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ਸਿੱਖ ਬੁਲੇਟਨ

The Sikh Bulletin

A Voice of Concerned Sikhs World Wide



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Editor in Chief

Hardev Singh Shergill

Editorial Board

Avtar Singh Dhama

Gurpal Singh Khaira

Production Associates

Amrinder Singh

Sachleen Singh

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editor@sikhbulletin.com

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HON. MANMOHAN SINGH PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

Hon. Manmohan Singh Ji,
Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa. Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.

May 29, 2004

It is with pride that all Punjabis, especially Sikhs, rejoice at your appointment as Prime Minister of India, the world's largest functioning democracy. We also noted with great satisfaction your statement that communal riots do happen but the governments have the power to stop them. For the carnage in Gujrat against the Muslims in 2003 and the holocaust against the Sikhs in 1984, the governments in power during those events must bear the responsibility. We recognize that the great leaders have to govern and compromise for the greater good of the country, especially when one party does not have a clear mandate. However, we feel that the ethical values and the principles should never be compromised for the sake of consensus.

While we join others in praising your precedent setting nomination to this high position, we also note your attempt in 1999 during your election campaign to put the blame of 1984 carnage against the Sikhs on RSS. At that time it was a Congress Govt. and a Sikh President.

We wish you success in turning India into a prosperous, peaceful and just society. It is in that spirit that we submit the following suggestions:

1. Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) with immediate effect.
2. Release all Sikh youth incarcerated since 1984.
3. Bring to justice the perpetrators of pogroms against Sikhs in Nov. 1984.
4. Provide financial compensation to the survivors of those pogroms.
5. Simultaneous to that render an apology on behalf of the Congress party.
6. Reconsider the appointment of Jagdish Tytler to your cabinet.
7. Name people of conscience and strength of character to the National Commission for Minorities in India, free from Govt. interference.
8. Our native Panjab has suffered dismemberment, first into two and then the half that you and I call 'des' into further three. To add insult to the injury even those borders are disputed and Panjab has been denied its own capital. That problem needs an urgent solution.
9. For the sake of diaspora Sikhs instruct the Indian diplomats to stop interfering in our Gurdwara affairs and stop asking for siropas.
10. Instruct the American and other Embassies to trash the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs list of Sikhs to be denied visas to their countries.

Sincerely,

Hardev Singh Shergill, Secretary General, Singh Sabha International

GUEST EDITORIAL
After 400 years of Sikh Martyr logy
 Gurpal Singh Khaira

Guru Nanak was chosen by God to propagate His message in the modern world. This message preached compassion, contentment, high morals and truthful living as key to individual happiness as well as social and communal harmony. He summed his message in a simple package easy to follow. He explained that earning ones own living through honest labor is prerequisite to a dignified life free of jealousy, envy and ego. This was the prescription, which created saintly law-abiding warrior citizens.

It was natural for the message to be opposed by the vested interests of the time especially the priestly classes (Brahmins and Mullahs) of the established religions. As a result he suffered lot of abuse. He was labeled a wicked spirit (Bhutana), and out of step (baytala) in addition to many other derogatory terms. He denounced cruelties of invader Baber and his army against the innocent citizens. For this boldness he suffered imprisonment to hard labor. The fifth Nanak Guru Arjan Dev ji defended every body's right to live as free people and practice their faith. He suffered death by torture at the hands of the emperor Jahangir.

The supreme sacrifice of the ninth Nanak Guru Teg Bahadur ji is unparalleled in the history of the world. He offered his head along with three of his followers at Chandani Chok Delhi in the defense of another religion. The Brahmins for whom the Guru sacrificed his life were always opposed to the Gurus message of Ik Onkar. The tenth Nanak Guru Gobind Singh ji sacrificed everything he held dear to his heart for the freedom of common people and their right to life and liberty without any interference from the government. His parents, all four young sons, several cousins and finally he himself laid down their lives and inspired people not to tolerate any injustice under the guise of state legalities.

It is this spirit of the Sikh Gurus in the individual as well as collective blood of the Sikh panth that make them stand up against tyranny and come to the defense of the victims regardless of their ethnicity or religious beliefs. Their acts of supreme sacrifices opened the floodgates of the pent up energies of the people. The 18th century witnessed this spirit under the leadership of Khalsa when there was no shortage of volunteers who came forward to embrace martyrdom. Bhai Taru ji and Bhai Mani Singh ji are the shining examples of the ones who died under unbearable torture yet accepted it as God's will (Bhana) with a smile. The numbers of Sikh martyrs are too numerous to narrate. The Sikh panth has honored them all by remembering them collectively in its daily prayer.

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸੀਸ ਦਿੱਤੇ.....

Against this background of 400 years of Sikh martyr logy we are celebrating the 400th anniversary of the compilation of the Aad Granth under the editorship of Guru Arjan Dev ji on September 1, 1604. (Date according to Nanak shahi calendar). When completed it was called Pothi and the Guru equated it to the Enlightener (Permaser). Singing, discussing and contemplating the Bani of the Pothi in the company of the pious people in a congregation knowledge of God's attributes and wisdom is gained.

ਪੋਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ.....

This pothi/granth with the addition of the Bani of the 9th Nanak Guru Teg Bahadur ji was canonized as eternal Guru of the Sikhs by Guru Gobind Singh ji 104 years later in 1708. Thus the human succession to Guruship was ended and the shabad became the guiding light for the followers. We will be celebrating 300th anniversary of Gurgaddi divas of Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji in 2008.

Today Sikhs have forgotten the Guru's message to contemplate the Gurbani. Under the stewardship of vested clergy they have resorted to ritualistic parrot reading similar to Hindu chanting of mantras. It has become an object of idol worship rather than the source of knowledge and inspiration. Guru Granth ji says we have ended all bondage by rejecting all priestly control

ਹਮਰਾ ਝਗਰਾ ਰਹਾ ਨ ਕੋਊ.....

However, Sikh panth today again find itself firmly in the grips of priests with newer titles as Granthis and Jathedars. Baseless story of Baba Buddha being appointed first granthi by Guru Arjan is propagated to legitimize and establish credibility for the position of granthis. By this story we are lead to believe that clergy is to be obeyed because the position was sanctioned and approved by Guru Arjan Dev ji. This is far from truth as guru's experience with the Masand system showed that eventually the priestly class become corrupt, arrogant and immoral. It is a blatant fact that by dismissing all Masands Guru Gobind Singh Ji abolished all positions of clergy and instructed his Sikhs to perform all religious function without the help of paid priests/granthis or modern day jathedars, the so called high priest.

Gurbani advocates no dietary or dress code for the Sikhs to walk on the spiritual path. Our clergy is trying to enslave us by imposing what we can eat and what we can wear. Adherence to these leads to egoistical behavior, ritualistic and discriminatory tendencies giving rise to fundamentalism based on rituals rather than spirituality based on Gurbani. Ignoring the shining light of the eternal Guru Granth Sahib this clergy is going to the overwhelmingly Hindu Government of India to define a Sikh. They have denied women to perform sewa and keertan at Darbar Sahib, Amritsar in an open defiance of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. No other religion allows their clergy to defy the injunctions of their scriptures. Sikh panth that defied all odds in opposing the Mughals, the pathans and the British today find itself helpless against the excesses of these self-declared high priests.

Today the Sikhs have migrated and are living in all four corners of the world. The curse of clergy is dividing them everywhere on the basis of external form or what food to eat. We learn from Gurbani that it is individual's own actions and behavior, which makes him good or bad. Yet the clergy insists on judging an individual as a good or bad based on the actions of his children and family members. Under this criterion one can question our Gurus' qualifications to be gurus because of the actions of their children. They have assumed it within their power to judge and expel people from the Sikh religion by excommunication. Their wrath falls on anyone who questions their interpretation of Gurbani or their giving preference to traditions contrary to the Gurbani.

However, It is not too late for the Sikh panth. On the bright side all is not lost. The Sikh panth is waking up and questioning the highjacking of Sikhi by the clergy with the aid of corrupt

politicians. Sikh ideals for which our Gurus sacrificed their lives are being revived. Reform organizations are springing up in all countries where Sikhs are living and efforts are in the works to unite them. Conferences are conducted to educate the Sikh public all over the world. Ritualistic practices of parroting few Banis in the morning and evening but worshipping the rest of Shri Guru Granth Sahib as idol is not the Sikh way and must be rejected. Gurbani needs to be understood to shape our lives as gurmukhs. Punjab our homeland has finally seen unity to safe guard our economic interests against the continuous encroachment by the Indian union. The Sikhs are a hard working ethical people and are soaring to the highest reaches in all fields of life. It should not take them long to rein the clergy and return to the path laid down by our gurus as enshrined in shri guru Granth Sahib ji.

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 Sept. 21st Calgary, Canada
 Sept. 25&26 Toronto, Canada
 Oct. 02&03 Philadelphia, USA
 Oct. 09&10 London, UK
 Oct. 16&17 Chandigarh, India

Contact List

SSI HEADQUARTERS

Hardev Singh Shergill
 201 Berkeley Ave
 Roseville, Ca 95678, U.S.A.
 e-mail editor@sikhbulletin.com
 Tel: 916-773-1994
 Fax: 916-773-6784

MALAYSIA

Jaswant Singh Grewal

No.7 Jalan 14/56
 46100 Petaling Jaya
 Selangor, D.E.
 Malaysia
 e-mail speaklab@tm.net.my
 Tel: 011-603-7874-8710

Kartar Singh

27 Jalan 12 Taman Selaseh
 68100 Batu Caves
 Selangor
 Malaysia
 Tel: 011-603-61893764

e-mail kartars@streamyx.com

Harwindar Singh

Tel: 011-603-4025-1889
 Cell: 011-6-0122682417
 e-mail: harveyg@khalsa.com

AUSTRALIA

Bawa Singh Jagdev

12 Meehan Street
 Matraville, NSW 2036
 Australia
 e-mail bawaj@optusnet.com.au
 Tel: 011-61-296-619-960

Ajmer Singh Gill

Mobile 0419409608
 e-mail asgill@lms.com.au

WESTERN CANADA

Vancouver

Gurmit Singh Tiwana

Tel: 604-859-9794

Inderpal Singh Bajwa

Tel: 604-870-3288

e-mail: jackiebajwa@hotmail.com

Calgary

Harcharan Singh

Tel: 403-250-8898

Cell: 403-681-8689

e-mail: editor@sikhvirsa.com

EASTERN CANADA

Gurcharan Singh Brar

39 Oaklea Blvd

Brampton, Ontario L6Y 5A2

Canada

e-mail brar_jiwanwala@hotmail.com

Tel: 905-454-4741

UNITED STATES

Dr. Bakhshish Singh Sandhu

1328 Jacob Drive

Yardley, PA 19067

U.S.A.

e-mail b.sandhu@worldnet.att.net

Tel: 215-579-9750

Fax: 215-579-0806

UNITED KINGDOM

Avtar Singh Sandhu

11 Crowland Avenue

Hays, Middx UB3 4JN, UK

e-mail asandhu@hillingdon.gov.uk

Tel: 011-44-208-848-9232

INDIA

Prof. Gurtej Singh

742 Sector 8B

Chandigarh 160009, India

e-mail akalsahaigurtejsingh@yahoo.com

Tel: 011-91-172-309-1414 and 172-278-0449

[WE appreciate the support of all those donors who have become patrons, life members and annual members of the Singh Sabha International and those who have very generously and voluntarily sent in donations for The Sikh Bulletin. More donors are needed in order to overcome the obstacles that the establishment is putting in our way, to restore monthly publication of The Sikh Bulletin and to expand on our work. Six major and some minor conferences scheduled during Sept. and Oct. this year are the natural progression of the initiatives taken eight years ago at the grass roots level. We urge our readers to participate in any of the conferences convenient to them. Hardev Singh Shegill]

GURU GRANTH SAHIB¹PROMOTING RELIGIOUS PLURALISM, EQUALITY, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

-Gurtej Singh, Chandigarh

Revelatory Nature

Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) claimed a direct encounter with Ultimate Reality and claimed to teach the Truth exactly as¹ it was revealed to him by God¹. He also asserted that what he had to say was relevant for the entire humankind. He believed that the purpose of his ministry was to bring everyone together in God – a valuable asset in a world torn apart by mutual strife. He travelled to the religious centres of most of the known world to interact with other faiths and to share his Truth. That is exactly what we are doing here today. A detailed examination of the alternate and distinct world view revealed to the Guru is ample evidence of his unifying mission. The ideal is reaffirmed by his concept of God, by the depiction of God's love and concern for creation, by the human being's spiritual duty to live according to His Will and to become its champions in the world.

Concept of One God

Guru's God is One, is the Final Cause, and is the common God of the entire creation. There is none other than Him⁴. He is all love. He is an absolute sovereign without a rival⁵. He is both 'transcendental and immanent. You inhere in all beings, in water, on land in the atmosphere, or wherever else, You inhere in them all'⁶. To emphasise the oneness of God, *Guru Granth* opens with the numeral "1" which is placed before the first letter of the Gurumukhi alphabet to make 'Ik-onkaar' unambiguously meaning, 'One Absolute Reality.' In the opening verse, the Guru describes the attributes of God, which according to his theology, form the basis of the human ethical value system and virtues for He is the source of all values.

Attributes of God: The equalising effect

He is described as 'Ever existent (True) Consciousness (name), the Creator Person, without fear, without enmity, the never dying entity, the never-born one, self-effulgent and knowable only by His own grace.' In the first composition, 'Japu' the Sikh Morning Prayer with which the scripture commences, the first attribute is emphasised, 'True in the beginning, true throughout time, is True and shall ever be True'⁷. The Guru thus points to a timeless Reality which is self-revealing, self established and self-naming⁸ dependent upon none to introduce it to its creation. Guru's God is Himself the Teacher. 'He himself speaks and is Himself the listener. He is Himself one and Himself the expanded form (creation)⁹. Everyone is on an equal footing with such a God. The Guru claims no special equation with God and no power to intercede on behalf of anyone. None may have an exclusive pact with Him, for He is the only God common to all¹⁰. He has no chosen people and there is none who is permanently or even primarily bad or tainted by sin¹¹. He is not impressed by formal declaration of faith, neither by the recommendation of another¹². Purity of life is the key. He delivers 'true justice' based on one's deeds. No rival (Satan, devil, *maya* or *mara*) vying for human allegiance, exists in the Guru's reckoning. He believes in the innate goodness of all beings¹³. "—Bias for man-made ethical systems has been dropped in the hymns of" *Guru Granth*¹⁴. The Guru excludes no one from His mercy. It is thus that he made a conscious bid to put individual humans in direct touch with Ultimate Spiritual Reality, ignoring geographic, racial,

linguistic colour, caste barriers and defying religious ones. Could there be better news for those who support pluralism in faith?

All faiths equally valid

The answer is yes. *Guru Granth* clearly initiates the doctrine of the equal validity of all faiths. The third Nanak earnestly prays 'save them from whatever door they approach You. Have mercy, save the world on fire.' The fourth Nanak continues in the same vein, 'take care of all beings –let the corn be in plenty – rid them all of pain and poverty, comfort the world'¹⁵.

God's sex

Adding another dimension to his universal and equalising approach, the benign Guru reveals an aspect of Reality, which ensures absolute equality of status for half the human race consisting of women. He says of God that He 'Himself is man and Himself the woman'¹⁶. Elsewhere he states, 'it cannot be ascertained whether God is a Female or a Male'¹⁷. His successor Gurus refer to God both as 'Father and again Mother as well'¹⁸. Often the gender indicator is ignored while addressing God. We also have a statement of a perceptive bard to the same effect entered in the concluding pages of the *Guru Granth*. This revealed truth forms perhaps the most potent basis for establishing the equality of sexes in relation to Ultimate Reality. Guru Nanak's most meaningful comment about women is his lament that she 'who bears the best of humans' should be condemned as bad. He is referring to certain systems which denigrated her as an untouchable, a seductress, a 'female serpent' and a 'doorway to hell' in spiritual reckoning. Had the Guru had his way, millions of them would not have perished at the stake as they did in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries in Europe.

Divine concern for human welfare

Unfolding further the implication of God being love, the *Guru Granth* describes in great detail that God, the Father and Mother takes deep interest in the created and 'provides succour to all humans as one would to one's children.' Besides father and mother, God is perceived as a 'friend' and a 'brother'¹⁹. He is interested in human welfare as a father is interested in a child or as a dear friend is interested in one's friend. His desire is to see no one in distress²⁰.

God's Will

God is perceived to be so concerned about human beings that He does not want them to 'experience fear' or to 'suffer even a moment of anxiety.' The 'world is created by Him and he also looks after it'²¹. He protects it here and in the hereafter²². This is His Will. It is the most pivotal concept mentioned in the *Guru Granth* and has been understood as the 'divine imperative' or 'God's cosmic order.' It is universal and brooks no exceptions.

Human birth a rare opportunity

The prevalent reality however is that the world is full of tension, mutual strife and exploitation leading to poverty, to war and misery. In the Guru's opinion, the evil causing so much misery is born in the mind of a 'self-oriented person' (*manmukh*, an egoist) who has succumbed to the five faults (passions and cravings) in human nature. Should such a person assume religious garbs in a bid to escape, it cannot be done because such a person is a pretender and is not religious at heart²³. Such a person wails in pain all his life for want of exercising the discerning intellect²⁴.

The compassionate Lord views this as a great tragedy worth averting. For him this world is an ideal 'place for spiritual development' and a person comes to it to earn spiritual merit²⁵. Human birth is a rare opportunity for salvation²⁶. The ones who don't use it are condemned to cast away a valuable ruby for the sake of mere glass. Among the most powerful lines in the *Guru Granth* are those in which the Guru reminds people of their destiny and of how they are wasting themselves for inconsequential material gains²⁷.

The way out for the individual

First part of the Guru's solution to the human predicament is the creation of God-oriented individuals, with altruism as an essential nature. This implies getting rid of the ego and the attendant evils like 'indulgence, anger, greed, excessive attachment and arrogance.' These are the five universal deceivers, the road-blocks to spiritual fulfilment. The Guru straightaway rejects total renunciation as the answer²⁸. He recommends a middle path of living life fully but under reasonable restraint. 'One must live in the dirt without being soiled by it' just as a duck remains in water but is not wetted²⁹. Initially this involves a two-fold effort. One needs to decontaminate oneself just as a vessel has to be rubbed clean and purified before venturing out to fetch milk³⁰. Indication is that purity of life is the pre-condition of ethical and spiritual progress. Under the guidance of a worthy teacher this can be completely successful³¹. This is followed by the process of cultivated and conscious imbibing of the values which are the attributes of the Supreme Reality. The seeker must progressively draw nearer to God by persistent striving to serve others, constant remembrance of His name and by contemplation upon His attributes. 'A person can be fulfilled only if merger with the One, whose attributes are recited, is complete'³². It is complete submission of ones ego to the divine imperative.

The second step

The 'wall of deception' is removed for good and one merges into Reality³³. The Guru describes the situation as one of dying to the world and of taking new birth in God. His formula for 'eternal inner peace' is to 'always bear God in mind,' to 'die as described in the Word and to then live. This is salvation'³⁴. It is not, however, the end. To complete the process, serving the world must be made the primary purpose of life³⁵. Like individual character, human behaviour has to be reconstructed on the foundations of God's attributes.

The purity of thought and deed coupled with virtuous and ethical living brings one nearest to the last phase of spiritual development. Self conquest is symbolised by offering of the head, which means complete identification with the will of God. Ridding himself of individual prejudices, the seeker is ready to serve humanity³⁶ lovingly and in an eternal blissful equipoise. That is, the seeker is fully prepared to execute God's will in this world. The final release is but a step away³⁷. In accordance with the doctrine of the worshipper assuming the form of the worshipped, the person has lifted himself to divinity by his boot-strings. A human's relationship with God is now the same as of a wave with the ocean. Dross is so completely transformed that the human form itself is now misleading³⁸.

The wider field

The most meaningful task of social transformation still remains. The entire preparation has been done with this end in view. The society's suffering is due to the aggressive instincts of individuals

who impose injustice upon it. It is to be rendered conducive to promoting freedom of worship, equality, social and economic justice. The method is to rid it of tension, the underlying fear which is its first cause. By spiritual discipline the human psyche has already been trained to sustain the new values. A believer in religion, a spiritually awakened person must refuse to remain neutral in this ongoing strife and must identify with the victims of arrogance and oppression³⁹.

The malady

Resistance appears to be inevitable. Learned sociologists like Max Weber ascribe all social ills to human inequality and aggression. It has been inferred that an apparatus of domination and coercion is basic to all political institutions and that the ultimate sanction for social order is armed might. This status quo favours the megalomaniac, the well entrenched exploiter, self-seeker who would live on another's earning and would, (using George Orwell's phrase), demand to be projected as 'more equal.' On the other hand, religions based on "mystically oriented temper of brotherly love," or indeed on any ethical system at all, must experience tension with a state apparatus so constituted⁴⁰.

The primary concern

How to act in the situation is the primary concern of Guru's theology. Salvation for the Guru is synonymous with social redemption. He aims at constructing a new well organised society with God-oriented individuals as instruments of His Will. His Will (*hukam*) must prevail for He, after all, is the only sovereign, the 'king of kings'⁴¹. Socio-political ills can be eradicated only by rendering the society conducive to right goals set under the guidance of God-inspired love for His creation. To transmute that state of human psyche into permanent institutions responsible for maintaining the society in a healthy, tension-free state, is his basic social, economic and political concern. Towards that end there are no short cuts and no price is too heavy to pay. Guru portrays God Himself as the 'destroyer of evil'⁴². This is the function the God-oriented are expected to perform.

A collective enlightened action by the God-oriented is deemed necessary. Hence is issued the Guru's call to individuals who wish to play 'the game of love.' He invites them to come to him in the full knowledge that courting martyrdom may become necessary. Humble desire to serve all is the motivation leading to complete spiritual fulfilment⁴³. He also states that 'if the cause is acceptable to God, it is worth dying for'⁴⁴. Puran Singh a perceptive poet and a philosopher portrays it like this, "Death in His Name offers the cup of sweet Companionship with Him through an intense ecstasy"⁴⁵. No matter what the consequences are, it is a responsibility which cannot be shirked. It is an expression of spirituality which cannot be denied to the self. This is the grand culmination, the supreme test of commitment to Truth. Two Gurus and an infinite number of their followers have themselves tread this path to the very end.

Two other compositions need to be examined to complete the narration. First one consists of the four *Babarvani* verses of Guru Nanak. They were revealed on the occasion of Babur's invasion of Hindustan. In these he initiates several politically potent principles of revolutionary dimension. He denies the divine right of kings to govern. These verses "suggest a serious concern of the author with politics. This concern was intimately connected with deeper concern for salvation. – moral commitment is given a clear

primacy over – political obligations. –this attitude was capable of resulting in revolt--⁴⁶. This is the manifestation that these principles have had in subsequent history.

From the above discussion it may be inferred that the Guru's solution envisages a just society. It is one in which the human spirit is truly free to worship according to its lights, to lead life according to its cultural traits, to live without coercion of any kind, is guarded against the wolf at the door and is guaranteed reasonable security. In a unique, distinct passage, Guru Arjan the Fifth Nanak, the compiler of the *Guru Granth*, has clearly defined the situation. He indicates how inspired people have fashioned themselves into the basic building blocks for a just society. Self discipline, 'Guru's guidance and God's mercy have all combined to produce champion(s) of God. After blessing his knight He sits back to watch his victorious performance⁴⁷. The champion will dance this last dance and be delivered for ever. Humankind is delivered of fear. The reign of humility is to begin and it is His decree that none shall henceforth intimidate another. Everyone shall live now in happiness and peace.' This composition is comprehensive and expressive. It delineates the stuff of which the champion is made and for what the Guru's discipline has prepared him. The Guru unfolds his vision of how the difficulty of transforming society can be surmounted through the agency, leadership and physical striving of people such as the one described as God's champion. It is a single composition which takes the closest look at all the implications of the Guru's thesis elaborated in the scripture⁴⁸.

It is also the most optimistic note of the *Guru Granth*. The process has been launched in the final shape. A sufficient number of highly motivated people forming a distinct social group have taken up the responsibility of establishing a just society. God's intervention in human history is underway. The revolution is on and is inviting participants inspired by idealism to serve His creation.

Conclusion:

The appeal of *Guru Granth Sahib* is universal. It addresses human beings as men and women and not as devotees, followers, 'flock,' or 'believers.' No human is alien or 'the other' for it, since God is the common Father or Mother equally of all. The way to salvation necessitates individual ethical and spiritual progress. All human values correspond to God's attributes and are cherished as virtues. The first step to salvation constitutes the cleaning of the self of vices and the imbibing of divine values. The process is near culmination with a person becoming indistinguishable from God. *Guru Granth* further seeks to organise a society of the God-oriented with love as the main cohesive force. This constitutes His own instrument for intervening in history.

The group so formed is to implement God's *hukam* or law that aims at establishing a universal coercion free, non-exploitative society. All its members must follow the Guru's celebrated trilogy of values. Firstly, they must sustain themselves by non-exploitative labour, (*kirat karna*). Secondly, they must live constantly in the glow of His will (*naam japna*), and must share the fruits of their labour with others (*wand chhakna*). It is a perfect formula for the establishment of the True Sovereign's rule on earth. Reason and persuasion is the primary tool to be used for the purpose, but force is not ruled out. It includes assuming and wielding political power by the God-oriented. That is the culmination of the mission.

The infinitely compassionate Guru's universal humanism is a sure guide. It tells us how to establish peace, harmony, contentment, social, political and economic justice. The Guru has charted 'a royal road' (a *gadi rah*) for all to tread irrespective of the religion they

subscribe to. It is a highway on which vehicles of all shapes, sizes and brands ply and reach their destination. The fifth Guru, the compiler of the scripture, draws humankind's attention to this ecumenical aspect of Nanak's path in the stirring words: 'Listen, listen O! holy men! my brothers, the people, the Guru emphatically proclaims that, if you desire to enjoy everlasting peace and equanimity of the soul, act according to the Guru's instructions'⁴⁹. The Guru today is the Word embodied in *Guru Granth Sahib*. For the purpose of the present undertaking it preaches integrated whole life in harmony with His Will which is synonymous for the universal good.

Sikh history answers the question; 'how practical is it eventually?' The Gurus themselves carried out an elaborate experiment. Each Guru built an urban centre as a focal point for the community of persons who adopted the idea. These grew into what historians have called, a 'state within a state' and an 'embryonic state.' In due course it challenged and prevailed upon the most established and the most strangulating despotism of all times.

Notes

(With an exception or two all translations are from Manmohan Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, (1969), and Gopal Singh, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, (mainly vol. iv), Gurdas Kapur & Sons Private Limited, Delhi, 1964).

1. The 'respected teacher, the Book' is a very rough translation of the nomenclature of the (Sikh) scripture known as *Guru Granth Sahib*. It is a duly anointed successor Guru. Theologically it is the embodiment (record) of the 'light' or the enlightenment spread by the ten Gurus although it contains the Word of God as revealed to the ninth and the first five Gurus only. Besides, as is well known, it contains the verses of about two dozen holy persons of known piety and having a distinct following as holy persons. They include such diverse persons as Shaikh Farid a devout Muslim to very orthodox Vaishnav Hindu saints, some saints belonging to the so called low castes who do not get even a nod of acceptance from the upper-caste people to this day, and some bards. Besides giving its own nomenclature to Ultimate Reality, the *Guru Granth* freely uses the Hindu and Muslim scriptural names of God. In its opinion, salvation and spiritual elevation is available without any reservation, to all who strive. It is meant as a non-denominational record of revelation relevant to all human beings regardless of their religious affiliations. Therefore, in figurative language often used in the east to represent mystic truths, it has been likened to a 'royal road' (*gadi rah*) to salvation and a 'ship for crossing over the ocean of life in the dark age,' that is our times. In India *Guru Granth Sahib* is a juristic person according to law. To followers it represents 'the teacher' and is also the symbol of Divine Sovereignty. So it is revered as a sovereign as well as a preceptor.
2. ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ Gauri ki Vaar M4 GG 306 This Word is uttered by Him, who has created the whole world; ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸਤਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥ Tilang M1, GG 722 As the word of the Lord comes to me, so do I utter, O Lalo; ਹਉ ਆਪਰੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਓ ਜੀਉ ॥ Sui M5 GG 763 By myself I know not how to speak. I utter all that is the command of my Lord.
3. ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਐਸਾ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਭਸੈ ਲਏ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥ Srirag M1 GG 72 Nanak, deem that such is the True Guru who unites all with the Lord. ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਐਸਾ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਭਸੈ ਲਏ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥ Srirag M1 GG 72 Nanak, deem that such is the True Guru who unites all with the Lord.
4. ਕਰਣ ਕਾਰਣ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਏਕੋ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਹੁਜਾ ਕੋਈ ॥ Dhanasri M3 GG 666 The one Lord is the cause of all the causes and there is not any other second; ਮਿਲਿ ਸਖੀਆ ਪੁਛਹਿ ਕਹੁ ਕੰਤ ਨੀਸਾਣੀ ॥ ਰਸਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਰੀ ਕਛੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ

- ਜਾਣੀ ॥Asa M5 GG 459. My mates meet me and say "tell us the distinctive sign of thy Spouse. I was so filled with the elixir of His love, that I could not say anything.
5. ਕਰਣ ਕਾਰਣ ਸਮਰਥ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਰੇ ਕੋਈ॥ Asa M5 GG 380 Thou art the Doer of deeds, Omnipotent and Infinite. Without Thee, O Lord, there is not another; ਕਰਣ ਕਾਰਣ ਸਮਰਥ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਰੇ ਕੋਈ ॥ Gauri Sukhmani M5 GG 276 The Lord alone is the Doer of deeds, there is no other than He.
 6. ਸਰਬ ਜੋਤਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਪਸਰਿ ਰਹੀ ॥ ਜਹ ਜਹ ਦੇਖਾ ਤਹ ਨਰਹਰੀ ॥੧॥ Ramkali M1 GG 876. Thine Light, O Lord is pervading all. Wherever I see there I see the Man-lion, my Lord ; ਸਰਗੁਨ ਨਿਰਗੁਨ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧੀ ਆਪਿ॥ Gauri Sukhmani M5 Slok (Ashatpadi 21)-GG 290. The Formless Lord is Himself related and absolute. He Himself is in primordial trance; ਜੋਤੋ ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਮਹੀਅਲਿ ਜਤੁ ਕਤੁ ਤੁ ਸਰਬ ਜੀਆ ॥ Bhairo M1 GG 1127 As many as are the creatures and living beings in the ocean, land, underworld and sky or whosoever they are; amongst them all, You O Lord, are contained; ਪੈ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਵੇਖਣ ਕਉ ਪਰਪੰਚੁ ਕੀਆ ॥ ਦੇਖੈ ਬੂਝੈ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਹਰਿ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ॥੨੪॥ Rag Asa M1 GG 433. The Transcendent Lord our King, has made the world to be hold. He, sees, understands and knows everything. Within and without He is pervading. MS
 7. ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥ M1 GG 1 True in the Prime, True in the beginning of ages, True is even now and True He, verily, shall be, O Nanak!
 8. ਆਪੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ ਆਪੀਨੈ ਰਚਿਓ ਨਾਉ ॥ Asa M1 463 The Lord, of Himself created His-own-self and assumed He Himself the Name; ਆਪਹਿ ਬਾਪੁ ਆਪੁ ਹੀ ਮਾਇਓ ॥ Gauri Bawanakhari M5 GG 250 He is His own father, His own Mother.
 9. ਆਪਿ ਕਥੈ ਆਪਿ ਸੁਨੈਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਆਪਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਆਪਿ ਬਿਸਥਾਰੁ ॥ ਜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਤਾ ਸਿਸਟਿ ਉਪਾਏ ॥ ਆਪਨੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਲਏ ਸਮਾਏ ॥ ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਭਿੰਨ ਨਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਆਪਨ ਸੂਤਿ ਸਭੁ ਜਗਤੁ ਪਰੋਇ ॥ Gauri Sukhmani Ashatpadi 22 M5 GG 292. He Himself is the speaker and Himself the listener. He Himself is One and Himself many. When it pleases Him, He creates the world. By His pleasure, He absorbs it in Himself. Without You nothing can be done. On Thy string Thou hast strung the whole world; ਬੂਝੈ ਦੇਖੈ ਕਰੈ ਬਿਬੇਕ ॥ ਆਪਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਆਪਹਿ ਅਨੇਕ ॥ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਆਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੬॥ Gauri Sukhmani M5, GG 279. He understands, beholds and exercises judgment. He Himself is one and Himself many. Nanak, He ever remains diffused among all. MS
 10. ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਖਾਲੀ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹੀ ਐਸਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ Sui M5 GG 778. Such is my Lord, bereft of whom there is not anyone.
 11. ਮੰਦਾ ਕਿਸ ਨੇ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਾਂ ਸਭਨਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਏਕੁ ॥M2 GG1238. 'Whom should we call bad, when all have One and the same Lord?'; Hindu Vaishnavas (Ramanuj) considered women and *sudras* to be 'born in sin' and therefore did not admit them to Vaishnavism. S. Jaiswal, *Origin and Development of Vaishnavism*, pp. 115-118, 212. There is also the concept of original sin; ਮਿਠ ਬੋਲਤਾ ਜੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਜਣੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ ਹਉ ਸੰਮਲਿ ਥਕੀ ਜੀ ਓਹੁ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਬੋਲੈ ਕਉਰਾ ॥ ਕਉਤਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਗਵਾਨੈ ਅਉਗਣੁ ਕੋ ਨ ਚਿਤਾਰੇ ॥ ਪਤਿਤ ਪਾਵਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਰਦੁ ਸਦਾਏ ਇਕੁ ਤਿਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਭੰਨੈ ਘਾਲੇ ॥ ਘਟ ਘਟ ਵਾਸੀ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਨੇਰੈ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਨੇਰਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਰਣਾਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਜਣੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥੧॥ Rag Sui M5, GG 784. Reverend God, who is my Friend and my Master speaks sweetly. I have grown weary of trying Him, but he speaks not harshly ever. The perfect Lord who thinks not of my demerits, knows not the bitter word. To purify the sinners is said to be the creed of my God. He ignores not even an iota of man's service. He dwells in all the hearts, He is pervading everywhere and He is the nearest of the near. Slave Nanak ever seeks the Lord's refuge. He, the Lord is his Nectar-sweet Friend (MS); "What our reason pronounces bad not as regards the order and laws of universal nature, but only as regards the laws of our own nature taken separately—as for the terms good and bad they indicate nothing positive considered in themselves- -" –Spinoza.
 12. There is no alternative to leading a virtuous life. Guru emphatically refutes a prophet's power to intercede on behalf of a follower or the efficacy of a verbal formula of commitment to see one through. ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਦਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਕਰਣੀ ਬਾਝਰੁ ਤਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ Ramkali Var M1, 952. All mortals' accounts a taken in the Lord's court; ਮੰਦਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਪਾਵਣਾ ॥ Asa M 1, GG 471. Man himself obtains the fruit of his bad and good deeds; ਜੇਹਾ ਬੀਜੋ ਜੋ ਲੁਣੈ॥ Majh M 5, GG 134. As a man sows so does he reap.
 13. ਬੁਰਾ ਨਹੀ ਸਭੁ ਭਲਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ ਰੇ ॥ Kanra M5 GG 1302. He finds no evil in no one, but good alone (G.S.); ਮਿਠ ਬੋਲਤਾ ਜੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਜਣੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ ਹਉ ਸੰਮਲਿ ਥਕੀ ਜੀ ਓਹੁ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਬੋਲੈ ਕਉਰਾ ॥ ਕਉਤਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਗਵਾਨੈ ਅਉਗਣੁ ਕੋ ਨ ਚਿਤਾਰੇ ॥ ਪਤਿਤ ਪਾਵਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਰਦੁ ਸਦਾਏ ਇਕੁ ਤਿਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਭੰਨੈ ਘਾਲੇ ॥ ਘਟ ਘਟ ਵਾਸੀ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਨੇਰੈ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਨੇਰਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਰਣਾਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਜਣੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥੧॥ Rag Sui M5, GG 784. Reverend God, who is my Friend and my Master speaks sweetly. I have grown weary of trying Him, but he speaks not harshly ever. The perfect Lord who thinks not of my demerits, knows not the bitter word. To purify the sinners is said to be the creed of my God. He ignores not even an iota of man's service. He dwells in all the hearts, He is pervading everywhere and He is the nearest of the near. Slave Nanak ever seeks the Lord's refuge. He, the Lord is his Nectar-sweet Friend (MS); "Spinoza therefore sweeps aside all such questions as 'How God comes to permit the existence of sin,' by simply saying there is no such thing as sin- -" Sir H. Cunynghame, *Short Talk Upon Philosophy*, Constable & Company Limited, London, 1923, 109.
 14. Puran Singh, *The Spirit Born People*, 13.
 15. ਜਗਤੁ ਜਲੰਦਾ ਰਖਿ ਲੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਉਬਰੈ ਤਿਤੈ ਲੈਹੁ ਉਬਾਰਿ ॥ Bilawal Var Slok M3 GG 853. O Lord, the world is on fire. Showering Thy benediction save it Thou, through whichever way it can be delivered, deliver it that-wise; ਸਭੋ ਜੀਅ ਸਮਾਲਿ ਅਪਣੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਕਰੁ ॥ ਅੰਨੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਮੁਚੁ ਉਪਾਇ ਦੁਖ ਦਾਲਦੁ ਭੰਨਿ ਤਰੁ ॥ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ਸੁਣੀ ਦਾਤਾਰਿ ਹੋਈ ਸਿਸਟਿ ਠਰੁ ॥ ਲੇਵਹੁ ਕੰਠਿ ਲਗਾਇ ਅਪਦਾ ਸਭ ਹਰੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕਾ ਸਫਲੁ ਘਰੁ ॥੧॥ Sarang ki vaar M4 GG 1251. O Lord, shower Thou Thine benediction and take care of all the beings. Produce Thou plenty of corn and water and ridding them of pain and penury, ferry them across the world-ocean. The Beneficent Lord heard my prayer and the world has been comforted. My Lord, take Thou me into Thine embrace and banish all my misery. Nanak meditates on the Lord's Name, for the House of the Lord is the Giver of boons. [The Christian position on equality and poverty is somewhat summed up by the following : From one of the many sermons preached to denounce Chartism, *Chartism Unmasked* ran 19 edition. It is quoted by Alec R. Vidler, *The Church in an age of Revolution*, Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1976, p. 95] "The Chartist leaders preach and the doctrine of 'equality'; but we have no such doctrine taught in the Book of Nature or the Book of God. – Another Chartist doctrine opposed to the Word of God is that poverty is not the everlasting purpose of a Sovereign God but is only the result of unjust human laws. – This is disproved by the Bible which says 'The poor shall never cease out of the land.'"
 16. ਆਪੇ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਨਾਰੀ ॥ Maru sohle M1 GG 1020. Thou Thyself art the male and Thyself the female; {ਆਪੇ ਨਰੁ ਆਪੇ ਫੁਨਿ ਨਾਰੀ॥ Swaiye Mahle chauth ke GG1403 He Himself is the man, Himself, again, the woman' (G.S); Guru Amardas (1479-1574CE) the Third Nanak appointed women bishops to recognise that women were equally capable of the highest spiritual development – an uncommon recognition. One of the well known holy man of his times, Chhajju

came to Guru Arjan the compiler, to get his writing included in the scripture he was compiling. He recited his composition, 'if she be a doll of paper, even then none must look at her. It will devastate a person just as does a gang of dacoits.' (kagaz sandi pootri tau na triyia nihaar. Eiuon he mar le jaygee join Bilochan di dhar). The Guru's reply to him was that, 'your words are for the ascetic. The way promulgated by us is for the householder. A householder must discriminate between his and other person's wife.' He did not include his compositions in the scripture. See Bhai Mani Singh, *Sikhan di Bhagatmala*, Khalsa Samachar, Amritsar, February 1955, 152.

17. ਸੁੰਨ ਮੰਡਲ ਇਕੁ ਜੋਗੀ ਬੈਸੇ ॥ ਨਾਰਿ ਨ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਕਹਹੁ ਕੋਊ ਕੈਸੇ ॥ Dhanasari M1 GG 685. In the primal state sits a Yogi, our Lord. He being neither a female, nor a male, how can anyone describe it?
18. ਤੁਮਹਿ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਫੁਨਿ ਮਾਤਾ। Sarang M5 GG-1215. Thou art my Father, Thou my Mother.
19. ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਇਤ ਉਤ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ॥ ਮਨਮੋਹਨੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਕੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਕਵਨ ਕਹਾ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਖੇਲਿ ਖਿਲਾਇ ਲਾਡ ਲਾਡਾਵੈ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਅਨਦਾਈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲੈ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਕੀ ਨਿਆਈ ਜੈਸੇ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਨਿਮਖ ਨਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਸਕੀਐ ਬਿਸਰਿ ਨ ਕਬਹੂ ਜਾਈ ॥ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਤੇ ਮਗਨ ਭਏ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈ ॥ Sarang M5 GG1213-14. He dandles and fondles me and ever, ever and father blesses me with bliss. He sustains me in such a way as mother and father do their child. Without Him, I can live not even for a moment, so I forget Him not ever. Says Nanak, meeting with the saints' society, I am enraptured and attuned to my Lord; ਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਬੋਲੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਖਾਇਆ ॥ Ramkali M 4, 882. Without God, I have no other friend. The Lord alone is my father, mother and companion; ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਹੈ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰੇ ॥ Ramkali M4 GG 882. The Lord God is the Father and Mother of Nanak. God cherishes me like His child; ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ M5 GG 1144. Thou, O Lord, art my Father and Thou my Mother; ਭਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮਾਤਾ ॥੩॥ Gauri M5 GG 240; The Master is my brother, son, father and mother; ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਮਾ ਪਿਉ ਆਪਿ ਹੈ ਆਪੇ ਸਾਰ ਕਰੋਇ ॥ M3 GG 653. He Himself is the father and mother of all and Himself He, takes care of them; ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ M5 GG 103. Thou art my father, Thou art my mother; ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਮਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲਕ ॥ M5 GG 1101. The Reverend Lord is my mother, Reverend Lord my father and the Reverend Lord my Cherisher.
20. ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਹੈ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰੇ ॥ Ramkali M4 GG 882 The Lord God is the Father and Mother of Nanak. God cherishes like His child.
21. ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸਭਨੀ ਥਾਈ ਤਾ ਭਉ ਕੇਹਾ ਕਾਤਾ ਜੀਉ ॥Majh M5 GG 103 Thou art my father, Thou art my mother. In all the places Thou art my protector. Then why should I feel fear and anxiety; ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਏ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਦਾ ਸਾਰ ॥ Vaar Malar ki M1 GG 1288 The Lord, of Himself, creates the world and of Himself takes care of it; ਟੂਟੀ ਗਾਵਨਹਾਰ ਗ੍ਰੋਪਾਲ ॥ ਸਰਬ ਜੀਆ ਆਪੇ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਕੀ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ Gauri Sukhmani M5, GG 282. The World-cherisher is the Mender of the broken. He Himself cherishes all the sentient beings. Within whose mind is the anxiety of all, none returns empty-handed from Him. (MS)
22. ਅਉਖੀ ਘੜੀ ਨ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੇਈ ਅਪਨਾ ਬਿਰਦੁ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥ ਹਾਥ ਦੇਇ ਰਾਖੈ ਅਪਨੇ ਕਉ ਸਾਸਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲੇ ॥੧॥ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸਿਉ ਲਾਗਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਮੇਰਾ ਚੀਤੁ ॥ ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਧੰਨੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਮੀਤੁ ॥ Dhanasari M5 GG 682. Aware of His innate nature, the Lord lets not His slave see the difficult hour. Lending His hand, He preserves His own slave and cherishes him at every breath. My Mind remains attached with the Lord. From the beginning to the end the Lord is ever my saviour; Wonderful is my Friend.
23. ਭੇਖ ਕਰੈ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਚਿਤੁ ਡੋਲੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤਿਸਾ ਭੂਖ ਅਤਿ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਭਉਕਤ ਫਿਰੇ ਦਰ ਬਾਰੁ ॥ -Bhairo M3 GG1132. The mortal assumes religious garbs, his mind greatly wobbles and within his mind his lust, wrath and ego. Within him is an exceedingly great thirst and hunger and he wonders about from door to door.
24. ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਖੁਆਇਆ ਦੁਖੁ ਖਟੇ ਦੁਖੁ ਖਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਲੋਭ ਹਲਕੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਭਾਰੀ ਬਿਨੁ ਬਿਬੇਕ ਭਰਮਾਇ ॥ Bhairo M3 GG1132. Whosoever strays in self-conceit, riches and worldly love; he earns pain and pain he eats. Within him is the great ailment of the rabidness of avarice and he wanders about benefit of the Divine comprehension.
25. ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥ Asa M5, GG 12. The human body has come to thy hand. This is thy chance to meet the Lord of the world. M.S.
26. ਕਾਚ ਬਾਦਰੈ ਲਾਲੁ ਖੋਈ ਹੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਇਹੁ ਅਉਸਰੁ ਕਦਿ ਲਹਾ ॥ Sarang M5 1203 He loses the jewel in exchange for glass. When shall this opportunity come to him again; ਕਉਡੀ ਬਦਲੇ ਰਤਨੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ ॥ Gauri M5 195 Casts away the jewel in exchange for a shell.
27. ਲਖ ਚਉਦਸੀਹ ਭ੍ਰਮਤੇ ਭ੍ਰਮਤੇ ਦੁਲਭ ਜਨਮੁ ਅਬ ਪਾਇਓ ॥੧॥ ਰੇ ਮੂੜੇ ਤੂੰ ਹੋਛੇ ਰਸਿ ਲਪਟਾਇਓ ॥ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਤੇਰੈ ਬਿਖਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਉਚਝਾਇਓ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਰਤਨ ਜਵੇਹਰ ਬਨਜਨਿ ਆਇਓ ਕਾਲਰੁ ਲਾਇ ਚਲਾਇਓ ॥ Maru M5 GG1017. Rambling and roaming through eighty-four lacs of existence, thou hast now obtained the invaluable human-life. O fool, thou art clinging to the paltry relishes. The Nectar-Name abides with thee thou art engrossed in sin. Thou didst come to deal in rubies and jewels, but thou hast loaded the nitre of sins.
28. This world is not an illusion or less real than the next and therefore must not be renounced. It is 'an abode of the True one.' {ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਚੈ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੋਠਤੀ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਾਸੁ ॥ ਸਲੋਕੁ ॥ M2, GG 463. The world is the True Lord's chamber and within it is the abode of the True One; world is the 'dharamkhand' or the field for the practise of religion, an opportunity to serve God and win his favour Ascetics, who reject worldly involvement, according to the Guru are renegades. This was Guru Nanak's rebuke to the holy men of the Jogi order members of which considered themselves well advanced in spirituality. (Vaaran Bhai Gurdas 1-29-6. ਸਿਧ ਛਪ ਬੈਠੇ ਪਰਬਤੀ ਕੋਣ ਜਗ ਕਉ ਪਾਰ ਉਤਾਰਾ ॥ A truly cultured man's, a spiritually elevated soul's pathway to salvation lies through acceptance of total responsibility which is the logical consequence of perception of God as Love. He spells out his plan for revolutionary changes with the help of 'principles of True faith and the people' who embrace them; St. Simeon Stylites who lived for thirty years atop a 60 feet high tower would have no respectability in the Guru's reckoning.
29. ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ Subi M1 GG 730. Abide pure amidst the worldly impurities. Thus shalt thou find the way to Yoga; ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਮੁਰਗਾਈ ਨੈ ਸਾਣੈ ॥ Ramkali M1 GG 938. As a lotus-flower remains unaffected in water, as also a duck swims against the stream's current and becomes not wet.
30. ਭਾਂਡਾ ਧੋਇ ਬੈਸਿ ਧੂਪੁ ਦੇਵਹੁ ਤਉ ਦੂਧੈ ਕਉ ਜਾਵਹੁ ॥ Rag Subi M1, GG 728. Sitting down wash and perfume the vessel, then go to bring the milk.'
31. ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਸਭਿ ਅਵਗਣ ਕਵੈ ਧੋਇ ॥ M5 GG 43. Wait upon Guru, the giver of peace, and he shall wash off all thy sins.
32. ਸਦਾ ਅਨੰਦਿ ਰਹਹਿ ਦਿਨੁ ਰਾਤੀ ਗੁਣ ਕਹਿ ਗੁਣੀ ਸਮਾਣਿਆ ॥ Majh M3 GG122. Day and Night they ever abide in bliss, and by uttering His praises are absorbed in the praise-worthy Lord; ਨਾਨਕ ਭੁਖਾ ਤਾ ਰਜੈ ਜਾ ਗੁਣ ਕਹਿ ਗੁਣੀ ਸਮਾਇ ॥੨॥ Vaar Majh ki Slok M2 GG147. Nanak it is obtained by him on whose face and forehead the writ of good fortune is recorded.

33. ਜਿਨੀ ਸੁਣਿ ਕੈ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਤਿਨਾ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸੁ ॥ Sri Rag M3 GG 27. They, who hear God's Name and believe in it, obtain an abode in their own home.'
34. ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੀਵਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦੁਆਰਿ ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਾਂਤਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਖਿਆ ਉਰ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ Bhairon M3 GG1132. They who die by the Guru's word; they come to life again and obtain the door of emancipation. They are blessed with mental solace and eternal peace and they keep God enshrined in their heart.
35. ਸੇ ਭਗਤ ਹਰਿ ਭਾਵਦੇ ਜੋ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਭਾਇ ਚਲੰਨਿ ॥ ਆਪੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਨਿ ਜੀਵਤ ਮੁਏ ਚਹੰਨਿ ॥ Gauri Bairagan M3 GG 233. Pleasing to God, are the devotees who walk according to the Will of the Supreme Court. Stilling their self-conceit they perform Lord's service, and remain dead in life; vich duniya sev kamaie ta dargah baisan paieai. M1; According to Will Durant, (*The Story of Philosophy*, 185), Spinoza appears to put it like this: 'The passivity of passion is "human bondage" the action of reason is human liberty--'. To be superman is to be free not from the restraints of the social justice, but from the individualism of the instinct.'
36. ਸੀਸੁ ਵਢੇ ਕਰਿ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਵਿਣੁ ਸਿਰ ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀਜੈ ॥ Raag vadhans M 1, 558. Cutting off my head I will give it to him to sit on, and without head, I will perform his service.
37. ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੀਵਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦੁਆਰਿ ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਾਂਤਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਖਿਆ ਉਰ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ Bhairon M3 GG 1132. They who die by the Guru's word they come to life again and obtain the door of emancipation. They are blessed with mental solace and eternal peace and they keep God enshrined in their heart.
38. ਏ ਮਨ ਜੈਸਾ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਤੈਸਾ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਤੇਹੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ॥ Rag Suhi M3 GG 755. O man, as thou servest, so becomest thou and so are the deeds which thou performest; The phenomena has been often referred to as dross becoming gold on contact with the philosopher's stone; ਮਨੁ ਕੋ ਤੇ ਕੰਚਨ ਭਏ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਰਸੁ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥ Sorath M 1, GG 638. From the rusted iron I have been transformed into gold, by uniting in the union of Guru, the philosopher's stone, O brother; ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਜੇਹਾ ॥ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਮਾਣਸ ਦੇਹਾ ॥ ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਉਠਹਿ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਸਲਨੈ ਸਲਲ ਸਮਾਇਦਾ ॥ Maru Sohle M5 GG 1076. God's slave; he is like unto the Lord. Due to his human body deem him not distinct from the Lord. As water waves rise in various ways, but water merges in water again; ਅਨਹਤ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਰਤੇ ਸੇ ਕੈਸੇ ॥ ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੇ ਤਿਸ ਹੀ ਜੈਸੇ ॥ Ramkali M1 GG 943. Q. 63. "Of What kind are they who are imbued with the Imperishable Lord?". The Guru Says Ans. "They are like Him, from whom they have emanated. They transmigrate not, nor do they come and go."
39. ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ ॥ M1 GG 15. Nanak seek the company of those who are of low caste among the lowly, nay rather the lowest of the low Why should he (he has no desire to) rival the lofty; ਸੂਰਾ ਸੋ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਐ ਜੁ ਲਰੈ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੋਤ ॥ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਕਟਿ ਮਰੈ ਕਬਹੂ ਨ ਛਾਡੈ ਖੇਤੁ ॥ Rag Maru Kabir GG 1105. He alone is known to be a warrior, who fights for the sake of his religion. He dies cut piece by piece, but deserts not the battle-field, ever. Guru Nanak himself went to Eminabad area which was suffering due to invasion of Babar and was imprisoned for sympathy with the suffering people. Dichotomous approach, according to him is a positive hindrance. Dividing human concerns into watertight compartments doesn't take one far; ਗਰੀਬਾ ਉਪਰਿ ਜਿ ਖਿੰਜੈ ਦਾਤੀ ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮਿ ਸਾ ਅਗਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਤੀ ॥੧॥ Gauri M5 GG 199. If one haughtily strokes his beard on the poor; that the Lofty Lord burns in fire. MS
40. See Jagjit Singh, "The significance of the concept of Meeri-Piri and its historical impact," quoting Max Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 223 and 227.
41. ਏਕੋ ਤਖਤੁ ਏਕੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ॥ ਸਰਬੀ ਥਾਈ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੁ ॥ Basant M1 GG 1188 There is but One Throne and One King. The Absolute Lord is contained in all places; ਸਚੈ ਤਖਤਿ ਨਿਵਾਸੁ ਹੋਰ ਆਵਣ ਜਾਣਿਆ ॥੧॥ Vaar Malar ki M1 GG 1279. Thou art seated on the Eternal Throne, O Lord. All others but come and go; ਏਕੋ ਆਪਿ ਤੂਹੈ ਵਡ ਰਾਜਾ ॥ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਸਚੇ ਕੈ ਪੂਰੇ ਕਾਜਾ ॥ Maru Sohle M5 GG 1074. The alone art the great King. By Thy command, O True Lord the affairs are fulfilled; ਸਭ ਸਾਹਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਹੁ ॥ ਵੇਮੁਹਤਾਹੁ ਪੂਰਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ॥ Ramkali M5 GG 893. Over the head of all the Kings is God, the True King. He is the Independent, Perfect Sovereign.
42. ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰਿ ਸੰਤ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥੨॥ Gauri M1 GG 224 Slaying the demons, the Lord saved the Saints; ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ ॥ Gauri M1 GG 225 Because of duality God slew the devils; ਦੂਤ ਦੁਸਮਨ ਸਭਿ ਤੁਝ ਤੇ ਨਿਵਰਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਤੁਮਾਰਾ ॥ ਜੋ ਜੋ ਤੇਹੇ ਭਗਤ ਦੁਖਾਏ ਓਹੁ ਤਤਕਾਲ ਤੁਮ ਮਾਰਾ ॥੧॥ Dhanasari M5 GG 681 All the demons and adversaries are warded off by Thee, O Lord and manifest is Thy glory. Who-so-ever annoys Thine saints, him Thou destroyest forth-with.
43. ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥ Salok M 1, GG 1412. If thou art Zealous of playing (the game) of Love, then enter upon my Path with thy head on thy palm (GS); ਪਹਿਲਾ ਮਰਣੁ ਕਬੂਲਿ ਜੀਵਣ ਕੀ ਛਡਿ ਆਸ ॥ ਹੋਹੁ ਸਭਨਾ ਕੀ ਰੇਣੁਕਾ ਤਉ ਆਉ ਹਮਾਰੈ ਪਾਸਿ ॥੧॥ Maru Vaar M5 GG1102 Accept thou death first, abandon the hope of life, and be the dust of the feet of all, then alone come thou to me. (MS)
44. ਮਰਣੁ ਮੁਣਸਾ ਸੂਰਿਆ ਹਕੁ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ਮਰਨਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੇ ॥ Rag Wadhans M1, GG 579. Fruitful is the dying of the brave persons, whose death is approved by the Lord. (die for a good cause).
45. Puran Singh, *The Spirit Born People*, Languages Department Punjab, Patiala, 1970, 5.
46. See, Grewal J. S., *Guru Nanak in History*, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1969, 165 and 166.
47. This is exactly why the Guru Granth declares the world to be a fit field for practising religion, a place for spiritual development. ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ ॥ Japu GG 7 'In the creation the earth has been established as a place to execute one's duty.' *Shabdharath* 7; ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ Srirag M1 GG26 In this world perform Lord's service. Then, (shalt thou) get a seat in Master Court, and swing thy arm (happily,) says Nanak; ਹਉ ਗੋਸਾਈ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਵਾਨਤਾ ॥ ਮੈ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿ ਉਚ ਦੁਮਾਲਤਾ ॥ ਸਭ ਹੋਈ ਛਿੰਤ ਇਕਠੀਆ ਦਹੁ ਬੈਠਾ ਵੇਖੋ ਆਪਿ ਜੀਉ ॥ Sri rag M1 GG 74. I am the petty wrestler of the World Lord. Having met the Guru, I have put on a tall plumed turban. All the assemblage to witness wrestling is gathered, and the Merciful Master Himself is seated to behold it.'
48. Srirag M5 *Guru Granth*, 73-74. About this hymn of the Fifth Nanak this is what a team of competent annotators said in 1941, 'In this hymn the respected Guru depicts the extent to which one who serves his Lord is empowered. In this connection, the religious centre established on the strength of selected Sikhs, so organised the powers of good that they picked up the courage to put a stop to oppression, to banish fear. It was generally felt that the Merciful Lord had issued an order that from this day none will cause suffering to another, all will live in peace. Worshipers imbued with the spirit of freedom and they started believing themselves to be God's champions. This fact influenced our subsequent history very deeply.' *Shabdharath Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, (4th ed.) Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, May 1969, 73; Spinoza appears to be paraphrasing the Guru when he says: "The last end of state is not to dominate men, nor to restrain them by fear; rather it is so to free each man from fear that he may live and act with full security and without injury to himself or his neighbour," -quoted by Will Durant in, *The Story of Philosophy*, The Pocket Library, New York, January 1967, 192.

49. ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਜਨ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਿ ਕਾਢੀ ਬਾਹ ਕੁਕੀਜੈ ॥ ਜੇ ਆਤਮ ਕਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਨਿਤ
ਲੋੜਹੁ ਤਾਂ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਰਨਿ ਪਵੀਜੈ ॥੫॥ Kalyan M4 GG 1326 Hear ye, O
Saints, the Guru shouteth out to ye. If ye seek the Peace of the soul,
then repair ye to the Guru's Feet. (G.S.)

MULTICULTURALISM AND UNIVERSALITY

Alice Basarke, Ottawa, Canada

Is Sikhism a universal religion or a culturally specific one? A tough question, isn't it? What is meant by 'universal religion?'. A friend once told me that Sikhism is universal, for no matter where one travels, there is always a Sikh who has been there before you. That may well be true, but no matter how many Sikhs can be found in how many unexpected places, this by itself, is not universality. Rather, by universal it is meant that the teachings of Sikhism have an appeal to mankind that can be appreciated in many places, by many diverse cultures. The belief in one God and the equality of mankind can stir the hearts and minds of people everywhere. That is the universality of the religion. But if Sikhism has the ability to stir the hearts and souls of all mankind, why is it still culturally specific to Punjab ? Or perhaps one should turn the question around to say what has kept Sikhism from adapting to other cultures? It is only in multiculturalism that universality can take root. The implication of universality is interaction with other cultures and religions. **This is the crossroads that the religion of Guru Nanak has reached.**

The history of Sikh interaction with other religions starts with Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. In his early teachings, we see him advising some Muslims that they are reading the Koran but missing the truth within it. In another instance, he is scolding Yogis for their conceit and Brahmins for practising empty rituals. The Guru was not condemning any religion, but rather the hypocrisy of its practitioners. **Today, all these stern warnings can be applied to his own Sikhs, yet very few of us are willing to see that.**

As the history of Sikhism developed, so did the awareness of other religions among the Sikhs. The discovery was unavoidable. In the earliest days, because of the supremacy of Mughal rule, Muslims forced themselves on the Sikh psyche by selective persecution. The British came later, bringing Christianity. When the Sikhs started leaving the Asian subcontinent and dispersing to the four corners of the world, they placed themselves in contact with new experiences with other cultures and other religions. In Singapore, they encountered Buddhism. In Saudi Arabia and the Middle East they found Islam, in Kenya and South Africa they discovered traditional African religions, and in America they came in touch with Christianity, Judaism and secular cynicism. Though the self-exile was voluntary, the Sikhs were ill-prepared for so much upheaval and change. In their 500 year history of interaction with other religions and cultures, Sikhs developed two distinctive ways of coping with their problems – tolerance and self-preservation. Both of these methods of coping have advantages as well as shortcomings. One must be careful in considering both styles in order to come up with a workable formula that will benefit Sikhism and carry it into the next century.

Tolerance

By tolerance, I mean to describe an attitude of live and let live – a willingness to co-exist with one's neighbours in friendship and harmony, even to learn from new traditions and adapt to new

experiences. This style of coping is eloquent testimony to the principles of open tolerance and is very common among the Sikhs. It fits the bon vivant* personality that is also a cultural characteristic of Punjabis. It first shows its occurrence in Sikh History in the compilations of Guru Granth Sahib, which surprisingly contains the writings of people such as Kabir, Ravi Das, Nam Dev, and many other writers from other religions. The Gurus saw the benefits of being open and tolerant to other beliefs. What needs to be remembered is that the Sikh Gurus, in their wisdom, were selectively open with necessary caution, and included only those utterances in Guru Granth Sahib which are in keeping with the faith of Guru Nanak.

This selective openness with necessary caution was used by other faiths as well. In its early days, Christianity made many difficult and highly controversial adjustments to be in open harmony with its neighbours. For instance, neither Christmas nor Easter, its most widely celebrated holy days, started out as Christian holidays. They have their origin in early pagan cults, which venerated the tree and the hare. Early converts had a difficult time leaving behind such treasured traditions of celebration. Rather than condemn and possibly lose these new converts, the church adapted. The pagan holidays were accepted, but the focus changed from honouring pagan deities to having a Christian spin superimposed on them, that is, the birth and resurrection of Christ. Over the test of time, no one remembers or cares that this was not a unique or exclusively Christian holiday. And no one would argue that Christmas or Easter is not a Christian celebration. They were adapted and then accepted. The Rosary is a string of beads used to keep count of prayers. Catholics adapted this from Islam, which in turn adapted it from the Buddhists. Yet who would argue that a Catholic using his Rosary was not saying a Christian prayer? Circumcision is another raging discussion that once took place within the early days of the Church. Christ was a Jew. Was it necessary to continue the culturally specific practice of circumcision in order to be a follower of Christ, or to be a Christian? **The obvious answer was 'no'. The Church chose to drop the restricting cultural tradition and leave itself open to the larger benefits of being universal. These decisions could not have been easy. Great care was taken that no religious tenets were broken. Only the suffocating hold of cultural taboos was removed.**

Adaptation is all right as long as it does not interfere with basic teachings and true beliefs of the host religion. However, there are grave dangers hidden in this open attitude. In the most generous attitude of being tolerant to all, one risks the danger of watering down one's own beliefs, and losing the essence of one's own religious and / or cultural identity. As an example of how open tolerance can go wrong, I would cite all those who are happy to promote the concept of Sikhism being a synthesis of Islam and Hinduism. There is ample proof that Guru Nanak rebelled against both Islam and Hinduism. He most definitely started a new religion that was neither Hindu nor Muslim. Yet there are still those who think it is an asset to speak of synthesis and keep both sides happy. Political correctness may be the mantra of the day, but in too much acceptance, they sadly lose their own unique identity. Core principles must be adhered to in order that the essential basis of one's beliefs is never altered. Adaptation is possible, but must be done with extreme caution and careful selection. In other words, **culture can be changed to suit the religion, but religion must never be changed to suit the culture.**

Self-preservation

The need for self-preservation among the Sikhs can be historically justified. From its earliest days, Sikh history shows its people always in danger of being exterminated, assimilated, or both. The threat is not only real, but is omnipresent. What can Sikhs do but retreat and huddle together, devising a style of coping which ensures self-preservation? This mode is directly opposite to the open tolerance described earlier. It is an effective means of coping with a strange and often hostile environment. But it is also a means of withdrawing into itself and refusing to make any changes no matter how small.

In 1699, Guru Gobind Singh created the order of the Khalsa, giving its followers five distinctive symbols to help them establish their physical identity. The five K's, kirpan, kesh, kangha, kara, and kachha, had everything to do with providing identity so as to protect cultural and religious unity, and safeguard the Sikh nation at a time of great persecution.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, Sikh unity and sense of identity was at an all time low. Sikhs had abandoned their customs and symbols wholesale. What remained was intermixed with Hinduism. Even the gurdwaras were lost to them, for the British Masters controlled the Sikhs by appointing Hindu overseers of their places of worship. The rise of aggressive Hindu movements such as the Arya Samaj did not help matters for the Sikhs.

To combat total assimilation, new Sikh organisations were formed that were meant to protect Sikh identity. The Singh Sabha emerged with the loud proclamation, 'We are not Hindus!' This was followed by the Akali Dal and then the Gurdwara Act which was to ensure that Sikh holy places would be administered by Sikh hands. The threat to Sikh identity did not become less acute with the advent of India's independence. Indeed it was Punjab that was divided, and the Sikhs who suffered the most in the ethnic cleansing that followed, with tremendous transmigration of people, who were not allowed to keep their land or property and had to move to wherever they were ordered to by short-sighted politicians. A million lives were lost. The most recent group of justifiable self-preservationists are the Khalistanis.

Though much can be said for the self-preservation style of coping, for it was and is necessary to protect oneself from assimilation and death, it too has its very serious shortfalls. Culture and religion can fuse into one. Universality is lost. There is a danger of becoming too introverted and pre-occupied with one self. This pre-occupation can be crippling, and render you unable to progress to the next logical step. Nothing in life remains static for long. Change is inevitable. Those unable to change with time, and to adapt to change and modern living, will make themselves obsolete. It is a great loss to the community that many Sikhs have lost their ability to distinguish between religion and culture. By preaching traditional cultural values, with no ability to explain reasons or necessity, Sikhs are losing the next generation. Our Sikh children want to be included, but feel isolated and rejected by a community that refuses to recognise the reality of the modern world that they live in. The irony of the situation is that a community that lives in the past, and is unable to change and adapt to the modern world, is a community in danger of self-annihilation. **If we Sikhs** are not able to keep our own children in the fold, who will be there to continue the practice of the Religion of Nanak.

Necessity of Expansion

For any organisation to survive, there have to be individuals who will devote their efforts to recruitment and expansion of their base numbers. In Religion, this is commonly recognised as Missionary work. Sikhism has not had its Crusades, and does not believe in forced conversions. You are not likely to ever find Sikh missionaries passing out pamphlets at airports, and trying to engage you in conversation, or ask you for money. However, expansion has obviously happened at various times throughout its short history. Guru Nanak's teaching has universal appeal, and he did make a large number of dedicated converts. This was done by word of mouth, and in the larger global context, the numbers were quite small. There is a historical record of the third Guru, in the mid sixteenth century, attracting large number of jats, (peasants) to the fold. The tenth Guru converted a large number of followers after he created the order of the Khalsa in 1699. More expansion took place during the secular reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The British are credited with adding numbers to the Khalsa ranks. This was done by giving them excellent military training and paying good salaries to the Sikh soldiers, while insisting that the regiments keep the 'uniform' of five K's. Though these conversions have questionable motives for those that are counting, the numbers of Sikhs did multiply in that period. In modern history, that is post-partition, the Sikhs' struggle was still on the hot burner. That discrimination continues to run rampant is evident in the withholding of language rights, hydropower, the 1984 attack on the Golden Temple, the November carnage and countless Human Rights abuses against the Sikh population, too numerous to list here. Sikhs have lost vast numbers of their community in this latest struggle. The danger of assimilation is greater than ever, and the need for increasing Sikh numbers is greater than ever.

So far any expansion of Sikh teachings has always happened within the Asian subcontinent. The continuity of essential teachings has remained constant since the time of Nanak to the present-day. The large infusion of jats during the sixteenth century has become a large influence on Sikh tradition and culture. However, it seems that even within the Asian subcontinent, cultural universality is not possible to achieve. Think of the opportunity lost in having large, very large numbers of 'untouchables' join the Sikh ranks. Ambedkar wished his followers to embrace Sikhism. He was in a position where he could have brought in millions of souls to the community. Sikhism could have been a force to reckon with. But the community that had been once brought up on the tenets of the ten Gurus to be a casteless society, had sunk so low into the Hindu influence that the potential converts were turned away. Forgetting the Gurus' teachings, Sikhs have become too conceited to allow themselves to rub shoulders with 'untouchables'. History would have been quite different, had they adhered to Guru Nanak's principles. Guru Gobind Singh's story of the donkey dressed in a lion skin applies today, more than ever. He summed it up beautifully by saying: 'My dear sons, I have not involved you in mere pantomime, as in the case of the donkey. I have freed you, wholly and completely, from the bondage of caste. Do not follow the foolish example of the donkey, and return to your old caste allegiance. If forgetting my words and abandoning the sacred faith, you return to your various castes, your fate will be that of the donkey. Your courage will desert you, and you will have lived your lives in vain.'

Today, expansion by conversion is possible on a much larger,

global scale. In North America, there have been converts made by Harbhajan Singh Yogi. This is a most fascinating phenomena in that the conversions are based primarily on acceptance of Punjabi culture. One wonders how many more Sikh converts would be possible if religion was separated from cultural impositions. This also leads one to speculate on the necessity to adapt Punjabi dress, Punjabi food and the Punjabi language before one can hope to become a Sikh. Does this imply that if a Westerner does not like saag and roti, he cannot learn to appreciate the teachings of the Gurus. If a child wishes to wear blue jeans rather than salwar kamiz, will she be lost to the community? Is it really necessary to speak Punjabi to appreciate basic religious concepts? Should we all withdraw from society and chant mantras and learn to dance the Bhangra? Must we waste our time arguing about whether one should sit on the floor, rather than learning the principles that are behind this custom? The real question is, what is more important? The teachings of Guru Nanak or must one adopt the culture of Punjab before one can be allowed to be religiously a Sikh?

Sikhism does have great potential for universal appeal. So far, however, it cannot claim to be universal because it has been kept culturally specific to Punjab. The first step has been taken by Sikhs who have left Punjab, and travelled around the globe. **The question now is whether Sikhism can continue into the twenty first century without making a break with its Punjabi roots.** The second part of the same question is even more important. Which adaptations are going to strengthen Sikhism, as any watering down of religious principles would certainly not be acceptable. What is religion and what is culture must be defined and separated. Religious teachings must not be changed, but cultural mores can be adapted to whatever country Sikhism finds itself in.

Attention must be paid towards clear definitions of what is religion and what is culture. For discussion purposes one can make lists of 'problems' and debate which one is religious and which one cultural. Some answers are obvious. Others do need more deliberation.

Here in Canada we have separate gurdwaras for Ramgarhia Sikhs. This is based on caste considerations and segregation. I hear that there are similar arrangements in Punjab.

- Men and women sit separately in gurdwaras. Not only does it look peculiar to Western eyes, but the religion teaches equality, and the Gurus insisted that men and women sit together in langar. Yet in the prayer halls of a religion that professes to be the 'religion of the householder', families are unable to sit together in prayer. We see the negative result on young children, as they disrupt everyone's peace and equilibrium, by running constantly between Mom and Dad.
- Does Gurbani support dietary injunctions for or against any food? Where and when were such specific dietary rules made? If there are no dietary restrictions in the religion, should this not be reflected in langar?
- At the birth of a daughter, congratulatory notes often sound like condolences. At the very least, they seem to say, 'Better luck next time, eh?' Selective abortions on gender basis are commonly practised. The Akal Takht should be commenting on this.

- Is it possible for an Eskimo in the high arctic to become a Sikh? If he does not have the facilities to bathe every time before reading the scripture, should he be automatically excluded from becoming a convert? Endless examples could be cited.

It is essential to examine what is really important to Sikhs. Is it the religion of the ten Gurus, or is it the culture of Punjab?

There is no consensus on these questions because many do not understand the difference between religion and culture, and while professing to be Sikhs, are so imbued with Hindu culture that the differences are blurred and unrecognisable. Sikhism will never be a truly universal religion, if it is tied down to that specific local culture. We Sikhs will have to consider multiculturalism if we wish any success in the next century. The choices are rather limited.

- Adapt universality by keeping the essential core of 'Sikh religious teachings', but not limiting its followers to any specific culture.
- Or remain culturally specific and risk being assimilated into Hinduism.

The choice is that simple, and that difficult.

ALL CHILDREN OF THE SAME ONE GOD

Devinderjit Singh, St. Catherine's College, Oxford
(May, 2004)

Shortly before the due date of the 2001 Census forms, I received several e-mails claiming to be of vital importance to Sikhs. I usually delete unsolicited messages without pausing but felt obliged to read these ones, at least initially. Apparently, it was crucial that we crossed out Indian as the description of our ethnic origin and write in Sikh instead. While this insanity irritated me, I decided not to respond to the e-mail and hoped that the silliness would recede quietly. Sadly, this has not happened. As a recent article by Jagdeesh Singh, of the 'Sikh Commonwealth', in *The Sikh Bulletin* (February 2004) indicates, the issue of ethnicity is still alive and well today. In this article I intend to address the relevant issues, and comment on some additional current topics.

Let's begin with legal considerations, as these tend to form the central plank of the arguments for regarding Sikhs as an ethnic group. In particular, the 1983 House of Lords ruling in *Mandia v Dowell Lee* is cited as a landmark judgement attesting to that fact. The case concerned a Sikh boy, Gurinder Singh Mandia, who was refused admission in a private school because he wore a turban and wouldn't cut his hair (to conform with the requirements of the school rules and its uniform). In a modern liberal democracy, which cherishes diversity and equality, the course of natural justice was obvious: Gurinder's right to practice his Faith, when it did not adversely affect anyone else, was paramount. The laws of the land, however, did not permit such a direct ruling at the time. The only antidiscriminatory tool available to their Lordships was the *Race Relations Act* of 1976, and they used it with ingenuity in Gurinder's favour. They did this by arguing that Sikhs could be seen as constituting a *de facto* ethnic group and that, in their opinion, this criterion satisfied the intent of the 1976 Act for it to be applicable.

It seems to me that some Sikhs have tried to make more of the Mandia judgement than was envisioned by the presiding Law Lords, especially in the last few years. In his article 'Nationhood not Religion!', for example, Jagdeesh Singh says 'the term 'religion'

is vague, stigmatized and legally undefined' but, citing the Mandia case, 'in contrast, British law explicitly and comprehensively defines what an 'ethnic' group is.' While the many barbaric acts carried out in the name of religion through the centuries, and even today, have given it much bad press, the all too common phrase of 'ethnic cleansing' hardly enhances the status of the term ethnic either. As for the supposed clarity of meaning, Lord Templeman underlined the inherent difficulty by saying: 'In the course of the argument attention was directed to the dictionary definition of the adjective 'ethnic'. But it is common ground that some definitions constitute the Sikhs a relevant ethnic group whereas other definitions would exclude them.' For the purposes of the Mandia case, he continued:

'The true construction of the expression 'ethnic origin' must be deduced from the 1976 Act.' Nowadays, of course, with the incorporation of the *European Convention on Human Rights* into British Law in 1998, we would expect that more pertinent arguments would be used to safeguard our rights.

Exactly what is so wrong about pursuing the ethnic argument for Sikhs? The answer to that can be found in the Mandia deliberations themselves, even though the judges gave the correct verdict in upholding Gurinder's appeal. Lord Fraser, for example, noted that: 'They were originally a religious community founded about the end of the fifteenth century in Punjab by Guru Nanak, who was born in 1469. But the community is no longer purely religious in character.' He went on to say that, in his opinion, '... Sikhs are a group defined by reference to their ethnic origins for the purpose of the 1976 Act, although they are not biologically distinguishable from the other peoples living in the Punjab.' As an English Sikh, I fail to see why my ancestry should have anything to do with my right to practice my Faith. Sikhism is all to do with belief, and living by its tenets, and nothing to do with any form of inheritance or birthright. Indeed, I know several communities of Sikhs in America who have no family links with the Indian subcontinent whatsoever. The fact that most Sikhs are of Punjabi descent is an 'accident of history', and not something we ought to be proud of or encourage. After all Guru Nanak travelled far and wide to spread his message of One God, and the universal search for the Truth, and he certainly didn't tie his teachings down to any particular cultural tradition. He was equally at ease talking to Muslims in Mecca,

Five prayers at five times, five are their names:

*Truth is first, honest labour second and
charity the third place claims;*

*The fourth asks for honesty in conduct and
fifth the praise of God.*

*Support these prayers with your actions, and
then call yourself a Muslim of the Lord.*

(Guru Granth Sahib, Raga Maj, Mahala 1, p. 141)

as he was in giving spiritual guidance to Yogis in the Himalayas:

*Make contentment your ear-rings,
honest work your begging bowl and*

Divine thought the ashes to smear on your body.

Let mortality be your floor-mat,

an abuse-free body your practice and

Faith your beating-stick.

*Consider your sect to be the whole of humanity, and
conquering your mind akin to conquering the world. (Guru
Granth Sahib, Japji, p. 6)*

Guru Nanak asserted that no single group, be they defined by religion, language, social status, history, or whatever, had a monopoly on the ultimate Truth that interested him. He underlined this by collecting the writings of contemporary Saints of varying

backgrounds, whose ideas were in accord with his, that were subsequently incorporated into the Sikh Scriptures by Guru Arjan.

Perhaps the most disconcerting feature of the ethnic agenda is its emphasis on an arbitrary division. This is at odds with the fundamentals of Sikhism, which strive to break down barriers and lay stress on oneness of humanity:

It is God's Light which pervades in all.

All souls are illuminated by His Light.

(Guru Granth Sahib, Raga Dhanasri, Mahala 1, p. 13)

*Recognise the Divine Light in all, and don't ask about caste;
in the hereafter, caste carries no weight.*

(Guru Granth Sahib, Raga Asa, Mahala 1, p. 349)

Firstly Allah made Light, then creation and all of humanity.

The whole world came from the same Light,

so why categorize people as high and low?

Folks, don't get taken in by prejudice.

*God is the Creator, God is in the Creation, and
is resplendent everywhere.*

(Guru Granth Sahib, Raga Prabhati, Bhagat Kabir, p. 1349)

The Sikh ideal is to be like *Bhai Kanhiya*, who offered help to wounded enemy soldiers on the battlefield. When questioned about this by Guru Gobind Singh, because he had been accused of being a traitor by fellow Sikhs, his reply was:

'Sire, I can't distinguish between friend and foe; I can only see God's radiance in everyone.' The Guru was so pleased with this reply that he gave *Bhai Kanhiya* additional medicine and bandages to aid the fallen warriors.

Some would say that I'm being nai've, and that the drive to push the ethnic cause is a matter of political expediency. Without it we lose leverage in the modern world and would miss out on lottery funds, and other government grants, to enhance our status and institutions; 'ethnic monitoring', they argue, is vital for keeping tabs on progress and ensuring that we are treated fairly.

Ethnic monitoring is a phrase that reminds me of Hitler and sends shivers down my back. Even accepting that this response is personal, it's not clear to me that there is anything substantive to be gained from the exercise; exactly what would it tell us? Are we really going to insist that the proportion of Sikhs at university, in Parliament, in the Civil Service, and so on, not mention people in prison, should reflect the population as a whole? While a wild departure might be indicative of a problem, such as discrimination, it's far from certain; there could be many reasons, to do with the social and cultural environment of upbringing that could explain large differences. We should also remember that such monitoring, ethnic or otherwise, is a double-edged sword. In India, for example, moves to limit the number of Sikhs in the armed forces, to reduce their gross over-representation, are strongly resented. After all, we say, people should be judged on their aptitudes and merits, and not on quotas. This is a very reasonable argument, but we must apply it consistently.

Some form of monitoring is required, of course, if we are interested in having a picture of our society and its evolution (even though this won't, of itself, explain why it's so). That's fine, and it's already been happening over the last few years. There was a question on 'religion' in the 2001 Census, with Sikh as an explicit option. Being the first time it had been asked, somewhat reluctantly, it was marked as voluntary. While the impetus for this question originally came from the Muslim community, and later the Jains, some Sikhs are not satisfied; they are pushing for Sikh to be made an option on the ethnicity section, and have even raised the spectre of legal action to try and achieve it. For the reasons

mentioned earlier, this seems insane. While we could argue about the precise definition of religion and ethnic group *ad nauseum*, most would agree that belief and principles are the central components of the former while ancestry and traditions are more important in the latter. By these criteria, Jews have a far greater claim to being an ethnic group than do Sikhs; but given their long history of being persecuted, they haven't been keen to make themselves conspicuous in this way. If one does feel strongly about wanting to put down their own choice on a Census (or any other monitoring) form, such as Punjabi instead of Indian, then there's always the option to fill in something under the 'other' category. Indeed, on the false assumption that this would prompt official government recognition, more people wrote in Jedi for their religion in the 2001 Census than ticked the box for Sikh!

As for the desire to get government grants to enhance our institutions and status, I find this even more disturbing. The Gurus taught us to place value only on the remembrance of God, honest work and the service of humanity; everything else is just an aberration which deflects us from our real purpose in life. Thus Guru Nanak preferred the humble abodes of honest and saintly people, like *Bhai Lalo*, to the sumptuous quarters of the rich and deceitful, such as *Malak Bhago*. After all,

*Kings and emperors own palaces,
oceans, mountains and much wealth;
But are not equal to even an ant if,
in its mind, it never forgets God.*
(Guru Granth Sahib, Japji, p. 5)

While there is nothing wrong in striving to make sure that our Gurdwara buildings are elegant and have good facilities, for example, we must hold the appearance in perspective and keep it subservient to the function (as a house of worship, service and equality). This is best exemplified by the visit of the Emperor Akbar to see Guru Amar Das: the former was so impressed by the set up of *Langar* that he wanted to patronise it with state funds; Guru Ji declined the offer, since its acceptance would have been at odds with the spirit and notion of a shared kitchen. The point is that our cause is not furthered by going out with a begging bowl, but by how we behave as individuals and as a community. When Indarjit Singh presents *Thought for the Day* on *Radio 4*, or Rabinder Singh presides in the English High Court, or Fauja Singh runs in the London Marathon at the age of 93, and so on, the Sikh reputation is enhanced at the national (and even international) level; by the same token, a few brawls in the Gurdwara can easily undo all the good work.

I think it's appropriate here to touch upon the upcoming law in France to ban overt religious symbols in schools and other state institutions. Surprised by its high level of public support, I have been trying to understand the motivation for this move by quizzing my French friends and colleagues. While a clear picture has not emerged, with Islamophobia, the demands of Muslim feminists and the century-old French tradition of a strict separation between church and state all playing a role, the people I've talked to are in agreement that the proposed law will lead to more problems than it will solve. If it isn't overturned by a challenge in the European Court of Human Rights, there will be a sharp increase in the number of private religion-based schools; the inevitable segregation of pupils is very undesirable, as it is ideal breeding ground for misunderstandings and bigotry. What has disturbed me even more, though, is the attempt by some Sikhs to get out of the bind by arguing that the turban is a cultural (or ethnic) tradition and not a religious one. Apart from the fact such a line cannot be pursued at

all for *Kesh* and *Kara*, it weakens the Sikh case legally; if it's simply a matter of convention rather than principle, there should be no difficulty in complying with the law has been the obvious retort. Another problem with this approach is that it is selfish. Are we only concerned with our own rights and not those of others? Guru Teg Bahadur sacrificed his life to champion the rights of the Brahmins to practice their faith, even though he was very critical of much of their behaviour. I'm also perturbed by hearing complaints that Sikhs have been the victims of violence because they have been wrongly identified as being Muslims, since it seems to imply that the attack would have been acceptable if the target had been correct. Although a single unwarranted act of aggression is one too many, we should be thankful that the backlash unleashed after the attacks of 11th September, 2001, were relatively minor in comparison with the outrage. This was in sharp contrast to the widespread carnage in India following the assassination of Indira Gandhi. It's either a tribute to western values, or a confirmation that something sinister went on in India, or both.

I often feel that the motivation for the ethnic agenda is symptomatic of a more common problem among Sikhs: rather than face up to our own shortcomings as a community, we find it easier to blame others for our ills and somehow hope to find an external solution to them. The traumatic events of 1984, in India, led Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana, then a recently retired policeman, to examine why the Sikhs had fallen into such a pitiful state. He had an inkling that the answer lay in Guru Gobind Singh's salutary warning:

*As long as the Khalsa remains distinct and pure,
I will give my all to it;
If it goes the way of the Brahmins,
I will never have any trust in it.*

This thought prompted Gurbakhsh Singh to embark on an extensive study of some ancient Indian texts to learn about the Brahminical traits at first hand, as a starting point for his quest. Coupled with his knowledge of Sikhism, he began to publish his findings in a scholarly series of books, *Bipran ki Reet ton Sach da Marag* or 'From the way of the Brahmins to the Path of Truth', in 1993. His thesis was that, as supposed followers of the Sikh path we have fallen back into many of the traditions and practices that the Gurus counselled against. For this he has been excommunicated by the Sikh hierarchy, just as Prof Gurmukh Singh and Giani Bhag Singh were in earlier times for perceiving the same thing; we have, indeed, turned Amritsar into another Benares!

One of the newer trends which Gurbakhsh Singh has criticized is the elevation of the 'Dasam Granth' to a status comparable to the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This is allegedly a collection of the writings of Guru Gobind Singh, but much of it does not stand up under scrutiny because the contents are at odds with the fundamentals of Sikhism. This is hardly surprising as it was put together long after Guru Gobind Singh's death. While we may hold those parts which are in accordance with the Gurus' teachings with respect, it would be foolhardy to take all of it at face-value; yet there are some who do, and at the highest levels. Even if it was possible to authenticate some writings as being purely the work of Guru Gobind Singh, it would still not be right to treat them as being comparable to the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The reason is that by choosing not to include his own compositions in the revision of the *Adi Granth*, when he added the writings of Guru Teg Bahadur, and on which he bestowed the Guruship shortly

prior to his death, Guru Gobind Singh did not want us to do so. He emphasised this further by not using Nanak as his pen name, out of keeping with all the other successors of Guru Nanak. I can't see that there is any room for doubt in this matter, but it is a valid question as to why Guru Gobind Singh made this decision. The only sensible answer is that, since his literary interests were very wide (he did patronise a court of several dozen poets after all), not everything he wrote was appropriate for inclusion in the Sikh Scriptures. To avoid any possibility of a subsequent ambiguity, therefore, he took the drastic step of excluding all his compositions.

There is a lobby of Sikhs who do not like the above assessment, including those who excommunicated Gurbakhsh Singh. Some do have a genuine concern, of course, because they realise that there are implications for our most cherished *Amrit* ceremony: the presently agreed *Nit-Nem* includes *Jaap Sahib*, *Sawaiye* and *Chaupai*, all presumed to be written by Guru Gobind Singh. Well, are we really sure that Guru Gobind Singh advocated these as part of our daily prayers? Given the earlier discussion, I'm rather doubtful. I suspect that the first thirteen pages of the Guru Granth Sahib, which stand apart from the Raga-based chapters, were the original prerequisite for the morning, evening and night prayers. Whether it was not so, Guruji gave us the authority to discuss matters of concern and current relevance, as a community, and make appropriate decisions. This has to be done in the light of Sikh principles (as opposed to mere traditions) and by consensus; a majority verdict is considered second best, and decrees by a select hierarchy are definitely out of the question. We should not be afraid to revise earlier decisions in the light of new information, or changing circumstances, or to correct inadvertent mistakes; just because we have been doing something in the past doesn't, of itself, make it right. Such frustration is probably at the heart of why Gurbakhsh Singh is so unforgiving towards otherwise revered figures in Sikh history: they should have known better and, given their standing and influence, their failures have had a seriously detrimental affect on Sikhism. Unfortunately, his blunt style creates enemies all too easily. As Prof Darshan Singh, the only respectable holder of the *Akal Takhat* post in the last few decades, said in an interview (*The Sikh Bulletin*, June 2003): 'The issues raised by S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana are perfectly valid. I have also raised the same issues in *Ujaro Deepa* and in my forthcoming book. Brother Kala Afghana's problem is that he does not know how to put restraint on his language and he needlessly makes people around him his enemies. ... if he changes his style of writing only a little, then, as I have stated earlier, the issues raised by him deserve the attention of all of us.'

A final comment on the Dasam Granth saga, I'd like to point out that we seem to be forgetting the writings of Bhai Gurdas. He acted as a scribe to Guru Arjan when the *Adi Granth* was compiled, but was also an author in his own right. Apart from the Guru Granth Sahib, the works of Bhai Gurdas are the only other compositions that were given official sanction by the Sikh Gurus. Although not included in the Sikh Scriptures themselves, Guru Arjan adorned them with the title of the '*Key to Gurbani*'. As such, the Dasam Granth could never have been anything more than a tertiary text.

In conclusion, I have tried to show that the ethnic agenda is misguided. The legal case on which it is predicated is being abused through over interpretation, and the supposed gains are not without their dangers. The whole thrust is at odds with the fundamentals of Sikhism, since it emphasises an arbitrary human division and places value on things which the Gurus considered to be distractions. Our aim should be to remember that

There is One Father, and we are all the children of the same One God... (*Guru Granth Sahib, Raga Sorath, Mahala 5, p. 611*) and make its message of universality a central part of our life.

Acknowledgements

I'm grateful for insightful discussions with Prof Ceri Peach, Dr Jean-Michel Gillet, Dr Simon Whittaker, Rabinder Singh QC and Daljit Singh MA.

CELEBRATING 400 YEARS OF THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB?

I.J. Singh, NY

The thought has been gnawing on my mind and it won't go away. On one level it is perhaps a trivial matter, but I am uncomfortable with the idea that seems not so accurate and refuses to sit well.

Even before the year 2004 started, Sikhs the world over were getting ready to celebrate the "400th anniversary of the compilation and installation of the *Guru Granth Sahib*." These days there is a hardly a gurdwara that is not deeply involved in such celebrations with a multitude of *akhand paaths*, *keertans*, lectures, symposia and conferences. Hardly a week goes by when one does not hear of another such celebration somewhere.

Nothing wrong with this at all; in fact, the more the better. We all need to be exposed to the teachings of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. (We can discuss another time what might be the best way to celebrate and highlight the magic and the message of the *Guru Granth*.)

My little problem is that I see confusion in identifying 2004 as the year of the installation of "Guru" Granth. To me, by collating the writings of his predecessor-Gurus and of the notable *Bhagats* of the Indian subcontinent, Guru Arjan in 1604 compiled a unique volume that became the major corpus of the *Guru Granth* and the spiritual repository of Sikh belief, but it was assuredly *not* the *Guru Granth*. The *Granth* that was installed as the *Guru* was the version so designated by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708, a hundred years later. If 2004 is 400 years of the *installation* of the *Guru Granth*, what kind of a marker will the year 2008 be?

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

Am I merely splitting hair or is this important? I don't mean to cavil but if we ignore the critical distinction between the two, we

would be muddying our history and even our doctrine, perhaps even short-changing the meaning of the message.

Guru Gobind Singh clearly recognized that after two centuries of guidance by a succession of Gurus and continuous progress since Guru Nanak, Sikhs had reached a level of maturity that had prepared them for self-governance. Sikhs could now become free of the guiding hand of a Guru in human form; that role would belong to the collective body of Sikhs worldwide (Sikh *Panth*) acting in an awareness of their spiritual roots (Guru Granth Sahib) and historical tradition. Yet, he also recognized that in time an evolving world would give them many new problems stemming from cultural change and technological progress. These would be temporal time-bound issues that would have to be explored, analyzed, interpreted and resolved by a community that is rooted in a common spiritual discipline that is not bound by constraints of time, culture or geography. This premise and this kind of reasoning would then essentially lead to the inevitable conclusion that the philosophy of Guru Granth Sahib is eternal. In other words, the teachings of Guru Granth transcend the limitations of time, geography or culture and are not restricted to the place or period when they were first enunciated.

So, in 1708 by an act of Guru Gobind Singh the *Aad(i) Granth*, modified with additional writings primarily of Guru Tegh Bahadur, now became the *Guru Granth Sahib* as the repository of all spiritual underpinnings and guidance of the Sikhs. Mindful of that base, the Sikh community can resolve whatever issues a changing world could put on their plate; the Sikhs can even revisit issues that appear settled at a given point in context or time but reemerge later. Before Guru Gobind Singh, both roles of temporal and spiritual authority were combined in the Gurus themselves. The period of the early Gurus served to teach and direct their Sikhs how to function as free and mature people, and how to explore ideas – first from the few writings of the early Gurus that were available to them and then from the *Aad(i) Granth* that Guru Arjan compiled in 1604, and how to govern their lives by principles that were extraordinary in their resilience and their permanence.

I think we are celebrating 400 years of the *Aad(i) Granth*, not of the *Guru Granth*. The celebration is fully deserved but let's keep in mind what we celebrate.

May 27, 2004

[One of the many Sikh Scholars promoting the worldwide celebration of 400 years of **Guru** Granth Sahib is Dr. Harbans Lal. One of many Gurdwaras doing the same is Gurdwara Sahib Alhambra to which celebration they invited (and he accepted) Joginder Singh Vedanti, the fraud called Ganga Sagar and fake (as per Manjit Singh when he was acting Jathedar of Akal Takhat) display of so called Guru Gobind Singh's gifts to Pir Budhu Shah. Wasn't there even one member of Alhambra sangat who was not concerned about waste of Sangat's money and time? ED]

PUNJAB RIVER WATER FORUM

Dear friends:

I need hardly to stress the importance of the Punjab's river water for the people of the area. Clean drinking water today is the most precious commodity. It is more precious than oil. A perceptible race is going on all over the world to control sources of fresh water. It is a very real danger that in another 45 years the world is going to face a water crisis which will leave half the world population thirsty and

their lands parched. There will not be enough drinking water for them, leave alone water for irrigation. The Punjab is slated to be rendered into a desert by the middle of the present century and that will be the end of the land of 'five rivers' and possibly that also of Guru Nanak's followers.

The problem of the Punjab's river water must be appreciated in this background and in the background of the India's insistence to carry away all the river water to non-riparian states of Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi. Needless to say, that this is against the constitutional law and customs prevalent in India as well as in all the prominent federations of the world. The Indian politicians have decided to use water deprivation as an instrument of destruction of the Punjab. A slow and subtle but sure genocide is in the offing.

No people in the world can accept calmly a situation which spells sure destruction for their homeland and writes off their coming generations. However the Punjabis have done precious little in the last fifty years to safeguard their own interests. Before the middle of July 2004, being wiped out of existence appeared to be our fixed destiny ordained by sectarian elements dominating the Indian body politic.

Fortunately the cauldron was stirred by the compulsions of the Congress government in the Punjab and the farsightedness of the present Chief Minister Amarinder Singh. It is now possible to hope for a change. The Termination of Agreements Act 2004 is however a grossly inadequate instrument for restoring Punjab's sovereignty over its river water. It is apparently being used by the union government to retain the Punjab in the same position of a sub-state. The Supreme Court of India is not ever known to have done justice to the Punjab where vital matters of Sikh concern were in question before it. From the history of the last fifty years it appears to have accepted the role of an instrument of the government to dissolve the Sikh entity and to destroy the Punjab. What makes the matters alarming is the fresh attempt of hegemonic elements in India to revive militancy in the Punjab and to destroy another generation of the Sikhs in a bid to control Punjab's destiny and water. That this has been successfully done in recent history hardly needs to be reminded.

Success of anti-Sikh forces is rendered possible by the ignorance of our people and the 'sailable' nature of our political leaders. It is now imperative that some honest people having welfare of the Punjab, the country, and humanity at heart should enter the field of action. By a general consensus, it has been decided to create the above named forum to pursue Punjab's interest and to strive for a just solution according to the prevalent constitution.

The forum will attempt mainly four tasks detailed below:

It will agitate matters in the relevant judicial forums with a view to getting justice according to the constitution of India. To leave this in the hands of the politicians is very dangerous as recent history of the case demonstrates.

Secondly, it will try to answer the uninformed prejudices being spread about the Punjab and the Sikhs all over India as that can result only in the massacre of the Sikh people just like in the recent past. PRWF will try to nip the evil in the bud.

Thirdly, knowing full well that no justice can be forthcoming from

the judicial system which has been successfully subverted by the Hindutva forces, it will try to internationalise the issue or Punjab's river water with the hope that international public opinion may be able to help in securing justice.

Fourthly, it will attempt educating the people of the Punjab using the print and electronic Media so that robbing the awakened may be rendered somewhat difficult.

For this purpose, the Punjab River Water Forum requests Sikhs and Punjabis all over the world to form local forums in all the countries in which they live. These may be called, '(country's name) Forum for River Water Justice.' These forums should get affiliated to the Punjab River Water Forum (PRWF) and help it in carrying out the outlined tasks.

An attempt is being made to organise such forums in every village and town of the Punjab to help the central forum in disseminating factual information and smothering disinformation on the Punjab's river water issue.

The importance of carrying on a world wide campaign cannot be minimised. It may be the only way to secure justice, the only way to avoid another massacre of the Sikhs in India and the only way to make the future of our coming generations viable in the 'land of our Gurus.' It may legitimately be deemed to be a service to humanity.

Remaining in touch almost every day will be required so every forum should provide its e-mail address to the PRWF. Resources permitting, an attempt will be made to have a website manned by the PRWF to post the relevant material for all to assess. An early response is requested as the events are developing fast. Regards, Gurtej Singh. July 26, 2004. Chandigarh, Water Forum, #742 Sector 8, Chandigarh-160009

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Dear friends of Punjab's Rivers,

We of the Forum at Chandigarh wrote the following **letter to the President of India**. You may also sign this petition and send it to the President directly. Unless you have the intention to meet the President, you may erase the last sentence in the body of the petition/letter. Though superfluous, the need to remain courteous cannot be overstressed. Our model in this regard should be the Zafarnamah of Guru Gobind Singh, the most cultured person of that age and the ideal for all ages.

Please give it as wide publicity as possible. People must know how we are being wronged. Those of you who can arrange to, may meet your representative in the parliament etc. to keep them informed about the situation as it is developing. **Our exercise has two aims:** **One** is to prevent a large scale massacre of our youth by drawing them into violent pretexts with the help of agents de provocateur as was done in the eighties and the nineties of the last century. We perceive the build up rushing in that direction. **The second** one is to try and get justice. One way (let us hope) of ensuring it is to make the facts as well known as possible.

While we will continue to spread the word as we are now doing, please explore the possibility of taking the water case to the international forums. Please also explore as to how the expenses will be met? Does anyone have an idea of how much it will cost?

We in India will try to become a party to the case in the Supreme Court.

Is there anyone who can design a BEAUTIFUL website on the issue? It can be manned by any one living outside but we in the Punjab River Water Forum will alone decide what is to be included. This is for the simple reason that we have been dealing with the problem for the last twenty years and are much better equipped to know how the case is to be presented. With regards and all good wishes, Gurtej Singh, July 30, 2004.

Punjab River Water Forum
#742 Sector 8, Chandigarh-160009

July 29, 2004

To

**His Excellency A. P. J. Abdul Kalam,
The President of India, New Delhi**

Dear Mr. President,

Any people would be proud of having a serious person genuinely devoted to research as its President. We, the undersigned, are very humble people and have ventured to bring certain facts to your notice in the hope that the researcher in you will at once recognise the truth we present. We are attempting to represent the beleaguered and the much abused people of the Punjab, for we fear as the matters are developing, another massacre of the Punjabi youth is being rendered imminent. The truth we represent is our only strength and we expect it to be recognised by the President of a country whose motto enshrined in the constitution is 'truth shall triumph' ("*satyamev jayate*.")

Your Excellency has referred the Punjab Termination of Agreements Act 2004 to the Supreme Court of India for advice. Commenting on this an eminent journalist has said, "President (has been) used as a postman to refer the dispute to the Supreme Court." (Rajinder Puri, *The Tribune*, July 25, 2004, 13). Surely it is not a happy situation. If Rajasthan or Haryana had any objection to the Act adopted by the Punjab legislature in the exercise of its legitimate legislative powers granted to it by the constitution, they could have gone to the Supreme Court. Why did you government lend the immense prestige of your august office to support a partisan venture of those desperately seeking to rob the Punjab at gun point? Some other journalists allege that your office was used merely as a rubber stamp. It is very distressing to realise that a person of your intellectual eminence was possibly so used. To whom shall the deprived section of the people confidently turn for a hearing of their grievances if the first citizen of the country is talked about as nothing more than a "postman" and a "rubber-stamp." Surely it does not augur well for the health of the Union!

Your Excellency will be surprised to know that the terms of reference have been meticulously designed to solicit a desired advice. Basic questions regarding the river water 'dispute' have been carefully avoided. Your Excellency must be aware that the 'distribution' of Punjab river water is done by the central government under Sections 78, 79 and 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966. Many states in India have been reorganised on linguistic basis since 1950 but in none other reorganising law have corresponding sections been included. This is because these militate against the constitution and would have been immediately struck down as illegal. Many times the government and the people of the Punjab have approached the

Supreme Court to pronounce upon their constitutional validity, but every time they have been prevented by mean tricks and as often by downright base stratagem from obtaining a proper court verdict. (See Appendix for one example of base stratagem). We request Your Excellency to have the Supreme Court advise you whether these sections of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966 are compatible with the constitutional provisions.

Another act has been amended to facilitate the loot of the Punjab's river water. It is the Interstate River Waters Act 1956. We hope and pray that your Excellency could ask your law department to have a good look at the map of north-west India and say whether the rivers Ravi, Beas and Satluj are purely Punjab rivers or inter-state rivers? Since they flow only in the territory of the Punjab, surely the amendment to incorporate the Longowal-Rajiv Accord is misplaced and not only defies the constitution but also common sense and geography. By such provisions we, in the Punjab, have been robbed of our only natural resource.

The very first 'agreement' on water sharing, was affected in a hush-hush manner by the Union Irrigation minister and two Deputy Secretaries from Punjab and Rajasthan on January 29, 1955. It deprived the Punjab of more than one half of a river (8 MAF of water). It was kept a closely guarded secret for several decades. The procedure for agreements is written in the constitution. We implore Your Excellency to have the Supreme Court advise you whether, according to law proceedings of a meeting are an adequate substitute for an inter-state agreement?

Equally earnestly we request Your Excellency to ask the Supreme Court to advise you whether in the law of any country can there be an 'agreement' which just takes away the most precious possession of one party and gives it nothing in return? The law on the point is so well settled that even a third class magistrate would throw out such an 'agreement' as a worthless scrap of paper. And yet on the basis of such scraps of paper, this state of the proud, the most productive and the most patriotic people has been robbed of its river water.

We are approaching you in the well settled tradition of the humblest in the land approaching the mightiest when they have an overriding Truth to share. It was in this tradition that one small man held the dictator of the mightiest empire on earth by the shirt sleeve and warned him of the 'ides of March.' We request you to recall the reference already made to the Supreme Court, or in the alternative to supplement it with such queries as we are bringing to your kind notice and to ask for advice afresh, if at all it must be sought. The dice of seeking advice, cast by your honourable ministers in your name is loaded and will not result in justice, but in bloodshed as the Punjab Legislative Assembly has warned. Some such device had resulted in widespread massacre in the plains of Kurukshetra some millennia ago.

In conclusion, we request you to also seek the Supreme Court's advice on the following points:

- 1). Whether Sections 78, 79 and 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966 are in consonance with the provisions of the constitution and its effect on the government's order of March 1976?
- 2). Whether the verbatim incorporation of a political deal in the Interstate River Water Disputes Act 1956 is in accord with the constitution.

While we write the above to Your Excellency, our hearts are full with a dozen sordid tales. Each one of them is more appalling than the other. All of them tell, how shabbily the people who swore to 'protect and preserve the constitution of India as by law established,' have treated the Punjab and the Punjabis throwing all constitutional propriety to the winds. We, the humblest of the land would like to share all that with one of its greatest sons, should Your Excellency be able to spare half an hour for us on any date at your earliest convenience.

With sincerest regard, Yours faithfully,

APPENDIX

STATE OF THE LAW

Anatomy of a Case

That writ petitions challenging provisions of an Act of Parliament and other issues of great public importance should not only take about 2 years to be admitted for final hearing but within days of admission the High Court be deprived of deciding the same, sound somewhat strange. But this is reality.

A writ petition under Article 226 of the Constitution was filed in January 1982 in the High Court of Punjab and Haryana. The petitioners were organisations like the Kisan Sabha, legislators and other public figures. They were challenging the validity of Section 78 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act as well as Central Government's decision to allocate water of River Beas (which follows through the State of Punjab) between Punjab, Haryana and Himachal.

At the preliminary hearing, notice to show cause as to the locus standi of the petitioners was issued to Union of India and various States. Four other petitions were also thereafter filed in the same High Court. Nothing was decided at a number of hearings before different Benches. Ultimately, on 1-11-1983, a Bench comprising of Chief Justice Sandhawalia and Justice S.S. Sodhi admitted the petitions and directed the petitions to be heard on 15.11.1983 by a Full Bench in view of the long delay that had already taken place.

Some States moved like lightning. They asked Supreme Court to grant Special Leave to Appeal from the Order of the High Court admitting the writ petitions. Request was made on 3 occasions to list the Special Leave Petition, which were intended to be filed, before 14.11.1983 but the Supreme Court declined the same.

In the meanwhile, a Special Full Bench was constituted by High Court before which the hearing of the petitions was to commence on 15.11.1983. The Full Bench comprised of Chief Justice Sandhawalia and Justice S.C. Mittal and S.S. Sodhi.

On the morning of 14.11.1983 the Attorney General made an oral request before the Chief Justice of India and on the oral request the proceedings in the High Court were stayed. On 14.11.1983 itself, i.e., the day before the Full Bench was to commence hearing of the petitions, the Central Government transferred Chief Justice Sandhawalia to Patna High Court.

On 18.11.1983, the Supreme Court not only granted Special Leave to Appeal from the High Court's Order admitting the petition but in exercise of powers under Article 139 A of the Constitution, withdrew all the five petitions pending in the High Court to be heard by the Supreme Court. Under Article 139A the power of the

Supreme Court to transfer a case from High Court to itself is confined to a situation where two similar cases are pending before two or more High Courts or in a High Court and the Supreme Court.

Obviously, this is to prevent any eventuality where conflicting decisions may follow to the case, however the petitions were pending only in one High Court and therefore Article 139A was not attracted. Moreover, four of the petitions were transferred without even giving notice to the petitioners contrary to the Rules framed by the Supreme Court itself. The Supreme Court Rules requires one month's notice to be given to the parties in cases which are sought to be transferred.

The Constitution of India provides for writ petitions as an extraordinary remedy where other efficacious and effective remedy may not be available. These writ petitions deal with the challenge to the allocation of river waters of Punjab to other non-riparian States. The issue underlying these petitions is highly sensitive and the challenge to the Award of the Central Government is on the ground that it is illegal, arbitrary and biased.

LESSONS FROM SGPC ELECTIONS

Dear Sardar Sher Sahib,

Gur Fateh. Because of your sincerity and devotion to serve the Sikh Panth I have been motivated to write you this letter. Many well-wishers of the Panth, and I think you too, have been disappointed at the outcome of the SGPC Elections. Brahmans will continue to tighten the rope of the very strong net, in which they have caught the Sikh Panth (my book, "Sikhism Under Brahmanical Siege").

I was participating in the Sikh Youth Camp held in the Gurdwara Brampton, Toronto from 5- 16 July. A couple of the organizers discussed the causes of the inability of even the four Sikh leaders to remove (as expected) the existing management, which everybody labeled as corrupt and anti-Panthic.

Here is the translation of what I heard in Punjabi:

1. One person observed, "Sikh Sangat is disgusted by the behavior of all the leaders, whether the chair-holders or their opponents. Tell me whom could you vote for? All of the four parties, trying to oust Badal, merely opposed the management without having any joint agenda of their own to convince the voters. All of them are jealous of one another and they too have their vested interests to be served by getting elected.

Education of the Sikh voter and image of the Sikh community are missing from their agenda. Because of their mutual hatred and intolerance, the four parties could not unite together to decide on one common agenda and to form one united front. They criticized the management but without giving any solid program acceptable to the voters."

2. The second voice said, "I told you that if I was in Punjab, I would not have voted for any of the parties. The voters did the same; there were a very small percentage of voters who cast their votes. I don't want to vote for the existing management, but there is none to be chosen from the other parties. It is unfortunate that none of the groups does any service to the Panth or give any leadership for

building the honour of the Sikhs. New leaders, instead of cooperating, criticized each other, even fights have been reported among two of them. No party did the sensible thing of challenging the voter's list containing so many non-Sikh names, which obviously were included by the existing corrupt management. How could they defeat the existing management, who were all organized, they worked to win the elections, and they spoke with one voice, under one leader?"

3. A third voice said, "Sikhs vote for the Panth, not for a party. Have you forgotten that when all the Sants were together to oust the Panth, three times they failed badly even when helped by the then Governments. The reason, the Maryada of one Sant does not agree with that of the other Sant. Even though they all formed one officially united party, as ordered by the Government, but the Sangat knows that each Sant preaches his own Maryada, rather than the Panthic Maryada. Few Sikhs voted for the Sants even though 80% of Sikhs are followers of the Sants."

4. Another voice said, "If we want to replace them, we need some clean honest leaders, who should work with the Sikhs without caring for the chairs. Such leaders will win the hearts of the Sikhs but it will need four to five years of sewa, before they can convince the Sangat of their being genuine Sikhs. These political leaders wanted to gain chairs without any agenda for serving the Sikh interests. Tell me what positive service they have done so far for the welfare of the Sikhs. Hence they always faced a total failure, whether they competed in political or in SGPC elections. There is no such leader who will sacrifice and do sewa without his vested interests. The Panth respects Sewadars. The selection of Nawab Kapoor Singh to be the Jathedar of the Khalsa is a proof of it. Our leaders want chairs only by pushing the others instead of themselves doing sewa, and that is where we fail."

The first one said, "Tell me how the old Akalis (Singh Sabha) could defeat the Mahants and the British Government? They awakened the Sikh community for more than 25 years. They preached Panthic Maryada against the Mahant management practising Hindu Maryada. Their agenda was to make Sikhs feel proud of their faith. Without the love of chairs, they willingly made sacrifices for the Sikh faith. Is there any such leader among us today? The present management will continue until true Sikhs come forward, and preach Sikh faith instead of just criticizing the management. Only such Sikhs will be accepted to replace the management."

The third voiced: "We have so many good and committed Sikhs, why don't they come forward?-----". One voice responded, "Those in chairs don't let any good Sikh come near them. They defamed sincere Sikhs." This went on and on. I heard this discussion and decided to write to you about it. Regarding the outcome of this election, let us not blame the voters. The opposition did not Pqualify to attract the voters.

I agree with the above conclusions and that is why I am writing it to you.

Therefore, my request to you is to choose the path of preaching Sikh faith among the Sikhs, both in India and abroad (you have your centers all over and they agree with you). Nothing can be done without forming a well-knit organization and you have it.

Now we should not waste any more of your time and money on pointing fingers on others, every Sikh knows about the leaders. The Sangat is helpless because they do not find a suitable person to choose from among them. In brief I will restate it for you:

- 1) Develop a system for the reconciliation of the Sikhs fighting for the control of Gurdwaras in America. Millions of dollars are wasted in the courts to take control of the Gurdwaras. Instead of sitting together and letting the Sangat decide, we practice violence in the Gurdwaras to oust the other group all in the name of the Panth. By this, they defamed the community and do irreparable damage to the image Panth. Motivate the Presidents of the Gurdwaras to serve the Panth rather than following their vested interests so that Gurdwaras can serve their purpose. I know it is not an easy task, otherwise many would have attempted to do it. We must try, we may not succeed 100%, but our efforts will help us to win the faith of the Sangat and to be accepted as leaders of the Panth. This will make people listen to us.
- 2) Sikhs ruin their lives by use of excessive alcohol. Let us guide them and help them quit.
- 3) Teaching Gurmukhi to the youth, holding seminars and youth camps for spreading the Sikh Philosophy and the information regarding the services rendered by the Khalsa for protecting the human rights of the weak, our great heritage.
- 4) Look to the suggestions given by Dr. Khaira, published in the bulletin and practice them. (SB July 2003 ED)

I am with you for any positive step you plan to take. If you could perform 10% of any of the above services to the Panth, Sikhs will have faith in you and vote for you. With Best Wishes

Yours Sincerely,

Gurbakhsh Singh USA

**RESOLUTION PASSED AT INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF SIKH STUDIES HELD AT YORK
UNIVERSITY,
MAY 22ND AND 23RD, 2004**

It has come to the notice of Sikh scholars and reading Sikh public that Dr. Doris R. Jakobsh presently an instructor in Religion, Renison College, University of Waterloo, Canada has recently published the book titled, "Relocating Gender in Sikh History: Transformation, Meaning, and Identity" has denigrated the Sikh doctrine of equality of genders which is incorporated in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The Sikh Scholars and the Sikhs of North America gathered at this International Conference, organised by the Gursikh Sabha Canada of Scarborough, Ontario (at York University) held on May 22 and 23, 2004 unanimously resolve that the Senate and the President of the University of Waterloo where Dr. Doris Jakobsh presently teaches, should be informed about her unauthentic and unacademic approach in hurting the religious sensibilities of the Sikh Community. It appears she has violated all norms of Ethnic research set by SSHRC Granting Programs, August, 1993. We request investigation of this matter and the needful action.

Dr. Jasbir Singh Mann M.D.,M.S.,

F.I.C.S.,F.A.A.O.S.,D.Lit.(Hon.), California, USA

Dr. S.S. Sodhi PhD, Former Professor, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada

Dr. Gurmel Singh Sidhu, Professor, Cal State Fresno, California, USA

Prof Kashmir Singh, Dept. of Law, G.N.D University, Amritsar, India

Dr. Kulwinder Singh, Head Sikh History Research Dept, Khalsa College, Amritsar, India

Dr. Gurnek Singh, Head Dept. Of Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Punjabi University, Patiala, India

Prof. Gurdarshan Singh Dhillon, Department of History, Punjab University, Chandigarh, India

Dr. Gurnam Kaur, Prof and Head Dept of Guru Granth Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, India

Dr. Balwant Singh Dhillon, Head Dept. of Guru Nanak Studies, G.N.D. University, Amritsar, India

Narinder Singh, Author of Canadian Sikhs, Ottawa, Canada

Kuldeep Singh, Chairman of World Sikh Council America Region, Toledo, Ohio, USA

Dr. Harpal Singh Pannu, Professor of Sikh Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, India.

REDUCED TO ASHES

A Book Review by Dr. I.J.Singh, NY

REDUCED TO ASHES: The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab. (Final Report: Volume 1). By Ram Narayan Kumar with Amrik Singh, Ashok Agrwaal and Jaskaran Kaur. South Asia Forum for Human Rights, Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2003. 635 pages.

TWENTY YEARS OF IMPUNITY: The November 1984 Pogroms of Sikhs in India. By Jaskaran Kaur with a Foreword by Barbara Crossette. Ensaaf, USA, June 2004. 150 Pages.

Reviewed by: I.J. Singh, New York University

The release of the book REDUCED TO ASHES was deliberately timed for June 2003. Twenty years ago, it was in June 1984 that the Indian army attacked the premier gurdwara (temple) of the Sikhs – The Golden Temple – and forty other gurdwaras across the north Indian state of Punjab. It was this attack more than anything else that set into motion the events chronicled in the book – the insurgency in the Punjab and the horrendous record of human rights violations by the Indian government that are only partially documented in this report.

The violations included mass roundups of young Sikhs and virtual emptying of Punjabi villages by the police. Young male Sikhs were incarcerated for years without trial or any opportunity to defend themselves. Many still languish in prison without any trial or legal redress. Freely utilized by the police, as instruments of "pacification" were abduction, rape and torture, even killings in staged encounters. It might shock readers to know that police had quotas of arrests and killings in order to earn rewards and bonuses.

CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation), India's equivalent of the FBI finally admitted staged encounters as well as illegal, undocumented and mass cremations of hundreds, but corrective actions have yet to be initiated. Even though directed by the Supreme Court of India to do so, the CBI has failed to investigate any. The insurgency in Punjab ended over a decade ago but as yet there has been no attempt at a complete accounting of the dead and maimed. Human rights activists, like Jaswant Singh Khalra, who protested too loudly or investigated too vigorously disappeared; their tortured bodies surfaced just as mysteriously, sans explanation.

The CBI finally admitted to 582 fully identified, 278 partially identified and 1238 unidentified cremations. Official records now admit that perhaps a little over 2000 people disappeared in those

troubled times, but these figures are from three crematoria alone in only the district of Amritsar. Independent observers estimate the numbers to be at least ten times larger. Many who were cremated by the police remain only partially or incompletely identified.

The book provides a useful chapter on the genesis of the insurgency in Punjab that was driven largely by the political ambitions of Indira Gandhi, who was then the Prime Minister of India. It provides an able analysis of the many inquiry commissions that were appointed under pressure but were extremely circumscribed in their authority and mandate. How the Indian judiciary was circumvented and tamed makes a riveting tale. Reproductions from official documents of mass cremations, along with personal interviews with surviving relatives of those who permanently disappeared while in police custody, complete this case against official malfeasance.

That India's record in human rights deserves critical scrutiny is beyond argument. For instance, as recently as two years ago (2002) several thousand Muslims were killed in a Gujarat by raging Hindu mobs with, it now appears, the active collusion and support of the government. Amnesty International has issued several highly critical reports on the imbroglio in Punjab and the failure of the government. (Amnesty International has not been permitted by the Indian government to enter India.) Indian citizens, primarily non-Sikh, have also issued several smaller booklets; the government banned many of these. But this book is the most complete recounting so far, and we have in our hands only the first volume. The second volume promises hundreds of case reports, and personal testimony of ordinary people who feared governmental repercussions and reprisals for daring to speak.

In the 1990's Yugoslavia and South Africa, emerging out of a period of horrendous violations of civil rights of their citizens, chose to confront their past by appointing "Truth and Reconciliation Commissions." Without such actions a government risks losing its credibility internally with its own citizens and externally with the international community. Also in neglect, the historical record is lost or tainted. This report on Punjab is a serious attempt to capture and preserve history by giving the victims a voice and to shift the focus of human rights in India from rhetoric to the healing power of truth and reconstruction.

Ram Narayan Kumar, the lead author based in Austria and Ashok Agrwal, a lawyer and human rights activist are both non-Sikhs. Of the Sikh coauthors Amrik Singh is a human rights activist in Punjab and Jaskaran Kaur is a 2003 graduate of Harvard Law School. It should be noted that this report, issued by the "*Committee for the Coordination of Disappearances in Punjab*" (CCDP), was published and printed outside India, in Nepal; the authors were afraid that it would be seized and suppressed if published in India.

The CCDP was started in 1997 to collect and collate information about people who have disappeared from all over the state, to evolve a workable system of state accountability, and to lobby for India to change its laws in conformity with the UN instruments on torture and enforced disappearances etc. The report carries an introduction by Peter Rosenblum, Director of the Human rights Program at Harvard Law School, and starts with evidence of mass illegal cremations and the attempt by the Supreme Court of India to intervene on a petition on behalf of those who were missing and unaccounted for in police custody. This is followed by extensive

discussion of the case of Jaswant Singh Khalra who first released copies of official documents that confirmed the complicity of security agencies in the undocumented and secret cremations of thousands of people abducted by the police. As a result Khalra was abducted by armed police commandoes in 1995, never to be seen alive again.

The report next provides a fairly detailed narrative on the tortured history of human rights and the failure of the political process in Punjab. This is necessary to understand the issues in Punjab and how they were so mishandled that they brought India to the brink of fragmentation. The movement on Punjab was not secessionist though it was so cast by Indira Gandhi.

The Indian government enacted draconian laws to deal harshly with political issues that allowed years of incarceration without trial. The Punjab police was transformed into an instrument of torture with quotas and rewards for summary killings of suspected terrorists. The rise of a nascent human rights organization in the face of governmental harassment and opposition is well documented, as is the diminution of the Indian judiciary to an instrument of the government.

Since the body of the report consists of interviews with survivors of the police torture or the relatives of those did not, the interview process is critical. Everything hangs on the veracity of the witnesses, cross checking of the information, and in the process confidentiality and safety have to be assured. In the politically volatile and dangerous Punjab this was not always easy, but Kumar and his team have achieved a near miracle. The interview process is well laid out.

Now this painfully detailed report has been followed by a "*Twenty Years of impunity*" that carries a foreword by Barbara Crossette, the noted correspondent for the New York Times, who covered the horrendous events in Punjab. It details the killings of Sikhs that continued for a decade after 1984, and the denial of justice. In the meantime many an investigative commission was appointed, more to obscure the truth than to expose it.

Jaskaran Kaur lists the arguments that the Indian government posited to these commissions to justify why police failed to protect any Sikhs or arrest any of the killers. In the submissions of the administrative hierarchy, police inaction was based 1) on the presumption that there was widespread simmering resentment against the Sikhs due to acts of omission and commission, overt and covert; 2) common pattern of allegations that Sikhs were armed with *kirpans* and that's why the mob had armed with lathis and wooden sticks, and had the mob been organized it would have been armed with deadly weapons; 3) time was too short to plan and organize a response to the mob violence; 4) the charged atmosphere created by the assassination of the prime minister; and finally 5) that the few people who were arrested belonged to different areas, indicating that they were not a part of an organized conspiracy.

Such a submission from governmental authority would be laughable if it was not so painfully absurd. It is now clearly and repeatedly established that within hours of Indira Gandhi's assassination, mobs armed with guns, in trucks loaded with kerosene arrived at Sikh localities. They carried lists of which and

factories were Sikh owned and which were not. They killed Sikhs, looted and burnt their property selectively while sparing others. Policemen stood by, watched the show and actively jeered while they egged on the looters.

Keep in mind that in India weapons are not easily obtained, they are licensed. In 1984 one could not buy kerosene on the open market, trucks are few and at a premium and lists of house owners take time to procure.

To me the carnage of Sikhs in 1984 speaks of a high degree of very efficient organization and management that I would term a criminal conspiracy.

Both books contain documentation that is a monumental undertaking and a painful read. They are all the more significant because India is the largest democracy on earth and, with Israel, perhaps the only other functioning one in that corner of the world. India's and neighboring Pakistan's nuclear capabilities make this an area ready to blow. That is more than ample reason for the world to pay attention to the fissiparous internal dissensions within India.

July 13, 2004

TEMPLES OR TREES?

Dya Singh, Australia

Let me share a lovely poem I came across. A poem which started me thinking - whether perhaps we need more trees than "Gurdwaras" - perhaps some of them should be called Sikh 'committee-dwaras', 'ritual-dwaras', 'gurudom or saadhdom-dwaras', 'jaat-paat-dwaras', 'Jang-dwaras', or even just Sikh centres for political infighting.

**But first, let us enjoy the lovely poem titled
'Trees' by Joyce Kilmer (1914)**

*I think I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree
A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet-flowing breast
A tree that looks to God all day
And lifts her leafy arms to pray
A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair
Upon whose bosom snow has lain
Who lives intimately with rain
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God, can make a tree!*

My late venerable father, Giani Harchand Singh 'Bassian' who, in his quest, to do Panthic sewa in Malaysia (formerly Malaya) from 1948 to 1969, unfortunately also had some very traumatic and sad experiences at the hands of Gurdwara committees as a Granthi Sahib. He had a saying in line with his experiences, "when Gurdwaras were modest and made of wood, to serve the spiritual and community needs of the local sangat, Waheguru visited and Guru Ji resided in them. When committees became ambitious, and Gurdwaras improved to imposing stone and marble buildings, Waheguru Ji stopped visiting and Guru Ji resides in body only in the

form of Guru Granth Sahib but not in spirit any more, and prem (love) took flight!"

I was, virtually, born in a Gurdwara, as Babu Ji was a Punjabi schoolteacher, missionary, ragi and unfortunately, due to economic circumstances, a Granthi Sahib. Now I travel worldwide doing kirtan - sometimes in gurdwaras. I have, no doubt seen some 'love-filled' Gurdwaras; especially amongst small 'sangats' but generally, the large Gurdwaras, especially the very imposing buildings of stone and marble, in major Sikh centers of the world appear 'loveless' and friendless. They are hotspots of trouble, factional bickering and political infighting. They are, nevertheless, filled with 24 hour 'service' of food, 'Akhand Paths' and 'kirtan darbars'. We have Sikh temples (for these cannot claim to be "Gurdwaras") for 'Ramgharias', 'Ravdasias', 'Pothoharis', 'Rodays', 'Sehajdharis,' and other 'Sikh denominations. 'Sants' and "gurudoms" have their own 'taksals' or 'thaths' and denominations like Radha Swamis, Namdharis, Nirankaris, Sewa Panthis etc. have their own 'ashrams' or 'deras'.

Perhaps we need smaller, 'modest', localized, non-denominational 'guru-ghars' filled with Guru Ji's blessings and love, to cater for the spiritual and also perhaps social needs of our Sikh communities and lovingly open to all who want to attend.

In a small village called Woodford in Queensland, an hour's drive north from Brisbane is the Woodford Folk Festival, held every year after Christmas. We have been doing kirtan in this festival for the last decade. The highlight of this festival, normally on the last day of the year, is the 'Fire Event'. Neil and Farida Cameron and their team of volunteers build a 'theme' over a period of six days while the festival goes on, and on the final day, in a very elaborate and moving ceremony, with live music and dancing, the 'theme' is set on fire with an elaborate fireworks display. It is a great two-hour spectacle for a crowd of sometimes 35 to 40 thousand.

At the end of Year 1999 ushering in Year 2000, the theme was a five storey high wooden Buddhist Pagoda with 5000 candles in it. It was set alight at the end of the night to a spectacular display of fireworks and our group with a five hundred strong 'non-Sikh, Non-Indian' choir singing 'Aadh Gur-ay Namaih, Jugadh Gur-ay Namaih, Satgur-ay Namaih, Sri Guru dev-ay Namaih". I asked Neil after the event, as the flames were dying down, and we were standing around celebrating another very successful event, what was the significance of burning down a beautiful and lovingly built Pagoda? His answer was profound. We build monuments to remember God, or seek 'nirwana'. But in time, we become prisoners to the buildings leading to in-fighting, corruption, and many other 'ungodly' actions. We forget why we built

these monuments in the first place – they become 'power bases' for those interested only in power, intrigue and foul-play. So, once in a while, perhaps we should burn down these monuments to remind ourselves why we built them in the first place and that we have not become prisoners to them and fallen into political intrigue or ritualistic pursuits or encouragement of rituals in the pursuit of making money to upkeep these buildings.

Yes, I have seen and visited some 'soul-less' Gurdwaras in my time. Strange I thought, Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat have been destroyed, sometimes razed to the ground, a number of times in the short history of the complex. But do we learn our lessons as to why we (or our Guru Ji) built them in the first place?

Here is Joyce Kilmer's poem again but with some 'changes' by me:

*I think that I shall never see
A temple as lovely as a tree
A tree that looks to God all day
And lifts her leafy arms to pray
A tree knows no restrictions or limitations
Of race, religion, cult, color or denomination
All the great sages, in nature and wilderness free
Sought enlightenment and held discourses
On the 'mound', by rivers and under the Tree
Temples are made by fools like me
But only Waheguru can make a tree.*

May we have the blessings of Waheguru Ji to go back to 'basics' - why we build temples in the first place and try to understand why, what happens in them in a very short period and perhaps attempt to eliminate these malpractices... perhaps sit under a shady tree once in a while and sing Gurbani or hold discourses on Sikhi - like Guru Nanak did!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I do not want to start any kind of argument with the author of the article 'Who am I' in the latest issue of your publication. But I have to explain something to him that I have explained before and no doubt will have to explain again and again.

The call from Guru Gobind Singh asking for heads, for total commitment, not only went out in 1699, but goes out every day and every minute. Those that hear this call not only follow the general teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, but will show their commitment not just in their behaviour, in their defence of the defenceless, fight against injustice, but will also adopt the uniform of Guru, which consists of the 5 Ks.

They are recognisable Sikhs, so that everybody knows that these are people who will help them out in a difficult situation.

Those people, call them by whatever name you like (I like to use 'initiated Sikhs') should most definitely not look down on anybody who has not taken amrit. They should be full of humility, they

should be the servants of all. There are too many initiated Sikhs who just took Amrit because they wanted to be the pardhan of the Gurdwara, or a ragi or granthi, but who have none of the inner qualities that Guru requires.

Of course a mona who is the servant of all is a far better person than an amritdhari who has no humility, who does not do true seva, who does not care about truth and justice.

But do not blame Guru Gobind Singh for the mistakes of these false amritdharis.

Bawa Singh Jagdev, you do not have to take amrit, you have to follow the path that you see before you. But do not try to destroy one of the most beautiful institutions of Sikhi. I know that I have done very well for myself in the spiritual sense by taking amrit. It has not made me into a perfect person, I am still likely to make mistakes. I am not always in spiritual balance. But when I do make mistakes, it is much easier to admit to them, and when I lose my spiritual balance it is much easier to get my balance back.

You gain when you hear Guru's call, and act on it. But not taking amrit does not make you into a bad person. We all have to find our own way to Guru. Gurfateh,

Harjinder Singh harjindersinghkhalsa@btinternet.com

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I acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of bimonthly "The Sikh Bulletin" for the months of June-July 2004 on 17-06-2004, posted by some well - wisher in Australia.

Whenever Editor in Chief does not agree with any writer/author or he wishes to give his views, footnote is generally added at the end of Article. But at the end of "WHO AM I" by Bawa Singh Jagdev, there is no such footnote at page 8 which shows that Editor in Chief has no objection whether any Sikh trims his beard or takes alcoholic drinks or does not follow the Sikh Reht Maryada (SGPC)!

If we go by Aims and Objectives of the Singh Sabha Lehr/Singh Sabha International (The Sikh Bulletin - December 2001) and SSI's Resolution Nos. 1 and 2 (The Sikh Bulletin - August 2002) then said article should not have been published because trimming of beard is tantamount to cutting SSI's roots !If SSI is in the company of apostate and perforce Sikhs then how can you achieve your aims and objectives?

At page 32 of the Sant Sipahi - May 2004, Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh has already been ridiculed because he is shown in the company of one Gursikh and other two Patits! Eagerly awaiting your advice/reaction to my observations.

Gurmit Singh,

General Secretary, Sikh Khalsa Mission Inc. (NSW-Australia)

[A Sikh is a lifelong learner. We cannot learn if we do not question. Bawa Singh has raised some very basic questions that need the scrutiny of people like you with one particular viewpoint and Gurnam Singh Sanghera with another. Our readers learn from this type of dialogue. Those who study and admire the Sikh beliefs which are very logical and scientific (compatible with *Hukam*) ask very specific questions: To become a Sikh do they have to adopt Panjabi culture, names, dress, food, keep unshorn hair, wear turban and carry a sword? Were Bhatti Sardar Rai Bular, Mardana, Mian Mir, Pir Budhu Shah, Bhai Ghanahiya and Bhai Nand Lal Sikhs? In this issue Alan Basarke raises similar questions (p.11). She definitely considers herself a Sikh, is married to a Punjab born Sikh but adds neither Singh nor Kaur to her name. Do we deny her belief? ED.]

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Dear Gurmit Singh Ji, Sat Siri Akal.

I have not made any comments on your thoughts regarding Sikhi and so-called apostasy. I just raised certain questions. You have not answered those questions. You have not provided any hymn or verse out of Sri Guru Nanak Sahib to affirm, confirm or to justify your ideas. Your verbose doesn't confirm anything. You have stated that a Sikh should look like a Sikh as ordained by Guru Sahiban. Gurubani is the touchstone and does Gurubani mention physical features of a Sikh? What does it mean that a Sikh should look like a Sikh? Does Gurubani mention that a Sikh should have cut or uncut hair or does Gurubani mention about dress code? Has Bani of six Gurus, saints, bhagats mentioned the outward appearances of a Sikh? Does Gurubani categorise Sikhs? Are you sure that any of the Gurus, from Guru Nanak ji to Guru Teg Bahadur Ji ordained the physical appearance of a Sikh? Are you saying that a Sikh and Khalsa are the same? Guru Gobind Singh created Khalsa. What does Gurubani say about Amrit, Khalas, Sikh, Kesh, long hair and outwardly dresses etc? You have said that mirror won't deceive us. So you seem to be talking about outwardly appearances and Gurubani has enunciated a lot about appearances. Gurubani is the mirror and delve into its deep implicit and explicit meanings contextually. Gurubani states that truthful living is the highest -that is practical life and Gurubani teachings be implemented in daily living. Does Gurubani divide people on the basis of cut and uncut hair or on the basis of different types of dresses? I have not created any doubt but I just asked questions and I am doing same again. Isn't it ordained that Sri Guru Granth Sahib is to guide us and the Word is the Guru? Similes, metaphors and allegories are to make us understand and nobody should draw inferential meanings according to one's own whims or ideology. I have just asked questions. If need be, then I may write an article. Literature about Sikhs and Sikh history needs revisiting and analysis. But this is another different aspect.

Gurnam Singh Sanghera, Surrey, Canada

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I received a copy of Sikh Bulletin last week. I am very pleased to read the contents. You are doing a wonderful job to save and put forward the Sikh Religion. At present it is at wrong track. Thank you for the good work and keep it up.

Balvinder Singh Gill, UK

ਸੰਪਾਦਕੀ

(From Vishav Sikh Bulletin June 2004)

ਇਰਾਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਮਰੀਕੀਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਜੰਗੀ ਕੈਦੀਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਿਆਨਕ ਜ਼ੁਲਮਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਸਵੀਰਾਂ ਦਿਲ-ਕੰਥਾਉ ਸਨ। ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦੇ ਨਸ਼ੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੜ੍ਹਚ, ਸੈਕੂਲਰਇਜ਼ਮ ਦੇ ਦੌਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਲ ਵੇਚ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਖ਼ੁਰਦੀ ਮੁੰਡੇ-ਕੁੜੀਆਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਵਹਿਸ਼ਤ ਉੱਤੇ ਉਤਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਵੱਡੇ-ਵੱਡੇ ਹੋਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਕਾਰਵਾਈਆਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਲਾਂਜਲੀ ਦੇਣ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਕਦਰਾਂ-ਕੀਮਤਾਂ, ਅਧਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੁਈ ਮੁੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ। ਧਰਮ ਹੀ ਇੱਕ ਓਹਲਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਅੰਦਰ ਉੱਸਲਵੱਟੇ ਲੈਂਦੀ ਹੋਵਾਨੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਢੱਕ ਕੇ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ: “ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਢਾਕਿ ਲੀਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਪਾਪੀ ਪੜਦਾ ॥”

ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਫ਼ੌਜੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਨੀਚਤਾ ਦੀ ਰੱਜ ਕੇ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਹੋਈ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਣੀ ਵੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਸੀ। ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੱਭਿਅਤਾ ਦਾ ਮਖੌਟਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਲੱਥਾ। ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਹੋਈ ਪਰ ਇਹ ਰਸਮੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਜੇ ਸੱਚੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੱਤਰਕਾਰ ਜਾਂ ‘ਸਿੱਖ ਬੁੱਧੀਜੀਵੀ-ਪੱਤਰਕਾਰ’ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਵਾਪਰੀਆਂ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਵੱਧ ਸ਼ਰਮਨਾਕ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਘੱਟੋ-ਘੱਟ ਚੇਤੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ!

ਸਦੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਲਕ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਰੋਪਕਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਏਨੀਂ ਦਰਿਦਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਤਾਂ ਨਾ ਮੁਗਲਾਂ ਕੋਹਿਆ ਸੀ, ਨਾ ਅਬਦਾਲੀ ਨੇ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ। ਕੈਸਾ ਅਜਬ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਰਾਕੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਕੋਹਿਆ ਜਾਣਾ ਤਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਆਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਤੜਪਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵਾਈ ਦਰਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤੇ ਕਸਾਈਪੁਣੇ ਦੇ ਚਰਮ-ਸੀਮਾ ਫੁੰਹਦੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਓਸੇ ਹਿੰਦ ਦੀ ਆਤਮਾ ਸ਼ੀਰੇ-ਮਾਦਰ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਪੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਛੱਜ ਬੋਲੇ ਤਾਂ ਬੋਲੇ, ਉਹ ਛਾਣਨੀ ਕੀ ਬੋਲੇ ਜੋ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਛਟਰਾਣਾ ਦੀ ਪੋਟਾ-ਪੋਟਾ ਵਿੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਚਿੱਤ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਸੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਹਰ ਪਾਸਿਓਂ ਵਿੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਦੇਹ ਦੀਆਂ ਨੁਮਾਇਸ਼ਾਂ ਲਾ ਕੇ ਖ਼ਾਸ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੇ ਛੋਕਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ ਕਰਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਕਰ ਕੇ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਢਾਹ ਕੇ, ਕੌਗਰਸ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਮਾਨਸਿਕਤਾ ਸਿਰਜੀ ਸੀ, ਓਸ ਦੇ ਨਤੀਜੇ ਆਉਣੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਵਹਿਸ਼ਤ ਕਦੇ ਸੀਮਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ। ਜੇ ਇਕੱਲੇ ਫਰਾਂਸ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਾਂਤੀ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੜ੍ਹੀਏ ਤਾਂ ਜਾਣਾਗੇ ਕਿ ਲੂਈ ਸੋਲੂਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਓਸ ਦੀ ਮਾਸੂਮ ਘਰਵਾਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਗਿਲੋਟੀਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਨੇਤਾ ਓਸੇ ਰਾਹ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਦੇ ਸੋਮੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਛਾਣਨੀ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਬੀਬੀ ਇੰਦਰਾ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਓਹੀ ਕੁਝ ਹੰਢਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਓਸ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਨੇ ਵੀ। ਹਿੰਦ ਦੀ ਉਤੇਜਤ ਮਾਨਸਿਕਤਾ ਜੋ ਓਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਬੀਬੀ ਨੂੰ ‘ਮਹਿਸ਼ਾਸੁਰ ਮਰਦਨੀ ਮਹਾਂ ਮਾਈ’ ਆਖ ਕੇ ਵਡਿਆਉਂਦੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਓਸ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਰਾਜੀਵ ਨੂੰ ‘ਚੜ੍ਹ ਜਾ ਬੇਟਾ ਸੂਲੀ ਰਾਮ ਭਲੀ ਕਰੇਗਾ’ ਆਖ ਕੇ ਹੱਲਾਸ਼ੇਰੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਸੀ, ਅੱਜ ਓਸ ਨੂੰ ਬੁਰ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਹੁਣ ਓਸੇ ਇੰਦਰਾ-ਰਾਜੀਵ ਦੇ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕੱਚਾ ਚੱਬ ਜਾਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰੇ ਕੱਸੀ ਬੈਠੀ ਹੈ। ਸੁਸ਼ਮਾ ਸਵਰਾਜ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਨਿਆਸਣਾਂ ਹੁਣ ਰਾਜੀਵ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਦੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਨੂੰ ਛਕਣ ਲਈ ਕਾਂਟੇ-ਛੁਰੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਸ਼ੂਲ ਸਿੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਬੈਠੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਚੁਣੀ ਹੋਈ ਬੀਬੀ ਸੋਨੀਆ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਖ਼ੂਨ ਦੀ ਹੋਲੀ ਖੇਡਣ ਦੀ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਬੈਠੀਆਂ ਗਿਰਝਾਂ ਕੀ ਭਲਾ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਨਗੀਆਂ ?

ਜਿਹੜੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਬਿਨਾਂ ‘ਸੀ’ ਕੀਤਿਆਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਣਾਂਮੂੰਹੀ ਖ਼ੂਨ ਪੀ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਹੈ, ਕੀ ਉਹ ਏਨੇ ਕੁ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਰ ਲਵੇਗੀ? ਸੱਚੇ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦਾ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ “ਜਿਉ ਪਾਵਕੁ ਈਧਨਿ ਨਹੀ ਧ੍ਰੁਪੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਹਾ ਅਘਾਈ ॥” ਪਹਿਲਾ ਵਾਰ ਤਾਂ ਖਾਲੀ ਗਿਆ, ਭਲੀ ਹੋਈ। ਪਰ ਬੱਕਰੇ ਦੀ ਮਾਂ ਕਦੋਂ ਤਾਈਂ ਮੈਰ ਮਨਾਏਗੀ? ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਲਹੂ ਪੀ ਕੇ ਮਸਤ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਆਦਮ-ਬੋ, ਆਦਮ-ਬੋ ਪੁਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਅੰਬਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਲਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਮਾਰਦੀਆਂ ਇਹ ਖਲਜੋਗਣਾਂ ਹੁਣ ਸੱਖੀ ਕੀਤਿਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣਗੀਆਂ। ਅਗਲੀ ਹੋਲੀ ਸੁੱਖੀ-ਸਾਂਦੀ ਬੀਤ ਜਾਵੇ ਤੇ ਓਸ ਤੋਂ ਅਗਲੀ ਵੀ, ਇਹੋ ਅਰਦਾਸਾਂ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ ਬਣਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਪਰ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਰਦਾਸਾਂ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ ਸਨ ਓਹ ਤਾਂ ਉਲਾਰ ਹੋਏ ਪਏ ਹਨ। ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਣ ਕੁਈ ਆਇਆ ਨਹੀਂ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿਰੋਪੇ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਸੜਕ ਉੱਤੇ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਹਨ। ਮਾੜੀ-ਮੋਟੀ ਰਹਿਤ-ਬਹਿਤ ਦੀ ਕਮਜ਼ੋਰੀ ਲਈ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੰਡਿਤ ਕਰਦੇ, ਆਪਣੇ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖਰੇ ਤੌਰ-ਤਰੀਕਿਆਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਥ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਛੇਕਦੇ ‘ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ’ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਛਾਂ ਖਿੜੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਅਮਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਂ ਦਾੜ੍ਹੀ ਰੰਗਣ ਦੇ ਦੋਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿਰੋਪਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ... ਹੁਣ... ਰਹਿਤ-ਮਰਿਯਾਦਾ ਕੁਈ ਕੁਕਾਵਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਪਦੀ।

ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਣ ਆਉਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਸਿਰੋਪਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ। ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਖ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਮਾਣ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਸੀਮਾ ਅੰਦਰ ਮਾਣ। ਨਾਲੋ-ਨਾਲ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਸਲਕੁਸ਼ੀ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਜਮਾਤ, ਜਿਸ ਅਧੀਨ ਰਾਜਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਤਲੇਆਮ ਹੋਈ ਅਤੇ ਕਈ ਦਰਜਨਾਂ ਅਬੂਗਰੀਬ ਸਮਾਨ ਜੇਲ੍ਹਾਂ (ਪੁੱਛ-ਗਿੱਛ ਕੇਦ੍ਰਾਂ) ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੱਚੇ-ਬੱਚੀਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਬੁੱਚੜ ਕੇ ਪੀ.ਐਸ ਗਿੱਲ ਅਕਹਿ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਢਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ, ਦੇ ਅਹੁਦੇਦਾਰ ਹਨ।

ਜੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਦੁੱਖ ਦੱਸਣ ਦੇ ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰ ਕਾਤਲ ਦੇ ਹੱਥਠੋਕਿਆਂ (ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਬਾਦਲ ਦੇ ਨੇਤਾਵਾਂ) ਨੂੰ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਦਾਸਤਾਂ ਸਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਦੇ ਕਾਬਲ ਰਹੇਗੀ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਝਿਜਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਕਿ ਬਹੁਤ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹੀ ਹੱਦ ਤੱਕ ਰਹਿਤ-ਮਰਿਯਾਦਾ ਦਾ ਮਸਲਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਹੈ, ਸਿੱਖ-ਸਿੱਖ ਜਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ-ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ। ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰੋਪਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਮਿਲਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਪੰਤੂ 'ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ' ਦੇ ਐਲਾਨ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ 'ਲਵ-ਕੁਸ਼ ਦੀ ਉਲਾਦ' ਵਰਗੇ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਲ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸਿਰੋਪਾ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਚਾਈ ਨਾ ਮਿਆਉਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ, ਢੋਲਕੀ-ਛੈਣੇ ਵਜਾਉਂਦੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪ੍ਰਸਰ ਦੇ ਬੂਹੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਹਨ। ਏਸੇ ਰਾਹ ਕਦੇ (6 ਜੂਨ 1984 ਨੂੰ) ਸਦੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਂਝਾਂ ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਟੈਂਕ-ਤੋਪਾਂ ਆਏ ਸਨ — ਕੌਂਗਰਸ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਭੇਜੇ। ਜੇ ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਏਨਾਂ ਸਿਆਣਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਓਸ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਜਾਣਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਉਹ 6 ਜੂਨ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਣ ਆਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਜਗਦੀਸ਼ ਟਾਈਟਲਰ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਲ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਆਵੇਗਾ। ਨਿਸ਼ਚੇ ਹੀ 'ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ' ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੀ ਅਣਖ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਚੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਦੀ ਮਰਿਯਾਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਠੇਸ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਈ ਹੈ। ਏਥੇ ਹਮਾਯੂੰ ਵੀ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਆਮਦ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਸੱਚੇ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਉਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਗਨ ਰਹੇ। ਏਥੇ ਅਕਬਰ ਵੀ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਸਾਦਰ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ, 'ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਪੰਗਤ ਪਾਛੇ ਸੰਗਤ'। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਜੂਨ ਚੁਰਾਸੀ ਦੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਗੁਰੂ-ਘਰ ਦੇ ਸਨਮਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਡੀ ਠੇਸ 'ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ' ਦੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਐਲਾਨ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਲਾਈ ਹੈ। ਕਿਹੜੇ ਜੁਗ ਭਲਾ ਹੋਊ ਅਜੇਹੇ ਸੰਗ-ਦਿਲ ਅਕ੍ਰਿਤਘਣ ਦਾ ?

ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਵਾਂ ਮਸਲਾ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਿਦਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਧਨੌਲਾ ਦਾ। ਓਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਖਾਂਦੇ ਦੀ ਦਾੜ੍ਹੀ ਹਿੱਲਣ ਦਾ ਇਲਜ਼ਾਮ 'ਸਿੰਘ ਪੋਲਿਟ ਬਿਊਰੋ' ਦੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਸਦਸਯ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਲੱਗਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਫਾਹੇ ਟੰਗਣ ਲਈ ਏਨਾਂ ਉਤਾਵਲਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਪੁੱਛੇ, ਬਿਨਾਂ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਲਾਹ ਕੀਤੇ, 'ਗੁਨਾ' ਵਾਲੇ 'ਫੈਕਸਨਾਮੇ' ਦੀ ਰੀਤ ਉੱਤੇ ਚੱਲਦਿਆਂ ਝਟਪਟ ਅਖ਼ਬਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਏਸ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਬਿਆਨ ਦਾਗ ਦਿੱਤਾ।

ਜਿਹੜੇ ਲੋਕ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਖ ਸਕਦੇ ਕਿ ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਧਨੌਲੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੋਨਾਂ ਬਿਆਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ 'ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ' ਪੂਰੀ ਵਫ਼ਾਦਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਮਾਲਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਪੱਖ ਪੂਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਐਨਕਾਂ ਬਦਲਵਾ ਲੈਣ। ਧਨੌਲੇ ਨੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਆਕਾ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਚੋਣ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ, ਉਹ ਜਾੜ੍ਹ ਹੇਠ ਆ ਗਿਆ। ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਕਾ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿਕੰਜੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੱਢ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਏਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਜੁੱਤੀਆਂ ਲਾਹ ਕੇ ਹਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਰੋਪਾ ਫੜੀ ਓਸ ਦੇ ਇੰਤਜ਼ਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਛੇ ਪਏ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੱਲਾ ਸੰਤ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੀ ਜਿਊਂਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਏਹੋ ਜੇਹੇ ਮਜ਼ਾਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਾਨਸਿਕਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਕਰਦੇ ?

ਪਰ ਸੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਿੱਥੋਂ ਹੋਣਾਂ ਸੀ ? ਓਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਰੀਰ ਦੋ ਦਹਾਕੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੌਂਗਰਸ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਗ ਉਗਲਦੀਆਂ ਨੀਤੀਆਂ ਭਸਮ ਕਰ ਚੁੱਕੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਜੋ ਭਾਂਬੜ ਬਾਲੇ ਸਨ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਰੈਫ਼ਰੈਂਸ ਲਾਇਬਰੇਰੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਨਾਯਾਬ ਬੀੜਾਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰ, ਧਰਮ, ਅਣਖ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਸਾਰਾ ਕੁਝ ਸਵਾਹ ਕਰਨਾ ਲੱਚਦੇ ਸਨ। ਅੱਜ ਦੇ 'ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨਾਂ' ਦੇ ਬਿਆਨ, ਆਪੇ ਬਣੇ ਸੰਤ ਦੇ ਅੰਗ-ਰੱਖਿਅਕ ਹਰਮਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਦਾ ਅੱਜ ਤਿਆਰਾ ਕੱਸ ਕੇ ਕੌਂਗਰਸ ਦੀ ਸੋਚ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਹਿਰਾ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਇਨਾਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਦੇ ਵੀਹਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਭ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਰ ਦਾ ਤਾਜ ਬਣਾਉਣਾ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜ਼ਾਲਮ-ਅੱਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਾਟਾਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੁਝ ਨਿਗਲ ਚੁੱਕੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਪਰ ਉਹ ਧਿਰਾਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ 'ਮਰਾਂਗੇ ਨਾਲ ਤੇਰੇ' ਦੀਆਂ ਕਸਮਾਂ ਖਾਧੀਆਂ ਸਨ, ਜਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਇੱਕੋ ਖੰਡੇ-ਬਾਟੇ ਦਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਛਕ ਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ, ਅਣਖ, ਸਵੈਮਾਨ ਦੀ ਰਾਖੀ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਣ ਨੂੰ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਸਨ, ਅੱਜ ਪੰਜ ਵੈਰੀਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ

ਕਾਬੂ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਲਈ ਜੂਝਣ ਦੇ ਪਿੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਤਰ ਸਕ ਰਹੀਆਂ। ਇਹ ਖੱਖੜੀਆਂ-ਕਰੇਲੇ ਹਨ; ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀਆਂ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਹੋ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣਾਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਪੂੜ ਚੱਟ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਇੱਕੋ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਹੰਭਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਾਰ ਸਕ ਰਹੀਆਂ। ਸੱਚ ਪੱਖੀ ਰਿਸ਼ਟ-ਪੁਸ਼ਟ ਸਰੀਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ, ਗੁਰੂ ਸਵਾਰੀ ਸਦਬੁੱਧੀ ਨੂੰ, ਹੈਂਕੜ ਦਾ ਲਕਵਾ ਮਾਰ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਣ ਇਹ ਢੋਲ ਦੇ ਡੱਗੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਆਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਹਾਰਨ ਦਾ ਪੱਕਾ ਇੰਤਜ਼ਾਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਏਸ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਯੋਗਦਾਨ ਵਿੰਗੀਆਂ ਕਲਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਖੱਕਦੀਆਂ ਕਿ "ਇਹ ਪੰਥਕ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀਆਂ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਸੁਹਿਰਦ ਹੋਣ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਿੰਨੀ ਵੀ ਪਕੜ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਵੀ ਬੁੱਧੀਜੀਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕਾਰ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਅਖਵਾਉਣ, ਪਰ ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਉਹ ਮੁੜਕੋ-ਮੁੜਕੀ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਆਮ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਵਿਚਰਦੇ, ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂੜ ਨਹੀਂ ਫੱਕਦੇ ਤੇ ਜਦ ਤੱਕ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਿੱਕੇ-ਮੋਟੇ ਮਸਲਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੁੜਦੇ, ਉਦੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਉਹ ਅੰਤਮ ਜਿੱਤ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਹਾਸਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ।" (ਪੰਜਾਬ ਫ਼ਤਵਾ 2004: ਬਾਦਲ ਦਲ ਦੀ ਜਿੱਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੁਕੇ ਰਾਜ਼— ਕਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਟ੍ਰਿਬਿਊਨ, 17 ਮਈ 2004)

ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਮਨਮੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ, ਨਵਜੋਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ, ਮਨੋਹਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਅਤੇ ਜੇ.ਐੱਨ. ਦੀਕਸ਼ਿਤ ਆਦਿ ਹਨ। ਪੁੱਛਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਸਵਾਲ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੀ ਸੁਖਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਦਲ, ਹਰਮੇਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਟੌਹੜਾ, ਪਰਮਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਢੀਂਡਸਾ, ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗੁਲਸ਼ਨ, ਈਮਾਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਨ, ਸੀਤਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਲਵੰਡੀ ਆਦਿ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਪੂੜ ਫੱਕਣ, ਮੁੜਕੋ-ਮੁੜਕੀ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਨਿਰਧਾਰਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਕੇ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਅਹੁਦਿਆਂ 'ਤੇ ਸੁਸ਼ੋਭਿਤ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜਾਂ ਅਯੋਗ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਮਹਿਜ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਾਨਦਾਨੀ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਦੇ ਆਧਾਰ 'ਤੇ ਪੈਰਾਸੂਟ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਦੇ ਪਿੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਤਾਰ ਕੇ ਲੋਕ-ਹਿਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਖਿਲਵਾੜ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਸਮਰੱਥ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ? ਕਿਹੜੀ ਹਰ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਜਮਾਤ ਜਾਣਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਨਵੇਂ ਖੂਨ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਜਮਾਤਾਂ ਬੁੱਢੀਆਂ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜਰਜਰੀਆਂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਬਜਿੱਦ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਿਨ-ਰਾਤ ਜੂਝਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੌਧਿਕ ਕੌਮਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਹਟਾ ਕੇ ਰਾਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂੜ ਫੱਕਣ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੋਰਦੇ ਉਦੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਨਿਜ਼ਾਤ ਸੰਭਵ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੜਕੋ-ਮੁੜਕੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਟੁਕੜਿਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਲਦੇ, ਗੱਲਕਾਂ ਭੰਨ ਕੇ ਖਾਂਦੇ, ਵਿਹਲੜਾਂ ਫੰਡਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਜਮਾਤ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰੋ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਿਖਿਆ-ਪੁੱਝਿਆ ਸਭ ਭੁੱਲ ਜਾਣ ਦਿਉ ਅਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਉਜੱਭ ਹੋ ਜਾਣ ਓਦੋਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ ਕਿਸਮਤ ਦੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਬਣਾਉ — ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਲੁੱਟ-ਘਸੁੱਟ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਭਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਅਤੇ ਉਜੱਭ ਏਜੰਡੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਏਸ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਲਾਮ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਚੈਨ ਦੀ ਨੀਂਦ ਸੁੱਤੇ ਰਹਿਣ। ਕੀ ਇਹ ਨਵੇਂ ਨੇਤਾ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਫ਼ਾਰਮੂਲਾ ਕੇਵਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਲਾਗੂ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਹੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਰਾਖਵਾਂ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ ? ਓਸ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੌਮ ਲਈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਆਗੂ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੀ। ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਛਕਣ ਤੋਂ ਅਗਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਦੀ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਸ਼ਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਉੱਤੇ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਫੱਟ ਲਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਆਗੂ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ। ਸਦੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਗੁਲਾਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਨਿਰੋਲ ਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਸ਼ਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਹਾਦਰ ! ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਨੇਤਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਬੀੜਾਂ ਲਿਖਣ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ! ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਅਬਦਾਲੀ ਨਾਲ ਲੱਹਾ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗ ਬਾਬਾ ਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਅਰਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਉਲੱਥਾ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ-ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਹੱਥੋਂ ਕਲਮ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਖੰਡਾ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਸੀ।

ਜੂਨ ਚੁਰਾਸੀ ਦਾ ਬਦਲਾ ਲੈਣਾ ਅਜੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ

ਢਾਈ ਸੌ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਪੈਗੰਬਰੀ ਸ਼ਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰੱਖਦਿਆਂ ਬਦਲਾ ਏਨਾ ਸਾਊ, ਸੱਭਿਅਕ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮਪਰਾਇਣ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰ ਫੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ-ਕਰਮ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਗਲਾਂ ਪਾ ਲਵੇ। ਸੱਚੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਰਬੰਸਦਾਨੀ ਦੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਬਰਕਤ ਬਾਕੀ ਹੈ। ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਜੁੱਸਾ ਛੰਡ ਕੇ, ਸਾਹਿਬਾਂ ਦੀ ਓਟ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਅੱਜ ਹੀ ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰਕ ਕ੍ਰਾਂਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੂਝਣ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਣ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਦੇ ਸੁਨੇਹੇ ਦੀ ਵਿੜਕ ਸੁਣਨ ਨੂੰ ਕਰੋੜਾਂ ਤਪਦੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਤਤਪਰ ਹਨ। ਤੱਤੀ ਤਵੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਬੈਠੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ-ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਦੇ ਅਲੰਬਰਦਾਰ, ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਤਾਜ, “ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਪਰਤਪੁ ਹਰਿ” ਦੀ ਅਜਬ ਘਾਲਣਾ ਦੀ ਦਾਸਤਾਂ ਸੁਣਨ ਲਈ ਲੁਕਾਈ ਪੱਥਾਂ ਭਾਰ ਹੋ-ਹੋ ਉਡੀਕ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਜੁਬਾਨ ਤਾਂ ਖੋਲ੍ਹੀਏ!

“ਬੜੇ ਗੌਰ ਸੇ ਸੁਨ ਰਹਾ ਬਾ ਜਮਾਨਾ, ਹਮ ਹੀ ਸੋ ਗਏ ਦਾਸਤਾਂ ਕਹਿਤੇ ਕਹਿਤੇ।”
ਗੁਰਤੇਜ ਸਿੰਘ।

ਪੀਊ ਦਾਦੇ ਦੇ ਕੀਮਤੀ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਕੇ ਵੇਖੋ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਚਾਰੋ
(ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੇਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਆੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਚੌਧਰ ਚਮਕਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਕੋਝੇ ਢੰਗ ਦਾ ਪੋਲ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹੈ)
ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ (ਮੋਹਾਲੀ)

ਨਗਰ ਕੀਰਤਨਾਂ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਤੇ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਮਾਰਚਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਅੱਜ ਤੱਕ ਇੱਕ ਬੰਦੇ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਇਆ, ਨਾ ਅੱਗੋਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ; ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਵਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ, ਨਾ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਟੀਚਾ ਹੈ। ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਨਾਲ ਕਮਾਈ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਬਰਬਾਦੀ ਉੱਪਰ ਹੁਣ ਰੋਕ ਲੱਗਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੈ:

“ਜੇ ਮਾਉ ਪੁਤੈ ਵਿਸੁ ਦੇ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਕਿਸੁ ਪਿਆਰਾ ॥
ਜੇ ਘਰੁ ਭੰਨੈ ਪਾਹਰੁ ਕਉਣੁ ਰਖਣਹਾਰਾ ॥
ਬੇੜਾ ਡੋਬੈ ਪਾਤਣੀ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਰਿ ਉਤਾਰਾ ॥
ਆਗੂ ਲੈ ਉਝੜਿ ਪਵੈ ਕਿਸੁ ਕਰੇ ਪੁਕਾਰਾ ॥
ਜੇ ਕਰਿ ਖੇਤੇ ਖਾਇ ਵਾੜਿ ਕੋ ਲਹੈ ਨ ਸਾਰਾ ॥ (35-22-4)

(ਭਾਵ ਮਾਂ, ਬੱਚੇ ਲਈ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਸਥਾਨ ਹੈ; ਜੇ ਮਾਂ ਹੀ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਖਵਾ ਦੇਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਚਾ ਸਕਦਾ; ਜੇ ਘਰ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਰੇਦਾਰ ਹੀ ਘਰ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਨ੍ਹ ਲਾ ਦੇਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਘਰ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਹਿਫ਼ਾਜ਼ਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ; ਜੇ ਮਲਾਹ ਹੀ ਬੇੜੀ ਡੋਬ ਦੇਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੁਸਾਫਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਰ ਲੰਘਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਜੇ ਵਾੜ ਹੀ ਖੇਤ ਦਾ ਆਵਾਰਾ ਪਸ਼ੂਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾਓ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਯੋਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਖੇਤ ਦੀ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਤਰੀਕਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੇ ਆਗੂ ਹੀ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਰਾਹੇ ਪਾ ਦੇਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸ ਦੀ ਜਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਰੋਵੇਗੇ!)। ਅੱਜ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਲੀਡਰਾਂ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ, ਪੁਜਾਰੀ ਨੁਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕਾਂ, ਕੀਰਤਨੀ ਜਥਿਆਂ, ਬੀਬੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਤਸੰਗਾਂ ਆਦਿ ਨੇ (ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੁਬਧ ਹੋ ਕੇ, ਚੌਧਰ ਦੀ ਹਵਸ ਪੂਰੀ ਕਰਨ ਖਾਤਰ), ਜਾਣ-ਖੁੱਝ ਕੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੋਰੇ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ; ਗੁਰਮਤਿ-ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦਾ ਪਾਸਾਰ ਬੇਰੋਕ-ਟੋਕ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਇਕੱਤਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਫੰਡ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਗੁੰਮਰਾਹ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਵਰਤ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਚਣ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੇਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਆੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਸਵਾਰਥ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਲੁੱਟਣ ਦਾ ਟੀਚਾ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਉਲੀਕੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।

ਪਿਛਲੇ ਕਾਫੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਆਏ ਦਿਨ ਕੋਈ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ ਪੜ੍ਹਣ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਆੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਧਾਰਨ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ, ਸਿਆਸੀ ਲੀਡਰ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ, ਧਾਰਮਕ ਆਗੂ (ਹੈੱਡ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ, ਰਾਗੀ, ਅਰਦਾਸੀਏ, ਧੂਪੀਏ, ਵਾਕੀਏ, ਡੇਰੇਦਾਰ ਸੰਤ, ਬਨਾਰਸੀ ਠੱਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਜੋੜੀਦਾਰ ਬਾਬੇ ਆਦਿ) ਆਪਣੀ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਜਾਂ ਚੌਧਰ ਚਮਕਾਉਣ ਲਈ

ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਗਰਾਹੇ ਫੰਡ ਬਰਬਾਦ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਧੋਖੇ 'ਚ, ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਤੋਂ ਕੋਰੇ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਕੁਰਾਹੇ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਘੜਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਨੇ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ: “ਜਹਾਂ ਗਿਆਨ ਤਹਾ ਧਰਮ ਹੈ” (ਭਾਵ ਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਹਾਸਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਵਿੱਦਿਆ ਲਈ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਅਤੇ ਪਾਲਣਾ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ)।

ਹੁਣੇ ਜਿਹੇ, ਇੱਕ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, ਅਲੌਕਕ ਰੰਗਦਾਰ ਡਰਾਮਾ ਰਚ ਕੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਤੋਂ 150 ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਪਾਵਨ ਸਰੂਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਰੀਬ ਇੱਕ ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ (80 ਲੱਖ ਰੁਪਏ ਚਾਰਟਰਡ ਹਵਾਈ ਜਹਾਜ਼ ਦਾ ਕਿਰਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਰਾਮਸਰ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਤੋਂ ਹਵਾਈ ਅੱਡੇ ਤੱਕ ਜਲੂਸ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੜਕਾਂ, ਬਾਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਧਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਬੇਮਤਲਬਾ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਥਾਂ-ਥਾਂ ਨਾਸ਼ਤੇ, ਚਾਹ-ਪਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਭੋਜਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਟਾਲ, ਕੀਰਤਨੀ ਮੰਡਲੀਆਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਚਿਮਟਿਆਂ-ਛੈਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰੇ ਤਾਣ ਨਾਲ ਕੁੱਟਦੇ, ਸਿੰਘ-ਪਾਤ੍ਰ ਕੱਚੀਆਂ-ਪੱਕੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੇਸੁਰੇ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸਪੀਕਰਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਲੱਖ-ਲੱਖ ਵਧਾਈਆਂ ਦੇ ਉੱਚੇ ਆਵਾਜ਼ੇ ਲਗਾਉਂਦੇ, ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਥਾਂ-ਥਾਂ ਮੱਥੇ ਟਿਕਵਾਉਂਦੇ, ਰਸਤਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਜਾਵਟ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੁਮਾਇਸ਼ੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਭਗਤਾਂ, ਭੱਟ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਅਤੇ ਟੈਂਟਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰੀ ਲਈ, ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਸਵਾਗਤੀ ਗੋਟਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਖਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਮਨਮੋਹਕ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕੁਝ ਲੱਖ ਰੁਪਏ ਹੋਰ) ਖਰਚ ਕੇ ਕੈਨੇਡਾ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਰਹੱਸਮਈ ਡਰਾਮੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਭੁਲੇਖਾ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਪੱਖ ਸਾਧਾਰਨ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਲਈ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਓਪਰੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਨਾਲ ਵੇਖਿਆਂ, ਇਸ ਨਿਰਾਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਅਲੌਕਿਕ ਤਮਾਸ਼ੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ, ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੇਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਜਵਾਬ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਹੋਇਆ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਆਮ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਲ ਅਨਿੰਨ ਪਿਆਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਨਾਜਾਇਜ਼ ਲਾਭ ਉਠਾ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਧਾ-ਭਾਵਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਉਭਾਰ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਵਿਖਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਲਗਨ ਜਾਗੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਵਧੀਆ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ, ਜੋ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਅੰਦਰਖਾਤੇ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਕੌਤਕ ਰਚਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਦਾ ਮੰਤਵ ਚੋਣਾਂ ਭਾਵ ਵੋਟਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਸਵਾਰਥ ਹਾਸਲ ਕਰਨ ਭਾਵ ਚੌਧਰ ਚਮਕਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਵਾਹ-ਵਾਹ ਖੱਟਣ ਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੋ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪੀ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਰਜ ਹਨ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਗੁਰ-ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਗੇ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਨ ਦੇਣਗੇ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਸੁਝਾਉ ਹੈ- “ਪੀਊ ਦਾਦੇ ਕਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਡਿਠਾ ਖਜਾਨਾ ॥ ਤਾ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਭਇਆ ਨਿਧਾਨਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਤਨ ਲਾਲ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਮੋਲੁ ॥ ਭਰੇ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਅਖੁਟ ਅਤੋਲ ॥੨॥ (ਪੰ. 186) (ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪੀ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਪਤਾ ਚੱਲਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ-ਸਾਲਾਹ ਦੇ ਅਮੋਲਕ ਰਤਨਾਂ, ਲਾਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੰਡਾਰ ਭਰੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਨਵਤਾ ਦੇ ਭਲੇ ਲਈ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਭਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੰਡਣ ਨਾਲ, ਅਸੀਂ ਆਤਮਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਦੀ ਇੱਕ ਖ਼ਾਸ ਸਿਫਤ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਤਨਾ ਇਸ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡੋਗੇ, ਇਹ ਵਧਦਾ ਹੀ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਰਲ-ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਖਰਚਣ ਭਾਵ ਸੰਗਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਚਾਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਮਾਨਵਤਾ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਦੂਜੇ ਬੰਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਜੋ ਸੇਵਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਪਰਵਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਇਵੇਂ ਹੈ :-

ਸੇਵਕ ਸਿਖ ਪੂਜਣ ਸਭਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਉਤਮ ਬਾਨੀ ॥
ਗਾਵਿਆ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਤਿਨ ਕ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਇ ਪਾਵੈ
ਜਿਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨੀ ॥ (ਪੰ. 669)
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਚਾਕਰੀ ਜੇ ਚਲਹਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਾਇ ॥ (ਮ.4, ਪੰ. 1246)

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਨ ਕੀਨੀਆ ਕਿਆ ਓਹੁ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਸਬਦੈ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਈ ਬਿਖੁ ਭੂਲਾ ਗਾਵਾਰੁ ॥

ਅਗਿਆਨੀ ਅੰਧੁ ਬਹੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥

ਅਣਹੋਦਾ ਆਪੁ ਗਣਾਇਦੇ ਜਮੁ ਮਾਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਤਿਨ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥ (ਪੰ. 589)

(ਭਾਵ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸੱਚੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਉਹੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਜਾਂ ਹੁਕਮ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ। ਜੇ ਕਰ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ-ਦੇਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਬਾਹਰ ਕੱਢਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਉਪਰਾਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਬਾਹਰੀ ਸਜਾਵਟ ਜਾਂ ਲੋਕ ਦਿਖਾਵੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਨੁਮਾਇਸ਼ੀ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਅਜਿਹੀ ਫੋਕੀ ਵਿਖਾਵੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਵਾਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ; ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਵਧਾਨ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਸਖ਼ਤ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ।)

ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਰੁਮਾਲਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਜਾਈਆਂ ਮੋਟਰ ਗੱਡੀਆਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਪਾਲਕੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਡੱਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਉੱਪਰ ਅਨੋਖੇ ਢੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਚੌਰ ਝੁਲਾ ਕੇ ਜੋ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਕਾਗਜ਼, ਜਿਲਦ ਜਾਂ ਕੱਪੜੇ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੋ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਹਾਸਲ ਕਰਨਾ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਅੰਦਰ ਢਾਲਣਾ, ਮਾਨਵਤਾ ਦੇ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਹਿਤ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਆਸ਼ੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ, ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਸੱਚਾ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਹੈ। ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ-ਜਨ ਇਤਨਾ ਮਾਮੂਲੀ ਜਿਹਾ ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝ ਰਹੇ ਜਾਂ ਸਵਾਰਥ ਸਿੱਧੀ ਦੀ ਮਨੋ-ਕਾਮਨਾ ਪੂਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਮੀਸਨੇ ਬਣੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ? ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਟੁੱਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਬੈਂਦਲ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਯਥਾ:

“ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਬਉਰਾਨਾ, ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥” (ਮ.3, ਪੰ. 644)

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤਾਂ ਪੁਕਾਰ-ਪੁਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਕਹਿ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ:

ਮਨਮੁਖ ਬੋਲੇ ਅੰਧੁਲੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਅਗਨੀ ਕਾ ਵਾਸੁ ॥ (ਅਗਨੀ:- ਕ੍ਰੋਧ) (ਬੋਲੇ:- ਬਹਿਰੇ)

ਬਾਣੀ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨ ਬੁਝਨੀ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕਰਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸੁ ॥

ਓਨਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸੁਧਿ ਨਹੀ ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨਿ ਨ ਕਰਹਿ ਵਿਸਾਸੁ ॥ (ਪੰ. 1415)

ਚੌਧਰ ਦੀ ਹਵਾਸ ਨਾਲ ਮੁਸ਼ਕ ਮਾਰਦੀ ਦੇਹ ਨੂੰ ਚਮਕਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਹਉਮੈ ਨੂੰ ਪੱਠੇ ਪਾਉਣ ਖਾਤਰ ਆਏ ਦਿਨ ‘ਨਗਰ ਕੀਰਤਨ’ ਜਾਂ ‘ਚੇਤਨਾ ਮਾਰਚਾਂ’ ਵਾਲਾ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਰੁਮਾਲਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਫੁੱਲ ਮਾਲਾਵਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਕੱਜੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਦੇਹ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਜਾ-ਸਜਾ ਕੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹੋਏ, ਅਨਮੋਲ ਰਤਨਾਂ ਵਰਗੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਰੂਪੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ। ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਂਝਿਆਂ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ, ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮਾ, ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਮੁੱਚੀ ਮਾਨਵਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਧ੍ਰੋਹ ਅਤੇ ਧੋਖਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਇਹ ਸੱਜਣ ਧੋਖੇਬਾਜ਼, ਬੇਈਮਾਨ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਫੌਜੀ ਜਾਂ ਸੱਚੇ ਸੌਦੇ ਦੇ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਕਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ। ਇੰਜ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਬਨਾਰਸ ਤੋਂ “ਭਾਲਾ ਸਿਉ ਪੇਡਾ” ਖਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ, ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਪਮਾਲੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਰੇਲ ਗੱਡੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਿਠਾ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਭੇਜ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਹਰ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਚੌਗਿਰਦੇ ਅੱਡੇ ਬਣਾ ਲਏ ਹਨ।

ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਇੱਕ ਅਸਚਰਜਤਾ ਭਰੀ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਸਮਝਾਉਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਐਸਾ ਅਸਚਰਜ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਲੋਕ ਦਹੀਂ ਦੇ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਾਣੀ (ਨੀਰਿ) ਨੂੰ ਰਿੜਕਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮੱਖਣ ਹਾਸਲ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਇਹ ਸੋਚਣੀ ਮੂਰਖਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਅਗਿਆਨੀਆਂ ਭਾਵ ਬੇਸਮਝ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਹੈਰਾਨੀ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਾਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਲਾਣਾ ਕੁਝੋ ਬਹੁ ਪੈ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹੈ।

ਐਸੇ ਅਚਰਜ ਦੇਖਿ ਕਬੀਰ ॥ ਦਧਿ ਕੈ ਭੋਲੈ ਬਿਰੋਲੈ ਨੀਰੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ (ਪੰ. 326)

ਆਨ ਅਚਾਰ ਬਿਉਹਾਰ ਹੈ ਜੇਤੇ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਫੋਕੁ ॥ (ਪੰ. 682)

[ਨੋਟ: ‘ਚੇਤਨਾ’ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਨਾਲ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚੇਤਨਾ-ਮਾਰਚਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਭਲਾਈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਨਸ਼ਿਆਂ (ਤੰਬਾਕੂ, ਬੀੜੀ, ਸਿਗਰਟ, ਗੁਟਕਾ, ਅਫੀਮ, ਚਰਸ, ਸ਼ਰਾਬ, ਡਰੱਗਜ਼ ਆਦਿ) ਦੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ, ਏਡਜ਼ ਦੀ ਭਿਆਨਕ ਬਿਮਾਰੀ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ, ਜਾਤ-ਬਰਾਦਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਕੌਰੜ, ਮੂਰਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਬੁੱਤ ਪੂਜਾ ਦਾ ਬੋਧਾਪਨ, ਫੈਸ਼ਨ ਪਰੇਡਾਂ, ਅਸ਼ਲੀਲਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਲੱਚਰਪੁਣੇ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਲਈ ਯਤਨ ਜਾਂ ਸਮੁੱਚੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਮਾਨਵਤਾ ਦੀ ਭਲਾਈ ਹੋਵੇ।]

ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਇਆ ਇਕੱਤਰ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੌਧਰ ਪੱਕੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਰੁਮਾਲਿਆਂ ਹੇਠ ਸਜਾ ਕੇ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਵਰਤ ਕੇ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਸਵਾਰਥ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਸਾਧਨ ਬਣਾ ਛੱਡਿਆ ਹੈ ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਖਿਡੋਣਾ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਦਿਖਾ ਕੇ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਸਵਾਰਥ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਸਾਧਨ ਬਣਾ ਛੱਡਿਆ ਹੈ। ਹਨੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਂ ਦਾ, ਜਿਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਦੇਹ ਨੂੰ ਰੇਸ਼ਮੀ ਰੁਮਾਲਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਰਾਹ-ਰਸਤਿਆਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਚੱਕਰ ਲਗਵਾ ਕੇ ਕਮਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੱਖ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਉਸ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਹਨੇਰੀ ਝੁਲਾ ਕੇ ਮਨਮਤ ਦਾ ਛੱਪਰ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਡੇਗਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਉਦਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਸਮਝ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵਾਲੀ-ਵਾਰਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਮਕਸਦ ਦੀ ਪੂਰਤੀ ਲਈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਮਰਜ਼ੀ ਵਰਤ ਲਿਆ। ਮਕਸਦ ਪੂਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਫਿਰ ਕਮਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦ ਕਰ ਛੱਡਿਆ। ਵੇਟਾਂ ਹਥਿਆਉਣੀਆਂ ਹੋਣ ਤਾਂ ਭੀੜ ਇਕੱਠੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ, ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਡਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਆ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਪਾਰਟੀਆਂ ਇਕ-ਦੂਜੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਭੰਡੀ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ, ਆਪਣੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਚਾਪਲੂਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਹਾਜ਼ਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਝੂਠੀਆਂ ਬਿਆਨਬਾਜ਼ੀਆਂ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਫਿਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਚੁੱਕ ਲਿਜਾ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੇ ਕਮਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਡੱਕ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਇਆ ਇਕੱਤਰ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੌਧਰ ਚਮਕਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਰੁਮਾਲਿਆਂ ਹੇਠ ਸਜਾ ਕੇ ਥਾਂ-ਥਾਂ ਫੇਰੀਆਂ ਲਗਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਵਸਬ ਫੜ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਰਵਾਇਤ ਹੀ ਸਮਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਜਦਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ: ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨੋ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਵੇਖਦਾ, ਜੇਤਾ ਜਗਤੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥

ਡਿਠੋ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ, ਜਿਚਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ (ਮ.3, ਪੰ. 594)

ਸੇ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਜੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਪਛਾਣਿਹਿ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਭੈ ਕੀ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ ॥

ਭੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਕਿਉ ਨਿਭਉ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਜਮੁ ਕਾਢਿ ਲਏਗਾ ਸਾਹਾ ਹੇ ॥ (ਪੰ. 1054)

ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਸਵਾਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦੇ [ਰਤਨ ਮਣੀ ਗਲ ਬਾਂਦਰੇ ਕਿਹੁ ਕੀਮ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ॥ ਕੜਛੀ ਸਾਉ (ਸਵਾਦ) ਨ ਸੰਮਲੈ ਭੋਜਨ ਰਸ ਖਾਣੈ ॥ ਡਠੂ ਚਿਕੜ ਵਾਸ ਹੈ ਕਵਲੈ ਨ ਸਿਵਾਣੈ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ)] ਭਾਵ ਬਾਂਦਰ ਦੇ ਗਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਮਣੀ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਤਾ; ਕੜਛੀ ਸਵਾਦੀ ਭੋਜਨ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਦ ਦਾ ਰਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੈਂਦੀ; ਡਠੂ ਚਿੱਕੜ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਖੁਸ਼ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕੰਵਲ ਫੁੱਲ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ। ਤਿਵੇਂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਦੇਹ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਲਕੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਜਾ ਕੇ ਸੜਕਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਘੁਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਫਿਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਸ ਦੇ ਕੀਮਤੀ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਂਦਰ ਦੇ ਗਲ ਪਏ ਰਤਨਾਂ ਵਾਂਗੂੰ ਸੂਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਦੇ। ਇਹ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਸਮਝ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ:

ਓਨਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸੁਧਿ ਨਹੀ ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨਿ ਨ ਕਰਹਿ ਵਿਸਾਸੁ ॥ (ਮ.3, ਪੰ. 1415) (ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸਾਰ ਕੇ ਅਥਵਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਅਰਥ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਤਿ ਨੂੰ ਸ੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮਨਮੁਖਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸਬਦਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਵੰਨਗੀ ਮਾਤਰ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ: ਜੋ

ਲੋਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਂਝਿਆਂ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਮੂਰਖ ਅਤੇ ਕਚੇ ਹਨ (ਮੂੜ ਨਰੁ ਕਾਚੇ), ਭਾਵ ਬੇਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ਼ ਹਨ। ਅਤੇ “ਜਿਨ੍ਹ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਪਿਆ ਆਪਣਾ ਤੇ ਨਰਿ ਬੁਰਆਗੀ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਨਾ ਕਰੋ ਪਾਪਿਸਟ ਹਤਿਆਗੀ॥ (ਪੰ. 651) ਭਾਵ ਪਾਪੀ, ਨਿੰਦਕ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਹਤਿਆਰੇ ਜਾ ਖੂਨੀ ਹਨ। ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਸ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਵਾਰ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ, ‘ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੋ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਰੈ, ਖੋਜ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਮਹਿ ਲੇ’ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਆਤਮਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਅੰਨ੍ਹੇ ਅਤੇ ਬੋਲੇ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਟੁੱਟੇ, ਘਰ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਆਤਮਕ ਸਵਾਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਲਾਭ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਠਾ ਰਹੇ। ਦੇਖੋ ਕੀ-ਕੀ ਕਰਤਬ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਬਿਰਧ ਦੇਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਸਕਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸੜਕਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੇਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਰਧ ਦੱਸ ਕੇ (ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਧਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਨਵੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਬਿਰਧ ਘੋਸ਼ਿਤ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਘਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਬਹਾਨੇ ਪੱਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਚੁੱਕ ਲਿਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ) ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਸਰੂਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ-ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਘੁਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਕ-ਦੋ ਡੇਰੇਦਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਬੋਲੀ ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਠੇਕਾ ਲੈ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਮਾਤਮੀ ਨਗਰ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਫ਼ਲਾ ਟਰੱਕਾਂ, ਕੈਂਟਰਾਂ, ਵੈਨਾਂ, ਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੰਮੀ ਕਤਾਰ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੱਕ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਤੋਂ ਤੁਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਰਸਤੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਖੀਰਾਂ, ਜਲੇਬੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਲੰਗਰ ਛਕਦੇ ਗੋਇਦਵਾਲ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਆਧੁਨਿਕ ਤਕਨੀਕ ਨਾਲ ਉਸਾਰੇ ਸਮਝਾਨ ਘਾਟ ਉੱਪਰ ਲਿਜਾ ਕੇ ਨਵੀਂ ਘੜੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ-ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਵਿਧੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਸਕਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਧਰਮ ਆਪਣੇ ਮੁਕੱਦਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੋਲਦਾ। ਇਸ ਜਹਾਲਤ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਣ ਇੱਕੋ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੇ ਸਾਡੀ ਬੁੱਧ-ਬਿਬੇਕ ਨੂੰ ਸਵਸਥ ਅਤੇ ਰੋਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਅਨਮੋਲ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੱਲ ਅਸੀਂ ਪਿੱਠ ਕਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਖੁਦ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੱਸਣ ਜੋਗੇ ਹਾਂ। ਨਤੀਜਾ ਸਭ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਹੈ।

ਕਦੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਸੋਚਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਢੋਲਕੀ-ਛੋਣੇ ਕੁੱਟਦੀ-ਕੁੱਟਦੀ ਹੇਮਕੁੰਟ ਦੀ ਪਹਾੜੀ ਉੱਪਰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਗਈ? ਜਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਇੱਕ ਹੋਰ ਪੁਸਤਕ (ਸ਼ਰੀਕ) ਨੂੰ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦੱਸ ਕੇ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਿਉਂ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਨਿਰਾ ਕੋਕ-ਸ਼ਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਹੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹਿ ਗਏ, ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ (ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਅਤੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ, ਰਾਗੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰੋਹਿਤ) ਦੇ ਜਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਫਸੇ ਕਿ ਨਿਕਲਣਾ ਔਖਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ। ਦਸਮ ਪਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਜਨਮ (ਭਾਵ ਸੰਨ 1666-ਸੰਨ 1708) ਵਿੱਚ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੌਤਕ ਮੰਨਣ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ, ਪਿਛਲੇ ਜਨਮ ਦੀ ਫ਼ਰਜ਼ੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਗਾਉਂਦੇ ਚਲੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਮੱਤ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖ ਘਰਾਣਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਤ-ਪਾਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਵੰਡੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਜਾਤ-ਪਾਤੀ ਸਿਸਟਮ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਜੜ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੁੱਟ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ:

ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰੀਅਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਿਦੇ ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਹੋਈ ॥੧॥

ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰਿ ਮੂਰਖ ਗਵਾਰਾ ॥ (ਪੰ. 1127)।

ਹਰ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਾਤ ਉੱਤਮ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਪਕਾ ਰੱਖੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੱਸਦੀ ਹੈ, ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ-ਵਿਹੂਣੇ ਸਭ ਨੀਵੀਆਂ ਜਾਤਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਨ, ਯਥਾ:

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਵੈ ਬਾਝ ਸਨਾਤਿ ॥ (ਪੰ. 1)

ਨਾ ਸੁੱਭ-ਅਸੁੱਭ ਦਿਹਾੜੇ, ਨਾ ਸ਼ਨੀ-ਦੇਵਤੇ ਦਾ ਝੰਜਟ, ਨਾ ਕਰਵਾ ਚੌਥ ਦਾ ਵਰਤ, ਨ ਕਬਰਾਂ, ਮੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ, ਦਰਗਾਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਮਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਮੰਨਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਰਮ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਤਰਸਯੋਗ ਹਾਲਤ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾਤਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਲੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਫਿਲਮੀ ਤਰਜ਼ਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ, ਪਿਕਨਿਕ ਨੁਮਾ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਦਰਬਾਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਾਜ਼ਰੀ ਭਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਦੁੱਧ ਬਦਾਮਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਗਿਲਾਸ 'ਤੇ ਗਿਲਾਸ ਡੀਕ ਕੇ, ਪਰਾਏ ਹੱਕ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਕਮਾਏ ਮਲਕ

ਭਾਗੋਂ ਦੇ ਭਠੂਰੇ-ਛੋਲੇ, ਜਲੇਬੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੰਗਰ ਛਕਣ-ਛਕਾਉਣ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਮਝ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਨ। (ਕੀਰਤਨ ਦਰਬਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਕੈਮ ਦਾ ਭੇਦ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਣ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਚ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਆਖਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ, ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ-ਤੇੜੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਫਟਕਣ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਭਠੂਰੇ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਕੇ ਲਹੂ ਕੱਢ ਕੇ ਵਿਖਾ ਦੇਣਾ ਸੀ)। ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਜਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਫਸੇ ਪਏ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ “ਬੁਤ ਪੂਜ ਪੂਜ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਏ” ਅਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਬੁੱਤ ਅਤੇ ਮੂਰਤੀਆਂ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਜੋਤਿ ਬਾਲ ਕੇ, ਪੂਪ ਅਤੇ ਫੁੱਲ ਚੜ੍ਹਾ ਕੇ ਅਰਦਾਸਾਂ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਰਲਗੱਡਾ। ਜਿਸ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਦੁੱਖਦਾਈ ਭਾਣਾ ਵਰਤ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸਦਾ ਕਾਰਣ ਉਹੀ ਹੈ — ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਆਏਗਾ, ਚੋਗਾ ਡਾਲੇਗਾ, ਜਾਲ ਬਿਛਾਏਗਾ, ਤੁਮ ਜਾਗਤੇ ਰਹੀਓ। ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਕਾਫੀ ਲੰਬੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਆ ਕੇ ਜਾਲ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਫਸਾਈ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਲ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਫਸੇ ਹੋਏ, ਹੁਣ ਤੱਕ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ: ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੀ ਆਵੇਗਾ, ਚੋਗਾ ਡਾਲੇਗਾ, ਜਾਲ ਬਿਛਾਏਗਾ, ਤੁਮ ਜਾਗਤੇ ਰਹੀਓ। ਭਾਵ, ਹੁਣ ਵੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ‘ਜਬ ਇਹ ਗਰੈ ਬਿਪਰਨ ਕੀ ਗੀਤ, ਮੈ ਨਾ ਕਰੋਂ ਇਨ ਕੀ ਪਰਤੀਤ’। ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਵੀ ਘਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਪਰੀਤ ਅਨਮਤੀ ਕਰਮ-ਕਾਂਡਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਫਸਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ। ਅਸੀਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ: “ਪਿੰਡੁ ਪਤਲਿ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਦੀਵਾ ਫੁਲ ਹਰਿ ਸਰਿ ਪਾਵਏ ॥ (ਪੰ. 923) ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ (ਤਾਂ) ਪਿੰਡ ਪਤਲਿ, ਕਿਰਿਆ, ਦੀਵਾ ਅਤੇ ਫੁੱਲ, ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਭਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਤਸੰਗ ਤੋਂ ਸਦਕੇ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਵੱਡੇ-ਵੱਡੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸੱਜਣਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਡੇਰੇਦਾਰ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਭਚਾਰੀ ਫੁੱਲ ਜਾਂ ਫੁੱਲੀਆਂ (ਹੱਡੀਆਂ) ਪਾਤਾਲਪੁਰੀ (ਕੀਰਤਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ) ਪਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਗੀਤ ਉਚੇਚੇ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ।

ਕੋਈ ਇੱਕ ਗੱਲ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਬਿਆਨ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇ। ਇੱਥੇ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਇੱਕ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਕਾਰਜ ਕਰਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਕੋਈ ਸਵਾਰਥ ਰਹਿਤ ਸੱਜਣ ਸਹੀ ਰਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੱਸਦਾ। ਕਈ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੈਠੇ ਸੱਜਣ ਰੋਲਾ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇੰਜ ਲੱਗਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਸਭ ਮਾਨਸਕ ਰੋਗ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਗੱਲ ਦੀ ਤਹਿ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਝਣ ਦੀ ਬਜਾਏ ਰੋਲਾ ਪਾਉਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਭੰਡੀ-ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਸਬ ਬਣ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹੈ। ਤਰਸ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਵੱਧ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਆਤਮਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਬੇਸੁਰਤੀ ਦੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ, ਗੁਰੂ-ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਰੱਤੀ ਭਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਨੂੰ ਲਲਕਾਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਸ਼ੋਕੇ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ‘ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਕਿ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੰਗਰਾਂਦ ਜਾਂ ਸੁੱਭ-ਅਸੁੱਭ ਦਿਹਾੜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਖੇਧੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ, ਤੁਸੀਂ ਨਵੇਂ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਜੰਮ ਪਏ ਹੋ, ਵਾਧੂ ਦਾ ਬਖੇੜਾ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ।’ ਤਰਸ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ‘ਅਸੀਂ ਕੱਟੜ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਹਿਮਤ ਨਹੀਂ, ਭਾਵ ਇੱਕ-ਪਤੀ ਵਾਲੀ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਭਾਵ ਪਤੀਬ੍ਰਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਹ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਇਤਨੀ ਕੱਟੜ ਹੈਂ ਕਿ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਗੈਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਵੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੇਖਦੀ। ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਸਮੱਸਿਆ ਬੜੀ ਪੇਚੀਦਾ ਹੋ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬੇਸੁਰਤੀ (coma) ਵਾਲੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਕੱਢਣਾ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਚੇਤਨਾ ਮਾਰਚਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੋਟਰ ਗੱਡੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਜਲੂਸ ਕੱਢਣ ਨਾਲ ਕਦੇ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਵੇਗੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਪੀਉਂਦੇ ਦਾ ਦੇ ਖਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਦੱਸਣੀ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀ ਟੀਸੀ ਤੋਂ ਹੇਠ ਉਤਰ ਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਅਣਜਾਣ ਬੰਦੇ ਤੋਂ ਪੁੱਛ ਲਵੋ, ਉਹ ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਾਏ ਦੇਵੇਗਾ।

ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟਲ ਸਟੋਰ ॥

(ਲੈ. ਕਰਨਲ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਰਕ)

ਅਸਲਈਅਤ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਮੰਚ ਤੇ,
ਹੂਰ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਆਪਨਾ ਅਪਨਾ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟਲ ਸਟੋਰ ਹੈ ॥
ਇਹਨਾ ਸਟੋਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਵਿਕਾਊ ਮਾਲ ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀ,
ਪਰ ਹਰ ਕੋਟਰ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਉਸ ਮੱਤ ਦਾ ਸੇਲਜ਼ਮੈਨ ਹਾਜਿਰ ਹੈ ॥

ਸਾਰੇ ਧਰਮਾਂ, ਮੱਤਾਂ, ਫਿਰਕਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਲੋਗ ਤਿਲ ਫੁਲ ਭੇਟਾ,
ਤੇ ਧਨ ਦੌਲਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਝੋਲੀਆਂ ਅਪਨੇ ਕੋਟਰ ਤੇ ਖਾਲੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ ॥
ਕਿਸੇ ਮੁਰਾਦ ਖਾਤਿਰ ਜਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਅਸੀਸ ਲੈਣ ਦੇ ਲਈ,
ਕੀਤੇ ਕੁਕਰਮਾਂ ਤੇ ਕੁੰਬਦੇ ਨਰਕਾਂ ਤੇ ਡਰਦੇ ਝੋਲੀ ਅੱਡ ਖਲੋਤੇ ਨੇ ॥

ਈਸਾਈ ਮਤ ਚ ਪਾਦਰੀ ਨੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਸਮਝੀ ਚਾਲ ਚਲੀ,
ਕੀਮਤ ਵਸੂਲੀ, ਮੁਆਫੀ ਦਿਤੀ - ਕਿਹਾ ਗੁਨਾਹ ਮੁਆਫ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ॥
ਚਲਾਕ ਸੀ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਪਾਦਰੀ ਗਿਰਜੇ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਬੈਠਾ,
ਤੇ ਵਖ ਵਖ ਕੀਮਤੀ ਮੁਆਫੀਨਾਮੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਵਾਪਾਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ॥

ਇਸਲਾਮ ਚ ਖਲੀਫਿਆਂ, ਫਾਤਿਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਮਾ ਅਇਆ,
ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਤੇ ਤੋਬਾ, ਰਾਗ ਤੇ ਤੋਬਾ, ਇਸ਼ਕ ਤੇ ਤੋਬਾ ਹੋ ਆਈ ॥
ਪਰ ਖਿਰਾਜ ਤੇ ਜਜ਼ੀਏ ਵਸੂਲਣ ਚ ਛੁਟ ਨਾ ਮਿਲੀ,
ਬਸ ਰਾਮ ਤੇ ਰਹਿਮਾਨ ਬਣ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਹੋਈ ਤੇ ਜਾਨ ਬਚਾਈ ॥

ਸਨਾਤਨ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੇ ਰਿਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਮੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਮੇ ਵੀ ਆਏ,
ਕਰਮ ਤੇ ਜਨਮ, ਤੇ ਮਨੁਖ ਤੇ ਧਰਮ ਉਚਾ ਹੋਇਆ ॥
ਫਿਰ ਕੀ ਸੀ, ਪਾਪ, ਕਪਟ, ਠਗੀ ਛਲ ਰੱਜ ਕੇ ਕਰੇ,
ਦਾਨ ਪੁਨ ਕਰੇ, ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੇ ਰਬ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋਇਆ ॥

ਬੁਧ ਜੈਨ ਆਏ ਅਹਿੰਸਾ ਪਰਮੇ ਧਰਮ ਫੈਲਿਆ,
ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਸੀ ਆਦਿ ਤੇ ਅਹਿੰਸਕ ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਕਰੇ ॥
ਉਜ ਭਾਵੇ ਮੁਨਾਫੇ ਜਾਂ ਵਿਆਜ ਚ ਬੰਦਾ ਕੱਚਾ ਖਾ ਜਾਓ,
ਪਰ ਭੁਲ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਪਛੂ ਪੰਛੀਆਂ ਕੀੜਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਨਾ ਕਰੇ ॥

ਏਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਿਧ ਪਧਰਾ ਭੋਲਾ ਭਾਲਾ ਸਿੱਧੜ ਬੰਦਾ,
ਸਟੋਰ ਚ ਆ ਵੜਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਾਊਂਟਰ ਦਾ ਦਰ ਫੜਿਆ ॥
ਪੁਛਿਆ ਭਾ ਜੀ ਦੁਖੀ ਹਾਂ ਮਨ ਦਾ ਚੈਨ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ,
ਉਪਰ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ ਜਾਕੇ ਰਬ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਭਲਿਆ ॥

ਅਗਲੇ ਕਾਊਂਟਰ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਪੁਛਿਆ ਰੈਵਰਡ ਫਾਦਰ ਜੀ,
ਦੁਖੀ ਹਾਂ ਦੁਖ ਦੂਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਦੁਆਈ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ॥
ਜੁਆਬ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਖੁਦਾ ਦੇ ਬੇਟੇ ਸਭ ਦੇ ਦੁਖ ਅਪਣੇ ਤੇ ਲਏ ਨੇ,
ਅਸਾਡੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਿਰਫ ਰਹਿਮਤ ਦੁਆ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ॥

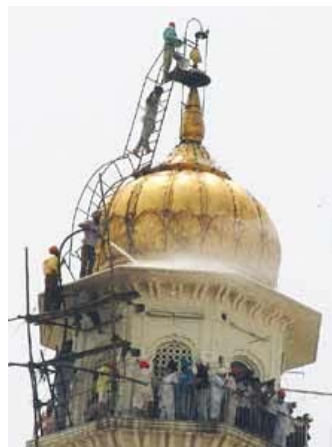
ਫਿਰ ਅਗਲੇ ਕਾਊਂਟਰ ਵਲ ਵਧ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਪੁਛਿਆ,
ਕੀ ਮਹਾਪੁਰਸ਼ੋ ਤੁਹਾਥੇ ਕੁਝ ਲੋਕ ਭਲਾਈ ਮਿਲੇਗੀ ॥
ਜੁਆਬ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਔਟ ਆਫ ਸਟਾਕ ਹੈ,
ਸ਼ਿਵ ਸੇਨਾ ਤੇ ਬਜਰੰਗ ਦਲ ਦੀ ਮੈਂਬਰਸ਼ਿਪ ਹੈ ਮਿਲੇਗੀ ॥
ਫਿਰ ਅਗਲੇ ਕਾਊਂਟਰ ਵਲ ਉਹ ਵਧਿਆ ਤੇ ਪੁਛਿਆ,
ਭਾਈ ਜੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਪਾਸ ਹੈ ਉਚੀ ਤੇ ਸੁਚੀ ਮਨੁਖਤਾ ਦਾ ਕਣ ॥
ਜੁਆਬ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਾ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤੂੰ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪਾਨ ਕਰ,
ਸਭ ਤੋ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਲੋੜ ਬਾਣਾ ਪਾ ਸੱਚਾ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਤਾਂ ਬਣ ॥

ਸਾਧਾਂ-ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੁਹਲੇ

(ਰਾਬਿਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੱਬੀ)

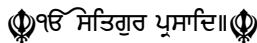
ਸਾਧਾਂ-ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੁਹਲੇ ਬੈਠ ਗਈਏ,
ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਬੜੀ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ।
ਕੋਠੀਆਂ, ਕਾਰਾਂ 'ਚ ਸੰਤ ਜੀ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ ਫਿਰਦੇ,
ਡੇਰੇ ਦੌਲਤ ਦਾ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਅੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ।
ਬਾਹਰ ਭੇਜਣ ਤੇ ਨੌਕਰੀਆਂ ਲਾਉਣ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ,
ਮੁੰਡੇ ਦੇਣ, ਮਨਾਉਂਦੇ ਨੇ ਕੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ।
ਵਿੱਚ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੈ ਗਿਆ ਅੱਜ ਰੌਲਾ,
ਗੁੰਮੀ ਕੁੜੀ ਨਾ ਲੱਭਦਾ ਸੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ।

ਅੱਜ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ - ਵਦਾਂਤੀ ਜੀ ਨੂ ਵਧਾਈ



ਕਈ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੀਂਹ ਨਾ ਪੈਣ
ਕਾਰਨ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਬਾਬਾ
ਅਟੱਲ ਰਾਏ ਜੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ
ਵਿਖੇ ਗੁੰਬਦ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ
ਕਰਾਉਂਦੇ

Ajit Jalandhar 07-30-2004



SINGH SABHA INTERNATIONAL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1.04 MISSION STATEMENT

Ensure, safeguard and promote correct exposition of the teachings of Aad Guru Granth Sahib.

Interpretation of Gurbani and representation of Sikhi in their real perspective.

Project and popularize healthy and proper image of Sikh culture and institutions.

SECTION 1.05 OBJECTIVES

- i) Establish, maintain and manage an institution for standardized and correct study and research of Gurbani and Gurmat, and for training suitable persons for propagation and dissemination of Gurbani's teachings through publications, conferences, seminars, group discussions in Gurdwaras and homes where some intellectuals can gather.
- ii) Promote Sikh way of life in accordance with the teachings given in Gurbani incorporated into the Aad Guru Granth Sahib and by Sikh Rehat Maryada (Code of Conduct) laid down by Sri Akal Takhat Sahib as an institution.
- iii) Cooperate with other Panthic organizations working for safeguarding, maintaining and promoting independent status of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib.
- iv) Support all those institutions, such as Missionary Colleges, those are training missionaries according to the principles of Gurbani and Gurmat and help them perform their function in more effective way. Develop and promote programs for education of Sikh youth and others about Gurmat, Sikh history, Punjabi language and culture, through organizing lectures, seminars, symposiums, conferences, Gurmat camps on Sikh religion and preparation and distribution of single subject pamphlets.
- v) Organize Sikh Sewa Dal in conformity with Sikh tradition and inculcate the spirit of selfless service among Sikh youth.
- vi) Develop programs for eradication of the evils of caste system and social inequality among Sikhs.
- vii) Check and oppose growth of Santwad and Derawad.
- viii) Protect and promote Sikh interests throughout the world.
- ix) Own and operate a Gurudwara.
- x) Own and operate a Missionary College.

I.....endorse the mission statement and objectives of the SSI given in Section 1.04 and 1.05 of these Bylaws and pledge to work for the fulfillment and promotion of the objectives of the SSI.

Please choose one of the following memberships. Patron and Life member dues may be paid in ten equal installments. Please make cheques payable to Khalsa Tricentennial Foundation of N.A. Inc. and mail to Sikh Center Roseville, 201 Berkeley Ave. Roseville, Ca 95678. Tax-exempt receipt will be issued by KTF.

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New Arrivals: ‘An Introduction to Sikhism’ (76 pages) by S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu, UK.

Two other books by the same author ‘Sikh Religion and Christianity’ (110 pages) and ‘Sikh Religion and Islam’ (Co-Authored by Gurmukh Singh-155 pages) were published earlier. These books were published keeping in mind the needs of our **Diaspora Youth**. Unfortunately the current managements of most of our Gurdwaras have no interest in these issues. We, therefore, appeal to concerned individuals who would take upon themselves the sewa of distributing these books to the youth in their congregations or Sikh Student Associations in their Colleges and Universities. **We will make any 20 volumes available for a donation of \$100.00 US.**

Within USA we will pay the postage. For other countries postage will be added.

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Inderbir Singh H. No. 4321 A, Gali No. 4, Ranjitpura, P.O. Khalsa College, Amritsar. Tel: 98146-45805, 0183-2228572

Rajpreet Kaur, W/O S. Gursewak Singh, H. No. 15273 Ward No. 1, Kothe Amar Pura, Joga Nand Road, Bathinda, Punjab. Mobile No. 98149-45270

Dr. Gursharanjit Singh, 16-New Modern Colony, Chheharata, Amritsar, Punjab 143001. Ph No. 0183-225-7894

Didar Singh, Khan Hospital, Sani Pur Road, Sirhind, Punjab. Ph. No. 01763-228121, 98152-46182

Inder Singh Ghagga, International Missionary, Vidya Nagar, P.O. Punjabi University Patiala, Punjab. Ph No. 0175-228-3316, 98144-55582

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