, p 1*

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

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

**That was Guru Nanak's message two hundred years before the term Deist was coined.** If he were born in Europe every one now would know about him. In the Indian sub-continent every new philosophy is, sooner or later, smothered under the shade of Brahmanical tree. That is what happened to Buddhism and now it is Sikhism's turn. Even Islam got brahmanized. Three countries of the Indian Sub-Continent, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, that were one country until 1947, are the only examples in the world where Muslims practice caste system.

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

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

**Deism holds that God does not intervene with the functioning of the natural world in any way, allowing it to run according to the [laws of nature](#).**

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

**This similarity between my Editorial and Deism belief has another companion:**

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

We had started publishing chapters from Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal's book "Nankian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity" starting with the November-December 2011 issue of the Sikh Bulletin. In the March-April 2012 issue we were going to publish Chapter 12 'Concept of God'. In preparation for that I decided to look for a book on evolution of the concept of God. The book that I chose to read on this subject was "The Evolution of God' by Robert Wright, published in June 2009 by Little, Brown and Company. This book put into words my thoughts that I had developed over time.

**It was also gratifying to learn that I shared a basic belief with Aristotle. "According to the book of Genesis, God created man in his own image, but according to Aristotle, men create gods after their own image."**

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

Religions cannot be reformed and that includes Sikhism. Martin Luther (1483-1546), a contemporary of Guru Nanak and, some even think they met, tried to reform Christianity. Result

is Catholic Church just as strong but Protestant Churches have multiplied and many of them are led by shady characters.

### **Maryada Dilemma**

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

### **Maryadas (established traditions) that Guru Nanak rejected:**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Ten Commandments**

1. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy
5. Honour thy father and thy mother
6. Thou shalt not kill
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not steal

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour

**10. Thou shalt not covet (neighbor's house, wife, servants, animals, or anything else)**

Moses's flock believed in multiple Gods, made their idols, showed no respect to their elders, engaged in murderous and immoral acts, stole, lied, just like Donald Trump, the impeached and now defeated 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, practiced slavery and were treating all women as personal property, not as equal humans.

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

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

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

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

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

Today there are plentiful Evangelical Christian preachers who claim to have been commandeered by God himself to do His work. God even orders them to live in palatial homes and own an airplane to fly to their multiple congregations.

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

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



**But here is an interesting point to ponder.**

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

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

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

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

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

**Buddha** was also about the same age as Nanak, late twenties to early thirties, when he started pursuing discovery of Enlightenment while meditating underneath a Ficus Religiosa tree. According to Buddhist texts the Buddha, meditated without moving from his seat for seven days under this tree. But it took Him 6 years in dukkhacariya to mature to understand the right method. **Both Buddha and Nanak rejected the existing concepts of God, as did Confucius.**

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

**Syed Mushtaq Hussain**, a young man from Kashmir, had been left behind in Mecca to study Quran for a period of three years from 1927 to 1930 by his parents during a Hajj pilgrimage. There this young man came across two manuscripts, one by **Taajudin Naqshabandhi**, who had

joined Guru Nanak and remained with him for roughly one-and-a-half to two years and **Khwaja Jainul Abdin, the author of *Tarikhe Arab***, who wrote the first-person account of Guru Nanak Dev ji's Arabian journey.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Compare this with similar incident involving St. Thomas, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus, who founded the first Christian church in India, in A.D. 52, (22 years after the Crucifixion), at Parur, Kerala, on the west coast of southern India:**

*“At Palayur Church in Guruvayur, Kerala, Thomas is said to have raised the first cross in India and performed one of his earliest miracles: When he encountered a group of Brahmans throwing water into the air as part of a ritual, he asked why the water fell back to earth if it was pleasing to their deity. My God, Thomas said, would accept such an offering. He then flung a great spray into the air, and the droplets hung there in the form of glistening white blossoms. Most onlookers converted on the spot; the rest fled.” [From the National Geographic March 2012 p52]*

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

**I firmly believe that Guru Nanak and Guru Granth are not for starting a new religion.**

Sikhism is a way of life. Whereas religions compartmentalize people, Sikhism breaks those barriers. An excellent example of that is the incorporation of writings of both Hindus and Muslims that are compatible with gurbani into Guru Granth Sahib, the only scripture of this kind.

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

Islam, on the other hand, was an alien faith in the Indian sub-continent, with no common history or bond with the native religions of India. But Guru Nanak found fellow interpreters of Koran among Muslims and incorporated their writings to reinforce his views which had universal application.

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

**ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥**

**Nā am Hindū nā Musalmān.**

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

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

ਵਰਤ<sup>1</sup> ਨ ਰਹਉ<sup>2</sup> ਨ ਮਹ ਰਮਦਾਨਾ<sup>3</sup> ॥

ਤਿਸੁ<sup>4</sup> ਸੇਵੀ<sup>5</sup> ਜੋ ਰਖੈ ਨਿਦਾਨਾ<sup>6</sup> ॥੧॥

ਏਕੁ<sup>7</sup> ਗੁਸਾਈ<sup>8</sup> ਅਲਹੁ<sup>9</sup> ਮੇਰਾ ॥

ਹਿੰਦੂ<sup>10</sup> ਤੁਰਕ<sup>11</sup> ਦੁਹਾਂ ਨੇਬੇਰਾ<sup>12</sup> ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਹਜ<sup>13</sup> ਕਾਬੈ ਜਾਉ ਨ ਤੀਰਥ<sup>14</sup> ਪੂਜਾ<sup>15</sup> ॥  
 ਏਕੇ ਸੇਵੀ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੨॥  
 ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਉ ਨ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਉ<sup>16</sup> ॥  
 ਏਕ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ<sup>17</sup> ਲੇ ਰਿਦੈ<sup>18</sup> ਨਮਸਕਾਰਉ<sup>19</sup> ॥੩॥  
 ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥  
 ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡੁ<sup>20</sup> ਪਰਾਨ<sup>21</sup> ॥੪॥  
 ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਇਹੁ ਕੀਆ ਵਖਾਨਾ<sup>22</sup> ॥  
 ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰ ਮਿਲਿ<sup>23</sup> ਖੁਦਿ<sup>24</sup> ਖਸਮੁ<sup>25</sup> ਪਛਾਨਾ ॥੫॥੩॥  
 ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 1136.

*I do not practice<sup>2</sup> the fasts<sup>1</sup> (of Hindus), nor do I observe the month of Ramadaan<sup>3</sup> (the Roza<sup>3</sup>).*  
*I serve<sup>5</sup> only the One<sup>4</sup>, who protects all till the end of life<sup>6</sup>. 1.*  
*My God is only One<sup>7</sup>, Who is called Gosain<sup>8</sup> (by the Hindus) and Allah<sup>9</sup> (by the Muslims).*  
*I have separated<sup>12</sup> myself from (religious practices) of them both, the Hindus<sup>10</sup> and the Muslims<sup>11</sup>. Pause.*  
*I do not make pilgrimages<sup>13</sup> to Mecca, nor do I worship<sup>15</sup> at Hindu sacred shrines<sup>14</sup>.*  
*I serve no other than the Only One. 2.*  
*I do not perform Hindu worship, nor do I offer<sup>16</sup> the Muslim prayers.*  
*I have understood in my mind<sup>18</sup> and pay my obeisance<sup>19</sup> to the One, the Formless<sup>17</sup>. 3.*  
*We are neither Hindus, nor Muslims.*  
*My body<sup>20</sup> and life<sup>21</sup> belong to the One (who is) Allah (for Muslims) and Ram (for Hindus). 4.*  
*Oh Kabir! This is what I say<sup>22</sup>:*  
*That the one-self<sup>24</sup> can realize<sup>26</sup> the God<sup>25</sup> through Guru - Pir (Spiritual Teacher)<sup>23</sup>.5. 3.*  
 AGGS, M 5, p 1136.

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

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

During Guru Nanak's period his followers were identified as **Nanakpanthis**. But by the time of 3<sup>rd</sup> Nanak, Guru Amar Das, the word **Sikh**, from Sanskrit word 'Shishya' (Student) had crept into the vocabulary just as 'Taliban' in Pashto in Afghanistan means student of Islam. *[It is noteworthy that the Indian government, especially after 1984, tried to equate Sikhs, whom it does not even recognize as distinct from Hinduism in its Constitution, with Taliban as terrorists and even United States State Department succumbed to that trap by including several seconds of Indian army's attack on Darbar Sahib as an act to drive Sikh Terrorists' out in its post 9/11 video on terrorism distributed in nation's schools.]*

### **Guru Nanak's concept of what other religions call 'God' in the opening verse of Adi Granth:**

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

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

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

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

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

*Ik oa'nkār saṭ nām kartā purakhḥ nirbhā'o nirvair akāl mūratḥ ajūnī saibhā'n gur parsād.*  
*The One and Only, Oh the Infinite; Exists; Creator; Without fear (Not governed by any other- Not under any Law of University); Without enmity; Timeless (Without effect of time and space); Neither takes birth nor dies; (Never comes into any anthropomorphic form); Created by Itself; Enlightener; and Bounteous.*

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

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

***Ik oa'nkār saṭ nām kartā purakhḥ nirbhā'o nirvair akāl mūratḥ ajūnī saibhā'n gur parsād.***

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

What does it really mean? What does it describe? Certainly, it is not anything akin to a human. It is formless and timeless and yet is self-existent. It does not incarnate in any human or other form. In the commencing line of ‘Jap’ that immediately follows the above opening verse the Guru doubles down. He unequivocally reasserts his firm belief that what he is saying is an absolute truth.

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

*True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. //I// AGGS M1 p1*

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

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

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

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

Origin of Universe according to Guru Nanak:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ<sup>1</sup> ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ<sup>2</sup> ॥

Kīṭā pasāo eko kavāo.

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ<sup>3</sup> ॥

Tis ṭe hoe lakh ḍarīāo.

*The Universe exploded from one source of energy<sup>2</sup> (Singularity) with a Bang [the Swift release of a store of effective force or energy] and started to expand<sup>1</sup>. Thereafter many things<sup>3</sup> appeared. AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.*

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



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

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

ਕਈ ਬਾਰ ਪਸਰਿਓ ਪਸਾਰ॥  
ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਇਕੁ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ॥

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

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

### **Evolution of Life!**

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

ਸਾਚੇ ਤੇ ਪਵਨਾ ਭਇਆ ਪਵਨੈ ਤੇ ਜਲੁ ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਜਲ ਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਸਾਜਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮੋਇ ॥

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਜੀਆ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਲੋਆ ਆਕਾਰਾ ਆਕਾਰ॥

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

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

ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥

*Air is like a Guru, water like a father and the Earth like the great<sup>7</sup> mother (which provides all types of resources and food).*

**AGGS, M 1, p. 8.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guru says:

ਸੇ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੇਨੀ ॥੩॥

ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੪॥੧॥

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

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

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

### What is Death?

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

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

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

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

*The body is made of earth (various elements) and it is the air (breath) that keeps it alive. O wise one, then tell me who died because the body and the air it breathed are still here? It is consciousness that died along with disputes caused by egotistical pride, but the One (Creator) who takes care of all does not die. AGGS, M 1, p. 152.*

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

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

ਪਵਨੈ ਮਹਿ ਪਵਨੁ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਜੋਤੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਹੋਈ ਏਕ ॥  
 ਰੋਵਨਹਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਕਵਨ ਟੇਕ ॥  
 ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ਰੇ ਕਉਨੁ ਮੂਆ ॥  
 ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ਇਹੁ ਤਉ ਚਲਤੁ ਭਇਆ ॥  
 ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
 ਅਗਲੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਖਬਰਿ ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥  
 ਰੋਵਨਹਾਰੁ ਭਿ ਊਠਿ 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 ਇਹੁ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਸੋ ਇਹੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਜਾਨਣਹਾਰੇ ਕਉ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਉ ॥  
 ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇਆ ॥

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

### **On Meat and Vegetables:**

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

ਮਾਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਝਗੜੇ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣੈ ॥  
ਕਉਣੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਉਣੁ ਸਾਗੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਕਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਪ ਸਮਾਣੈ ॥  
ਗੈਂਡਾ ਮਾਰਿ ਹੋਮ ਜਗ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੈ ॥  
ਮਾਸੁ ਛੇਡਿ ਬੈਸਿ ਨਕੁ ਪਕੜਹਿ ਰਾਤੀ ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੈ ॥  
ਫੜੁ ਕਰਿ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਦਿਖਲਾਵਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਸੂਝੈ ॥

.....  
ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿੰਮੇ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਜੰਮੇ ਹਮ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ॥

.....  
ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭਿ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਹੋਏ ਜੀਇ ਲਇਆ ਵਾਸੇਰਾ ॥

.....  
ਮਾਸਹੁ ਨਿੰਮੇ ਮਾਸਹੁ ਜੰਮੇ ਹਮ ਮਾਸੈ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ॥

.....  
ਮਾਸੁ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਤੇਬੀ ਚਰੁ ਜੁਗਿ ਮਾਸੁ ਕਮਾਣਾ ॥  
ਜਜਿ ਕਾਜਿ ਵੀਆਹਿ ਸੁਹਾਵੈ ਓਥੈ ਮਾਸੁ ਸਮਾਣਾ ॥

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Human race is one.**

### **Quotes from Sri Guru Granth Sahib:**

**ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥**

*Èk pitā ekas ke ham bārik tū merā gur hāī.*

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

*You are our Guru. AGGS M5, P 611*

**ਨਾ ਕੇ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥੧॥**

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

*I get along with everyone. AGGS M5, p 1299*

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

**Quotes from 'Sikh Reht Maryada:**

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

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

*(Chapter V Article VI c) p.15*

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

*(Chapter XI Article XVIII b) p.26*

**Two questions arise:**

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

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

**Quotes from Sharia Law:**

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

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

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

1. Soon after we started publishing The Sikh Bulletin in November 1999, I received an email from a teenager from one of the Eastern Seaboard States. He wanted all the material on Sikhism that I could send him. I did not have much but whatever I had I sent that to him including a couple copies of Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal's magazine that he had started publishing around the same time as we did. I also put him on the mailing list. Some years later I received an email from him telling me that he had converted to Islam because he had found contradiction between Sikh scriptures and Sikh practices and Sikhs practiced caste system. I wish he had turned agnostic because what he got into was the worst of the lot. If he ever visits India he will find Muslims practicing the same caste system.



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

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

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

*There were too many religions and divisions among them in his time as is the case today. Today he will surely say that ‘I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim; neither a Sikh nor a Christian’. He showed mankind a path to life and living.*

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

**Sikhism is not a revealed religion.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Abraham to slaughter a lamb instead. **Guru Nanak's God does not favour one group over the other.**

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

**Guru Nanak rejects all three fundamentals of Christian faith.** Foundation of this faith is so shaky I am surprised it lasted so long and was allowed to decimate nature based cultures of so many people around the world. Guru Nanak's Creator neither goes around fathering children from virgins, nor does anybody die for sins of others; each is responsible to face the consequences of his or her own actions and that too in this life because there is no second coming because once anyone dies, it is **dead**, it cannot be reversed, even by the Creator.

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

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

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

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

Although he incorporated into his Bani the multiple names for God in other religions, to make him understood by the masses, his personal word for the 'God' entity is '**Karta Purakh**' or '**KARTAR**' (Creator), formless, ageless, and everlasting and devoid of human attributes.

### **NANAK: The One and Only of His Kind**

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

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

**Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and Copernicus (1473-1543)**, a Polish Mathematician called the founder of modern Astronomy, thousands of miles apart and unknown to each other, arrived at the **same conclusion about the cosmos, including that it is in constant change**. He was the

first to shatter the prevalent belief, supported by the Church, that Earth is the center of the universe and that Sun revolves around the Earth. **Galileo**, who concurred with Copernicus concept, was jailed by the Pope for disobeying the Church doctrine that Sun revolves around the Earth, **because The Bible says so.**

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

So, those who claim that Sikhi is also a revealed religion, like the other religions, are doing a grave disservice to Guru Nanak. Would they also say that Copernicus received divine revelation too? Copernicus himself makes no such claim. **The fact of the matter is that there is no such thing as revelation. Any religion making that claim is false.**

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

**Guru Nanak also planted the seeds of the future successes to come in the field of science, such as: the Big Bang theory,  $EMC^2$ , origin of life in water, Evolution of Species and from the point of view of nurturing the body, no difference between meat and vegetables.**

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

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

### **Guru Nanak:**

Born as baby Nanak, because he was born at his mother's paternal house, he died known as Guru Nanak. **He gave a priceless gift to mankind but it was not a religion. Guru Nanak wanted to rid the masses of conflicts in the name of religion rather than introduce still another religion.** What Guru Nanak gave was *jeevan-jaach* (How to live). His philosophy got distorted and ritualized into a traditional religion by lesser people who came to inherit it.

Since Nanak himself rejected the concept of Second Coming, the corner stone of the world's largest ritual filled religion, we just have to hope and wish that the world will produce, sometime down into the future, another personality like him, to implement what he started, **a universal concept of mankind living in a righteous, peaceful and prosperous world as one family,**

**marked by brotherly love, tolerant of our petty differences, enlightened citizenry conscious of its responsibility towards the animal and vegetation kingdom as the highest form of life on this little speck of star dust that we call planet Earth.**

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

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

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

**He was also an accomplished linguist.**

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

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

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

**A BIGOT IS DEAD: LONG LIVE BIGOTRY**

**W. H. McLeod (1932-2009)**

[From July-August 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੂੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ॥

*One could attain liberation while enjoying life (laughing, playing, eating good food and wearing good clothes). AGGS, M 5, p. 522.*

Guru Nanak places emphasis on individual human dignity and intellect. His message has nothing like the Ten Commandments or the Sharia Law. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind.

**Guru Nanak** rejected the concepts of virgin birth, resurrection, specific times or directions for prayer. Starving the body for a day time (as fast) and then gorging it at night fall was abhorrent to him. Pilgrimage for spiritual gain and feeding the Brahman to sustain deceased relatives had no value for him.

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

**Women constitute one half of humanity but no religion accords women the status that Guru Nanak demands for women, not even today's Sikhism:**

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ॥  
ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥

ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਢਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥  
 ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ॥  
 ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥  
 ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਲਾਹੀਐ ਭਾਗਾ ਰਤੀ ਚਾਰਿ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਊਜਲੇ ਤਿਤੁ ਸਚੈ ਦਰਬਾਰਿ ॥

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

This hymn is a rebuke to the patriarchal culture, as it is addressed to men, especially rulers/leaders who were the guardians of the socio-religious order. Further, he declares that woman is the hub of humanity, the lifeline of humanity. It is woman who conceives, it is woman who nurtures humanity from birth to death. Moreover, he puts woman at the apex of “human evolution” by declaring that only God is independent of woman.

To sink deeper Guru Nanak’s message in a suffocating and corrosive patriarchal society, Guru Amar Das [3rd Nanak] declared female and male equality in a very forceful way:

ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਏਕ ਹੈ ਹੋਰ ਸਗਲੀ ਨਾਰਿ ਸਬਾਈ॥  
 ਸਭਿ ਘਟ ਭੋਗਵੈ ਅਲਿਪਤੁ ਰਹੈ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਲਖਣਾ ਜਾਈ॥

*In this world there is one “Husband,” all other beings are His brides. He enjoys being in all hearts and yet He remains detached. He is invisible and indescribable. AGGS, M 3, p. 591.*

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

ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮਤਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨਿ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ॥

*A sati is not the one who burns herself on the funeral pyres of her husband. O Nanak, she alone is sati for whom the agony due to separation from her husband is like death. AGGS, M 3, p. 787.*

ਭੀ ਸੋ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਰਹੰਨਿ ॥  
 ਸੇਵਨਿ ਸਾਈ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਿਤ ਉਠਿ ਸੰਮ੍ਹਲੰਨਿ ॥

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



ਕੰਤਾ ਨਾਲਿ ਮਹੇਲੀਆ ਸੇਤੀ ਅਗਿ ਜਲਾਹਿ॥  
ਜੇ ਹਾਣਹਿ ਪਿਰੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਤਾ ਤਨਿ ਦੁਖ ਸਹਾਹਿ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਕੰਤ ਨ ਜਾਨਣੀ ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਅਗਿ ਜਲਾਹਿ॥  
ਭਾਵੈ ਜੀਵਉ ਕੈ ਮਰਉ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਹੀ ਭਜਿ ਜਾਹਿ॥

*Wives struggle and face hardships in life along with their husbands. They endure physical pain because they love their husbands. O Nanak, if the husband does not care for his wife and is unconcerned whether she is happy or miserable then why should she suffer for him? AGGS, M 3, p. 787.*

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਕੈਲੀ ਘਾਤੁ ਕੰਵਕਾ ਅਣਚਾਰੀ ਕਾ ਧਾਨੁ॥  
ਫਿਟਕ ਫਿਟਕਾ ਕੋੜ ਬਦੀਆ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਅਭਮਾਨੁ॥

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

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

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

ਆਪੇ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਨਾਰੀ॥  
*God is both man and woman. AGGS, M 1, p. 1020.*

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ॥  
ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੰਧਪੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਭ੍ਰਾਤਾ॥  
*You (God) are my father, You are my mother, You are my relative and You are my sibling. AGGS, M 5, p. 103.*

ਆਪੁਨੇ ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰੇ॥  
ਜਿਉ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਮਾਤਾ ਸੰਮਾਰੇ॥  
*God takes care of all Its creatures, the way a mother nurtures her children. AGGS, M 5, p. 105.*

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

ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਪਰਹਰ ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ॥  
ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਤਜਿ ਹੋਹੁ ਨਿਚਿੰਦਾ॥  
*Control your lust and anger, and renounce slandering others. Giving up greed and possessiveness brings peace of mind. AGGS, M 1, p. 1041.*

ਕਾਮਵੰਤ ਕਾਮੀ ਬਹੁ ਨਾਰੀ ਪਰ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਜੋਹ ਨ ਚੁਕੈ॥

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

ਪਰ ਧਨ ਪਰ ਦਾਰਾ ਸਿਉ ਰਚਿਓ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਸਿਰਾਵੈ॥

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

ਬਨਿਤਾ ਛੋਡਿ ਬਦ ਨਦਿਰ ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ।

ਵੇਸਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਹਾ ਦੁਖਿਅਾਰੀ।

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

ਪਰ ਧਨ ਪਰ ਦਾਰਾ ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਇਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਨਿਵਾਰਿ॥

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

### **Truthful living is higher than truth.**

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

### **WAS GURU NANAK OR SOME OF HIS FOLLOWERS IN BAKU, AZERBAIJAN?**



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

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

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

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

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

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

**My latest exposure to this came in 2014 when I read:**

**"A Journey from Bengal to England, through The Northern Part of India, Kashmire, Afghanistan, And Persia, And into Russia, by the Caspian-Sea"**

**By George Forster.**

**In the Civil Service of The Honourable The East India Company.**

**Printed for R. Faulder, New Bond-Street, London, 1798.**

**(Original Edition).**

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

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

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

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

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

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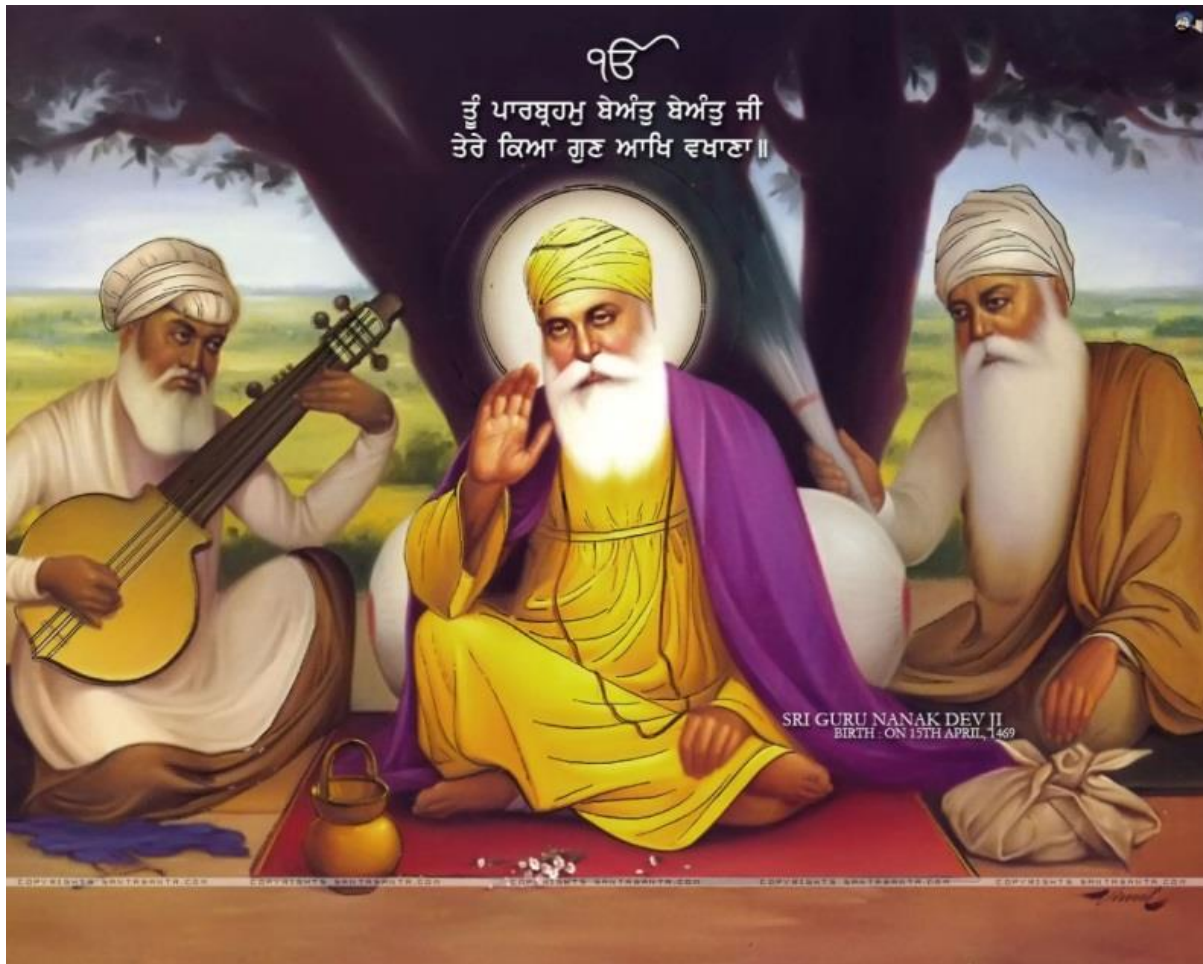
**SRI GURU NANAK SAHIB JI (1469-1539)**

Guru Nanak, during his fourth missionary journey to Muslim Countries, arrived in Baghdad, Iraq in Samvat 1578 (1521 A.D.). This portrait of Niranghari Guru Nanak Sahib Ji, is believed to have been painted by a Muslim artist in Baghdad.

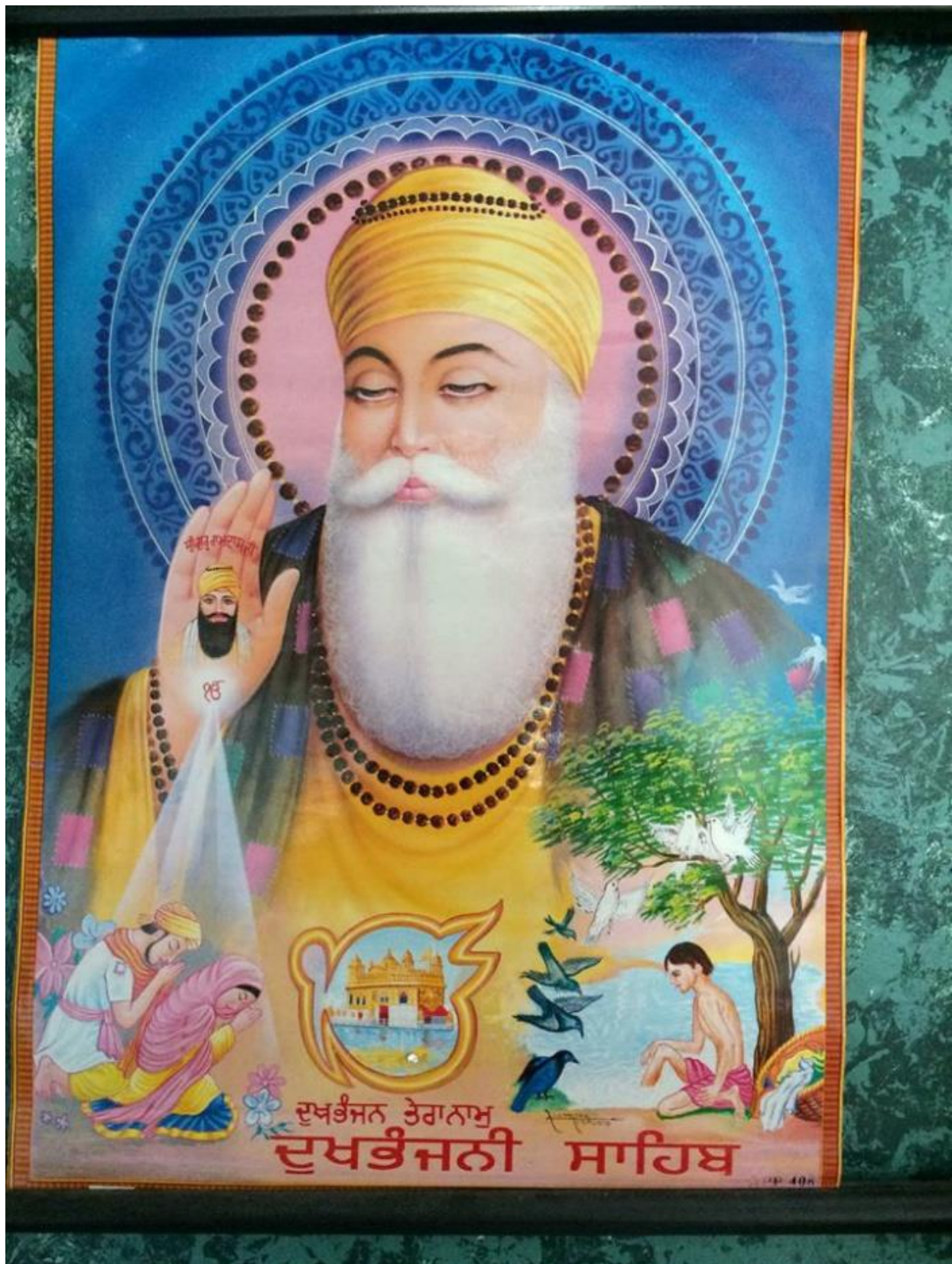
**Copy from British Museum**



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



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



Hindu Nanak



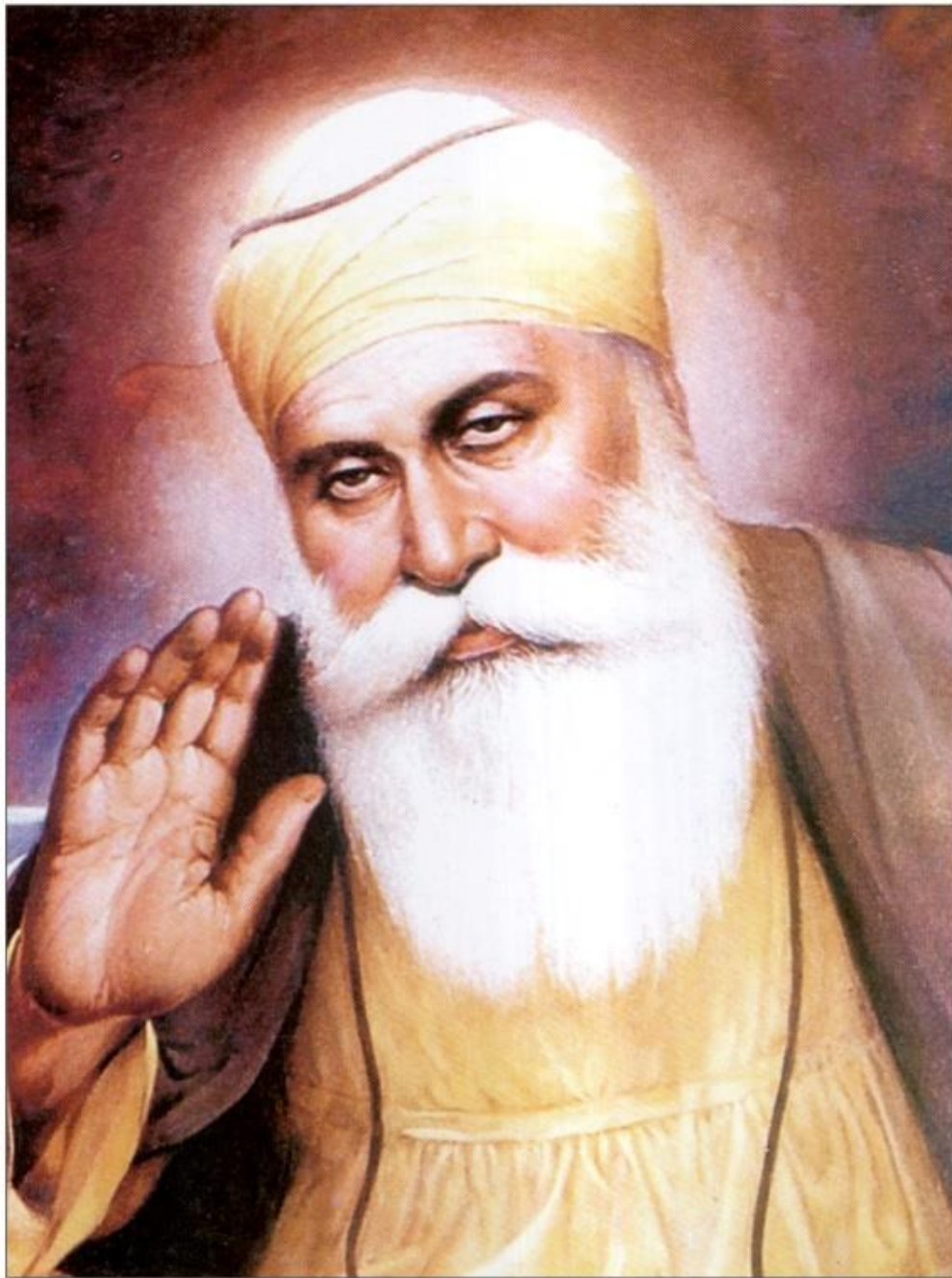


Fig. 2-7. Guru Nanak. In this type of paintings rosaries (*malas*) around the turban, in the hand and around the neck are clearly shown. This type of painting is very common in Gurdwaras and in houses of many Sikhs.

**Sikh Nanak by Sobha Singh**



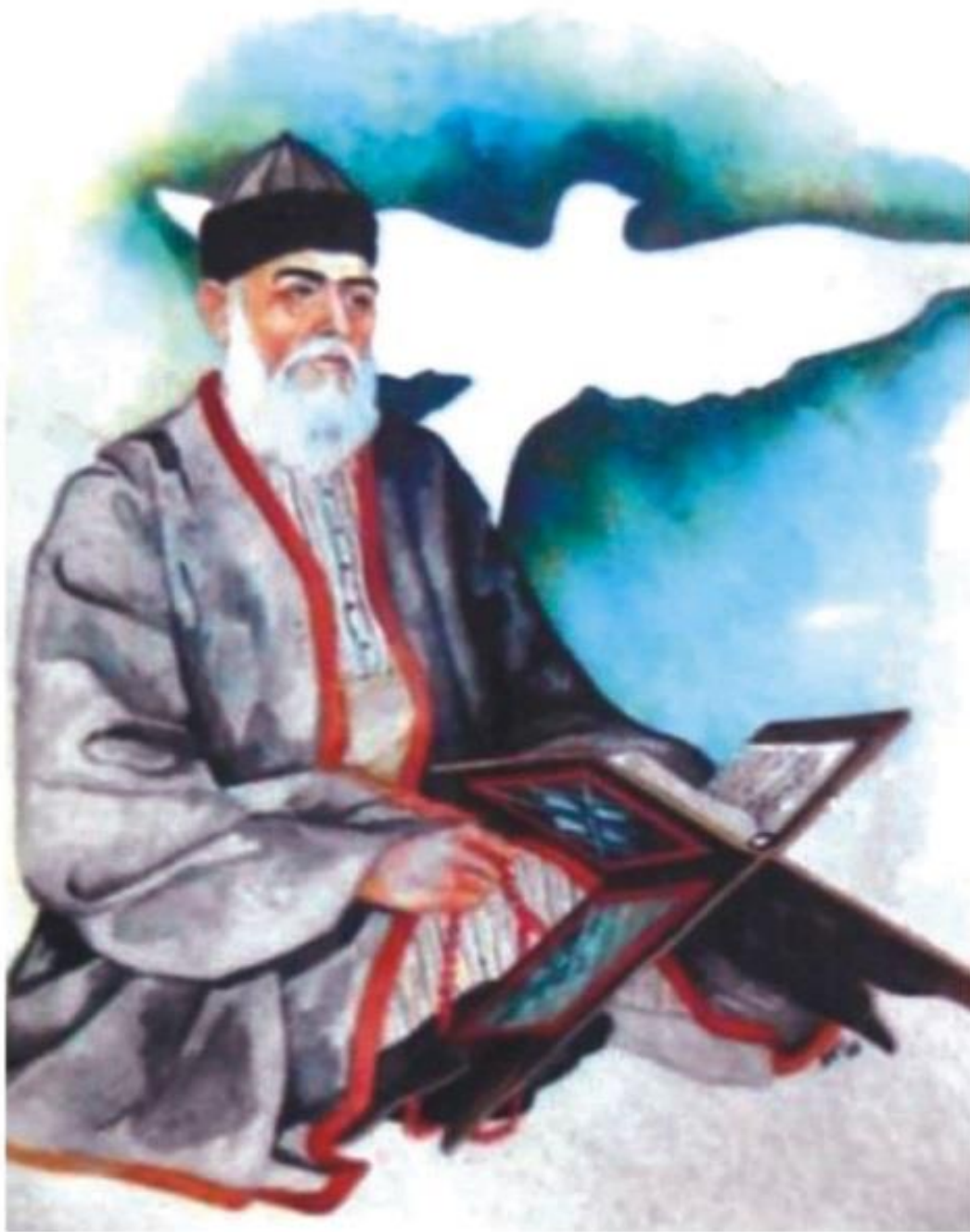


Fig.2-5. Haji Bektashi with turban on *Kula* (cap). The end of his turban coming out is not seen in the painting, it may be on the other side. The facial expression resembles with that of Guru Nanak in Fig. 2-3.

**Haji Bektashi, Turkey**

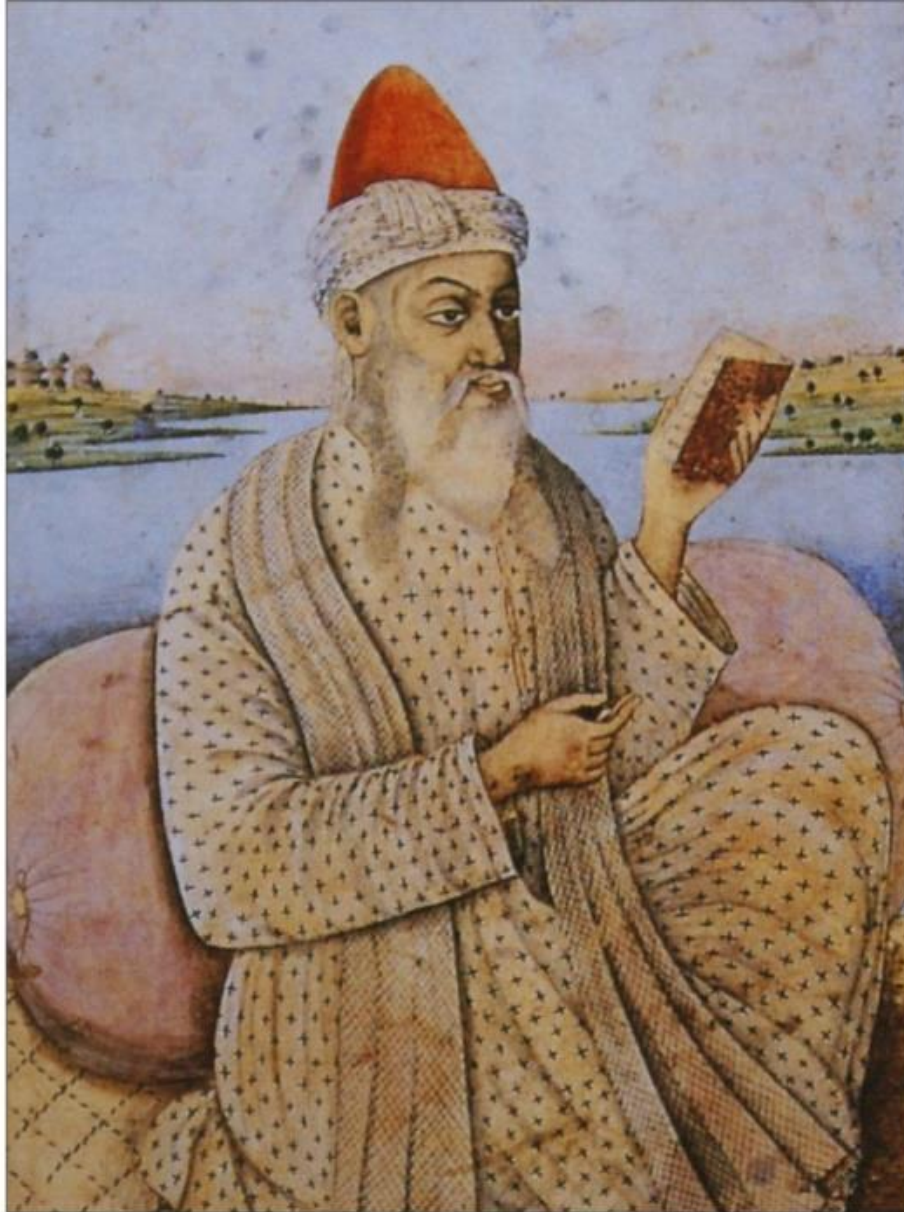


Fig. 2-3. Guru Nanak with a turban on *Kula* (cap) and one end of his turban is coming out. The turban style is very similar to that of Maulana Jallaluddin Rumi of Konya, Turkey (Fig.2-4). Guru Nanak is shown holding a notebook in which he used to write his Bani. The most prominent feature to be noted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

#### **Sufi Nanak**

**Background landscape is very similar to Istanbul, Turkey**



**Straits of Bosphorus Istanbul, Turkey today.**



If Guru Nanak did travel to Konya, Turkey, his travels would surely have taken him to Jerusalem, place sacred to the three Semitic religions and on to Istanbul and may be Baku, Azerbaijan. Background for Guru Nanak's portrait above is intriguingly similar to views of Straits of Bosphorus in Istanbul today. With today's research this is the closest we come to placing Guru Nanak in Istanbul, Turkey.

Guru Nanak must have found Rumi's philosophy to his liking:

***"I'm not from the East or the west.  
I'm not Christian or Jew or Muslim.  
I'm not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen.  
I do not belong to any established religion or any cultural system.  
I'm neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my Beloved."***



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

### **Rumi**

[Rumi, Poet, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī, also known as Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Balkhī, Mawlānā/Mevlānā, Mevlevī/Mawlawī, and more popularly simply as Rumi, was a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic. [Wikipedia](#)

[Born:](#) September 30, 1207, [Vakhsh, Tajikistan](#)

[Died:](#) December 17, 1273, [Konya, Turkey](#)

[Buried:](#) [Mevlana Museum, Konya, Turkey](#)]



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



Sikh Memorial to Guru Nanak at Kartar Pur



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





ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਖੂਹ ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਵੀ ਹੁਣੇ ਮੁਰੰਮਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ

ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ

Persian Wheel Memorial to Guru Nanak at Kartar Pur

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**Nanak Editorials from the Sikh Bulletin**

[www.sikhbulletin.com](http://www.sikhbulletin.com)

March-April 2007 **Down To Earth COMMON-SENSE SIMPLICITY OF GURU NANAK'S MESSAGE**

January-February 2009 **NANKIAN PHILOSOPHY**

March-April 2012 **EVOLUTION OF GOD**

May-June 2012 **GURU NANAK'S GOD ;**

November-December 2012 **NANAK (1469-1539) The One and Only of His Kind**

January-February 2013 **PRAYER - ARDAAS**

January 25, 2005 **SIKH ARDAS/PRAYER** as it should be but is not in the Gurdwaras

March-April 2013 **RECASTING OF THE SIKH BULLETIN** November-December 1999 **As Guru Nanak Mission**

March-April 2013 Synopsis of the publication of the first fourteen years of the Sikh Bulletin

May-June 2013 **SAT KARTAR**

March-April 2014 **MILK BARS TO DESI SHRAB BARS IN THE LAND OF THE GURUS**

November-December 2014 **TRANSITION FROM THE SIKH BULLETIN TO GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI: DISCOVERING GURU NANAK THE ONE AND ONLY MY JOURNEY**

January-February 2015 **COMMENCING VERSE FROM GGS**

March-April 2015 **I HAVE NO RELIGION: My Journey of Finding Guru Nanak (1469-1539) The One and Only [From March-April 2015 SB]**

May-June 2015 **WHAT SIKHS MUST KNOW ABOUT GURU NANAK**

July-August 2015 **November-December 2014 Editorial revisited: moving towards fulfillment of that Mission**

September-October 2015 **GURU NANAK AND HIS MESSAGE**

November-December 2015 **GIFT TO HUMANITY GURMAT: GURU NANAK's PATH OF ENLIGHTENMENT** by BALDEV SINGH PH.D. Entire book

January-February 2016 **GURU NANAK vs GOD AND DIVINE:**

**A Case for dropping God & Divine from translation of Gurbani.**

March-April 2016 **WWR: WORLD WITHOUT RELIGION: Ah! Wouldn't that be heaven and Guru Nanak's mission finally fulfilled?**

May-June 2016 **THE PURPOSE OF LIFE, MY LIFE**

July-August 2016 **SIKH AND GURSIKH: I am not a Sikh but I am a Gursikh and a Free Thinker**

September-October 2016 **DISCUSSION GENERATED BY JULY-AUGUST EDITORIAL**

November-December 2016 **GURU NANAK'S JAPP BANI IN ENGLISH AND SUPPORT FOR THIS EDITORIAL FROM GURBANI**

**Some examples of Guru Nanak's non-religious but Scientific Philosophy:**

January-February 2017 **GUEST EDITORIAL: GURU NANAK'S UNIQUE IDEOLOGY**

March-April 2017 **GURU NANAK AND RELIGION**

May-June 2017 **UGLY AMERICANS II: MY COUNTRY I CRY FOR THEE**

July-August 2017 **ABOUT THIS ISSUE**

September-October 2017 **SIKHI IS NOT A RELIGION, NOR IS IT BASED ON MIX OF HINDUISM & ISLAM**

November-December 2017 **SIKHO KUJH SIKHO, BJP IS KILLING YOU WITH KINDNESS, 'FAKE KINDNESS', BECAUSE THEY THINK OF YOU AS FOOLS, AS GANDHI & NEHRU DYNASTY DID.**

November-December 2018 **EDITORIAL**  
**TIME TO SPREAD GURU NANAK'S PHILOSOPHY ACROSS THE WORLD**

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

Amen! Halleluia! Above **quote came to me from a Sikh Scholar** who is doing a great service to the cause of Sikhi and I could not help but compliment him and told him that I agreed with his quote whole heartedly. To that I added, that **Guru Nanak was not a prophet in the sense of Biblical or Muslim prophets**, who claimed to speak to or spoken to by God, directly as in the case of Moses or indirectly, as in the case of Mohammed, who had an Angel as an intermediary. When Bani talks about '*dhur-ki-bani*' it is not God talking to Nanak; **Sikhi is not a 'revealed' religion**; it is born out of Guru's life experience; it is Guru's own inspiration and thought process that **inspires him to seek and speak fundamental truths**. He wrote back that he was pleased to read my response but observed, **"No Sikh scholar could dare to say what you have said."**

**He is right and therein lies the tragedy**. I am not afraid to say it precisely because I am not a scholar. The tragedy is that Sikh scholars are too fearful of consequences if they break with the established tradition; as Mr. Tohra had explained away the un-sikh practice of denial of sewa to the women at Darbar Sahib because of the long-established **tradition**. **The fact that Guru Nanak had broken many traditions going back centuries was inconsequential.** [From January-February 2009 Sikh Bulletin Editorial]

**UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres**, world's most powerful Diplomat, gave the following message after his visit to Darbar Sahib on **October 3, 2018**:

**"I want to express my deep respect for the religion of the Sikh people and this wonderful Golden Temple, in which the spirit of peace, tolerance and ecumenism is present. I prayed here as a Catholic but, all people, from all religions in the world, can pray in this holy place."**

**"There are unfortunately not many temples in the world where this is possible, and this makes me feel very happy to be here and very proud to be invited. And, at the same time, it increases my admiration for the Sikh communities everywhere: the Sikh community in India, the Sikh community in my part of the world, in Europe, in North America, everywhere where Sikhs are contributing to the development of our world."**

**"I want to express to my hosts my deep gratitude and wish you all the best – to the wonderful practice that the Golden Temple represents, receiving everybody, sharing with everybody the food, but, more than the food, sharing this wonderful spirit of peace, of harmony, of understanding that we badly need in today's world."**

Similar comments are made by everyone who visits Darbar Sahib. But **what the world is ignorant about is the true meaning of Guru Nanak's Philosophy, which was never intended to be taught as a religion** but was surely given to all humanity as a, 'Jeevan-Jaach.'

### **Sikhs have failed as its custodians.**

In **1996** we started a **Sikhi Reform** movement as was the case with **Singh Sabha** movement during the British occupation of Panjab. Year **2004** was the second most audacious attempt when Prof. Gurtej Singh and I went around the world for six weeks and held six major and three minor conferences in six countries, Malaysia, Australia, Canada, USA, UK and India.

For the last **twenty-two years** I have attempted to learn about and spread the word of Guru Nanak's philosophy to the best of my ability through the pages of **The Sikh Bulletin** that commenced publication in **November 1999** at Roseville, California, USA.

This issue marks the **19<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the publication of the Sikh Bulletin, in print from 1999 to 2005 when we had to close the Gurdwara for lack of sangat and 2005 to now in electronic form. Printed copies were mailed to twenty-two countries. Since **2005** it has gone out in electronic format and attained much wider circulation with the help from our readers in other countries passing it along to the people on their mailing lists.

On **January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019** I will be **85 years old** and had been pondering whether to make this the last issue or go for another year to complete two decades of publication. Then **Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal** announced plans for celebration of **Guru Nanak's 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019**. **Dr. Chahal** is the **Sikh Scholar** who is quoted in the beginning of this editorial. He is also the person from whom I have learned the most.

**Then on August 28, 2018 a very positive development, of great significance for the future of Sikh Bulletin, took place in the form of the following email with an attachment, which is published following this editorial:**

*"Hardev Veerji, thank you for writing this article. I am so happy to read it... Once again, thank you for a brilliant piece. Can you please include my email address in your distribution list for Sikh Bulletin? I will be most grateful."*

*Rabb Rakha, Harpreet Kaur*

### **My response:**

*"Preet Ji: Thank you for your kind words. The second attachment has some supplemental material to the first one that you have read. Our website is [www.sikhbulletin.com](http://www.sikhbulletin.com)".*

*I am 84 years old. One cannot teach new tricks to an old Dog. **What Nanak needs are much younger people who can use modern social media to spread his message of tolerance, love, brotherhood, togetherness and common humanity of the highest form of life in the animal kingdom, us all.** If you and your friends can start sending out bits of these attachments on the*

*social media it would work wonders. Much obliged by your initiative to communicate with me.”*

*Best regards,  
Hardev Singh Shergill*

The biggest surprise came on August 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 in the following email:

*“Shergill Ji it is great to hear from you. Preet is my beloved wife. She has been reading the SB and has been appreciative of your work, but your last article on Guru Nanak moved her to want to convey her appreciation to you personally.*

*“I am honored that you consider me suitable to take over the responsibility of keeping SB going; It’s going to be very tough to fill your shoes; but I want SB to live on. After all, how many publications are out there promoting Guru Nanak's spirituality in the authentic way that SB works.*

*“I am sure you have already worked on the Nov Dec 2018 Issue. I am sending you an article on Guru Nanak for that issue.*

*“I can be co-editor for as long as you see fit. Am prepared to resume full responsibility from whatever point you want me to.*

*As for your condition - I am on board. You can view my articles and videos on this site:*  
[www.sikhivicharforum.org](http://www.sikhivicharforum.org)

*The one thing that will come across is that I consider Guru Nanak's banee to be the basis of his spirituality for the entire humanity - which is not only unique and new - it is also a deep critique AGAINST religion - which is a clergy construct. Guru Nanak poured damning critique on the clergy - Teenay Ujarrey Ka Bandh - the clergy of all three existing religions are the ROOT cause of the UPROOTING (Ujarrey) of spirituality from humanity.*

*Guru Nanak's spirituality / philosophy is what I prescribe to.*

*Sikh Religion is something I don't identify with because:*

- (i) it was never meant to exist;*
- (ii) it was created by a group that was rooted in Vedic / Snatan / Udasi / Nirmala thought;*
- (iii) it is maintained by a group that was NOT supposed to exist in the first place - Sikh Clergy.*

*Sikh spirituality is found in the SGGS ji. Sikh Religion is found in our Gurdwaras, institutions, dogma, ritual, practices etc. Sikh Spirituality and Sikh Religion are actually antonyms in the sense that one negates the other.*

*The Chahal Conference papers can be published in the May/ Jun and July August 2019 issues. I expect that there will be enough material for use in 2 issues. The other 4 issues we can work on together.*



*Remain in Chardee Klaa as always. My article for the Nov /Dec issue is attached."*

Warm regards, Karminder

The above email by DR. Karminder Singh Dhillon of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, was in response to the following email to him by me:

On Thu, Aug 30, 2018 at 7:21 AM Hardev Singh Shergill <[editor@sikhbulletin.com](mailto:editor@sikhbulletin.com)> wrote:

*"Many years ago (2013) when my health insurer, Kaiser Permanente, almost killed me with over dose of radiation, I had approached Dr Sarjeet Singh Sidhu, your colleague, to take over publication of the Sikh Bulletin but he did not think he will be able to do justice due to constraint of time availability. Would you consider taking that responsibility?"*

*"I was considering Nov-Dec 2018 being the last issue until Dr Chahal came up with the 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Guru Nanak project. Now the last issue will be Nov-Dec 2019, culminating 20 years of publication of the Sikh Bulletin that I had never dreamed of nor planned."*

*"If you agree we could jointly put out the remaining issues of 2019 and you take over full responsibility from 2020."*

*"I have only one condition:*

*Guru Nanak's philosophy should never be presented as a RELIGION. It should be presented as "Jeevan Jaach" for the whole mankind."*

To the Readers of and the contributors to the Sikh Bulletin:

*I am grateful to you all, both who liked the limited knowledge I was able to bring to you and those who felt offended by my views. Mostly we had a civil dialogue. That is what Guru Nanak preached and practiced all his life, civil dialogue. I can assure you, unequivocally, that unlike me who was totally ignorant of authentic Gurbani and had to search for truth like searching for a needle in a haystack of literature on Gurbani, you will be getting an original thinker scholar of Gurbani in Dr. Karminder Singh Dhillon whose articles have appeared in the Sikh Bulletin since the July-August 2007 issue of The Sikh Bulletin. I assure you, you will not be disappointed.*

Best Regards, Hardev Singh Shergill

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**SIKH DI ARDAS  
SIKH PRAYER  
NOT THE ONE OFFERED AT THE GURDWARAS**

**SIKH ARDAS/PRAYER  
Campus-Community Memorial Service  
For the victims of the Tsunami Tragedy  
Activities and Recreational Center, U. C. Davis  
Tuesday, January 25, 2005**

**[Author was invited by UC Davis Chancellor's office to join in an inter religious service for the victims of Tsunami disaster and "make remarks and/or offer a prayer that reflects their religious perspective on dealing with tragedies of this nature i.e. mourning, grieving, death and moving forward with life". Opening prayer was offered by the representative of the Sikh community.]**

Mr. Chancellor, Lady Mayor, Faculty and Student body of UC Davis and invited guests:

At 500 years Sikhism is the youngest of the world's great religions **and the least understood**. On behalf of the Sikh Community in this country I thank you for honoring it by inviting one of its members to participate in this memorial service for the victims of tsunami tragedy.

Our Gurus bequeathed to us their writings and writings of Hindu *bhagats* and Muslim *faqirs* in the form of Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of the Sikhs. For Guru's advice concerning any human experience we look to this written word.

Gurus have used every word for God that was prevalent in 15th century India, including Ram of Hindus and Allah of Muslims. **The most all-encompassing Sikh term for God is 'karta purakh', The Creator of the universe, both visible and invisible.**

This Creator is **One and is Real**. Creator existed before the creation and will be after this creation has run its course. Universe that we see is real but is ever changing. It has been created, destroyed and created again in an unending cycle. Anything that is created will come to an end. Only the Creator is everlasting and permeates the entire creation.

Entire mankind is one family. We are all children of the same God. **That God is not vengeful**. Although God created the universe and all that is in it, **God does not micromanage it**. God has established certain **immutable natural laws that Gurus have called 'hukam'**. Everything in the universe, animate or inanimate, obeys those natural laws.

Anything that takes birth must die. To mourn and to grieve at death is human but moving forward with life is to accept the '*hukam*' with equanimity. Pain and pleasure are like robes that hang in everybody's wardrobe. To accept the tragedies and triumphs of life in good grace is the essence of living in the shadow of God.



Of all the creatures, God has given to the humans the gift of intelligence that, Guru Nanak called '*bibek-budhi*', (**discerning mind**) to discover the immutable laws of nature and use the gift of technology and self-effort to minimize the danger to humans and other life forms and maximize the comfort and quality of life. Every tragedy is a stepping stone to the triumph of human spirit.

Selfless effort to ameliorate the effects of tragedy is the best prayer. Joy and grief, the human emotions, are the gifts from the Creator. We have to learn to experience them without extremes. That is the meaning of living under '*hukam*'.

Guru says that the heaven and hell are right here on this earth. We make them by our own deeds and experience them only in this life. Man has invited tragedy by inhabiting places that are subject to natural disasters. Man can surmount any future tragedies by using caution and technology. Rim of the Indian Ocean has been converted into a hell for those directly affected. For the rest of the mankind it is an opportunity to convert this hell into heaven.

**Sikh Prayer is on P.268 of GGS Holy Scripture. It makes no personal request to the Creator. It simply thanks the Creator for the bounties it itself has showered on all of its Creation.**

**Please rise for the Sikh Prayer**

You are the Lord, we pray to You.  
You have graced us with our body and soul.  
You are our mother and father and we are your children.  
You have showered us with bountiful gifts.  
Nobody can fathom your limits.  
Only you are Supreme.  
Whole universe is governed by your '*hukam*'.  
Whatever you have created obeys your command.  
Only you know the extent and condition of your greatness.  
O God, Nanak, your devotee, is sacrifice to You.  
Dear God of us all, Nanak beseeches you to **ble**

**Thank you. Please be seated.**

ਤੂ ਨਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥  
ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ ॥  
ਤੁਮ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੇਰੇ ॥  
ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਮਹਿ ਸੁਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ॥  
ਕੇਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਅੰਤੁ ॥  
ਉਚੇ ਤੇ ਉਚਾ ਭਗਵੰਤੁ ॥  
ਸਗਲ ਸਮਗ੍ਰੀ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਸੂਤ੍ਰਿ ਧਾਰੀ ॥

ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ॥  
ਤੁਮਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ॥੮॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 268}

Hardev Singh Shergill

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