

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਚੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥
Ik oānkār sat nām kartā purakh nirbha-o nirvair akāl mūrat ajūnī saibha-n gur parsād.



THE SIKH BULLETIN GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI

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PUNJAB THE LAND OF THE GURUS AND THE SIKH HOMELAND

Salute to the land of five Rivers – The Punjab
When Indira Gandhi ruled 18 states, Punjab wasn't in those 18.
Now when Modi is ruling 19 states, Punjab isn't in those.
When British ruled all over India Punjab was the last one to come under that rule and immediately started struggle for freedom.

In the freedom struggle against British, the contribution of Punjabis is more than 80%.

When Mughal ruled India and converted Hindus to Islam, one and only one Punjab stood against them and Guru Teg Bahadur Ji (9th Guru & father of Guru Gobind Singh ji) laid down his life at Chandni Chowk in Delhi for their support & Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed all his four sons of the age of 7,9,14 & 17 years against the conversion to Islam. His Elder two sons (Sahibzade) sacrificed their lives in war against Mughals at Chamkaur Sahib(Pb) & younger two sons (Sahibzade) were bricked alive at Sirhand (Pb) by the Mughal ruler of that State.

Even when Sikander conquered all, only King Porus of Punjab dared to stop him.

So, Only Punjabis do what others can't do and are always ready to fight against Jabar and Julam.

Be proud to have been a Punjabi.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was one of the greatest emperors in Indian history, Sher-E-Punjab, Lion of Punjab.

Born: November 13, 1780, Gujranwala, Pakistan

Died: June 27, 1839, Lahore, Pakistan

Blinded in one eye, injured in one arm, yet built up the great Sikh empire.

United the disparate Sikhs into a kingdom and built an empire that covered Punjab, Kashmir, Ladakh, the entire North West.

Served by able men like Hari Singh Nalwa, Dewan Mokam Chand, Veer Singh Dhillon, Zorawar Singh.

Also built a modern army, even recruited European officers to bring in the latest techniques of warfare.

Technical Associate

Amrinder Singh

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That's why British Rulers couldn't annex Punjab during his lifetime. Because of him, Punjab was the last State which came under British rule in 1849.

But alas no one teaches about his legacy in India. Because of him, Punjab was the most literate state at that time. Even though he recruited European officers he ensured they followed a strict code of conduct, no beef, no smoking and no alcohol.

As a matter of fact, Ranjit Singh banned cow slaughter in his empire.

A devout Sikh, who never differentiated on religion. Both his court and army had equal number of Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims - a true secular king.

His finance minister was a Hindu Brahmin, his Prime Minister was a Dogra, his foreign minister a Muslim.

He also renovated the Golden Temple, gave it the gold plates, and gave equal amount of gold to then Hindus and Muslims too, for renovation of their shrines and temples.

Built Gurudwaras at Patna and Nanded, in honor of Guru Gobind Singh, both of which are considered among the Panch Takht.

A great warrior, an equally able and wise ruler, a truly great human being too.

Ranjit Singh is the only king in the history of world to have conquered Afghans, which even modern militaries of USA and Russia couldn't achieve, and eventually blocked entry of Mughals.

Floating on the Internet

[Two worst enemies of Panjab and Sikhi, since the 1947 partition of Panjab, have been Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Parkash Singh Badal. The former sold his soul to Congress, leaving the latter with the choice of only BJP. At a Moga conference of Akali Dal he declared it the 'Panjabi Party' that Hindus could join. Hindus of Panjab became the first group of people in the world to renounce their mother tongue, Panjabi, purely for political reasons. RSS zealots spread out through Panjab villages in early 1950s telling non-sikhs that when census takers ask them about what language do they speak at home, their answer should be '***as in tan ji Hindi bolde aan***'.

[I heard with my own ears in the Chamarly of my Nanak Vilege, Sakruli, Hoshiarpur. Editor]

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SIKHS IN INDIA AND THE USA

By
Harbhajan Singh Shergill

PREFACE

I am not a historian or scholar. I am an ordinary Sikh interested in my roots. There are many excellent books about Sikh history and Sikhs which not everybody can read. Most of the new generation, including my own children, do not know about Sikh history.

In 2012, on the centennial celebration of the founding of the Sikh temple in Stockton, California (the first temple in the USA), I was given the honor of making a Sikh museum in the original Gurudwara Sahib building. The building still stands, though it has been renovated over the past one hundred years.

While working on the museum, the thought came to me about writing a small booklet about the Sikhs. This booklet would tell about our home, our history, and our contributions.

Although I tried to use accurate dates for events, they vary in different books and sources. One reason for the variation is that the original dates are based on the Indian lunar calendar (Vikrami calendar), which varies each year compared to the Western calendar. For example, in 1699, Baisakhi would have been on March 30th. Now it is celebrated on April 13th each year. The Baisakhi date will change again in a few years. Mr. Purewal solved the problem by creating the Nanak Shahi calendar. And what was done to this calendar by our honorable Jathedars? Every Sikh knows that. Anyway, I do not want to go into the controversy over calendars and dates.

This booklet is written as a story and not a book of history. For anyone who wants to go deeper into Sikh history, nice books are available. One excellent source is the Encyclopedia of Sikhism. It

is a four-volume set by the Punjabi University of Patiala and is available online also.

This booklet is kept simple so that any high school student can read and understand it. It is also for non-Sikhs, who may not want to spend time on a reading a longer or more complex books. Just by reading this, they will have some understanding about the Sikhs. It will also serve as a guide to Sikh Museum in Stockton (Gadar Memorial Museum). I am thankful to Nikki Kalra for typing it. I am also thankful to Neil Ranu for reviewing it and giving it the shape of book. Your suggestions are welcome at hsshergillmd@gmail.com

This is my humble effort. I hope my readers will accept it.

Harbhajan Singh. Shergill M D
Stockton, CA
April 2018

THE SIKH

Literally, the word, “Sikh,” means student or a follower and, “Guru,” means teacher. A person who is a Sikh is someone who believes in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the holy book of the Sikhs), the teachings of the ten Gurus, and does not believe in any other religion.

Sikhism is the fifth largest religion in the world. It originated in Punjab, India, in the later part of the 15th century. Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of this faith, was born in 1469 in Punjab at Nankana Sahib, which is now in Pakistan. He believed all men were created equal and that we all are the children of the same father.

Sikhism is monotheistic in its fundamental belief. In the Sikh religion, the Creator is formless and eternal, transcendent and all pervasive. The three main pillars of Sikhism are:

1. Nam Japna (constant remembrance of God's name).
2. Kirat Karni (earning one's livelihood through honest labor).
3. Vand Shakna (sharing your good fortune with others).

From Guru Nanak Dev Ji to Guru Arjun Dev Ji, the fifth Guru, things went smoothly. When Muslim rulers of India saw the popularity of Guru Nanak's message increasing, they felt threatened.

Guru Arjun Dev Ji was tortured to death in Lahore. After his death, the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Ji, gave new form to the Sikhs. He started dressing as royals of that time did and wore swords and started keeping an army. Thus, the Sikhs became saint-soldiers who have meditation beads in one hand and sword in the other.

The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, gave the Sikhs their current form. After baptism (Amrit Shakna), he made it compulsory for the Sikh to keep five-Ks: uncut hair (kesh), iron bracelet (kara), sword (kirpan), undergarment (kachera), and wood comb (kanga). To abolish the caste system, which was prevalent in India (and still is), he gave the men the last name of Singh (lion) and to women, Kaur (princess).

Kirpan is the combination of two words, ‘kirpa’ (favor) and ‘aan’ (honor). It is not the weapon of offense. It is to be used to protect the weak against aggression and to protect one's personal honor and property. Guru Gobind Singh Ji said, “When all peaceful means to resolve a conflict fail, then it is just to use the sword.”

The sixth and tenth Gurus fought many battles and won, but never acquired an inch of land or any other property. The battles they fought were in self-defense.

Now, there are about 30 million Sikhs in the world. About 21 million are in India (of which, 16 million are in the Sikh homeland of Punjab and the

rest are in other parts of the country) and the others are scattered all over the world.

In the United States, the Sikh population is estimated to be about half a million. Other countries with considerable Sikh populations are: United Kingdom (760,000), Canada (500,000), Malaysia, Australia, Italy, France, Thailand, Pakistan, and Philippines. You will hardly find any country where there are no Sikhs. Sikhs make up 0.39% of the world population.

In the United States, you will find Sikhs in every field as scientists, professors, doctors, engineers, transportation professionals, businessmen, farmers, laborers, politicians, and military personnel. A handful of notable Sikhs in America include: Piara Singh Gill, a member of the Manhattan Project, Narinder Singh Kapany, a pioneer in fiber optic research and development, and broadcaster Ms Penny *Sandhu*. ***Everyone knows Nikki Haily who has Sikh roots (Randhawa)***. The Sikh place of worship is called the gurudwara (door of the guru). A gurudwara can be built in any shape, but they all are recognized by a saffron Sikh flag (Nishan Sahib) in front of the building and domes on top.

Inside the gurudwara, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is placed on a raised platform and covered by a canopy. Persons belonging to any faith can go into the gurudwara as long as they cover their heads, walk with bare feet, and do not carry cigarettes or alcohol. A free langar (community kitchen) is attached to each gurudwara where anyone can come and eat. Gurudwaras also provide shelter to people who need it.

In the United States, Sikhs are the most misunderstood people. Most Americans believe they are Arabs or Afghans or followers of Osama Bin Laden. This is because of their beards and turbans. In fact, most of the people who wear turbans in this country are Sikhs. Many hate crimes have been committed against them due to mistaken identity. After 9/11, Balbir Singh Sodhi

was shot dead. There was an attack on a gurudwara in Wisconsin on August 5, 2012, killing six people and wounding many others. These tragedies were all due to ignorance and lack of understanding. There is a great need for us in America to understand each other.

Sikhs have contributed a lot to India in every field despite being only 2% of the population. During the height of the Second World War, they comprised 45% of the British Indian Army and gave their lives to defend Europe. For the freedom of India, this 2% of the population made more than 80% of the sacrifices. Out of the 121 hung by the British, 93 were Sikhs and out of the 2,646 who suffered life imprisonment, 2,147 were Sikhs.

Even now, these 2% of Sikhs in India contribute 33% of the total income tax and 67% of the total charity in India. There are more than 59,000 gurudwaras (Sikh temples) in India providing langar (free food) to approximately 5,900,000 people daily.

In the United States, Sikhs are contributing a lot to the economy. There are Sikhs in every field. Sikh youth are joining the army against all the odds. They have to fight every step to keep their identity.

I can say with certainty that Sikhs are not and will not be a burden on society. Initially, they came here to work and make some money and go back home to India, but current immigrants are here to stay.

There is nothing to be feared. Their appearance might be different, but they have the same dreams like any other Americans. True to their tradition, they will not hesitate to lay down their life for their newly adopted country if the chance was given to them. So, the next time you see a turban wearing person, just say, "Hi," or, "Sat Sri Akal" (God is true).

GURU PERIOD

1469 - 1708

The story of the Sikhs starts about the same time as the story of Europeans in America. Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith, was a contemporary of Columbus, Martin Luther, Michelangelo, and Babar.

The Guru period starts in the last third of the 15th century and ends in the first decade of the 18th century. The beginning of the period coincides with the death of William and the start of the reign of Queen Anne of Great Britain. Britain had made East Jersey and West Jersey crown colonies during this time.

Guru Nanak Ji's message was that all men are equal. We are all the sons of one God. He preached to meditate and remember God. Earn your living by honest labor and share it with the less fortunate.

Guru Angad Ji created the Punjabi alphabet and collected his writings and the writings of Guru Nanak into a book called "Pothi Sahib" (Small Book). The Pothi Sahib also contains the writings of Hindu and Muslim saints which Guru Nanak collected during his travels.

Guru Amardas Ji started the tradition of langar (community kitchen) in which everyone eats sitting together irrespective of social status. He also organized Sikhs into 22 divisions called Manjis and appointed men and women preachers to head those Manjis. He also spoke against the practice of sati and encouraged widows to remarry. (Sati was a practice in which women were forced to burn themselves alive with their husbands on the funeral pyre according to Hindu tradition.) He wrote in praise of God which is part of the S.G.G.S. now.

Guru Ram Das Ji was the founder of the city of Amritsar. He encouraged his Sikhs to enter into trade in addition to participating in agriculture. He

also wrote in praise of the lord and this is now included in the S.G.G.S.

Guru Arjun Dev Ji compiled the writing of previous gurus and added his own and gave the Sikhs the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (the holy book of the Sikhs). He also constructed the Golden Temple at Amritsar. The foundation stone of the temple was laid by a Muslim saint, Mian Mir. Guru Arjun was tortured to death in Lahore by the orders of the emperor at the time.

Guru Har Gobind Ji was the son of Guru Arjun Dev Ji. After his father's death, he told the Sikhs to bear arms and he created the concept of the saint-soldier. He wore two swords representing miri (temporal) and piri (spiritual). He also sat on a throne and laid the foundation of the Akal Takhat (Throne of the Immortal). The Akal Takhat is still the supreme authority for the Sikhs.

Guru Har Rai Ji preached Sikhism. He did keep a small army but mostly lived peacefully. He reorganized mission work and the number of Sikhs increased significantly. He also had a free medical clinic for the sick at Kiratpur and had good knowledge of herbal medicine.

Guru Harkrishan Ji became guru at the young age of five. He was summoned to Delhi by Emperor Aurangzeb. He stayed in Delhi at Bangla Sahib. There was an outbreak of small pox. He served the sick people and died from small pox.

Guru Teg Bahadur Ji meditated a lot. In the early days, after assuming the guruship, he traveled and preached Sikhism. He went to the far east of India and finally established Anandpur Sahib. When Kashmiri Pandits came to him for help, he went to Delhi to meet the emperor on their behalf. His companions were tortured to death by boiling water and being burned and sawed alive. He refused to give up his faith. He was beheaded in Delhi (now Sis Ganj Sahib). His body was cremated in Delhi at Raisina village ('now called RAKAB GANJ SAHIB) near Indian Parliament

while his head was taken to Anandpur Sahib and cremated there.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji gave new form to the Sikhs with baptism. He was an excellent leader, a great poet, a great philosopher, and a great general. He sacrificed his father and mother and his four children for the sake of Sikhs. He recompiled the Siri Granth Sahib ji and added to it his father's (the ninth Guru) writing. It was written by Bhai Mani Singh Ji. Then he went south to meet the Emperor and settled at Nader. There he met Baba Banda ji, whom he sent to Punjab after baptizing him. Guru Gobind Singh ji was stabbed by two Muslim brothers, and though his wound was healing, it opened again. He died there in Nader. He told the Sikhs to follow the Siri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, which has guided the Sikhs since then and will continue to until the end of time.

GURU NANAK DEV JI

The First Guru: 1469 - 1539

More than five hundred years ago, a great man was born in the land of five rivers. His name was Nanak ji. He founded the Sikh religion. He was born to Mata Tripta ji on October 20, 1469, in the village of Talwandi in Shekhupura District (now in Pakistan and called Nankana Sahib). His father was Baba Kalyan Das Bedi (popularly called Mehta Kalu). He had one older sister, Bebe Nanaki ji.

From childhood, Baba Nanak was different from other boys of his age. He was good in studies and always asked his teacher strange (at least, strange for his age) questions about God, religion, etc. His father saw that he was not interested in studies, so he sent him to graze family milk cattle.

One day while grazing the cattle, he got busy with his thoughts, and the cattle destroyed some other farmer's crop. Then his father gave him some money and sent him to a nearby town so that he could buy something to sell at a profit later. But Baba Nanak spent that money feeding some

hungry saints. When he came home his father got angry and slapped him. His sister was the only one in the family who understood Baba Nanak. His father sent him to Sultanpur, where his sister was living. Her husband, Jai Ram ji, got a job for Baba Nanak as a storekeeper.

For a while, Nanak worked like an ordinary man. He got married to Mata Sulakhani Ji. They had two sons, Baba Siri Chand and Lakhmi Das Ji. Baba Nanak was well liked by the Nawab (Chief) of Sultanpur. He was accused of misappropriating groceries but was found innocent. One early morning he went to take a bath in the nearby river when he saw a vision. He was not seen for three days. People thought he had drowned or committed suicide, but his sister did not give up. Finally, he came back to town and declared, "There is no Hindu and no Muslim."

After this, Baba Nanak gave up regular work, leaving his children under the care of his sister. He went on long journeys. He traveled to Ceylon in the south, to Assam in the east, to Mecca and Bagdad in the west, and to the Himalayas in the north.

He went to the well-known places of religions. He held discussions with religious preachers of that time and pointed out the fallacies that they were practicing. He did not believe in any rituals.

Guru Nanak had a teaching method unique only to him. In Hardwar, he saw Hindus throwing water to the east to the rising sun, but instead of criticizing them for that ritual, he started throwing water towards the west. It was they who asked him, "what are you doing?", "I am watering my fields at Kartarpur in Punjab", replied Baba Nanak. They all laughed and said, "How will your water reach Punjab?" Baba Nanak asked them, "why are you throwing water toward the rising sun?" "We are offering the water to the souls of our forefathers in the next world." Baba Nanak responded, "If your water can reach the next world, surely mine could reach Kartarpur, which is in this world."

While in Mecca, he slept by putting his feet in the direction of Kabba. The Priests got angry and said, "How do you dare to dishonor the house of God?" He replied, politely, "Sir, I am too tired; you can turn my feet to the direction where there is no God."

When Babar invaded India, he spoke boldly against his cruelty. He had excellent ways of communicating his point of view. He believed and practised the concept of one God. He said God is everywhere, he is not confined to a temple or mosque.

Guru Nanak spoke against the caste system. He believed that all men are created equal. He believed in basic human rights of every man. He preached to the kings to rule in the name of God. He preached to Muslims to be true Muslims and to Hindus to be true Hindus. He believed in universal brotherhood. He said that one can live a worldly life and still pray to God. One does not have to go to caves or mountains to pray, which was the custom among Hindus at the time. He said one should work honestly and should share his earnings with the needy.

In his later years he established a farming commune at Kartarpur. By now, he had many followers. His followers are called "Sikhs" (disciples). At Kartarpur, most of his writings were collected later. He composed 974 shabads in 19 ragas. His main compositions are Japji Sahib, Sohla, Sidh-Gosht, Dakhani Onkar, Asa Di War, Patt, and Baramaha. He died at Kartarpur in 1539 and appointed one of his followers, Bhai Lahna ji, as his successor.

GURU ANGAD DEV JI

The Second Guru: 1504 - 1552

Guru Angad Dev Ji was born at Mate di Sarai in Ferozepur District on March 31, 1504. His real name was Lehna. His father's name was Pherumal Ji, who was a shopkeeper, and his mother was Daya Kaur Ji. He was married to Kheevi Ji. He

had four children: two sons, Dasu and Dattu, and two daughters, Bibi Amro and Anokhi Ji.

His father was a very religious man. He was a worshipper of Durga. Lehna started helping his father in business and also became a worshipper of Durga. During Babar's invasion, Mate Di Sarai was looted. So, Bhai Lehna's family moved to Khadur, the hometown of his mother. Bhai Lehna worked honestly and he grew rich. Every year, he used to lead a party of pilgrims to the sacred place of Durga in the Himalayan Jawala Mukhi (Fire-Faced) Temple.

Once, while on his way, he stopped at Kartarpur and met Guru Nanak ji. He was so impressed by Guru Nanak's ideas of God that he gave up Durga worship. Soon he wrapped up his business and came to stay near Guru Nanak. He was a very obedient follower. If Guru Nanak told him to wash his clothes in the middle of the cold night, he did it without asking questions. He stayed at Kartarpur for seven years at the service of Guru Nanak. Impressed by his service, devotion and spirit of humility, Guru Nanak called him Angad ("part of myself"). He appointed Angad Dev ji as his successor in 1539 at Kartarpur.

On assuming guruship, Guru Angad Ji put down the sayings of Guru Nanak in writing. Since most of his compositions were in Punjabi, in which no book had been written so far, Guru Angad developed the Punjabi Alphabet called Gurmukhi ("from the mouth of Guru") and also completed a biography of Guru Nanak. He also introduced the tradition of the free kitchen. He wrote 63 shabads and sloks.

Guru Angad Dev ji was chiefly noted for patience and obedience. He said, "Thou should have patience like the earth, and firmness in pain and pleasure like a mountain; thou should bear pardon in thy heart and do good to all, no matter what they do to thee." He died in 1552.

GURU AMAR DASS JI

The Third Guru: 1479 - 1574

Guru Amar Dass Ji was born at Basarke in Amritsar District on May 5, 1479. He was about 10 years younger than Guru Nanak ji, but somehow had not come in contact with him. His father was Tej Bhan Bhalla Ji and his mother was Lakhami Ji. He was married to Ramo Ji. He had four children: two sons, Mohan and Mohari Ji, and two daughters, Bibi Dani & Bhani Ji.

He lived the very simple life of a devout Hindu. He went to all pilgrimages but found no peace. He was 69 years old when one day, he heard in the early morning hours, a hymn of Guru Nanak being sung by Bibi Amro (Guru Angad's daughter who was married to his nephew). He was so impressed by those hymns that he came to Khadur and became a follower of Guru Angad ji. He started serving him with full dedication. At this old age he would go every morning to the river to fetch water for the Guru's morning bath. Then, he would go to the forest to collect wood for the kitchen and would work the whole day doing one thing or another. He did this for 12 years. One morning, while he was bringing water for the Guru, he stumbled on the peg of a spindle, near a weaver's hut. Upon hearing the sound, the weaver woke up and when he asked his wife about the noise she said, "It must be Amru, the homeless."

When Guru Angad ji heard about it he said, "Amar Dass is not homeless, he is a home for the homeless." Finding him worthy to carry on Guru Nanak's mission, he appointed him his successor. He assumed the guruship on March 26, 1552, at Khadur. He was about 73 years old at that time. To avoid the jealousy of Guru Angad's sons, he left Khadur and settled in Goindwal. Once Datu (Guru Angad's son) came there and kicked him off from his seat. Even this did not anger Guru Amar Dass Ji. He said, "Sir, pardon me, my old bones must have hurt your tender foot." He preached to his disciples to use the same patience and humility. He used to say, "If one ill-treats you,

bear it. If you bear it three times, God himself will fight for you for the fourth time."

Though he was old when he took over, he did a lot in the short period of his guruship to reorganize Sikhism which was falling back into the folds of Hinduism:

1. He did a lot for women. He prohibited purdah (veil) and opposed the practice of sati (burning alive with the dead husband). He said true sati is one who suffers the torture of separation from the Creator, which is worse than death. He promoted the remarriage of widows, thus giving equal status to women.
2. He built bowlis (a well with staircase) and said that Sikhs will find all the benefits of pilgrimage by taking a bath in it.
3. He continued the practice of the free kitchen. Anyone who came to see him first had to eat in the kitchen with everybody else. When Emperor Akbar came to see him, even he had to eat with commoners in the kitchen. Only then would Guru Amar Das ji meet him.
4. He organized missionary work, established twenty-two seats (manjis), and appointed 146 well trained missionaries, out of whom, 52 were women. Never in the history of India were women given such position and power.
5. He spoke against the priestly class. He preached that one could reach God without any mediator.
6. He started writing at the age of 73

and composed the Anand Sahib. His 907 hymns are included in the Guru Granth Sahib. Thus, he gave the Sikhs a well-organized institution and set the ball rolling which put Sikhism on the way to gradual dissociation from Hinduism.

He was an example of dedication and humility. He was the “Home to Homeless.” He was the hope of those without hope. He was an abode for those without any.

GURU RAM DAS JI

The Fourth Guru: 1534 – 1581

Guru Ram Das Ji was born on September 24, 1534, in Chuna Mandi, Lahore, in the house of Hardas Sodhi Ji and Daya Kaur Ji. He was married to Bibi Bhani ji (Guru Amardas's daughter) and had three sons: Baba Pirthi Chand, Mahan Dev and Arjun Dev Ji. Being the first child, he was called, “Jetha” (First born). He was still a child when he lost his parents. He moved to his maternal grandmother's home.

He started earning his living as a hawker, selling roasted grains. Here he came in contact with Guru Amardas ji. When Guru Amar Das ji moved to Goindwal he also moved with him. In his free time, he would come and spend his time in the service of the Guru. He also helped in the construction of the bowli (well). Guru Amar Das ji was so impressed by him that he allowed him to marry his daughter, Bibi Bhani, and thus he became a member of the Guru's household. In spite of being a son-in-law, there was no change in his behavior towards Guru Amar Das ji. He always served him with the same dedication and humility.

When the time came to choose his successor, Guru Amar Das ji chose Ram Das ji, not because he was his son-in-law, but because he was the only one worthy to carry on Guru Nanak's mission. He was

43 at the time of taking over the guruship (August 30, 1574).

When he assumed the guruship, Sikhism was still facing many challenges. Age-old Brahmin influence was still holding strong onto socio-spiritual life in Punjab. Even prior to his assumption of the guruship, Ram Das defended the claims of Sikhism against Brahmins in the court of Akbar. During his guruship he took the following steps:

- 1 He founded Amritsar. The land was given to Bibi Bhani by Emperor Akbar who came to see Guru Amar Das ji. The land was bought from a landlord, initially, it was known as Chak Ram Dass, but later on came to be known as Amritsar. It gave the Sikhs the central seat to serve as Sikhism's base temple as well as spiritual base.
2. To promote Sikhism, he established new centers and sent missionaries, like Bhai Gurdas Ji, to Agra in the east and other missionaries to Kabul in the west. He also took new steps to consolidate, enrich, and protect the new faith.
3. He encouraged traders to settle in Amritsar and thus, strengthened the economy of the Sikhs.
4. He introduced new ceremonies of birth, marriage and death through appropriate hymns composed by him, and thus, gave Sikhs a separate identity.
5. He appointed masands (preachers) to regularly collect funds from the Sikhs & use them for the propagation of Sikhism.
6. He won the support of the Udasis (a sect started by Guru Nanak's son, Baba Sri Chand), which helped to carry on Sikhism during a time of persecution of Sikhs.

7. He composed hymns. His 679 shalokas are included in the Guru Granth Sahib.

Even after becoming the Guru, he was as humble as ever. When Baba Sri Chand came to see him, pointing to his long beard he asked, "Why are you keeping such a long beard?" The Guru replied, "To wipe the feet of holy men like you." He attempted to actually do it but Sri Chand moved back and said, "You are in my father's place. This humility has won for you the spiritual throne of my father. I was superseded because I did not possess this quality. Your greatness is beyond description."

Guru Ram Das ji is known as Sodhi Patshah (Sodhi King) and also as an apostle of love and humility. He died at Goindwal in 1581 and appointed his younger son, Arjun Dev ji, to the guruship.

GURU ARJUN DEV JI

The Fifth Guru: 1563 - 1606

Guru Arjun Dev Ji was the younger son of Guru Ram Das and Bibi Bhani Ji. He was born at Goindwal on April 15, 1563. He was married to Ganga ji, daughter of Kishan Chand of Village Meo in Jullundur District. He had one son, Hargobind Ji.

He was the first Guru who grew up in a Sikh environment. He learned Punjabi from his father, Guru Amar Das ji, and Sanskrit and Hindi from Pandit Beni. He learned many other things about life from Baba Buddha Ji. From early childhood, he started writing poetry. He was also very fond of fine arts. He learned the use of arms and horse riding. Though born in the same family, his older brother Pirthi Chand was an ambitious and vicious person. He was very possessive and worldly. Because of this, Guru Ram Das ji did not deem him fit for the guruship. His other brother, Mahadev, was totally detached from the world. So, when the time of transferring the guruship

came, Guru Ram Das Ji appointed him as the fifth Guru.

This created a great rift in the family. Pirthi Chand used mean tricks to establish himself as the Guru but slowly and slowly Sikhs recognized the true successor of Nanak.

During all this trouble in the family, Guru Arjan Dev Ji showed great tolerance and stayed calm under all circumstances. Sikhs, like Baba Budha Ji and Bhai Gurdas ji, also helped a great deal in controlling the situation. Pirthi Chand calmed down for a while with the hope that Guru Arjan would not have a child. He was sure the guruship would pass to his son Meharban. His hopes were never fulfilled, as a son was born in Guru Arjun's home. All his life Pirthi Chand tried all illegal means to claim the guruship for himself or his son. This caused the division amongst the Sikhs and helped the enemies of the Sikhs.

In spite of all these family troubles, Guru Arjan Dev ji did a lot for the Sikhs. He compiled the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, which he dictated to Bhai Gurdas Ji. It contains the compositions of the four preceding Gurus, Guru Arjun Dev Ji, and other Hindu and Muslim saints. Thus, he gave to Sikhs their "holy book," which was installed in the Golden Temple.

He completed the construction of the Golden Temple and the nectar pool around it, thus giving the Sikhs a central place of worship. Its foundation stone was laid by a Muslim Saint, Mian Mir. Thus, showing the broad base of Sikhism in which, everybody was equal, regardless of religion or caste.

He constructed many other Gurdwaras also. Among them are Taran Taran, Bowli (well) Sahib, Dewan Khana at Lahore, and Shish Mahal (House of Mirrors) at Kartarpur. He also reorganized the Sikh Missionary Center. During his time, it was said that there was no place in India where a Sikh was not found.

He also encouraged the Sikhs to do business. In Taran Taran, he made a place for the crippled and the chronically ill. Then during his short life time of the guruship, he did a lot to reorganize the Sikh faith and gave it a new shape.

During the time of Akbar, relations of the Guru with the Emperor were good, so Akbar came back again to pay a visit to Guru Arjan Dev ji. But after his death, his son Jahangir came to the throne. He did not tolerate any new popular movement. Enemies of the Sikhs finally got their say. Pirthi Chand supported the moves against Guru Arjan Dev ji directly and indirectly. Another Hindu minister of Lahore, Chandu, also played a vicious role in Guru Arjan's death. He offered his daughter to Guru Arjan's son for marriage. That proposal was not accepted as Chandu had made disrespectful remarks about the Guru. Chandu felt insulted and he started scheming to take the revenge.

The Guru was framed in a fictitious case and finally was tortured to death. He was made to sit in boiling water on a hot iron plate and burning sand was poured on his head. But he stayed calm and accepted the will of God. He finally went to the heavenly abode on May 30, 1606. Gurdwara Dera Sahib in Lahore is situated at that place now. He appointed his son Har Gobind ji as his successor.

He was the supreme example of non-violence. He did not just preach but practiced all that he preached. He gave the Indian masses a new weapon of non-violence to fight against injustice. He encouraged the masses to fight for their rights even if it cost them their lives. He gave a new direction to Sikhism and started a revolution against the cruel government. He was the first Sikh martyr and his example of sacrifice was followed by Guru Teg Bahadur ji and many other Sikhs. Somebody has said: *The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.*

GURU HARGOBIND JI

The Sixth Guru: 1595 - 1644

Hargobind Ji was the only son of Guru Arjan Dev and Ganga Ji. He was born at Wadali near Amritsar on June 19, 1595. At that time, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, was staying in Wadali to avoid a clash with Pirthi Chand, who was dreaming to be guru himself and also to pass the guruship to his son. Pirthi Chand got upset when he came to know about Hargobind's birth. He started looking for the ways to kill Hargobind in his infancy by sending a maid to poison him and later on a Brahmin and a snake charmer. Each time God saved Hargobind. Later on, he had an attack of small pox from which also he recovered. In those days it was rare to survive from an attack of small pox.

Baba Buddha Ji was his teacher. He taught him basic language and also taught him use of arms and horse riding. He got the religious training from his father. He was only eleven years old when his father Guru Arjun Dev Ji was summoned to Lahore by Emperor Jahangir's orders and was tortured to death. After his father's death, he assumed the guruship at that young age. He was surrounded by his hostile uncle's family but he also had very devout Sikhs like Baba Budda ji and Bhai Gurdas Ji.

He changed the old traditions. He wore two swords, indicating temporal power (Miri) and spiritual power (Piri). He dressed himself in the royal style and sat on the throne. He laid the foundation of Akal Takht in front of the Golden Temple. The Akal Takht was made by Baba Buddha Ji, Bhai Gurdas and the Guru Ji himself. Thus, in the same compound there is the Golden Temple to give the Sikhs spiritual guidance and Akal Takht to give them guidance to resolve their political questions. He made the Sikh religion and politics inseparable. He ordered his Sikhs to arm themselves because he saw that the Sikh religion was in danger of extinction because of antagonism from both Hindus and Muslims.

The most popular arm of that time was the sword (which is called a Kirpan in Punjabi). He did not raise his sword to acquire a kingdom but for the protection of the Sikh religion and other minorities of that time. A Sikh is allowed to use the sword only under two circumstances: "Kirpa" (favor) to protect the defenseless and weak from the oppressor, and "Aan" (Self-Respect) to protect himself and his faith. Sikhs used it to establish an empire (again to protect themselves and their faith) during the period of Banda Bahadur and Ranjit Singh. In Sikhism from the time of Guru Hargobind Ji, it is justified to use power to get justice when all other means of peaceful settlement fail.

The daily routine of the Guru was as follows: "He woke up before day break, bathed and dressed himself in full armour and then would go to Golden Temple for morning prayers. He then preached to the Sikhs. Later in the afternoon he used to sit on Akal Takht and listen to singers recounting the feats of heroism. Plans were made for hunting and political problems facing the Sikhs were discussed and resolutions passed. Personal conflicts of the Sikh were also decided by the Guru himself. So, no Sikh had to go to the courts for resolving his dispute."

Soon, Guru Ji had a fair-sized army under the command of Bidi Chand, Pirana Jatha, Langa Ji, and Pinde Khan.

The Guru was imprisoned in the Gwalior Fort by the orders of Jahangir. Different reasons have been given by different writers but mainly he was arrested because of his increasing popularity among the Punjabi masses and because of the complaints by the enemies of the Sikhs. The period of his imprisonment also varies from a few days to twelve years. It is possible that initially he was ordered to be imprisoned for twelve years but later on released after a short time. Before he left for Delhi, he appointed Baba Budha Ji in charge of the Golden Temple and Bhai Gurdas Ji in charge of the Akal Takht.

During this time, Baba Budha Ji and Bhai Gurdas ji started the tradition of peace marches (called Chowkian). Sikhs would leave Amritsar and go singing hymns in small groups to Gwalior.

Later on, Jahangir's relation with the Guru became friendly. All the misunderstanding was cleared. When the Guru was released from jail, he asked Jahangir to release other princes along with him, which Jahangir did. The Guru was known as Bandi-Shor (the Liberator). During peace time, Guru Ji did not give up his military style. More and more Sikh youths came and joined his army. During this time, he also sent Sikh preachers to different parts of India.

After Jahangir's death in 1627, Shah Jahan ascended to the throne of Delhi. Enemies of the Sikhs again had their way. Guru Ji had to fight with the imperial army in self-defense. He fought and won all four battles.

The first battle was because of the royal hawk which was captured by the Sikhs. They refused to return it and the imperial army attacked. It was fought at the site of Hargobindpur. The second was fought at Nathana (Gurdaspur) in 1636 and the last one at Kartarpur in 1634. The Pinde Khan took part during the first battle and after that he became very proud and started saying that Guru Ji won the battle because of him. During the second and third battles, Guru Ji did not let him participate. Finally, he left the Guru Ji's army and joined the Mughal Army. Pinde Khan came against the Guru ji at Kartarpur and was killed by Guru ji during the fight. While dying he asked for forgiveness and was forgiven by the Guru ji.

After this, Guru Ji retired to Kiratpur which was established by his oldest son Baba Gurdita. He had six children, five boys (Baba Gurditta, Anirai, Suraj Mal, Atal Rai, and Teg Bahadur Ji) and one daughter, Veero ji. Baba Atal Rai died in childhood in Amritsar. Baba Gurditta was adopted by Siri Chand (Guru Nanak's son and founder of Udasis sect). He preceded the Guru ji at Kiratpur

with his family. He died at the age of twenty-four. Ani Rai and Suraj Mal were too worldly and Teg Bahadur retired into solitude. So, when the time came to pass the guruship, Guru Ji chose his grandson Har Rai ji, as his successor. Baba Gurditta's older son Dhirmal, started a new sect of Dhirmaliyas and Suraj Mal's family was founder of Gulab Rais.

After the wars were over, Guru Ji engaged himself in praying and preaching. For the last eleven years of his life, he lived like a fakir and did not even use pillows. He was a great soldier and commander. He raised the army of saint-soldiers. He was the founder of Akal Takht, Loh Garh fortress and Har Gobind Pur. He fought against the oppressor in self-defense only. He preached to the Sikhs to live a peaceful life but at the same time, he advised them to use arms if necessary.

Though he did not compose any hymns himself, he preached Sikhism at faraway places and asked the Sikhs to follow the Guru Granth Sahib ji. He always helped the needy. He used to say the mouth of a poor man is the Guru's Treasure, so whoever feeds a hungry person is donating to the Guru's Treasure. He gave the Sikhs a new direction.

GURU HAR RAI JI

The Seventh Guru: 1630 - 1661

He was the grandson of Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji. His father was Baba Gurditta ji and mother was Nihal Kaur Ji. He was born at Kiratpur (in Hoshiarpur District) on January 16, 1630. He had an older brother, Dhirmal. He was married to Kishan Kaur ji and had two sons: Ram Rai and Har Krishan Ji. He had one adopted daughter, Anup Kaur Ji.

He grew up in a natural environment in Kiratpur. He got his basic education there. He was well trained in the use of arms and religious duties. So, when Guru Har Gobind ji was looking for a successor, he was the natural choice. Guru Har Rai

Ji assumed the guruship at the age of fourteen after the death of Guru Har Gobind Ji.

His older brother Dhirmal was very jealous of it. He started bothering Har Rai Ji. In contrast to Dhirmal, Har Rai was very polite and mild-natured. He simply ignored Dhirmal.

The Guru ji maintained a cavalry of 2,200 horses but he rarely engaged himself in war. He went for hunting but never to kill animal. He would catch them alive and keep them in his personal zoo at Kiratpur. He would also pick up orphaned and unwanted animals and take care of them. Once passing through a garden, his loose dress struck a flower off its stem. He felt so bad about it after that whenever he was wearing a loose dress he would keep it folded so that the gown could be tucked under his arms.

All his life, he served the sick and the poor. He maintained a free medical clinic for the poor. When Dara Shikoh, eldest son of Shah Jahan fell ill, no cure could be found for his illness. He was given medicine from Guru's clinic which cured him. At that time, Guru Har Rai Ji ignored the enmity of the Mughals with Sikhs.

He spent most of his time preaching and reorganizing missionary work. He went to Malwa for preaching. During this time, he blessed the poor orphans. With Guru's blessing, children of these orphans became the rulers of Patiala, Nabha and Jind. He also got more copies made of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

After Shah Jahan's death, there was a fight among his sons and Dara Shikoh fled from Delhi. Guru Har Rai Ji helped him with the army so he could safely cross the river but later on he was caught by his younger brother Aurangzeb, and put to death.

After Aurangzeb got established, he started spreading the Muslim religion by force. He called Guru Har Rai Ji to Delhi. Guru Ji did not go himself but sent his eldest son, Ram Rai Ji. He

was given instructions not to show any miracles and tell the truth. He misinterpreted a verse of Guru Nanak Ji just to please Aurangzeb. When Guru Har Rai Ji came to know about it, he felt so bad that he disowned his son for the sake of the principles of the Guru's House. He appointed his younger son, Har Krishan Ji, as the Eighth Guru.

One day, addressing his Sikhs he said, "Anyone may come to you at any time and should go back satisfied. You should do service in such a way that the poor guest may not feel he is partaking in some charity but as if he had come to the Guru's House which belonged to all in equal measure. He who has more should consider it as God's trust and share it in the same spirit. Man is only an instrument to serve God. The temple and the mosques may be repaired and rebuilt but not a broken heart." He died on October 6, 1661, at the age of 31 at Kiratpur.

GURU HAR KRISHAN JI

The Eighth Guru: 1656 - 1664

Guru Har Krishan Ji was born at Kiratpur on July 7, 1656. He was the youngest son of Guru Har Rai Ji and Kishan Kaur Ji. He had an older brother, Ram Rai Ji, who was disowned by Guru Har Rai Ji. Ram Rai established his own sect and established himself at Dehradoon.

Har Krishan Ji assumed the guruship at the age of five, after Guru Har Rai Ji's death. He was surrounded by enemies. His uncle Dhirmal was still trying to take over the guruship by foul means. His older brother declared himself the Guru and also requested for Aurangzeb's help for this and claimed that as the oldest son, he should be the successor of Guru Nanak's throne. But he did not know that the guruship was not a property which could be inherited. It was given to a Sikh who was most worthy of it by virtue of his personal qualities. Moreover, Aurangzeb himself became king by killing his older brother so he could not accept his claim that the oldest son had more rights.

Ram Rai pressed Aurangzeb to call Har Krishan Ji to Delhi and settle the claim himself. Aurangzeb saw in it a good opportunity to spread his own religion. He had full control over Ram Rai. If he could persuade Har Krishan Ji also, then his job would have been very simple. He called upon Raja Jai Singh of Amber (Jaipur) and asked him to bring Har Krishan Ji to Delhi. Ram Rai was very happy to hear these orders. He thought, "If my brother does not obey the order, the king will send an army and destroy him. If he does obey the king's order and come to Delhi, it will be against the wishes of his late father and he will be considered a greater sinner than I. If he runs away because of fear, then I will go to Kiratpur and take possession of his personal property and the guruship too."

Sikhs of Delhi were also pleased to hear this as they thought that they will have the chance to see the real Guru, Guru Har Krishan Ji, because they were quite upset with Ram Rai.

Raja Jai Singh sent high official with the order that he was to invite the Guru rather than summon and bring him to Delhi with full honors. When the Guru learnt about this, after counseling with the prominent Sikhs, he finally decided to go to Delhi. On his way, he kept on preaching Sikhism.

Guru Har Krishan Ji was received by Raja Jai Singh with great honor and he stayed in Raja Jai Singh's palace. There, he preached the God's word. Aurangzeb tried to meet him a few times but Har Krishan Ji did not see him for one excuse or another. He was put to various tests but with God's grace he established his credentials. He refused to show any magical tricks because they were against Almighty God's will.

Then there was an outbreak of small pox in Delhi. Guru Ji helped the sick people day and night. While doing so, he contracted small pox himself from which he did not recover. When he knew his time was coming near, he ordered his followers not to weep for him but to sing the Guru's hymns.

In the chanting of God's name, he breathed his last on March 30, 1664. His last words were "Baba Bakala" and this was a signal to his followers that the next Guru would be found at Bakala.

He died at the young age of 8 years old. He was the youngest of all the Gurus. He stayed in Delhi in Raja Jai Singh's palace, where Gurdwara Bangala Sahib now stands. His body was cremated on the bank of Jamuna at a place called Tiokhari, south of Delhi, where Gurdwara Bala Sahib has been built. He was respected by Hindus and Muslims alike. He was also known to Muslims of Delhi as "Bala Pir."

GURU TEG BAHADUR JI

The Ninth Guru: 1621 - 1675

Guru Teg Bahadur Ji was the youngest of five sons of Guru Hargobind Ji and Mata Nanaki Ji. He was born on April 1, 1621, in Amritsar.

He got his early training of archery and horse riding from Baba Budha Ji. Bhai Gurdas Ji taught him reading, writing and about religion. He was also interested in music and poetry. His childhood name was Teg Mall. He got married at the age of 12, on Feb 4, 1633, to Gujari Ji.

He took part in a battle of Kartarpur along with his father, the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Ji in 1635. Guru Ji was impressed by his use of sword in the battlefield. He started calling him Teg Bahadur. He spent some time in Keeratpur. After his father's death in 1644, he moved to Bakala to his mother's ancestral home, with his wife Gujari and mother Nanaki. He spent most of his time in meditation and stayed aloof.

Before Guru Harkishan passed away, he said, "Baba Bakala."

Many other descendants from the Guru's family had moved to Bakala and started claiming that they were the next guru. As the story goes, a businessman Makhan Shah's ship got caught in a

storm. He prayed to God and promised that he will give some coins in offering if he reached safely. He came to Bakala where there were twenty-two fake gurus sitting there. He started offering two gold coins to each one of them with the hope that true guru will know and question him. When he came to Guru Teg Bahadur Ji and offered two coins and bowed, Guru Ji smiled and said that his offerings were short of what he had promised. He declared that he found the real Guru.

Dhirmal (Teg Bahadur's nephew), who was claiming to be guru, got very upset. His men plundered the Guru's house. Guru Ji stayed calm. When Makhan Shah came to know, he attacked Dhirmal's house in retaliation and plundered his house. He also brought the scripts of Granth Sahib Ji which was in the possession of Dhirmal. Guru Teg Bahadur Ji made him return everything back to Dhirmal and forgave him. The Guru ji believed that forgiveness is the best charity.

During his tour to the east, his son was born. He was named Gobind Rai. Guru Ji reached Chak Nanaki (Anandpur Sahib) on Vaisakhi in 1672.

In May 1673, A group of Kashmiri Pundits came to Guru for help as they were forced to convert to Islam. Guru Ji promised them to intervene. He left Anandpur Sahib on July 11, 1675, for Delhi. Before he left, on July 8, 1675, he nominated his son Gobind Rai as his successor.

Some historians say that he travelled with his Sikhs and kept on preaching on the way and was captured by authorities in Agra. But according to *The Sikh Encyclopedia*, he was arrested in Ropar on July 12, 1675, and was taken to Sirhind. He was put in jail in Bassi Pathana for almost 3 months and tortured. He arrived in Delhi on November 4, 1675. He was tortured to accept Islam.

Of his three companions, Bhai Mati Das Ji was sawed alive, Bhai Sati Das Ji was burned alive, and Bhai Dayal Ji (brother of Bhai Mani Singh Ji)

was boiled in water in front of Guru Ji's eyes. This was done in public to scare everyone in Chandni Chowk where there is a fountain now. When this did not shake Guru Ji, he was beheaded on November 11, 1675, in public in Chandni Chowk. Sees Ganj Gurdwara stands there now.

His mutilated body was left on the ground. It was a stormy night. Taking advantage of that, Lakhi Shah Lubana and his son Naghia put the headless body in the cart and cremated it by burning their house with all its contents. Gurdwara Rakaab Ganj is situated at that place now.

Guru Ji's head was picked up by Bhai Jaita Ji, who took it to Anandpur Sahib and it was cremated there. Guru Gobind Singh wrote about his father in his writings: "He protected their tilak and Janeu (signs of Hindus). In this age of darkness, he performed a grand deed." His sacrifice was for freedom of religion. It was against the state's interference into personal beliefs. For his sacrifice, he is called Hind Di Chadar (Protector of Hinduism). He Wrote 115 shabads which were added by Guru Gobind Singh Ji to the original Granth Sahib at Damdama Sahib.

GURU GOBIND SINGH JI

The Tenth Guru: 1666 - 1708

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was the only son of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji and Mata Gujri Ji. He was born on December 22, 1666, at Patna, Bihar. He was born during his father's missionary tour to the east. He was given the name Gobind Rai at birth. At his birthplace now is Takhat Sri Harimandir Sahib. Gobind Rai spent his childhood years there. He came to Anandpur Sahib (Chak Nanaki) in March of 1672. After his father's martyrdom on November 11, 1673, he assumed the leadership of the Sikhs. He was formally appointed Guru on Baisakhi Day which was on March 29, 1676.

His education included Punjabi, Brij, Sanskrit and Persian. He did most of his writings in Paunta Sahib. He also got training in martial arts, horse

riding, archery and sword fighting. Gobind Singh Ji had three wives: Jeeto Ji, Sundri Ji and Mata Sahib Kaur Ji. He had four sons:

Baba Ajit Singh	Born in 1687
Baba Jujhar Singh	Born in 1691
Baba Zoravar Singh	Born in 1696
Baba Fateh Singh	Born in 1699

On Baisakhi Day, March 30, 1699, he gave a new appearance to the Sikhs. After being baptized with "Khanda di Pahul" (Baptized with Sword), Sikhs became the Khalsa. The name "Singh" (lion) was given to men and "Kaur" (princess) to women.

The first five Sikhs who answered his call and were sworn in, were called Punj Piare (Five Beloved Ones). After baptizing his Punj Piare, Guru Ji knelt down in front of them and requested to be baptized. After he was baptized, Gobind Rai became Gobind Singh. Mata Sahib Kaur is known as the "Mother of Khalsa." She did not have any of her own children. She is also known as "Kawara Dola" as her marriage was never consummated.

By this time, Guru Ji had created and gathered many Sikhs and arms. He erected forts in and around Anandpur Sahib. As his popularity and power started increasing among the general public, the chiefs of surrounding areas started feeling jealous and threatened. They had a few battles with Guru Ji and had lost them.

The first battle was the War of Bhangani on September 18, 1688, with Raja Fateh Chand. Guru Ji fought many battles in Anandpur Sahib between 1700 to 1704. Then, the hill chiefs asked Aurangzeb for help. Aurangzeb sent a large army under the guidance of the Governor of Lahore and Nawaab of Sirhind. They were helped by the hill chiefs and they laid a siege to the fort of Anandpur in May of 1705. It continued for a long time.

Some of the Sikhs deserted Guru Ji and left Anandpur. They disclaimed him as their Guru. The

Muslim and the Hindu chiefs sent a message to Guru Ji. They promised a safe passage for Guru ji by swearing on Quran and the cow. They wanted him to leave Anandpur and were ready to use fair or foul means. Guru Ji was aware of their wicked plan but he had to bow to the pressure of the Sikhs and his mother. Finally, he bade farewell to Anandpur.

On the night of December 5, 1705, he left Anandpur along with his family and a handful of Sikhs.

As soon as they left Anandpur, the promises made by Hindus and Muslims were broken. On the banks of River Sirsa, a fierce battle was fought. Prince Ajit Singh Ji, with a few Sikhs, was able to stop the advancing imperial army while the rest of the Sikhs crossed the Sirsa. Then the rest of the Sikhs along with the Prince crossed the river as well. Udai Singh, a proud Sikh soldier died there along with some other Sikhs. The Imperial Army did not dare enter the river in the cold night of December.

In this confrontation, the whole Sikh party got separated. Mata Sundari Ji and Mata Sahib Kaur Ji were with Bhai Mani Singh Ji. They reached Ropar and were able to reach Delhi safely. Guru Ji's mother and his two younger sons went along with their long-time servant, Gangu Brahmin to his village, Kheri. Guru Ji, with both his older sons and 40 Sikhs reached Ropar, and from there, on the next day, they reached Chamkaur Sahib.

In Chamkaur, Guru Ji stayed in a mud fortress of Bidhi Chand and waited for the advancing Imperial Army. Soon Chamkaur was surrounded by the Mughal army. On December 7th, the battle began.

During this battle, Guru Ji's older sons (Baba Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh ji) and three of his "Beloved Ones" died. At night, the fight stopped. Mughals were very sure about their victory. In the mud fortress, only a few Sikhs remained. They

requested Guru Ji to leave the fortress, but Guru Ji did not accept it. Then, five Sikhs, in the form of Guru Khalsa asked Guru Ji to leave the fortress.

Guru Ji did not have a choice but to listen to them. He agreed to their decision and exchanged his crested turban with Bhai Sangat Singh Ji, who had some resemblance with Guru Ji. He left the fortress with Daya Singh, Dharam Singh, and Mann Singh in the darkness of the night. Bhai Sant Singh and Sarjit Singh remained in the fortress and died fighting bravely.

Thus, in obeying the order of the Guru Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh Ji vested the temporal powers in the Guru Khalsa. By giving his turban to Bhai Sangat Singh Ji, he crowned the Khalsa himself. As he had said earlier, "Khalsa is the life of my life." He proved that.

Moreover, it's a great honor to exchange turbans. It is a tradition that if two unrelated persons exchange, they are considered like real brothers. As the turban signifies self-respect, one gives his self-respect to the head of the one he trusts the most. Thus, Khalsa has the honor of exchanging its turban with the Guru.

In the darkness of night, the three Sikhs got separated. Guru Ji reached the forests of Machhiwara. He was tired and hungry. He had seen many of his Sikhs and his older sons die in front of his eyes. His feet were blistered and had thorns in them. He slept on the ground and used a stone as a pillow. He was not aware of the whereabouts of the rest of his family. Still, he thanked God and submitted to His will. Here, he composed his famous Punjabi composition, "Mittar Piare Nu Haal Mureedan da Kehna" ("Tell my Bosom Friend, His Devotee's Plight").

As daylight broke, the Sikhs also reached Machhiwara. Here, Guru Ji stayed at Gulaba Masand's house for two days. The Imperial Army was looking for Guru Ji when they found out that he had escaped. Two Pathaan brothers, Ghani

Khan and Nabi Khan also lived there. They were in Guru Ji's service for a while. They offered to help. Guru Ji disguised himself in a blue robe worn by Muslim holy men at that time. He was seated in a palanquin, which was lifted by the Pathan brothers in the front and Sikhs at the rear. This way they travelled.

Whosoever questioned, they told that they were escorting "Uch Ka Pir" (A High Saint). It could also be interpreted as holy saint of Uchcha, a well-known sacred place for Muslims near Multan. They travelled like that until one day they got stopped by a detachment of the army. The officer was not satisfied with the identity. He had his suspicions so he stopped them and sent for Pir Mohammad, who had been the Guru's Persian tutor.

The Qazi told the officer that the man was not Guru Gobind Singh. The officer was satisfied and asked for forgiveness for the inconvenience and let them go. Later on, for his favor, Guru Ji gave Hukumnama (an autographed letter) to Pir Mohammad and the Pathaan brothers.

Guru Ji reached Hehar (in Ludhiana District) and stayed with Mahant Kirpal Das (follower of the Udassi Sect). From there, Guru Ji moved to Jat Pura and was welcomed by Muslim Rai Kalha. He was a rich and important person and was the chief of Jagraon and Raikot.

Here, Guru Ji received the sad news of the tragic deaths of his two younger sons and his mother. A messenger told him that "Gangu" had taken them to his house, stole money from Mata Gujri ji, and deceived them. He informed the Muslim officials of Morinda, who arrested Mata Gujri and Zoravar Singh and Fateh Singh ji and took them to Sirhind where they were kept in a cold tower for two days. Wazir Khan tried all means to convert them to the Muslim religion, but the little boys stayed firm in their belief. He was ready to let them go but another Hindu, Wazir of Sucha Nand, persuaded him to punish the "offspring of a snake."

Wazir Khan ordered that they should be bricked alive. Sher Mohammad of Malerkotla objected to this cruelty and said that it was against the rules of Islam. Wazir Khan finally ordered them to be executed. He could not find anyone to kill two innocent children.

Finally, on December 20, 1705, they were bricked alive by two executioners Shishal Beg and Vishal Beg from Samana (who were in the court for some other murder). After each layer of brick, the children were asked to give up their faith. When they kept on refusing, Wazir Khan got upset and ordered them to be beheaded. When Mata Gujri ji heard of this news, she died of grief. Their bodies were cremated by a Sikh, Todar Mal by covering the required land by gold coins .

After staying at Jat Pura as Kalha's guest for some time, Guru Ji moved to Dina (Tehsil Moga, District Ferozepur). There, he was received by three brothers: Shamira, Lakhmira and Takhat Mal.

When Nawab of Sirhind came to know about this, he ordered Shamira to arrest Guru and bring him to Sirhind. Shamira ignored the orders. At this place, Guru Ji wrote his famous "Zafarnama" ("Epistle of Victory").

This showed his great confidence in Almighty and his tough personality. He lost all his sons, his mother, most of his Sikhs, and all his worldly riches, but still did not admit defeat. He made Aurangzeb aware of the situation as to how unjustly he was ruling, and how he deceived others by his false oaths. He challenged him to fight. In the letter he wrote, "When all the peaceful means fail to get justice, it is fair to draw the sword."

This letter was taken to Aurangzeb in Deccan by Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh Ji. They went in the disguise of Muslim pilgrims. They were received with courtesy by Aurangzeb. By then, he was an ill man. He promised to look into

the matter and sent an invitation to Guru Ji to meet with him personally. He also gave a letter (Parwana) to the Sikhs so they could return safely. Guru Ji accepted his invitation to meet with him but Aurangzeb died at Ahmednagar on February 20, 1707, and the two would never meet.

While the above correspondence was going on, the situation in Punjab was still explosive. Wazir Khan had decided to kill Guru Ji. After killing his two sons, Khan was scared about his own life. His life was in danger as long as Guru Ji lived, at least that is what he thought. So, he planned to attack Dina. When Guru Ji came to know about this, he marched away with his Sikhs and received full information of Wazir Khan's activities. Guru Ji decided to move on to Khidrana and face the approaching army there. There was a small seasonal lake (Dhab) at that place (Mukatsar sahib).

In the meantime, the Sikhs, who had deserted Guru Ji at Anandpur Sahib, were rebuked by their wives and other relatives at their homes. Forty of them from Majha under the leadership of Mahan Singh and Mai Bhago, returned back to Guru Ji. When they came to know that Guru Ji had gone to Khidrana, they rushed to that place. It was not easy for them to travel without being noticed. The enemy army was everywhere. So, they traveled in small batches during the night via uncommon ways.

Finally, they reached Khirdana. When they heard about the approaching army, they decided to fight there so that Guru Ji would have more time to move away. What else could have been the better way of repenting than dying fighting for their Guru.

They spread sheets over the bushes. When Mughal Army approached, they thought that the Sikhs were camping there in large numbers. Battle started. Sikhs fought bravely until their end in small batches. Guru Ji had reached a small hill and from there he could see his brave Sikhs fighting.

He and his other Sikhs kept on shooting arrows at the attackers. Finally, when all the Sikhs had died, Wazir Khan reached the lake. It was dry. His soldiers were dying of thirst.

There was water about 50 Km in the front and 20 Km at the rear. To save themselves, his soldiers decided to retreat. Again, the victory was of the Sikhs. Guru Ji came down and cremated the dead ones. Then he found Mahan Singh ji, who was still breathing. He was very happy to see Guru Ji. When Guru Ji asked him what he would like, he asked Guru Ji to destroy the disclaimer which was in Guru Ji's possession. Guru Ji did that and Mahan Singh died peacefully in Guru Ji's lap.

Mai Bhago was also wounded but alive. Guru Ji took care of her wounds. After that, she spent all her life in Guru Ji's service and went to the south with him. She was always dressed like a man. Because of her old age, she died while in the south.

Guru Ji called these 40 martyrs the "Muktae" (the Saved Ones). Since then, that place is called Mukatsar and a Sikh shrine stands there today. (This shrine was also attacked and damaged by Indian Army in June 1984.) This battle was fought on December 29, 1705. That was the last battle that Guru Gobind Singh ji fought and won. After cremating the dead ones, Guru Ji moved further into wilderness and spent some time in the Lakhi Jungle.

He reached Talwandi Sabo (now known as Damdama Sahib). He stayed there for eight to nine months. There, he also met his devotee Dalla. Soon it became a center of learning. It is also called Guru Ki Kashi. Here, he recited the Granth Sahib, which he dictated from his memory to Bhai Mani Singh Ji. He added compositions of the Ninth Guru and gave the form which we now have. The Granth Sahib was copied by many others. Baba Deep Singh Ji also wrote a few volumes of this Granth. They were lying in the Golden Temple Library until June 1984. The

original Granth Sahib written by Bhai Mani Singh ji was lost in the Sikh Holocaust.

Mata Sundari Ji and Mata Sahib Kaur Ji also joined him in Damdama Sahib. When Mata Sundri ji asked about her four sons, he pointed to the Sikhs and said, “For these sons, I have sacrificed our four sons. If four have died, do not grieve as many thousands are living.”

He decided to move to the south to see Aurangzeb on October 30, 1706. While he was at Baghor (in Rajasthan) he came to know about Aurangzeb’s death. He came back to Delhi. There was a fight among the Aurangzeb’s sons for the throne. Bahadur Shah asked Guru Ji to help, which he did by sending his 500 Sikh soldiers under the command of Bhai Dharam Singh. When Bahadur Shah became Emperor, he invited Guru Ji to Agra and received him with great honor and gave precious gifts. Though Bahadur Shah remained busy fighting against the rebellions, his relations with Guru Ji remained friendly.

Mata Sundari Ji was left in Delhi and Mata Sahib Kaur Ji accompanied Guru Ji to Deccan. Guru Ji and his soldiers did not take part in any other battles. In the beginning of August, 1708, he reached Nander. When he saw Bahadur Shah was too pre-occupied with the rebellions and had no time to look into the Punjab matters, he left the Emperor and settled in a beautiful place on the banks of Godavari.

There lived a hermit named Madho Das. He was a Rajput of Kashmir who renounced the world after he killed a pregnant deer. When he came in contact with Guru Ji, his whole life was changed. He found peace of mind after seeing the Guru and became his disciple. When Guru Ji asked him, “What is your name?”, he said, “I am your banda (slave).”

Guru Ji instructed him in Sikh teachings and he was baptized and named Gurbakhash Singh. Guru Ji sent him along with some of his Sikhs back to

Punjab. He gave him his five arrows, five Sikhs, a flag, a drum (nagara), and a letter (hukamnama). He instructed him to punish the enemies of the Sikhs, which he did. He also established and founded the Sikh empire, though it was short lived. Mata Sahib Kaur Ji was also sent to Delhi to give company to Mata Sundari Ji.

Guru Ji spent most of his time in meditation. Wazir Khan wanted to kill Guru Ji. He could not kill him in the war. So, he conspired to get him murdered. He hired two Pathans who followed Guru Ji to Deccan, and finally, to Nander.

They started coming to the daily prayer. One day, after the evening prayer (on September 1, 1708), one of the Pathans (Jamshed Khan) stabbed Guru Ji. Guru Ji killed him at the spot and his companion was killed by a Sikh. Guru Ji had a deep wound. Bahadur Shah sent his personal physician, Mr. Cole, who stitched the wound. It started healing. It was not fully healed yet when Guru Ji tried to bend a stiff bow and the wound started bleeding again.

When he saw his worldly end near, he requested the Sikhs to bring the Granth Sahib and told the Sikhs that from then on, the Guru Granth Sahib would be the Guru of the Sikhs. Thus, he gave spiritual powers of the Guru to the Granth Sahib ji. He said, “So does the Akal Pursha (All Mighty) ordain, the word is a master now, the Song of Nam, the Guru Granth. All Khalsa should seek the Master in the word and bow to Guru Granth Sahib as my successor.”

Since then, the Guru Granth Sahib ji is a Sikh’s only and sole Guru and will be until the end of this world. Any decision taken by five Sikhs (Guru Khalsa) in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib is called Guru Mata (the Guru’s Decision). Every Sikh is supposed to follow that without any question.

After leaving the Sikhs under the guidance of the Granth Sahib, he bade farewell to his earthly body

on October 7, 1708. Mata Sahib Kaur ji died soon after his death in Delhi. Mata Sundari Ji lived for a while. After Guru Ji's death, she along with Bhai Mani Singh ji and Banda Singh ji guided the Sikhs. Mata Sundari Ji adopted a son and named him Ajit Singh. He started claiming himself to be the Guru and was very arrogant. He killed one man and for that crime he was executed by the authorities.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was less than 42 years of age when he died. He was a saint, a soldier, a poet, a commander and a leader. One writer (T.L. Wasvani) wrote about his personality as follows: "He had humility of Nanak, virtues of Jesus, wisdom of Buddha, bubbling energy of Muhammad, sun kissed glory of Krishna and homely grandeur of Rama. Even these words cannot describe his personality. Though he wished all the time to die in the battlefield, his wish was not fulfilled by the Almighty. He always accepted the will of God. He was against injustice whether that was done by a Hindu or a Muslim.

He had many Muslim friends and followers who gave their lives fighting for him. Many Hindu chiefs and men like Gangu Brahmin and Suchanand were thirsty for his and his family's blood. He did not hesitate to help Bahadur Shah (whose father had destroyed Guru Ji's whole family and killed the Ninth Guru) because he knew it was Bahadur Shah's right to be the emperor.

During his fight (he fought about fourteen battles) he and his Sikhs never got an inch of soil or a penny for their personal use. It was fight for justice, fight for righteousness and fight for the truth."

Guru Ji fought all the time against heavy odds and never accepted defeat. His Khalsa will not be defeated either, no matter how heavy the odds may appear. The Khalsa will be victorious.

SIRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

1708 Onwards

The holy scripture of the Sikhs and Eternal Guru has the writings of six Gurus and many Muslim and Hindu saints from all over India.

It was compiled by Guru Arjun Dev Ji. He included the writings of four Gurus and Hindu and Muslim Saints before him. Most likely, the writings of saints were collected by Guru Nanak ji during his four travels. All those writings were in two volumes (pothis) and were in the possession of Baba Mohan Ji, son of Guru Amar Das Ji.

Guru Arjun ji had to persuade Mohan Ji to give these volumes to him. Later on, more material was collected and edited by Guru Arjun Dev Ji. The first volume was scribed by Bhai Gurdas Ji under the supervision of Guru Arjun Dev Ji. He added his own compositions in these collections. Later on, Guru Gobind Singh Ji added his father, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's compositions at Damdama Sahib. That volume was written by Bhai Mani Singh Ji. The current Guru Granth Sahib is the exact copy of it. The original volume was destroyed during the Second Holocaust, which is also known as Vadda Ghallughara. Baba Deep Singh made many copies of that volume.

On October 7, 1708, before Guru Gobind Singh Ji left this world, he gave the guruship to the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Since that time, it has been guiding the Sikhs and will guide them through the end of this world.

This volume is all in poetry, written in Sant Bhasha (Language of Saints) of those times. This language is the mixture of different dialects of Indian languages. It is organized according to musical measures (ragas) in which hymns are to be recited. There are thirty-one ragas. The Granth Sahib contains 5,894 hymns all together.

Guru Arjun was the largest contributor with 2,216 hymns. He is followed by Guru Nanak Dev Ji (976

hymns), Guru Amardas Ji (907), Guru Ram Das Ji (679), Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji (118), saints and bards (937) and Guru Angad Dev Ji (61). The volume has 1,430 pages.

This is the only book written during a time of prophets, (Gurus) under their supervision. They approved every single word of it. This is perhaps the biggest book of poetry written. It is the center piece of all Sikh ceremonies from birth to death.

It is installed prominently in every gurudwara. Dr. Trump has said, "It is the treasury of the old Hindi Dialects."

It is written in praise of God and teaches mankind how to live their lives. It also gives a glimpse of Indian culture and social life during those times.

It starts with the Mool Mantar (Basic Lesson):

Ek Onkar	There is one God
Satnam	True is His name
Karta Purakh	Creative His personality and immortal His form
Nirbhau	Beyond fear
Nirvair	Beyond enmity
Akaal Moorat	Beyond death
Aajuni	Beyond birth
Saibhang	Self-existent
Gur Parsad	By Guru's grace
Jap	Recite.

It also says that we are all children of one Father, God, and that the whole human race is one. Its approach is universal and the message is for all of mankind.

PERIOD OF BABA BANDA SINGH BAHADUR JI 1708 - 1715

The beginning of this period coincides with the crowning of the East Jersey and West Jersey colonies in America and ends with the Yemasee War in the Carolinas.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur (Lachhman Das) was born in a Rajput family of Kashmir. He was born on October 16, 1670, at Rajouri. Like many Rajputs, he was trained in using arms, hunting and horse riding. At the age of 14, he killed a female deer while hunting. When he opened her abdomen, he found out that she was pregnant and the fawn was still alive. It died in front of his eyes. He felt guilty and stopped hunting.

Lachhman Das started searching for peace of mind. He met a wandering saint named Janki Prasad and became his follower.

Janki Parsad gave him the new name of Madho Das. He stayed with him for about one year and then left him after he found another saint named Ram Das at Ramthaman near Kasur. Finding no peace there either, Madho left him and after wandering around many different places, finally reached Panchvati Woods near Nasik. There, he learned yoga from Yogi Augar Nath. After his death, Madho Das became the head of his sect and established a monastery at Nanded on the left bank of River Godavari.

When Guru Gobind Singh Ji arrived in Nanded on September 3, 1708, he went to his monastery and met Madho Das. Madho was very impressed with Guru Ji's personality. When Guru Ji asked his name, Madho forgot his name and said that he was Guru Ji's Banda (man), hence he became known as Banda Singh. Because of his bravery, he was called Banda Singh Bahadur.

Guru Ji baptized him and gave him a new name of Gurbakhsh Singh, but the popular name that stayed with him was Banda Singh Bahadur. During the next few weeks, Guru Ji gave him a crash course in Sikhism. He also made him aware of what was happening in Punjab and who were trustworthy and who were not.

Finally, during the first week of October, Guru Ji sent him towards Punjab along with five Sikhs, some arrows, a nagara (war drum), and a Sikh flag

along with an emblem of authority. He also gave him letters for prominent Sikhs.

Banda Singh Bahadur came to Punjab to conquer and punish the Nawab of Sirhind, Wazir Khan. On his arrival in Punjab, as the news spread, Sikhs came to join him. He attacked Samana, which belonged to the executioners of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, Baba Jorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh Ji, on November 26, 1709. After destroying and punishing the officers of surrounding areas, he reached Chappar Chiri. By that time, more Sikhs from Duaba and Majha joined him. On May 12, 1710, a battle was fought with Wazir Khan's army and Wazir Khan was killed. Sikhs acquired Sirhind on May 14, 1710. Baj Singh was appointed the governor of Sirhind.

Banda Singh Ji got married at Sirhind and lived there like a king and had a son. He made Lohgarh his capital and issued a new coin in the name of Nanak. He abolished the land lordship and for the first time in history, gave ownership of the land to the workers.

Bahadur Shah, the Indian ruler, got angry when he saw Banda's increasing power and popularity among the local people. He sent a big army and issued an order on December 10, 1710, to kill worshippers of Nanak. At that time, Banda Singh left Punjab and moved towards the hills temporarily. He got married there again and had another son.

After Bahadur Shah's death in February 1712, his son, Farrokh Siyar came to power and accelerated the campaign against the Sikhs.

Farrokh sent a big army to capture him. Baba Banda Singh was surrounded at Gurdas Nangal in a small mud fortress with his men and their families. The siege lasted for eight months and the Sikhs did not have enough supplies. They survived on anything and everything edible. They survived on animals, tree leaves or whatever they could eat or find. Hunger and dysentery took a great toll on

them.

Finally, on December 7, 1715, the royal army was able to break in and they arrested Banda Singh with 740 other Sikhs. They took Banda and his Sikhs to Delhi. They arrived on February 27, 1716.

During the journey to Delhi, they killed every Sikh they could find. Farrokh Siyar took Banda Singh and his people in a procession through Delhi streets. They put Banda Singh in a cage and 740 Sikhs in chains followed. Behind them, came the heads of 2,000 killed Sikhs stuck on spears and 700 cartloads of Sikhs heads. CR Wilson, a Bengali civilian, in his *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, gave the following description of the entry of the Sikh captives into Delhi:

Malice did its utmost to cover the vanquished with ridicule and shame. First, came the heads of the executed Sikhs, stuffed with straw and stuck on Bamboos, their long hair streaming in the wind like a veil, and along with them to show that every living thing in Gurdaspur had perished, a dead cat on a pole. Banda himself, dressed out of mockery in a turban of a red cloth, embroidered with gold, and a heavy robe of brocade flowered with pomegranates, sat in an iron cage, placed on the back of an elephant. Behind him stood a mail-clad officer with a drawn sword. After him came the other 740 prisoners seated two and two upon camels without saddles. Each wore a high foolscap of sheepskin and had one hand pinned to his neck, between two pieces of wood. At the end of the procession rode the three great nobles, Muhammad Amin Khan, sent by the emperor to bring in the prisoners, Qamr-ud-Din, his son, and Zakariya Khan, his son-in-law. The road to the palace, for several miles, was lined with troops and filled with exultant crowds, who mocked at the teacher (Guru) and laughed at the grotesque appearance of his followers. They wagged their heads and pointed the finger of scorn at the poor wretched as they passed. 'Hu! Hu! Infidel dog worshippers your day has come. Truly, retribution

follows on transgression, as wheat springs from wheat, and barley from barley!!' Yet the triumph could not have seemed complete. Not all the insults that they had invented could rob the teacher and his followers of his dignity. Without any sign of dejection or shame, they rode on, calm, cheerful, even anxious to die the death of martyrs. Life was promised to any who would renounce their faith, but they would not prove false to their Guru, and at the place of suffering their constancy was wonderful to look at. 'Me deliverer, kill me first,' was the prayer that constantly rang in the ears of the executioner.

After torturing them in jail, they started public executions on the Kotwali Chabutara. This was the same place where Baba Satidas and Dyala Ji were killed.

Each day, they chopped heads off Sikhs. It lasted for several days. After that, Banda Singh with some prominent Sikhs were taken near Kutab Minar on Khawasa Qutab Din's tomb. On their refusal to accept Islam, other Sikhs were tortured to death. Banda's four-year old son, Ajay Singh, was cut into pieces. His heart was taken out and pushed in his mouth. He remained calm and his eyes were pulled out. His flesh was also taken out with pinchers and he was cut up limb by limb. It all happened in June 1716.

Though this period in Sikh history is only eight years long, Banda Singh did a lot with limited resources and being new to the area. His name will keep shining in Sikh history forever.

THE SIKH GENOCIDE

1710 - 1762

This period coincided with Queen Anne's reign and continued until Pontiac's Rebellion and the Treaty of Paris.

The First Sikh Genocide was started by Bahadur Shah to crush Baba Banda Singh's powers. It began with an order to kill the followers of Nanak

on October 10, 1710. Thousands of Sikhs were killed in the following years.

Delhi rulers thought that they had finished the Sikhs. This was only eight years after the death of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

The remaining Sikhs kept low profiles and stayed in isolated areas. Whenever the government came after them with force, they eloped in the forests, which they knew very well. A few isolated incidents happened here and there.

One of these incidents happened with Bhai Tara Singh. He belonged to Van Village. Tara Singh was a Butter Jatt. He was a family man and helped Sikhs whenever he could.

It was reported to the Governor of Lahore that Tara Singh gave refuge to criminals. His property was enclosed with a fence made of thorny bushes. Initially, the governor sent a small force of 25 horsemen and 80 footmen to capture and arrest Tara Singh. They were all forced back with heavy casualties. Zakaria Khan got very upset and sent a larger unit of the army.

By this time, Tara Singh had about 22 companions with him. They all fought very bravely causing large causalities to the army. And in the battle, they all lost their lives as well. This incident happened on December 24, 1732.

It made the authorities very mad and the persecution of Sikhs started again. New laws were passed. Sikhs had no rights. It was made legal to rob or kill Sikhs at any given time.

A special army of 10,000 soldiers was formed to go from village to village looking for Sikhs. They had orders to kill Sikhs and Sikh sympathizers right away. 5 Rupias were given to the informers of Sikhs and 80 Rupias were given for a Sikh's head. People started hunting Sikhs like wild animals for the prize.

The Sikhs who were captured alive were brought to Lahore where they were offered to embrace Islam or death. Most of them chose death. They were tortured very cruelly. For example, some had their scalps removed with cobbler's scrapers. Bhai Tara Singh was one of those who was tortured.

Bhai Mani Singh Ji was tortured by cutting his joints one by one. Bhai Shubeg Singh and his son Shaahbaz Singh were broken on wheels. They were hanged upside down, their skin removed while they were alive and their eyes pulled out. Nothing could scare the Sikhs. They accepted God's will. Most of these horrible scenes were played on Nakhas Chowk in Lahore. The severed heads of Sikhs were piled in Pyramids and exhibited to create fear in the minds of onlookers.

In spite of all this, when Zakaria Khan could not control the Sikhs, he offered peace by giving Jagir to Sikhs in 1733. A humble Sikh, Kapoor Singh ji, was chosen by the Sikhs for that honor. He accepted it as ordered by the Khalsa. This offer did not last for long time though. In 1735, the Jagir was confiscated by Zakaria Khan.

In 1739, Zakaria Khan declared that no Sikh should be spared. Sikhs were hiding in jungles and would come out once in a while to visit Harmandir Sahib.

There were two Sikhs, Baba Bota Singh and Baba Garja Singh ji, who were coming back after visiting Harmandir Sahib. They hid behind the bushes in Taran Taaran to rest. Some travelers were passing by. They saw some movement in the bushes. One said, "It might be Sikhs." The other one said, "No Sikh is left. If someone is there, they must be a coward." Hearing this, they both came out and let their presence be known. They occupied a bridge near Sarai Nurdin and started collecting tax. None dared to refuse to pay the taxes.

Finally, they sent a letter directly to Zakaria Khan taunting him. He sent 100 horsemen to capture

them. They fought against these horsemen very bravely, and after killing many enemies, reached to martyrdom.

In 1739, when Nadir Shah, the king of Persia, was going back, Sikhs came out from jungles and looted his army for arms and money and liberated thousands of Hindu women who he was taking along with him as slaves. This infuriated Zakaria Khan and he started a genocide with more brutal force, which he continued until he died in 1745.

The genocide was then carried on by his successor, his son, Yahia Khan. With the help of his Hindu Diwan, Lakhpat Rai, he hunted Sikhs down in the forests. One attack on Sikhs is called "Chhota Ghallughara" (Lesser Holocaust). Yahia Khan found out through his informer that 15,000 Sikhs were hiding in Kahanuwan. On one side, was a flooded river. He lit a fire in the forest on the other two sides, and on a third side, he sent his well-armed army. A few thousands of Sikhs were able to escape by fighting through. The rest were killed or arrested. 7,000 Sikhs were killed in one day. It happened in June 1746. Those who were arrested were butchered publicly in Lahore at Nakhas Chowk. It included the sick, the wounded, women, children and elderly.

After Yahia Khan, in 1752, Mir Manu became the Governor of Lahore. He continued the Sikh genocide with even more brutality. Before him, the rulers went after Sikh men, but he started arresting women, children and elderly men. If they could not do forced labor, they were tortured to death.

On the day of Eid, he killed 1,100 Sikhs. Sikh women were forced to grind wheat on grinding stones. They were given a cup of water and a quarter piece of chapati (like Mexican tortilla) per day to survive. Their breast-fed babies were pulled out of their laps, thrown in the air like rag dolls and killed by piercing them with the spears. Then they were cut into pieces and a garland was made out of their body parts and put around their mothers' necks. When the women could not

perform their task, they were put to death as well. This continued until 1753.

Near Amritsar, Mir Manu found out that some Sikhs were hiding in sugar cane fields. He himself went there with his army and surrounded the field. Sikhs attacked suddenly on his side. His horse bolted and he fell from his seat. His one foot got caught in stirrup and was dragged along by the horse. A few days later, on November 2, 1753, he died of severe injuries and pain.

In 1757, Abdali came back again. Sikhs looted him and liberated the enslaved Hindu women. He sent a large army after the Sikhs. Baba Deep Singh ji died to protect Harmandir Sahib against Jahan Khan. This period produced Sikh leaders like Nawab Kapoor Singh and Jassa Singh Ahluwalia ji. After Abdali went back, Sikhs were able to defeat his governor of Lahore. By the end of 1761, the entire Punjab, between Satluj and Indus was under the control of Sikhs.

When Ahmed Shah Abdali came back in the beginning of 1762, Sikhs retreated to the forest areas. A large number of Sikhs gathered in Malerkotla and Kup area. Abdul Shah Abdali was informed about this and he left Lahore for Malerkotla on February 3, 1762. He reached Malerkotla on the morning of February 5th. About 50,000 Sikhs were surrounded from all sides by Abdali's forces.

Sikhs under the guidance of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Charat Singh Sukarchakia, and Sham Singh Karorisinghia fought bravely pushing towards Barnala. By the end of the day, some of the Sikhs were able to break through the strong hold. Women, children, and elderly who could not escape, were mercilessly butchered. Almost 25,000 lost their lives in one day. This is also called "Vadda Ghallughara" (Large Holocaust).

After this, Abdali went back to Lahore on March 3, 1762. With him, he carried 50 carts loaded with the heads of Sikhs and a large number of

prisoners, who were executed in Lahore later.

Abdali attacked Harmandir Sahib on the day of Baisakhi in 1762 as a large number of Sikhs were going to be congregating there. When Sikhs heard that he was coming, they dispersed. Those who stayed behind under the command of Baba Gurbaksh Singh fought bravely until death.

Abdali ordered his troops to blow up the Harmandir Sahib. One brick flew and hit him on the face and that wound lasted on his face for rest of his life. He died a few years later.

The period between 1710 to 1767 is considered the darkest period in Sikh History. During this period, 300,000 to 400,000 Sikhs lost their lives. Almost 3 times it was declared that Sikhs were eliminated from the face of earth. Followers of Nanak were considered finished. People were not allowed to say gurh (name for raw sugar cake) because it sounded like Guru. Each time Sikhs bounced back stronger than ever and more determined than before.

This period gave Sikh History the greatest heroes like Baba Banda Bahadur, Baba Bota Singh, and Baba Garja Singh ji. It also gave great martyrs like Bhai Taru Singh and Bhai Mani Singh ji and thousands more whose name history could not remember. They are the unsung heroes of Sikh History. It also produced the leaders like S Nawab Kapoor Singh, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, and S. Baghel Singh JI along with many more misal sardars.

During all this chaos, the State of Patiala which was under Baba Ala Singh, did not play much role. Yes, they did help the Sikhs here and there, but to keep peace with Abdali, kept on giving him precious gifts and a lot of cash.

RISE OF THE KHALSA

1762 - 1799

This period coincides with the death of George II

in Great Britain and continues until the death of George Washington.

After the great holocaust and destruction of Harmandir Sahib, Abdali went back to Lahore, somewhat satisfied that he had achieved what he came for. He was surprised to know that 60,000 Sikhs assembled in Amritsar on Diwali and resolved to defend any attacks on Golden Temple. On October 16, 1762, he attacked Amritsar again and he felt heavy resistance. He was forced by the Sikhs to withdraw. Sikhs started rebuilding the Golden Temple. After cleaning the whole area and tank, the foundation stone was laid down by S. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia.

Ahmed Shah came back seven times in 1764. Very stiff resistance was given by the Sikhs. It took him 4 days to reach Amritsar from Lahore. When he reached Amritsar, he expected a large force but there were only 30 Sikhs under the command of Gurbakhash Singh. All of them got killed during the fight.

After Abdali left in March of 1765, Sikhs got together on the Vaisakhi of April 10, 1765, and passed the resolution (gurmata) to capture Lahore. They captured it on the same day and Multan was captured in 1766.

Abdali came back the eighth time to Punjab to destroy the power of Khalsa and attacked Amritsar again in January 1767.

Sikhs fought bravely and killed 5,000 Pathans. After pondering around, he went back to Afghanistan. When Abdali crossed the Indus River, Sikhs occupied Lahore again. By the end of 1767, Khalsa ruled all of Punjab. Sikhs started extending toward Delhi. Abdali came back again in 1769. This time, the Sikhs did not let him cross the Jhelum.

In February of 1783, Budda Dal under S. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Baghel Singh marched towards Delhi with 60,000 Sikhs. Finally, on March 11, 1783, the Sikh army started entering the

walled city by making a hole in the wall, now called "Mori Gate." S. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia sat on the throne of Delhi in the Red Fort. Then a treaty was signed by the king which gave control back to the Mughals, with the condition that they will give 37% of revenue to the Sikhs.

As a souvenir, S. Jassa Singh took a piece of stone out from Delhi Takhat and brought it back to Amritsar. It was kept in Akal Bunga until 1980, and now, it has been placed on one side behind the Langar Hall.

30,000 Sikh army soldiers stayed in Delhi under S. Baghel Singh's leadership. During this time, Baghel Singh founded a historical site and constructed a Sikh shrine. Sikhs camped in the Sabzee Mandi. Now this site is called "Tees Hazari" and a court is there. Shah Alam the Second was pleased by the way S. Baghel Singh managed. He granted him one eighth Octroi for life and Baghel Singh left Delhi in December 1783.

If the Sikhs had wanted, they could have ruled all of India. The emperor in Delhi was weak and Abdali also was exhausted and the other threats had decreased.

After the death of S. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia in October, 1783, there was a void in Sikh leadership. Misals did not appoint any supreme leaders. Then misal sardars started fighting with each other. Punjab was almost divided into 11 independent states (Misals). Among all the Misals, young Ranjit Singh of the Sukarchakia Misal emerged as the strongest leader.

In 1779, Lahore was under the control of the Bhangi Misals, who had liberated it from the Afghans in 1765. But as power corrupts, they started doing some excess and the general population was not happy with them. The leaders of Lahore secretly approached Ranjit Singh. After discussing it with his mother-in-law, Rani Sada Kaur, he captured Lahore with her help on June 27, 1799, without much bloodshed. On April 12,

1801, in a coronation ceremony, he was proclaimed the Maharaja of Punjab.

THE SIKH RAJ

1799 - 1849

This period coincides with the death of George Washington and continues until the beginning of the California Gold Rush and the election of Zachary Taylor as President of the United States.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was born in Gujranwala on November 13, 1780. His father was S. Mahan Singh and his mother was Raj Kaur. He was the grandson of S. Charat Singh of the Sukarchakia Missal. At the age of 12, he took control of his missal as his father died in 1792. In 1796, he was married to Sada Kaur's daughter, Mehtab Kaur of Kanhayia Missal.

At this time, Punjab was split into many small states under Sikh, Rajpoot, Muslim, and Pathaan chiefs. Sham Zaman invaded India four times between 1793 to 1798 but was thrown back by Sikhs.

After capturing Lahore and declaring himself Maharaja of Punjab, Ranjit Singh started consolidating his empire. He started a mint and created the Nanak Shahi coin in the name of Guru Nanak. His seal did not have his name. Instead, it read, "Sarkar Khalsa Ji" (Government of Khalsa).

After dealing with the Majha Missals, he turned towards Malwa. Those chiefs went under British protection. In 1809, he signed a treaty with British and agreed upon making the Satluj his eastern boundary. He extended his kingdom to Peshawar in the west, Kashmir in the north, and Sind in the south.

The Maharaja had European generals in his army, including one American born general, and great generals like S. Hari Singh Nalwa and Akali Phula Singh Ji. He acquired the world-famous diamond, "Kohinoor," which he wore all the time. He

treated all religions with respect. During his reign of 40 years, no one was given the punishment of death. He even let his enemies go after they accepted his sovereignty. He did not have any formal education but was an excellent warrior and ruler.

This was the golden period for the Sikhs and the people of Punjab. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a stroke and died in 1839.

During his reign, the Dogras got into high positions and controlled the administration. After his death, his oldest son, Kharak Singh, was declared Maharaja but he was not so strong a person. Most of the time, the work was done by his grandson Naunihal Singh. Naunihal Singh was killed by the Dogras, who made his death seem like an accident.

Sher Singh became the new Maharaja of Punjab after the death of Naunihal Singh. He also played into the hands of crafty Dogras and Brahmins. After he was murdered, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Maharani Jinda's youngest son, Dalip Singh, was declared maharaja.

At this time, the Sikh Empire was in the hands of non-Punjabis. Lal Singh, a Purbia Brahmin, was the Chief Minister of Punjab. Tej Singh, another Purbia Brahmin, was commander-in-chief of the Khalsa force. Dina Nath, a Hindu Brahmin, was in charge of overall Sikh Empire affairs.

Under such leadership, the Sikh army was fighting with the British army. Those leaders did not have any loyalty towards the Sikhs and made deals with Britishers.

After three major battles were fought at Mudaki, Alliwal and Sabharaon, most of the loyal Sikh soldiers and sardars like S. Sham Singh Attariwala were killed.

Sikhs fought bravely under all odds and were winning. Britishers were retreating, but Teja Singh betrayed the Sikhs. He sent mustard seeds instead

of gun powder to the army and destroyed the supply bridge on the Satluj. He also sent a message to the British Commander not to give up.

Shah Mohammad, a famous poet, wrote, "Because of the lack of one sarkar (Ranjit Singh), the Sikh army lost after winning all the battles." One British Commander paid tribute to S. Sham Singh Attariwala by writing, "You did not lose, they made you lose. I did not win, they made me win."

Britishers entered Lahore not as conquerors, but as caretakers of Maharaja Dalip Singh. First, they moved the Maharaja to Uttar Pradesh and then, with the excuse of education, to Europe. They arrested Maharani Jinda and rewarded the Sikh traitors for their services. On March 29, 1849, a public Darbar was held in Lahore and the proclamation was made declaring the end of the Sikh Empire.

Maharaja Dalip Singh stayed in England. His mother joined him later. After her death, Dalip Singh took her ashes to India, but he was not allowed to go to Punjab. He married "Bamba" and had two sons and three daughters. Like his grandfather, he had a stroke and died in a hotel in Paris on October 22, 1893. He was buried on his estate at Elvedon in Suffolk, England a week later. One of his daughters finally managed to get to Lahore to her ancestral home.

This was the golden period for the Sikhs and all the Punjabis. Although it was a short period in terms of history, it was indeed a memorable one for the Sikhs.

BRITISH RAJ

1849 - 1947

This period begins at the time of Zachary Taylor's presidency and the beginning of California's Gold Rush. It ended in 1947 when the National Security Act was passed, the Polaroid Camera was invented and Jackie Robinson broke racial barriers in Baseball. Harry Truman was the President of the United States at that time.

After Britishers took over Punjab by deceiving and breaking all their promises and ignoring all their treaties, they wanted to control the Sikhs. They absorbed most of the Sikh army of Ranjit Singh into their own. They started recruiting Sikhs for the army.

Britishers preferred to recruit Jatt Sikhs in the army so they started asking for family names. If you look at Sikh history from 1699 to 1849, you will not find the last names of Sikhs. If there were more than one person with the same name, they were identified by their village. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Jassa Singh Ramgarhia were such examples. The caste system as represented by last names had disappeared as it was supposed to.

When Britishers started asking for the last names, people started going back a few generations to dig for their last names. Since then, "Singh" has been a middle name for Sikhs. Sikhs started using their last names. Britishers also made separate Sikh regiments in the army. Sikhs in uniforms had to be baptized Sikhs. They carried Guru Granth Sahib JI wherever they went. During World War I, Britishers prepared a mini Granth Sahib JI which was only $1 \frac{1}{4}$ " in size

Because agriculture was not profitable due to high taxes and high interest rates by the lenders, young illiterate men from villages started joining the army in large numbers. Many Sikhs moved to other British colonies such as East Africa, Malaya, Singapore, and Hong Kong to do labor work. Some became watchmen to earn a livelihood. By doing this, they earned the respect from the British rulers.

In September of 1897, in Saragarhi (a mud fortress), in the northwest frontiers of India, 21 Sikhs under the command of Havaldar Ishar Singh held the fortress against 10,000 Pathans. They fought bravely until the last soldier died. It is considered as one of the greatest "last stands" by military historians.

After this, Sikhs served the British Army, fighting

in Europe during the 1st and 2nd World Wars. More than 83,000 Sikhs lost their lives and 109045 were wounded. Their ashes are scattered all over Europe and Asia. Sir Winston Churchill said "British people are indebted and obliged to the Sikhs for a long time. I know within this century we needed their help twice (in W W 1&2) and they did help us very well. As a result of their timely help 'we are today able to live with dignity and independence. In the war, they fought and died for us , wearing the turbans."

During the 2nd World War, Sikhs also served in the Indian Liberation Army under Subhash Chandra Bose. They left USA, Canada, Singapore, and Hong Kong and went back to India to fight for the freedom of India. Persons like Bhagat Singh, Kartar Singh Sarabha were hanged to death and many were sent to the cellular jails where they suffered for many years. Many of them never came out alive.

In India itself, during the Freedom Movement, Sikhs played much bigger role than their share. In Jalian Wala Bagh, Guru Ka Bagh, Jaito da Morcha, Saka Nankana Sahib, Saka Panja Sahib, it was mostly Sikhs who lost their lives. In Guru Ka Bagh agitation, Sikhs showed what non-violence is. When you are weak and cannot fight, that is not non-violence. When you have a sword and you don't use it against the enemies, that is non-violence.

Every day, 100 Sikhs would leave Akal Takhat and they would be beaten cruelly, sometimes even to death. They never raised arms and stayed true to their traditions. It was a Sikh, S. Udham Singh, who killed General O. Dyer in England to take revenge of Jalian Wala Bagh.

The English Police Superintendent who had beaten the Sikhs in Guru Ka Bagh was killed by Babbar Akalis in Patiala. Sikhs will fight for justice. They never forget their enemies or friends. During the first half of the 20th century, Sikhs lost their lives on three fronts:

1. Fighting to defend British interests in the First and Second World Wars in Europe.
2. Fighting for the freedom of India in the Freedom Movement.
3. Fighting against British allies in India during the Second World War under Subash Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Army

Finally, India got freedom on August 15, 1947. India was divided into two countries. Britishers caused the partition of India. In general, Punjabis and Bengalis suffered the most. In Punjab, 78% (11.2 million) of the population transfer took place. One million people lost their lives. Sikhs, who left Pakistan, were mostly farmers and big landlords. With a blink of an eye, they all became refugees. Hundreds of thousands lost their lives.

Sikh soldiers who fought for the British and survived did not get any pension. They fell through the cracks. The British refused to pay saying that it is the Indian government's duty to look after them and the Indian government said that Britishers should compensate them because they fought on their behalf.

SIKHS IN FREE INDIA

1947 Onwards

This period coincides with the presidency of Harry Truman and continues until the presidency of Barrack Obama.

Even though Sikhs were only 2% of the Indian population, they paid the highest price for the freedom of India. Out of 121 hanged, 93 were Sikhs. Out of 2,646 who suffered life imprisonment, 2,147 were Sikhs (80%).

It was the Gadari Babas from California, USA, who started the freedom movement for India in 1912. The majority of them were Sikhs. They gave heroes to the freedom movement like Kartar Singh Sharabha, S. Bhagat Singh, and S. Udam Singh.

During the freedom movement, Nehru and Gandhi promised Sikhs an autonomous state in free India in their offer to join India. After independence, when India recognized states on the basis of language, Sikhs were ignored. When they reminded Nehru of his promise, his answer was, "now the situation has changed."

Sikhs had to fight again in 1950 and 1960 to get their state. In fact, when Sikh refugees came from Pakistan, Nehru declared them criminals and told all his agencies to keep an eye on them.

The Constitution of Free India refused to recognize Sikhs as an independent religion. They are considered Hindus under the Constitution. The explanation is that Sikhs came out of Hindus. If Jews claim tomorrow that all the Christians are Jews because Jesus Christ was born into a Jewish family, it would be the same logic.

When they wrote the glorious history of India, they did not mention the sacrifices made by Sikhs. India claims Gandhi got freedom for India by non-violence. The role of freedom heroes like Sarabha, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru Sukhdev, and Udam Singh are all forgotten.

No credit is given to the Gadari Babas who ignited the freedom movement. All the credit of the Gadar Party is given to Lala Hardyal in history books. There is no doubt that he played some role initially and ran the paper for a few months. But his association with the Gadar Party was only for five months. After that, he left the USA and went to Switzerland. He did not have any further contact or contribution to the cause. Bhai Parmanand once told Baba Bhakana, "You should not put much faith in Lala Ji. He is not reliable. You never know when he will quit suddenly."

I had the chance to meet Baba Makhan Singh Sandhu, the last Secretary of the Gadar Party. He was against putting the picture of Lala Hardyal in the Gurudwara Museum here. According to him, Lala Hardyal apologized to the British and played

no role in the Freedom Movement after that.

And there was also General Bikram Singh who saved Kashmir for India in the war with China in 1962 and in the war with Pakistan in 1965. Sikhs paid a heavy price in 1971 during the war with Pakistan again. It was General Shubeg Singh Ji and General Arora who got victory for India, and recently, in Kargill, Sikhs gave their lives for India.

Since the freedom of India, Sikhs have had to fight for their rights. Then came 1984 when Sikhs wanted more rights for Punjab and the issues of water use and the recognition of Anand Karaj (Sikh marriage) emerged.

In June 1984, Mrs. Gandhi (then Prime Minister of India), sent the Indian Army to teach a lesson to the Sikhs. The Indian Army, with all its mighty force and fire power attacked the Golden Temple, the holiest shrine of the Sikhs. Their excuse was to arrest Sant Jarnail Singh Bhinderwale and his associates who were in the Golden Temple at that time.

On one side, were about forty men armed with machine guns, rifles, and pistols to defend the Golden Temple, and on the other side, was the world's largest army with tanks and air support. The army practiced their attack thoroughly in Chakarta by making a life-size Golden Temple complex. In spite of that, those brave Sikhs kept the army at bay for three days. Not even a single person surrendered. Every Sikh fought to the last bullet and the last breath.

The day the army chose to attack was not a coincidence. It was planned by the government to teach a lesson to the Sikhs. At the same time, the army attacked another forty holy shrines in Punjab, killing almost ten thousand men, women, and children who were visiting the holy places to celebrate the martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev Ji. The Sikh Reference Library was set on fire and many manuscripts and other historical documents

were taken away by the army and have not been returned.

Some Sikh soldiers revolted in the army and many villagers went to protect the Golden Temple. They all lost their lives. Sikhs felt the same way as a true Christian would feel if some country's army attacked Rome. Or how a Muslim would feel if Mecca was attacked by an army during Hajj.

As true to Sikh tradition, two brave Sikhs, Shaheed Beant Singh and Satwant Singh, punished Indira Gandhi for her crimes against the Sikhs and their shrines. Afterward, Hell came loose on the Sikhs.

By the direct orders of Rajiv Gandhi, in Delhi alone, more than 7,000 Sikhs were burned alive. Their properties were looted and houses were destroyed. Sikh women were gang raped by Hindu mobs. Police sided with the mobs and helped them in every way to teach a lesson to Sikhs. Wherever the Sikhs resisted, police reached there and arrested them for protecting themselves.

In some instances, they disarmed Sikhs and promised to protect them if they gave up their weapons. As soon as the Sikhs trusted and gave up their weapons, the police gave signals to Hindu mobs that those people did not have any arms. They were then attacked by these mobs and got killed by being beaten with iron rods. The rioters also put tires around their necks and burned them alive.

This was repeated all over India. Sikhs were pulled out of trains and buses and beaten to death or burned alive. Sikh women were assaulted publicly. Sikhs were thrown in fire chambers while alive in many foundries in India. Sikh complaints were not registered in the police stations. The army was not called. This massacre lasted for 72 hours. Decades later, the victims are still waiting for the justice from the Indian Government.

Criminals like Sajjan Kumar Shastri and Jagdish

Tyler were rewarded by Congress for their roles in these killings. No law worked against them. Official estimates are that 3,870 Sikhs were killed in Delhi. But certain agencies have calculated the numbers at more than 7,000 in Delhi alone. A conservative guess is that more than 10,000 Sikhs lost their lives in those 4 days throughout India. When Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was asked about it, his reply was, "When a big tree falls, the earth is bound to shake."

Many Hindus tried to help their Sikh friends and neighbors by giving them shelters in their homes. A commission was appointed for these cases. Many Hindus did raise their voice against the government commission but the criminals are still wandering freely.

Mrs. Nayantra Sehgal, the first cousin of Indira Gandhi said, "I am talking about the first three days of November 1984, when areas in and around Delhi were turned into a slaughter house and more than 2,000 Sikhs were butchered like goats. The female of the species was kept alive. What earthly use is a dead woman to a festive frolic, that features rape as one of its attractions? Each girl was taken away by 10 or 12 boys, many of them in their teens. They would take her to the nearby mosque, gang rape her and send her back after a few hours. Some of these girls never returned. One girl said 15 men climbed on her. Most of these rapes took place while the bodies of their husbands, sons, fathers, or brothers were still burning. It was instigated and blessed by politicians and workers of the ruling party and carried out by squads of their loyal constituents from resettlement colonies."

In the words of Dharam Vir, Principal Secretary of India's first Prime Minister, J.L. Nehru: "While Delhi was numbed by shock and sorrow, a wild frenzy of terror, murder, loot, and arson seized large sections on the city. Its prime target was a minority community (Sikhs). In large parts of the country, violence spread in various degrees of intensity, shaking faith in our secularism, not only

on the part of the affected community but also other minorities. The administration appears to have been totally paralyzed for three critical days while hordes of hooligans went on looting, raping, killing and arson.”

All this is well documented by Chief Justice Sikri, Professor Ragini Kothari, and Manushi and many other justice loving citizens of India. Persons like Mr. Phulka are still fighting in courts to get justice for the victims of 1984. So far, many governments have come and gone and none of them has issued any sincere apology to the Sikhs.

The politicians often say that we should forget 1984. I ask these politicians, would they have forgotten if their wife, daughter or sister got raped and their father, son or brother would have been killed or burnt alive? Following that, Sikh youths were hunted and killed in fake encounters, or tortured to death by the police of Punjab for ten years.

Unfortunately, at that time, the President of India was Giani Zail Singh. He was a puppet in Mrs. Gandhi’s hands, just like our recent prime minister, Mr. Manmohan Singh, was in the hands of the Congress Party. Although he is a very intelligent man, his remote control was in the hands of Sonia Gandhi. General K. S. Brar and Dyal, the leaders of the attack on the Golden Temple, were Sikh. KPS Gill a police officer, whose hands are colored with the blood of thousands of innocent Sikhs. Beant Singh was the C.M. of Punjab then. Though they were Sikhs, they played into the hands of the government. They were used as handle for the axe which they used to butcher the Sikhs. Even today some Sikhs are playing that role which is unfortunate.

Indira Gandhi is gone and so is General Vaidya who was Commander-in-Chief of Army in 1984. Sikhs will never forget or forgive their enemies, especially those who attacked the Golden Temple, which is evident by recent attack on General K.S. Brar 28 years after the incident.

In this third holocaust, more than 100,000 Sikhs

lost their lives. In the 20th Century alone, half a million Sikhs have lost their lives in the first and second w.w. and wars of freedom and during the partition of India. Even after India’s independence, the third holocaust took a big toll on Sikhs.

History is a witness and each time if Sikhs’ enemies want to destroy the Sikhs, Sikhs come back stronger and more determined than ever. They have had to fight for their survival since their existence. And they will survive as long as they exist.

Sikhs are peace loving people. They do not oppress others; nor do they want to be oppressed.

Every Sikh carries a sword (kirpan) which is an arm of defense, not offence. The word “kirpan” is made up of two words: kirpa (favour) and aan (honor). It is only used to protect the weak people or to protect a Sikh’s honor and life. For a Sikh, honor for his religion or his family comes before anything else. Life is a secondary thing for Sikhs. He can give his life for the honor of his religion. He can take the life of anybody who tries to dishonor him or his religion.

A Sikh is a saint-soldier. He never raises his weapon to attack first but raises it in defense. He remembers his Guru Ji’s teachings. Guru Ji has said, “It is just to raise the sword only if all other peaceful means have failed to resolve the problem.”

In USA, our forefathers and American Constitution have given the citizens the right to bear arms. Now, tell me one thing: You are in your home, minding your own business and a mob attacks you just because they don’t like your appearance or the way you live your life. You called the police and instead of helping you and dispersing the mob, they start helping the mob. What will you do? Won’t you shoot back at them until your last bullet or breath to protect your family and property?

A similar thing happened to Sikhs in free India. All of their rights were taken away by the government. Nobody listened to them when they complained to the authorities. Under these circumstances, some young men and women took arms. They preferred to die fighting rather than be the sacrificial goat. And because of this, Sikhs are labeled terrorists or extremists by the Indian government.

Sikhs are part of India. Their homeland (Punjab) is in India. Now, Sikhs live all over the world, but a part of them is always attached to Punjab. Their soul is attached to their beloved Golden Temple and other Sikh shrines. When any bad thing happens in Punjab, it hurts them. They have survived against all odds and I am sure they will flourish in India and all over the world. They will spread the Word of the Guru to the whole mankind.

Every Sikh abroad is an ambassador of Sikhs in India. So, it is a great responsibility on everyone to live up to the expectations in society.

SIKHS IN THE USA

By the end of the nineteenth century, the British empire was spread all over the globe. A large number of Sikhs were serving in the army as well as watchmen in various British colonies.

The Sikhs' first exposure to North America was in 1897 when Sikh soldiers, as a part of the Hong Kong Regiment, came to Vancouver. They were on their way to London to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond jubilee.

The first written proof of the Sikhs' presence in North America was found in an article published in the San Francisco Chronicle on April 6, 1899, under the headline, "Sikhs Allowed to Land." It mentions four names: Bakhshish Singh, Budh Singh, Wariam Singh and Suhava Singh.

After that, Sikhs started coming to Canada and the

USA from Hong Kong and Singapore. Initially, they worked in lumber mills and farms in the Oregon area. Many came to Canada first and then moved south to the USA.

As their numbers grew, so did resentment among locals. It was all due to misunderstandings. Most of the immigrants back then were not educated. A few bad incidents happened in Bellingham, Washington State; Astoria, Oregon; and Marysville, California (January 28, 1908).

On May 13, 1914, 376 British citizens (among them 340 Sikhs) came to Canada on the ship Kama Gata Maru. They were not allowed to land and were forced back to India in July of 1914. On their return to Calcutta, they were greeted by the British army with bullets. Quite a few Sikhs died there and the rest of them were arrested and sent to various jails by a special train.

By the time the first decade of 20th century was over, the presence of Sikhs was felt mainly in the Western United States. Some worked in mills in Oregon and Washington. In San Joaquin County, they were working on farms in the Holt area and on the construction of railway lines.

Being here in a free society, they felt that they were mistreated in their homeland by Britishers. But they also felt mistreated by Americans because they were considered slaves. They decided to stay in America to start a revolution to free India.

For this purpose, they formed the "Gadar Party" (the "Rebellious Group") and started holding meetings and publishing newspapers and other pamphlets.

Around 1912, they formed the "Hindi Association of Pacific Coast" in Portland, Oregon and "Pacific Khalsa Deewan Society" in Stockton, California.

The first Sikh Temple in the USA was established in Stockton on Grant Avenue. Baba Jawala Singh,

Baba Vaisakha Singh and Professor Sant Teja Singh ji were among the founding members.

The Hindi Association moved from Oregon to California and became a part of the Gadar Party. A building was bought on S. Wood Street in San Francisco and was named Yugantar Ashram. The first Gadar paper was published on November 1, 1913.

Sikhs like Baba Jawala Singh and Baba Vaisakha Singh ji were supporting the Gadar Party from the newly built Gurudwara in Stockton. They also bought a four-plex in Berkeley where Indian students could stay for free. Their tuition was paid by Baba Jawala Singh and all their groceries used to come from Holt. During the summer months, they were given jobs, free food and shelter.

With the start of the First World War, most Sikhs started going back to India to fight for the freedom of their country. People left their jobs and everything else they had to free their motherland. The population of Sikhs declined in the USA as a result.

Those who stayed had to struggle for every basic right. Due to a change in land ownership laws, no foreigner could own or lease land any more. Most of the Sikhs who were leasing land and making a living were now out of business. To circumvent that, they started to get married to Mexican women so they could lease land on their names. They also leased land in the name of Americans who they paid a percentage of their earnings. Deception was common. Sikhs did not have any legal ways to address that.

One such incident happened in Imperial Valley in which Pakhar Singh Gill was deceived by three of his business partners. He tried everything. He went to the police and the courts. Everybody told him that they could do nothing to help him. In the end, he took the law into his own hands and killed two of his partners and went to attack the third one. It became a big issue. Some said Sikhs were violent and cruel. But there was another group of fair-

minded people who started thinking about why this had happened. Though Pakhar Singh Gill spent 30 Years in jail, it was an instrument for the change in the land ownership laws. You now see big land lords all over the USA. We owe that to Pakhar Singh Gill's sacrifice.

Because of their appearance and long hair, Sikhs have been called "rag heads" and many other derogatory names. Still, Dalip Singh Saundh became the first Sikh US Congressman. Now you will find Sikhs in almost every field of life. There are Sikh doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors, technicians, businessmen, teachers, bankers, etc. Some keep their Sikh appearance, some have given it up.

Sikhs are well respected in their fields. One such Sikh is Mr. N.S. Kampani, who is known as the "Father of Optics." There were Sikhs serving in the US Army during the First and Second World Wars. And today, there are quite a few Sikh men and women who have joined the US Army to serve and sacrifice for their new adopted country. Sikhs are joining politics too. Many Sikhs are running as candidates in elections. There are many Sikh mayors in different towns.

Although we have come a long way in the last 100 years, a lot needs to be done. After 9/11, Mr. Sodhi's murder and then the Wisconsin Sikh temple shooting are reminders that all is not well yet. It's all due to misunderstandings. Perhaps we are unable to educate our neighbors about who we are and what we stand for. As the new generation is coming up, they might be able to tell our story to their American friends, which will lead to better understanding and mutual respect for each other. One thing is for sure: our ancestors came here to earn money and then went back to India, but whosoever is coming now, is coming here to stay. Though we might look different, our dreams are the same as those of early Americans. To achieve those dreams, we have to educate our American friends and also have to understand their point of view. We need to have open discussions, not

arguments with each other. Hopefully, one day, a descendent of the early Sikh pioneers will sit in the White House as the President of the USA. Only on that day, will our American dream be fully accomplished.

I salute those early Sikh pioneers who opened the doors of this great country for us. They sacrificed their lives and comforts so we could enjoy the luxuries of life. We are indebted to all of them.

THE GADAR PARTY

The word, “Gadar,” means mutiny. The Gadar Party was an organization formed by the Indians living in the United States. Its purpose was to instill patriotic feeling in young Indians and to train them for an uprising in India against the British.

In May 1913, in Astoria, Oregon, a meeting was held by the South Asian immigrants led by Sikhs. Then on December 31, 1913, a large meeting was held in Sacramento, CA. An organization was officially formed and it was named “Hindi Association of Pacific Coast.” Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna was the first president; Baba Jawala Singh, the founder of the Sikh Temple, was the vice president; Lala Hardial was the Secretary, and Pandit Kashi Ram was the Treasurer.

The aim of the association was to free India from British rule through armed struggle. Its head office was in San Francisco, California. They also started to publish a weekly paper, “The Gadar,” in Urdu and later on it was published in Punjabi, Hindi, and other languages too. Lala Hardial was the first editor of the paper. After him, it was taken over by Kartar Singh Sarabha.

There were twenty-one members in the first committee. Then, branches of the association were established in different parts of the USA, Canada, and other countries. The newspaper was sent to these places and also to India.

Ultimately, when the First World War started, most of the members went to India to fight against the British, thinking that the British were occupied in the war in Europe and it would be easy to defeat them.

Almost 8,000 Indians (majority of them Sikhs) went to India to fight for their motherland. Many of them were arrested as soon as they landed in India. Some of them went on Komagata Maru. They were welcomed in Calcutta with bullets.

People like Kartar Singh Sarabha were hanged. Some were sent to life imprisonment.

There is no doubt that the Gadar Party played a great role for the freedom of India. They are the forgotten heroes of Indian freedom movements. In Indian history books, the credit for the Gadar Party is given to Lala Hardial. No doubt he was a very intelligent man. He did help set-up the structure but his association with the party and the Gadar newspaper was only for a few months.

There are many good books lately on the Gadar Movement and Gadarites. In 2012, on the Centennial Celebration of the Sikh Temple of Stockton, two conventions were held at the University of the Pacific in Stockton and a museum was established at the Stockton Sikh Temple. The main attraction of the museum is the printing press which was used to publish the Gadar newspaper.

KOMAGATA MARU

On January 8, 1908, the Canadian government passed a law to restrict non-white immigration. According to this law, they prohibited immigration of persons who did not come from the country of their birth or citizenship by continuous journey and have their ticket purchased before leaving their country.

Baba Gurdit Singh of Sarhali village in Amritsar was a businessman in Singapore. To meet all the

requirements of the new law, he chartered a ship, the Komagata Maru, in January, 1914, to sail from Calcutta to Vancouver.

The ship had 376 passengers, of which, 340 were Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus. It left Hong Kong on April 4, 1914 and reached Vancouver's Burrard Inlet on May 23, 1914.

The ship was not allowed to dock. A dock shore committee was formed with Hasan Rahim and Sohan Lal Pathik. They raised \$22,000 and a case was fought and lost.

On July 19, 1914, there was a fight between the Canadian Navy and the angry passengers. The passengers threw bricks and coal lumps. In the end, only 20 passengers were allowed to land and the rest were sent back to India by the Canadian Navy by force. It left Vancouver by July 23, 1914, and reached India on September 27, 1914, at Budge Budge Ghat Calcutta.

They were received by the British police on arrival. They searched the ship and wanted to arrest Baba Gurdit Singh and some passengers. When they met resistance, the police fired shots and killed 19 of the passengers. Baba Gurdit Singh was able to escape and lived in hiding until 1922. He gave himself up by the advice of Gandhi at Nankana Sahib. He was imprisoned for five years. After release from jail, he participated actively in India's Freedom Movement.

He had one son, Balwant Singh, two grandsons and five granddaughters. He later settled in Calcutta. He died on July 24, 1954, in Amritsar and was cremated in his native village, Sarhali Kalan. His descendants now live in India, Canada and the USA.

On August 3, 2008, the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Stephen Harper, issued an apology in Surrey, B.C. on the behalf of the Canadian government. Memorials to this tragedy are erected at Vancouver, B.C., and Budge Budge Ghat in

Calcutta, India. Now there are many Sikhs in Mr Trudeau's cabinet on very important positions.

PUNJAB

In the northwest of India is a state called Punjab. It is bordered by Jammu and Kashmir on the north, Himachal on the northeast, Haryana and Rajasthan on the south, and Pakistan on the west.

The word Punjab means "The Land of Five Rivers" ("Panj" meaning five and "Ab" meaning water). These rivers are the Ravi, Chenab, Jehlam, Beas and Sutlej.

Punjab has been the site of ancient civilizations as evident from the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro (now in Pakistan). It has been the traditional route of entry into India through the northwest passes. The people of Punjab have had to defend themselves from invaders for centuries. This made its people fearless and warriors.

In the first part of the 19th century, all of Punjab was under the Sikh ruler, Maharaja Ranjit Singh. A few years after his death, in 1839, it was occupied by the British. In 1947, at the time of the independence of India, the western part of Punjab became part of Pakistan, and the eastern part became a state in India.

In the mid-60's, further division of Punjab took place on the basis of language. The Hindi speaking area on the northeast side was given to Himachal and a new Hindi speaking state of Haryana was created. Current Punjab is very small and has only two rivers out of five. The map of Punjab looks like the "Bell of Liberty."

The climate of Punjab is hot in the summer and cold in the winter with Monsoon rainfall. It is primarily an agricultural region and it grows all kinds of crops like wheat, rice, cotton, sugar cane, fruits and vegetables. You name it, it grows there. It has made great progress in agriculture through the "Green Revolution". It is "The Food Basket"

of India.

Most of the people live in villages. All villages are joined by a network of roads and have electricity. Houses are made from mud, sun-dried bricks, and regular bricks. There is no heavy industry in Punjab. There is a fair amount of small-scale industries, producing spare parts, hosiery, textiles, engineering goods, sewing machines, etc.

The people who live in Punjab are called Punjabi. The majority of them are Sikhs. Others are Hindu, Muslim, or ascribe to other religions. Sikhs are tall, strong and handsome people. They are easily recognized by their beards and turbans. The word "Sikh" means disciple. The Sikhs are the disciples of Guru Nanak (the founder of the Sikh religion) and the nine other Gurus who succeeded Nanak. Men have the middle or last name, Singh (Lion), and women have the middle or last name, Kaur (Princess). Sikhs greet each other by saying, "Sat Sri Akal" (God is Truth).

The Sikh baptism is called "Amrit Chakhana." Amrit is prepared by mixing sugar in a bowl and stirring the solution with a double-edged dagger while reciting hymns from the Granth Sahib. Once baptized, they are supposed to wear five "K's": kesh (uncut hair), kangha (comb), kachha (shorts), kara (steel bangle), and kirpan (sabre).

The worship place of the Sikhs is known as the gurdwara (guru's gate). It is recognized by a triangular yellow flag with the Sikh symbol of quoit, dagger and two swords.

In the Gurdwara, the Granth Sahib is placed on a raised platform and covered with silken robes. Anybody can enter the Gurdwara as long as he or she covers their head and is barefoot. No one is denied entry on the basis of caste or creed.

The basic philosophy of the Sikh religion is that all men are created equal and all are children of the same father, the almighty God. Free food and accommodation is available at each Gurdwara.

The Sikhs are hard-working people. They are excellent farmers, fine sportsmen, and fearless soldiers. They are the backbone of India's defense, transportation and agriculture. They do equally good in technical fields and many other professions. Sikhs are found now all over the world. Wherever they went, they established themselves with their hard work.

The means of transportation in Punjab are old as well as new. You can see people riding horses, camels and bullock carts, along with motorcycles, rickshaws, cars, buses and trains. Punjab has one international airport in Amritsar.

The capital of Punjab is Chandigarh. It is a modern city designed by the French architect, Le Corbussier. It lies at the foot of the Shiwalik range of the Himalayas. The whole city is divided into 50 sectors. It is known for its beautiful buildings and rose gardens. Other main cities of Punjab are: Amritsar (the place where the Golden Temple is located, which is the holiest shrine of the Sikhs), Jullandhar, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Bhatinda, and Patiala.

The children of Punjab play all kinds of games. Almost in every village in the evening you will see kids playing khudo (ball), Khundi (a bent stick), gulli-danda, and kabbadi. Soccer, hockey and cricket are popular in cities, schools and colleges.

Punjab celebrates all kinds of festivals like Diwali and Holi, which are also celebrated in the rest of India. But there is one festival unique to Punjab. This is Baisakhi. It falls in the middle of April, and at that time, crops are ready for harvest. A huge fair is held. Men, women and children wear colorful dresses. Everybody is in a happy mood. The men dress in colorful Punjabi costume and perform vigorous Bhangra dance on the beat of the dhol (big drum). Bhangra starts with a slow beat and then the tempo gradually rises. The women perform an equally energetic dance called Giddha.

You can still see glimpses of old Punjabi life in the

villages: ladies getting water out of wells and spinning charkhas (spinning wheels) and older men gossiping in the corners of the villages. But the old ways of life are being replaced by modernization.

Punjab is much more colorful than this description. One can appreciate it much more if one goes and stays there for a while.

THE SIKH TEMPLE OF STOCKTON

The first group of four Sikhs landed in San Francisco on April 6, 1899.

After that, Sikhs started coming to USA. Some directly by sea and others through South America. Some came to Canada first and then moved down to the USA. Wherever a few Sikhs get together, they want to establish a gurdwara (Sikh temple), a place to gather and worship.

Baba Jawala Singh and Baba Wasakha Singh ji settled in Holt, CA, near Stockton. According to a poem written by Baba Wasakha Singh Ji, they came to California at the end of 1910. He mentions 20 Keto (Queto) near Holt Station next to the Middle River. It was there they had the first Sikh holy scriptures brought. He mentions five names: himself, Baba Jawala Singh, Bhai Santokh Singh, Bhai Hazara Singh, and Bhai Nand Singh. They formed a company and were leasing land and doing cultivation. It was known as "Bhaian Wala Dera" (Gathering of Brothers). Whosoever went there had free food and shelter. He also had work if he needed it.

In December of 1911 (Poh Sudi Seven), they had big gathering of Indians to celebrate the birthday of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the Tenth Master. In this gathering, there were thirty-five Muslims and twelve Hindus. Lala Hardial and Bhai Parmanad Ji were there too. They decided to establish the first Sikh Temple in the United States on that occasion and collected approximately \$5,000 in cash and some more was promised by others. Baba Jawala

Singh was elected the president and Tara Singh was elected Secretary and Bawa Singh and Hari Singh were his assistants. There were a total of twelve members on the committee.

Finally, they found this place in Stockton and there was a house on the property. The holy scriptures were brought from the farm in Holt and established there and the Sikh flag was hoisted. Bhai Bhola Singh Ji was appointed the first priest and then Teja Singh came from Canada. He helped the temple to get registered with the State of California.

When the Sikh flag was hoisted, Americans objected. The police were called. Professor Teja Singh explained to them that this is a religious flag. It is hoisted in every gurudawara the same way as a cross on a church. Everyone was satisfied by his explanation.

In 1916, a big hall was constructed. The basement was used for the kitchen and langar (dining) hall. It was used by every Indian irrespective of their religion. It was the main center for all gatherings of the Indian community.

The population continued to grow and in 1929 a new big brick building was erected and the old building was moved to the side, which houses the museum now. It was used to board students in the summers. They worked the farms in the area. Later on, wash rooms were added. Over the last hundred years many priests served this institution. But two of them were outstanding for community service. One was the first priest Baba Bhola Singh ji and other was Giani Wadhawa Singh Gill.

In 2012, during the centennial celebration, both buildings were renovated and the original building is now serving as a museum. I was given the honor to establish it. Along with photographs documenting Sikh history, which includes photos of the Gadari Babas, the main attraction is the printing press used by the Gadar Party.

There are numerous gurudwaras now all over the

United States. But this has special significance being the first Sikh Temple in the country. It is a reminder of the sacrifices made by our forefathers.

BABA WASAKHA SINGH JI

Baba Wasakha Singh Ji was born in the village Dadehar in Amritsar in 1877 (middle of Vaisakhi Samany, 1934 Bikrami). His father was Bhai Dyal Singh Ji and his mother was Ind Kaur. He learned Punjabi script from Sant Ishar Das. He was married to Bibi Ram Kaur at a very young age. She died four years after their marriage and had no children.

Perhaps he was named Wasakha Singh because he was born in Visku month of the lunar calendar. It was quite common to name a person after the month or day he or she was born.

He came from a religious family and initially did farming. Around 1900, he joined the army (11th cavalry) and served as a priest. In 1907, he left the army after staying for a short time in the village. He left for China and reached Hankon Island. He got a job as a policeman because of his army background.

In 1908, he reached San Francisco and worked on a farm around there. He came across Baba Jawala Singh. Together they formed a company that leased land around Holt California near Stockton.

He was one of the Sikhs who established the first Sikh temple in Stockton, California. He also played an active part in the Gadar Party.

When the First World War broke out, the Gadar Party decided to go to India to start the revolution for the freedom of India. Baba Wasakha Singh left for India and reached Madras on January 7, 1915. He was arrested on arrival and was sent to Ludhiana and released from jail.

He stayed active in the freedom movement. When Kirpal Singh leaked a plan to the police, Baba

Wasakha Singh was arrested and sent to the central jail in Lahore. His property was confiscated and he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was sent to Andeman in December, 1915.

After the war ended, he was released. He was among the five beloved ones when the foundation stone of Gurudawara Panja Sahib was laid on October 14, 1932. He served as Jathedar of Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar in 1934. He resigned from that post when saropa was given to some government official. Then, he led the Kisan Movement (Farmer Movement).

He was arrested again during the Second World War and was sent to Rajanpur Jail and then Deol Camp Jail. He was released in November 1941 because of poor health. He was arrested again and sent to Multan jail. He was kept there until February 14, 1942. He helped refugees during partition. He spent his whole life fighting for the rights of workers and farmers. He died on December 5, 1957.

BABA JAWALA SINGH JI

Baba Jawala Singh was born in 1866 in the village of Thathian in the District of Amritsar. His father's name was S. Ghanhia Singh. His father was a farmer. Jawala Singh left the village for a better life.

He reached California in 1908. He worked around San Francisco and later leased a 500-acre farm near Sacramento. He grew potatoes. By this time, he was joined by Sant Wasakha Singh Ji too. Their ranch was the center of Gadarite activities. On December 31, 1931, a meeting was held in Sacramento and he was elected as vice president of the Gadar Party.

He left San Francisco on August 29, 1914, on the ship, "Korea." He reached Calcutta on October 29, 1914. Police boarded the ship and he was arrested and sent by train to Ludhiana. After further investigation, he was sent to Montgomery Jail. He

remained behind bars for 18 years. He was released in 1933. After his release, he worked for the families of those who died in service of the country. He organized the “Desh Bhagat Parwar Sahib Committee.”

On May 18, 1938, he was going to Kamila (Bengal) and was in a bus accident. He was seriously injured and eventually died at the age of seventy-two years old.

KARTAR SINGH SARABHA

Kartar Singh Sarabha was born in 1896 in the village of Sarabha in Ludhiana District. His father's name was Sardar Mangal Singh Grewal, who was a farmer. He got his primary education in the village and then joined Malwa Khalsa High School in Ludhiana. After high school, he went to Orissa to live with his uncle and joined the college there.

In 1912, at the age of sixteen, he came to the USA and enrolled in UC Berkeley in chemistry. Due to his association with the “Nalanda Club” of Indian students at Berkeley, he became interested in patriotic activity. He saw that Indian immigrants, especially farm and manual workers, were treated badly in the USA.

When the Gadar Party was formed, he joined the party. He edited the Punjabi edition of their newspaper and he wrote articles and composed patriotic poetry. At a meeting in Sacramento on October 31, 1913, he jumped on stage and sung a patriotic poem, “Chalo Chaliye Desh Nu Yudh Karne.” (“Let's go to Our Country and Join the Battle of Freedom”). He was the first to follow this call when the time came.

He left the USA in September 1914. He went to India via Colombo and established a center in his own village. He went to Bengal and met other freedom fighters like Pingley, Sanyal, and Rash Bhari Bose. They were able to make bombs on a small scale. He participated in raids on rich people

to get funds for the party.

They contacted various army units and planned a revolt in February 1915. Their plans were leaked by Kirpal Singh, who was able to infiltrate their party. Most of the Gadarites were arrested. Sarabha, Jagat Singh Sursingu, and Harnam Singh Tundilat were able to escape to Afghanistan. After escaping, they changed their minds and came back to Punjab to continue their work and punish the traitors.

They were arrested on March 2, 1915, at Wilsonpur in Shahpur District. They were tried in Lahore on a conspiracy case. Sarabha was sentenced to death on September 13, 1915 and hung on November 16, 1915.

BABA SOHAN SINGH BHAKNA

Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna was born in January 1870 in Khutrai Khurd at the home of his mother, Ram Kaur Ji, in the Amritsar District. His father was S. Karam Singh Shergill of the Village Bhakna in Amritsar District. He also had a step-mother, Har Kaur. His father died when he was only one year old. He was raised by his mothers and grandmother, Hukham Kaur.

He received his primary education in the village. He knew Urdu and Persian well. When he was sixteen years old, he was given the responsibility of the farm. He fell into bad company and started drinking. He mortgaged sixty-three acres of his total land of sixty-five acres. He had debt of three thousand rupees. Then, he came into contact with Baba Kesar Singh of Village Mahawa (District Amritsar) and stopped drinking. But, by that time, he was financially ruined.

He was married to Bishan Kaur (daughter of Khushal Singh from Jandala in Lahore District). They did not have any children. He reached Seattle, Washington on April 4, 1909.

He worked in a lumber mill (Munarch Mill) near

Portland, Oregon. When the Hindustan Association of Pacific Coast formed in 1912, he was the first president. Then, the headquarters were moved to San Francisco and the group's name was changed slightly. He was again made president.

When the Komagata Maru was returned to India by the Canadian government, Sohan Singh was sent to Yokohama, Japan, to meet the passengers of that ship. He took with him pistols, ammunition, and Gadar literature.

When he reached Calcutta, he was arrested and sent to Ludhiana. After an investigation, he was sent to Multan jail. In a conspiracy case tried in Lahore, he was given life imprisonment, but was eventually released.

After release, he served in the Desh Bhagat Sahik Committee (Patriotic Committee) to help the children of patriots who died for freedom. He also worked for the welfare of farmers. He died at Amritsar on December 21, 1968.

BOOK REPORT

PUNJABI LANGUAGE IS 5,500 YEARS OLD

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Dr Jaspal Singh Mayell

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Many International Punjabi Conferences have been held in Canada, India, Pakistan, UK, and USA which were attended by experts of Punjabi,

spoke about Punjabi and recited poems; some were honored for writing books and novels in Punjabi. Nevertheless, nothing has been talked about the origin of Punjabi Language. I have not come across any systematic study and research on the origin of Punjabi language. It was Chahal [1, 2] in 2016 who did some preliminary research about the origin of Punjabi language and about the language of the Holy Scriptures (*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*) of the Sikhs.

Recently Dr. Jaspal Singh Mayell has come up with origin of Punjabi language from the time of excavation of Harappa civilization about 3,500 BCE (5,500 years ago). Dr. Mayell was born in 1929 in Sialkot about 318 Km from Harappa now in Pakistan. He moved to India in 1947 after partition of India into Pakistan and India. He obtained his MSc in Chemical Engineering from Delhi Polytechnic Institute, Delhi in 1952 and PhD in Chemistry from the University of Texas, Austin, Texas in 1962. His first book, *Universality of Sikh Religion*, 2006 and the current book, *Punjabi Language is 5,500 Years Old*, 2017 were published by the Mayell Publishers, Stamford, Connecticut, USA. Dr. Mayell was founding members of Sikh Cultural Society, New York and President of Relief Committee of Greater New York for 28 years from 1984-2012.

Another French Chemist, Antoine Lavoisier (1743-1794), disproved the Classical Elements, earth, air, fire, and water (called *Panj Tatt* – earth, air, fire, water and ether/sky, in Eastern Religions) are not elements instead discovered about 55 substances, which could not be decomposed into simpler substances by any known chemical means were provisionally listed as **elements**. [3]

On the other hand, Dr. Mayell, being Chemist busted the myth that Punjabi was originated from Sanskrit instead from language spoken by the people of Harappa about 5,500 years ago. Chahal calls the old Punjabi as "Proto-Punjabi", which actually became the language of the land of five rivers, Punjab. The name, "Punjab", was given to the land of five rivers by Persians, which means

“Panj aab” (five rivers) and the language of its people was called “Punjabi”. [1]

The first Chapter deals with deciphering of symbols of Harappa people inscribed on different pots or on walls. Dr. Mayell gives 11 reasons for Punjabi to be 5,500 years old:

1. The people living in Harappa were speaking Punjabi and so the people of present Punjab speak Punjabi. He further says that languages like Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic came from foreign countries. Some reader may not digest that Sanskrit came from some foreign country. According to Chahal [1] the Vedas were written by sages of Punjab in the language of Punjab people. This language was named as “*Prakrit*” by Panini, and same language when put under thousands of rules of Grammar was called “Sanskrit”. The first Veda, Rig, was composed around 1,500 to 600 BCE when there was no Sanskrit. Some scholars called that language of Veda a Proto-Sanskrit or Vedic Sanskrit. Panini lived around 600 to 500 BCE at Attoch on the bank of Sind river of Punjab, then called Sept Sindhu. This *Prakrit* is the same proto-Punjabi which was called *Pali* when used by Buddhists to write their scared books. However, the language spoken by the people of Punjab remained same – the Punjabi. [1]
2. Harappa’s people and people of today’s Punjab have the same culture.
3. Harappa people used symbol language Dr. Mayell has deciphered these symbols into Punjabi language. However, the other researchers say that these symbols are very difficult to decipher till today.
4. Multan and Harappa, just 24 miles apart, are oldest cities in the world about 4,000 to 6,000 years old as reported by Kenoyer. The Punjabi language (Multani dialect) spoken today might be the same spoken by Harappa people.
5. The entire area of Punjab has the same traditions, customs and culture as originated in Harappa and Multan.
6. Although there is no solid proof of Punjabi being spoken by Harappa people, Dr. Mayell’s deciphering of symbols of Harappa indicates that it is Punjabi language of today.
7. Kanoyer says that manufacturing seals at various times and their inscriptions are still not decipherable but Dr. Mayell says it is possible that it is Punjabi language.
8. Prof. Dales says that there is no influence of Aryan language on the language of Harappa people.
9. Enamel part of teeth of Harappa people were studied in the University of Florida. The results proved that enamels were of the people of Harappa and there was no mix up from any other outsiders.
10. Dr. Mayell says that the skeleton of Harappa is the same as that of Punjabi people, therefore, they spoke Punjabi language. I do not think it is a good reason since skeleton of humans from different places is same for the last many thousands of years.
11. Finally, Dr. Mayell says that Harappa people were peaceful and had no distinction of any class.

In Chapter 3 Dr Mayell says that 150 million people speak Punjabi Language in the world. For example, 107 million in Pakistan, 35 million in India and 8 million in rest of the world.

In Chapter 4 Dr. Mayell gives very clear cut examples of Punjabi language spoken by Baba Farid during 1173-1266 about 200 years before Guru Nanak. It means the Punjabi language was well spoken in the Punjab much earlier than the time of Baba Farid. Then some poets at that time also spoke and wrote in Punjabi.

However, Chahal [2] has reported that the language spoken by different Bhagats from

different part of India is very much comparable to the Punjabi of Bab Farid and that of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and of today except with some dialectic differences. For example, Baba Farid (1175-1265) from Punjab, Bhagat Kabir (1399-1495) from Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Bhagat Ravidas (1458-1520) also from Varanasi, Bhagat Dhanna (1415 -) from Rajasthan, Bhagat Jaidev (1142 -1180) from West Bengal, Bhagat Trilochan (1267-1335) from Maharashtra, and Bhagat Namdev (1270-1350) also from Maharashtra.

It clearly indicates that during the period around the 12th century from Baba Farid to the 16th century to Bhagat Ravidas Punjabi was spoken by people of whole India except the Southern part where the language was quite different.

In Chapter 5 Dr. Mayell says that Puru/Porus (341-317 BCE) spoke Punjabi.

Buddhists about 550 BCE and Jain people spoke Punjabi but called it *Pali* and *Agamas*, respectively. *Pali* and *Agamas* are actually *Prakrit* (Proto-Punjabi).

In Chapter 6 Dr. Mayell talks about thirty dialects of Punjabi language which have been listed in Table 22. Unfortunately many researchers called different dialects of Punjabi as the different languages.

Chahal [1] has noticed that the language of the Holy Scripture of the Sikhs (*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*) is Punjabi having different dialects. But many famous Sikh scholars erroneously report about 22 languages, in fact, these are 22 dialects of Punjabi as reported by Dr. Mayell.

In Chapter 7 Dr. Mayell discusses that Punjabi is a unique and tonal language. Thus Punjabi language is very good for music and dancing.

In Chapter 8 Dr. Mayell discusses past and future of Punjabi language in details.

The study on the origin of Punjabi language reported by Dr. Mayell is worth reading by the linguists especially by the Sikh researchers on Punjabi language. Just imagine that this language survived for such a long period of about 5,500 years in spite of no support by any government at any time. This is because of its uniqueness and being a tonal language. The alphabet of Gurmukhi script in which the Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs (*Aad Guru Granth Sahib*) is written was modified from “*Takri*” alphabet by Guru Nanak. But some scholars are propagating that it was developed by Guru Angad. This is the script with which any word as spoken can be written easily. [2]

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PUNJABI & MONGOLIAN? [From July-August 2008 Sikh Bulletin]

Recent UNESCO report on languages concluded that languages of the world are disappearing at an alarming rate; “...most languages disappear because their speakers voluntarily abandon them”; and included Punjabi among them. That did not come as a surprise to me. Way back in 1960 I had travelled through Pakistan on my

overland trip from New Delhi to Seattle, USA. Although everybody I came in contact with in Pakistan, from Lahore to the Iranian border, spoke beautiful Punjabi and only Punjabi, their official language was Urdu. Later when I visited Punjab (India) in 2001, after an absence of 25 years, I had to ask myself why did Sikhs in Punjab agitate for Punjabi suba if they were not going to use the language? [See p. 2]. But just imagine my surprise as I turned to page 137 while recently reading "**Marco Polo: From Venice to Xandau**" by Laurence Bergreen.

This was my surprise: An alphabet adopted by **Kublai Khan** in 1269 to be used for transcribing all the languages of his vast empire that extended from China Sea to the Caspian Sea was Punjabi. Arrangement of letters is top to bottom, unlike Gurmukhi script which is left to right, but sound sequence is the same except for the missing fourth consonant in each row. This alphabet was devised by a Tibetan monk, **Matidhvaja Sribhadra**, in Kublai Khan's court at the latter's request. It is obvious that the monk was well aware of the use of Gurmukhi script in Punjab. He did, however, adapt it for use for transcribing sounds specific to various languages in Kublai Khan's empire. It is inconceivable that it is a mere coincidence. Relevant text from that book appears on **page 2**.

Hardev Singh Shergill

Consonants		Vowels			
ਕਾ	ਤਾ	ਪਾ	ਯਾ	ਹਾ	ਾ
ਖਾ	ਥਾ	ਫਾ	ਯਾ	'ਾ	ਉ
ਗਾ	ਦਾ	ਬਾ	ਾ	ਊ	ਈ
ਨਾ	ਨਾ	ਮਾ	ਯਾ	ਏ	ਕ
ਚਾ	ਤਾ	ਤਾ	ਰਾ	ਫਾ	ਿ
ਝਾ	ਧਾ	ਤਸਾ	ਲਾ	ਗਾ	ਿ
ਯਾ	ਦਾ	ਦਾ	ਸਾ		
ਨਿਆ	ਨਾ	ਵਾ	ਹਾ		

MARCO POLO

By Laurence Bergreen | Pages 136-137

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

Text relevant to Kublai Khan's alphabet:

In keeping with his aspiration to become the "universal emperor," Kublai sought to encourage a common written language for all the peoples of his empire. To bring order to the chaos of Mongol communication, he commissioned an influential Tibetan monk named Matidhvaja Sribhadra to devise an entirely new language: an' alphabet capable of transcribing all known tongues. Endowed with prodigious intellectual gifts, the monk was said to have taught himself to read and write soon after birth and could recite a dense Buddhist text known as the Hevajra Tantra from memory by the age of three. As a result of these accomplishments, he was called 'Phags-pa, Tibetan for "Exceptional One." Having arrived at the Mongol court in 1253 as an eighteen-year-old prodigy, 'Phags-pa later found special favor with Kublai Khan's principal wife, Chabi, and came to exert a profound influence over the court.

Although Kublai Khan professed to respect four distinct faiths, 'Phags-pa ensured that his Buddhist sect, the Sa-skya-pa, ranked first among equals. To the Chinese purist, the Mongol version of Buddhism was debased, corrupt; it derived from the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet, whose lamas, "Superior Ones," demonstrated a proficiency in sorcery that alternately delighted and intimidated the deeply superstitious Mongols and impressed the skeptical Marco Polo.

For a time, 'Phags-pa directed all spiritual matters at court, and even Kublai Khan deferred to him. In exchange for spiritual validation, he bestowed on the young monk a golden mandala said to contain pearls "the size of sheep droppings." When the two met for their mystical seances, 'Phags-pa sat above his pupil, and when conducting secular business, they traded places. The see-saw relationship was intended to demonstrate a harmonious balance between spiritual and temporal matters.

In 1269, 'Phags-pa, in fulfillment of his commission, presented Kublai Khan with a

syllabic alphabet—that is, one in which symbols represent consonants and vowels—consisting of forty-one letters, based on traditional Tibetan. The new written language became known as "square script," owing to the letters' form. It was written vertically, from top to bottom and from left to right, using these symbols:

The system transcribed the spoken Mongolian tongue with more accuracy than its improvised predecessors, and even recorded the sounds of other languages, notably Chinese. Kublai Khan proudly designated this linguistic innovation as the language of Mongol officialdom, and he founded academies to promote its use. The Mongolian Language School opened the same year, and two years later, the National University. 'Phags-pa script appeared on paper money, on porcelain, and in official edicts of the Yuan empire, but scholars and scribes, devoted by sentiment and training to Chinese, Persian, or other established languages, resisted adopting it. Nor did Marco demonstrate familiarity with the new Mongol idiom.

In 1274, about the time the Polo Company arrived in Mongolia, 'Phags-pa retired to the Sa-skya-pa monastery in Tibet, where he died in 1280. By that time, his version of Buddhism was falling into disfavor with the Mongols, and his clever script had failed to catch on, except among a small number of adherents who employed it on ceremonial occasions. It remained a worthy but failed experiment in artificial or constructed language.

EXCERPTS FROM MY ARTICLE 'DES'

Published in Sikh Bulletin of Dec. 2001

My 'Des' is no more

Punjab now is full of strangers and an alien language. This language is alien even though all my schooling from grade one through high school was in that medium because that was the language of the state where my grandparents decided to

settle in 1924. Still Punjabi was the language at home, and language of communication with everyone other than the natives. In fifties, when one of my cousins cut off his hair, its impact was like a death in the family.

But this time even in my 'Des' I had to speak the alien language whenever I needed directions. Bhaiyas control the city transportation and since the **Sikh Youth are also clean-shaven they look like Bhaiyas too.** In Ludhiana, to look for a Turban on the streets is like looking for chicken in the American Chicken-Chowmein. It is much easier to see a Turban in Yuba City.

Children answer phones in that alien language, chauks (Town squares) are named after non-Sikh 'Satgurus' and traffic signs are in that alien language.

One wonders why did our people agitate to split half of Punjab into three parts and settle for one third as Punjabi Sooba when even they themselves have quit using the language and we cannot even get together to form a Sikh government?



According to a story in The Tribune dateline Patiala Oct. 30th 2001, during a surprise inspection of 694 offices by the language department, 261

officers and 431 employees were found not using Punjabi in official work. Mansa district topped the list of defaulters with 66 officers and 91 employees found not using Punjabi. "Contrary to popular thought, it is not only the Punjab Govt. Secretariat where Punjabi has been given the go-by. The language is still not being used in totality in various district-level offices all over the state." The Director of the department responsible to enforce use of Punjabi is Dr. Madan Lal Hasija. The name is non-Sikh, but we have to assume he is Punjabi. When questioned about the violations which had been detected by his department during the past six months, he said these were not considerable. Punjabi Hindus are the only group in the entire history of mankind who disowned their mother tongue way back in 1951 when India wide plebiscite was held to create linguistic states, setting the stage for the tragedy that has plagued Punjab ever since. Thanks to the wholesale abandonment of their mother tongue by Punjabi Hindus, Punjab was made a bilingual state and seeds of its further division were sown and Punjabi, by default, made language of Sikhs only. Cannot the Punjab govt. and its universities find Sikhi Sarup Sikhs to head their departments and chair their anniversary committees? **No wonder there is neither pride in Sikhi nor Punjabi language in Punjab today.** Hardev Singh Shergill

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**Amritsar, August 16, 2008
Punjabi as Official Language
Bill in coming session: CM
Tribune News Service**

The state government will present a Bill in the next session of the Assembly starting on September 4, 2008 for implementing the Punjabi language as official language in government departments. Addressing the gathering at Baba Bakala on the occasion of Rakhar Punnian, Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal said Punjabi had failed to get its due status in Punjab and added that steps would be taken to promote it.

[What took them so long? ED.]

FROM: GURBACHAN SINGH SIDHU

[mailto:gssidhu30@yahoo.co.uk]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 10:21 AM

To: Hardev Singh Shergill

Subject: Re: Punjabi and Mongolian?

Dear Mr. Shergill: Thank you very much for sending me the universal alphabet of Kublai Khan. It is remarkable that the pronunciation of the letters matches exactly with that of the modern Punjabi Alphabet (tta, Ththa dadda, nna, gga, nga etc.). Similar names for the written symbols were used by the Bhagats before the time of Guru Nanak (See Kabir's acrostic in Guru Granth Sahib Page340). Needless to say, that the religious people always use the script prevalent during their times. If the Gurmukhi characters and their names were prevalent in the time of Kabir then they must have been used for quite a long time before the advent of Kabir for people to have expertise in reading them. Gurmukhi characters have already been discovered used in the 5th century BC. Some writings in these characters were discovered at Baku.

The arrangement of the characters is also to a large extent similar although vertical. As for the shapes we cannot say that they match exactly with modern Gurmukhi characters. The shapes of vowel symbols are nowhere near our commonly used modern Gurmukhi symbols. However, we must not forget that scripts have been written by hand (long hand) for thousands of years and each writer unintentionally makes some slight changes in the shapes of the letters (See the photocopies of various writings in my book ' Punjab and Punjabi'). Over time the original shapes become corrupted (Landay and Gurmukhi are examples of the same script). Now that we have printing presses, such corruptions have more or less ceased but we still find different fonts in one and the same alphabet. We do have shapes like D, d, d etc. and in some writings the top end in "d" is left free twisted to the left hand (especially in long hand). Such variations in handwritings were comparatively more pronounced in handwritten

documents in the past than they are today.

Another significant fact that needs to be noted is that the inventor was a Tibetan. In old times people from Tibet visited the Punjab and even in the times of Guru Nanak people of Punjab are on record to have visited Kailash in Tibet. Guru Nanak's visit to Tibet is recorded in apocryphal Sikh literature. Only last month a group of Hindus started on their journey to Kailash in Tibet. I read somewhere that some years ago some Tibetans too visited Amritsar and claimed that it was their sacred place. No wonder this sort of cultural exchange may have resulted in borrowing scripts. If we can borrow the Persian script to write Indian languages or use dots under Jja, Shasha, Faffa etc. to represent Persian sounds, the people in the old may also have borrowed the systems of writing.

If something written in this script is discovered, it may be helpful to gather further information about this script. Meanwhile I have kept it in my file for further study. Can somebody collect more information about such Tibetan scripts from Dalai Lama, now that he is a citizen of India? He might even know about this particular script because the inventor was a Buddhist monk.

G S Sidhu, UK

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A PHYSICIAN'S CONCERN FOR FUTURE OF PUNJABI

Varinder Walia, Tribune News Service, Amritsar,
July 31, 2008

The book, "Maan Boli: Ik Doctri Drishtikon," (Mother tongue: A doctor's perspective), by Dr Harshinder Kaur, a pediatrician-cum-writer, that has been taken note of in the world of Punjabi, is being translated into Pashto, Sindhi, Urdu and English. It has already been transliterated into Shahmukhi (Persian script). The book raises apprehensions about the bleak future of Punjabi on the basis of a UNESCO report on languages which

read: "Most languages disappear because their speakers voluntarily abandon them".

Harshinder said here yesterday while work of translation in Sindhi and Urdu had already been completed, a Washington-based Punjabi scholar had sought permission to translate the book into Pashto. The English translation of the book was released recently in New Zealand.

Harshinder has been invited by Manzur Ejaz, president, Wichaar Publishers, Lahore, to mark the release of Wichaar in Pakistan on October 26. Expressing concern over the future of Punjabi, Harshinder asked: "Will the third generation of Punjabi immigrants forget the language of their forefathers in 50 years as predicted by an American linguist? In India too, Punjabi faces the threat of extinction in many parts, because many upper-class people have started abandoning it". She says many of the third-generation Punjabi immigrants have never visited Punjab, hence, will forget it.

Harshinder's concern assumes significance as world's languages are disappearing at the rate of one in a fortnight. The eight articles in the book are an eye-opener. The first one is on the impact of language on a child's mind. She is concerned about the pathetic condition of Punjabi which, she claims, is older than English. Harshinder is WHO and UNICEF-certified trainer and life member of 11 pediatric societies. Her research papers were published in national and international journals. She has published five books and two are in the press. She has written books on heart diseases, "Saade Bachche, Saade Chirag", "Bachian Dian Manovigyanik Samasiavan Te Ilaj" and "Bachian Bare Gyan Vigyan Te Manovigyan".

Her survey on mother tongue, published by Singh Brothers, was released in New Zealand on April 13 to mark Baisakhi. Her sixth book on female feticide is being published by the SGPC, Amritsar, and another book of stories for children "Dactar Massi Dian Kahaniyan," is under publication.

A recipient of the Punjab State Award (August 15, 2006) for social work, female feticide prevention and professional excellence, and the SGPC award Faqr-e-Qaum for work on preventing female feticide.

SANJHI PUNJABI

Dear Friends: I hope you are doing fine.

It is a great pleasure to inform you that the 4th issue of APNA's quarterly Punjabi magazine "Sanjh" has been published both in Shahmukhi from Lahore and Gurmukhi from Ludhiana. See the following page for details:

<http://www.apnaorg.com/sanjh-4/>

With this issue, Sanjh has completed its first year. Our primary objective for Sanjh is to bridge the script divide between the readers of Shahmukhi and Gurmukhi scripts by publishing the same magazine separately in two scripts and provide the best contemporary Punjabi writings from all sources to both West and East Punjabi readers. Sanjh has been received very well and is now widely recognized as an important Punjabi journal:

1. It is the first and only Punjabi magazine that publishes separately from West Punjab (in Shahmukhi) and East Punjab (in Gurmukhi), with identical content.
2. It provides the best writings of East, West and Diaspora Punjabi writers, thus providing a comprehensive reading of current Punjabi writings from all sources.
3. Sanjh is the first serious attempt to try to close the wide gap that has been created in literary Punjabi language being used on both sides of Punjab's border due to indiscriminate use of Hindi/Sanskrit vocabulary in East Punjab and

Urdu/Persian in West Punjab. Sanjh is pioneering the effort to publish only those writings that represent Punjabi without the undue influence of either Sanskrit/Hindi or Urdu/Persian.

Please check the following links if you are interested in subscribing to Sanjh:

In Pakistan: <http://www.apnaorg.com/sanjh-subscription/sanjh-pakistan.html>

In India: <http://www.apnaorg.com/sanjh-subscription/sanjh-india.html>

Outside India & Pakistan: <http://www.apnaorg.com/sanjh-subscription/>

Let me know if you have any questions or comments. Hope to hear from you soon.
Regards, Safir Rammah

Coordinator - Academy of the Punjab in North America (APNA) Web page:
<http://www.apnaorg.com>

TRANSLATION AND EXPLANATION OF JAP JARNAIL SINGH



Jarnail Singh, Sydney, Australia

I was born in village Kharoudi, District Hoshiarpur in Punjab. Graduating from Khalsa College Mahilpur, I completed my post-graduation in English from Hoshiarpur and Chandigarh. I started my career as a lecturer in English but soon switched over to banking and joined a public-sector bank as a probationary officer. I worked my way up to the middle management level but soon after that we decided to move to Sydney in 1999. For now, Sydney is my home and here I am working as a business analyst with a multinational company in their finance division.

I owe my interest in Sikhism to Prof. Sahib Singh's interpretation of Guru Granth Sahib. When I read his "Darpan" in ten volumes I found a glaring gap between what he says and what I have seen and learnt living as a Sikh in Punjab. This led me to delve deep into Guru Granth Sahib to find out the truth myself. During this journey, I also realized that there is no communication between Sikhism and the outside world. **Sikhs are busy teaching Sikhism to themselves only.** One way to communicate with the world at large is to translate GGS. Besides, this is also the need of the generation of Sikhs born overseas. That is how I ventured on this humble attempt.

Kind Regards
Jarnail Singh

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

Before this cosmos came into existence God was in a compressed state called "ekonkar" Creating the eternal laws God expands and resides in its creation operating these laws without any fear or enmity. God is beyond the limits of time and does not take birth, exists on its own and can only be understood through knowledge sifted through discerning intellect.

ਜਪ

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥
ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥
*Truth prevailed in the beginning,
Before the beginning.
Prevails now, will prevail forever.*

In Sikhism, Truth and God are synonymous. So, the statement that truth was, is and shall last forever, is required to be understood in the context of the above preamble (popularly called Mool Manter) from "Ekonkar" to "Gurprasad" wherein the concept of God has been explained. Since God and truth are synonymous, it means that attributes of truth are same as those of God described in the preamble. Just as God is one, truth is always one; there can never be two truths. Just as God is everlasting, Truth cannot be transient. Just as God pervades everywhere, Truth cannot be parochial. Just like God, Truth is always fearless and impartial. Just as God is beyond the limitation of time, so is Truth.

ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥
ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥
ਭੁਖਿਆਂ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ ਜੇ ਬੰਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਰ ॥
ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ॥
ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ॥
ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥

*Washing the body for times umpteen, does not
wash the mind clean
Meditating in deep trance does not tranquil the
mind*

*All the wealth of this world does not satiate
hunger*

*Millions of clever ideas do not help at all
To dismantle the pall of falsehood;
To see the truth*

*Appreciate and abide by the will of God
manifest in nature, says Nanak.*

Guru started with a statement about Truth. Since God and Truth are synonymous in Sikhism, the logical conclusion is that farther from truth is farther from God. Falsehood is like a pall between

us and God. In this stanza, Guru tells us about popular methods preached by various religions to pierce open this pall of falsehood. In the first line Guru refers to rituals of purity and cleanliness which fail miserably to cleanse our mind off the falsehood. Thousands of people perform these rituals at pilgrimages believing it to be a holy act that will please God. In the second line, Guru alludes to the practice of remaining silent for a long time which however fails to shut out the noise from within. There are sects who think if they don't utter a word for a long time they can control their mind. In the third line, Guru tells us that it is not at all possible to satisfy our desires to the full as it turns out to be a never-ending journey. In the fourth line, Guru explains that we cannot realize truth by being a genius. We may get many clever ideas but we are likely to end up constructing our own truths. In these lines, Guru is explaining us the pitfalls in our journey to truth and at the same time prepares us for the all-important question. What is the way to break ourselves out of this cocoon of falsehood? Guru gives his answer. Understand and follow the will of God manifest in nature all around you. Guru calls it Hukam; a Punjabi word meaning order or command.

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਜੀਅ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਉਤਮੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ ॥
 ਇਕਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਇਕਿ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਸਦਾ ਭਵਾਈਅਹਿ ॥
 ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੜੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ ੨ ॥

Hukam defies all description

*Matter shapes into existence by Hukam
 Mind emerges and gains glories by Hukam
 By Hukam we are good or bad;
 by Hukam we are happy or sad.
 By Hukam some are blessed for ever;
 Others suffer life and death for ever
 Hukam rules over us all,
 no one is beyond its purview
 One who understands Hukam
 cease to have an Ego.*

In the last line of previous stanza Guru referred to Hukam or will of God. In this stanza, Guru explains Hukam in more detail. In the first line Guru says the all that is tangible (that is all matter in this cosmos) takes a shape (AKAR) as per Hukam, however it is not at all possible to describe in its entirety, how the Hukam operates. In the second line Guru says that all that is intangible (Jeeyo) also comes into existence as per Hukam and achieves glory as per Hukam. We see that just in two lines Guru has covered the entire creation in this cosmos. In the third line Guru says human beings achieve heights of greatness and fall into the depths of meanness by Hukam and they are in pain or pleasure as per Hukam. When we obey Hukam and follow the wisdom of Guru to conquer the temptations of greed, lust etc. our mind climbs to the heights of glory and if we travel to the opposite direction, greed and lust under the operation of Hukam take us down to the path of meanness. Some get out this vicious circle of pain and pleasure by Hukam, while others keep on suffering for ever in this whirlwind. No one can interfere in the operation of Hukam. The operation of Hukam is fearless, impartial and irrevocable. No middleman can come to our help. In the fifth line Guru says that everything is under Hukam, no one can survive out of it. In the last line, Guru says that once a person understands Hukam, he/she experiences an annihilation of his/her ego or sense of being separate and special. One thing that is to be noted here is that though it is not possible to describe Hukam, but it is not only possible but mandatory for human beings to understand it.

ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਤਾਣੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਕਿਸੈ ਤਾਣੁ ॥
 ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਦਾਤਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥
 ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਗੁਣ ਵਡਿਆਈਆ ਚਾਰ ॥
 ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵਿਖਮੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਸਾਜਿ ਕਰੇ ਤਨੁ ਖੇਹ ॥
 ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਜੀਅ ਲੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਦੇਹ ॥

ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਜਾਪੈ ਦਿਸੈ ਢੂਰਿ ॥
 ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਵੇਖੈ ਹਾਦਰਾ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥
 ਕਬਨਾ ਕਬੀ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਤੋਟਿ ॥
 ਕਬਿ ਕਬਿ ਕਬੀ ਕੋਟੀ ਕੋਟਿ ਕੋਟਿ ॥
 ਦੇਦਾ ਦੇ ਲੈਦੇ ਬਕਿ ਪਾਹਿ ॥
 ਜੁਗਾ ਜੁਗਿੰਤਰਿ ਖਾਹੀ ਖਾਹਿ ॥
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਚਲਾਏ ਰਾਹੁ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੁ ॥੩॥

*Some are lyrical about your prowess
 Wondering who else can match your prowess
 Some are lyrical about your bounties
 And see them as signature of your presence
 Some are lyrical about your glories galore
 and virtues great
 Some are lyrical about how hard and deep
 one delves to know you
 Some are lyrical about how you create
 and destroy life
 Some are lyrical about how you suck out
 and breathe in life
 Some are lyrical about your distance
 or immanent presence
 One may go on and on and on to describe
 with no end
 Millions have tried and tried but gave up
 at the end
 The ever generous Lord keeps on giving
 to the point of satiation
 Since ages and ages all are surviving
 on this generosity
 O Nanak, the blithe God carries on this operation
 through Hukam in blissful joy.*

In the second stanza Guru gave a brief description of the operation of Hukam, People often recognise God from the outcomes of this operation and react accordingly. In the first eight lines of this stanza Guru gives peoples' perception of God and in the last six lines he gives his own opinion. In the first line Guru tells us that some people recognise God

as a superpower with unmatched prowess. It is pertinent to note that Sikhism does not describe God as a superpower or as an Omnipotent entity, as this description inherently assumes that God does have some, though weak, opposition. God in Sikhism does not have any opposition at all. Instead, Sikhism describes God as "Karta". Some people translate it as Doer or Creator. It is very difficult to translate this Punjabi word into English without losing some of its nuances. Whenever we say creator or doer it implies someone who designs or makes something with material provided to him. However, God does not rely on anyone to provide him with material, nor does he chisel something out of something. God causes everything to happen through its Hukam. God does not design a rose with petals meticulously made in a factory, but causes the plant to bloom into flowers. In the second line Guru tells us that there are people who relate God to the gifts they get from him. People start worshipping these gifts as souvenirs of God. In the third line, Guru tells us that there are many who keep on singing praises of God enumerating its various virtues. In the fourth line, Guru tells us that there are many out and about in this world who proclaim that concept of God is something extremely difficult to understand. They claim it to be very unintelligible, imperceptible and indiscernible. In the fifth and sixth line Guru tells us about people who praise God the way It creates and destroys life. In the seventh and eighth line, Guru tells us that there are many who say that God is living very far away up above in the skies. And there are many who say that God lives very close to them, so much so that they can feel its presence.

In the last six lines of this stanza Guru gives his own opinion. Millions have tried to capture God into some sort of theory or explanation but gave up at the end. It is not at all possible to describe God in its totality. It is important to note here that there are people who have given accounts of God in very minute details. In the preceding eight lines Guru refers to those people. We find extremely fine details of God in scriptures of other religions.

There are details of Heaven and Hell. There are details about how and when God created this universe. There are details of what happens after death. There are details about the path and the difficulties on the path the dead person takes to reach God, heaven or hell. There are people who have devised tools to predict the next birth a person takes after death. There is a kind of hypocrisy in these exercises. On the one hand these people declare that God is a superpower, omniscient and omnipresent and on the other they claim to know everything about the way God works which means they are more powerful than God. That is the reason our Guru says that all this is a useless exercise. All that we got to remember is that God has been operating this cosmos for millions of years through Its Hukam. Everything in this cosmos is surviving on God's magnanimity. God is never tired of being generous and does this all in blissful joy.

ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਨਾਇ ਭਾਖਿਆ ਭਾਉ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਦੇਹਿ ਦੇਹਿ ਦਾਤਿ ਕਰੇ ਦਾਤਾਰੁ ॥
 ਫੇਰਿ ਕਿ ਅਗੈ ਰਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ ॥
 ਮੁਹੌ ਕਿ ਬੋਲਣੁ ਬੋਲੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਸੁਣਿ ਧਰੇ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥
 ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਉ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਵਿਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਕਰਮੀ ਆਵੈ ਕਪਦਾ ਨਦਰੀ ਮੋਖੁ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਏਵੈ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਸਭੁ ਆਪੇ ਸਚਿਆਰੁ ॥੪॥

*Eternal God with glories eternal
 Speaks in language of love immeasurable
 We beg and beseech for more and more
 The donor is giving since days of yore
 What can we offer to seek his blessings?
 What should we say to capture his loving
 attention?
 We have this life, a blessing great
 To contemplate deep and hard on virtues great
 and glories eternal
 Good deeds breathe in us a life spiritual; make us
 an enlightened individual
 Be in the know, says Nanak, the True God
 himself is lit up everywhere.*

In this stanza, Guru discusses a common practice of pleasing God with some offerings. Since day one, mankind is striving to please God to get favours for themselves. Clever people have exploited this inherent desire of mankind to their own benefits and are doing a good business out of it. You don't have to go far to find people who have opened shops to sell sure shot ways to please God. They even claim to make God physically present as if God is at their beck and call. You find these people at all places and in all religions with slight variation in their tricks to suit their clients.

As usual Guru approaches this subject in a systematic and logical way discarding and repudiating many old dogmas. The fundamental question is what can we do to please God? Can we please God by offering gifts in cash or kind? Or do we have to do something else? Guru rules out the first possibility as we have nothing that can be offered to God as a gift or offering. A gift is a deliberate relinquishment of ownership of something we own in favour of a third person. We do not own anything in this world. Everything in this world has come to us as a gift from God. God has bestowed upon mankind all that they got. In fact, mankind is asking for more and more and he has been giving it for ages without a frown on his face. Eternal God always speaks in language of love and affection. (This is very important statement that distinguishes Sikhism from other religions. God in Sikhism is never angry.) Human beings have nothing that has not been given by God to them. So, all those rituals to make offerings at places of worship are in fact a farce. Apparently, it will be extremely offensive if we offer God's gift back to God as a gift from us.

Now if we have nothing that can be offered to God as a gift, then is there anything else that we can do to seek his blessings. Guru says yes there is. This life as a human being is a blessing from God. Guru says we can make the most of this life as a human being by spending it in the service of God. Guru has used Punjabi word Amrit Vela for this life. The literal meaning of Amrit is nectar and Vela means time or period. In GGS Amrit is also the

name given to teachings of Guru. Time here stands for the life of a human being. So Amrit Vela means our life when we can understand and act as per the teachings of Guru. When we act per the teachings of Guru we get incarnated into a new person who feels God in everything around him/her.

ਬਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਅਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਜਿਨਿ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਗਾਵੀਐ ਗੁਣੀ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ॥

ਗਾਵੀਐ ਸੁਈਐ ਮਨਿ ਰਖੀਐ ਭਾਉ ॥

ਦੁਖੁ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਘਰਿ ਲੈ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਦੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵੇਦੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਈਸਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਰਖੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਰਬਤੀ ਮਾਈ ॥

ਜੇ ਹਉ ਜਾਣਾ ਆਖਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਹਣਾ ਕਥਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥

ਗੁਰਾ ਇਕ ਦੇਹਿ ਬੁਝਾਈ ॥

ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਇਕੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਸੇ ਮੈ ਵਿਸਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥੫॥

Cannot be sculptured; cannot be installed

Immaculate God is self-created

Those who serve get the reward

Murmur melodies about the treasure house of

merits and virtues

To earn his respect

To get rid of pain

To be in blissful joy

The one who follows Guru, the wisdom that

lights up the melody of God in us

Enjoys the primordial sound, the unstuck celestial vibration

Is blessed with the supreme knowledge

Realizes the all pervasiveness of God

Guru is Issar, Guru is Gorakh, Guru is Brahma and Guru is Parvati

Even if I know; I cannot describe

O Guru, bless me with the understanding and resolve

*To carry in my heart all the time
Love for God
Who provides for all.*

When the priestly class could not understand, and explain God properly, they created their own gods to befool the public. In the process, God has become the most abused person in this world. God has been treated sometimes as something super human, at other times as an animal, a bird and what not. The way clergy treats God is a classic example of hypocrisy and double talk. In one breath, they say God is the creator, in the second breath they themselves become the creator of God. On the one hand, they say God is indescribable, on the other hand they start capturing God into some weird sculptures. In the fifth stanza of Jap Guru nails this hypocrisy. In India, God was/is sculptured out of stones or rocks and installed in temples for worship. Guru discards and repudiates this idea, as usual, with logic. No one can create someone who is the one and only source of all creations. Guru advises us that instead of indulging in this hypocrisy we should rather be focused on singing and listening to the praises of almighty God with a heart full of love and respect. If we appreciate the virtues of God, sing and listen to his praises, we will be able to eradicate all pain in our life and joy will bloom out forever in our hearts. In the fourth line of this stanza Guru explains how to sing praises of God. In this line the term Gurmukh has been used for the first time in Guru Granth Sahib. Though this term is a full-fledged subject in itself, it will be pertinent to mention in brief that Gumukh is a person who has disciplined his mind to follow the teachings of Guru. Instead of following the dictates of his mind, his mind follows the dictates of logic, knowledge and wisdom. When a person listens to the wisdom of Guru, he can feel that the whole world vibrates with manifestation of God. And he is blessed with ultimate wisdom.

In the fifth line Guru refers to the famous deities of Hinduism such as Brahma, Shiva, Gorakh and Parvati. The idols of these deities and many others

are installed in temples as Gods for worship. Guru repudiates this concept and tells us that Guru, the ultimate knowledge, replaces all these deities. The last line of this stanza is a prayer for an insight from Guru, an insight that God is the only giver or provider for the whole world. This is an extremely important statement from Guru. It looks simple at the surface but has depths of the ocean in it. Have a look around, and we will find that there are many who claim to be the source of support for the humanity.

From a small family to a large nation, we have a long list of people who claim to be the saviors of those they support. People in the developed world have this feeling that numerous lives in the third world countries are dependent on their generosity. They have statistical data to support their assertion. All these stats are an attempt to turn their backs from the truth that God is the only provider for entire humanity. The moment they accept this truth, the dirty politics and chicanery of diplomacy is exposed.

ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਾ ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਾ ਵਿਣੁ ਭਾਣੇ ਕਿ ਨਾਇ ਕਰੀ ॥
ਜੇਤੀ ਸਿਰਠਿ ਉਪਾਈ ਵੇਖਾ ਵਿਣੁ ਕਰਮਾ ਕਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਲਈ ॥
ਮਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਤਨ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਮਾਣਿਕ
ਜੇ ਇਕ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਣੀ ॥
ਗੁਰਾ ਇਕ ਦੇਹਿ ਬੁਡਾਈ ॥
ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਇਕੁ ਦਾਤਾ
ਸੇ ਮੈ ਵਿਸਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥ 6 ॥

*Why should I venture on a pilgrimage
When it does not find favour with God
I look around and can't find a single person
Who realized God without his grace
But I do know*

*If I follow even one word of wisdom of Guru
My mind fills up with priceless treasure
O Guru, bless me with the understanding
and resolve
To always carry in my heart
Love for God
Who provides for all.*

Interestingly and ironically, God has also been given an address. However, we remember that in stanza five of Jap Guru told us that God cannot be sculptured and installed in temples for worship. God cannot be made to reside in a place of worship to grant special blessings to the visitor of that shrine or place of worship. Since God pervades in the entire cosmos, hence cannot be reduced to an idol in a temple or a localized theophany looking after a certain community. Thus, Guru demolishes the very basis of the concept behind installation of God in temples or other religious places. The concept of pilgrimage is an extension of the concept of a localized God. Over the years this concept has evolved into a full-fledged ritual (and business). It is based on following premises:

- That the places of pilgrimage are holy places
- That God resides in these holy places.
- That God blesses all those who visit these places.
- That visit to these places helps in spiritual upliftment of the pilgrims.
- That pilgrimage helps cleanse your soul off bad deeds

Sikhism repudiates all these concepts. That is why it rejects pilgrimage outright. Instead of performing a pilgrimage to seek God's blessing, it will be better if we inculcate wisdom of Guru in our mind which will enrich us spiritually. We should remember all the time that there is only one provider for all on this earth. This provider is God. No idol in a temple or a localized theophany has anything to do with what we get in our life.

ਜੇ ਜੁਗ ਚਾਰੇ ਆਰਜਾ ਹੋਰ ਦਸੂਣੀ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਨਵਾ ਖੰਡਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਨਾਲਿ ਚਲੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਚੰਗਾ ਨਾਉ ਰਖਾਦਿ ਕੈ ਜਸੁ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਜਗਿ ਲੋਇ ॥
ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਤ ਵਾਤ ਨ ਪੁੜੈ ਕੇ ॥
ਕੀਟਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਕੀਟ ਕਰਿ ਦੋਸੀ ਦੋਸੁ ਧਰੈ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਗੁਣਿ ਗੁਣ ਕਰੈ ਗੁਣਵੰਤਿਆ ਗੁਣ ਦੇ ॥
ਤੇਹਾ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਸੁਝਈ ਜਿ ਤਿਸ ਗੁਣ ਕਰੇ ॥ 7 ॥

**If one has a long long life,
long like eons even ten times more
Becomes a celebrity followed
across the continents
Enjoys a good reputation acclaimed
by one and all
Will still be an also-ran
if unable to win favour from God
Is declared guilty
revealing the worms of negative forces within
Says Nanak, God transforms meritless
into meritorious
Bestows more merit on the meritorious
None can add to the merits of God.**

In this Stanza Guru refers to yogis, siddhas and Rishis in India who claim to have succeeded in elongating their age by some yoga postures or some other spiritual exercises. Guru says that all this is a useless exercise. However, Guru's message is not confined to these personalities from Hinduism; it applies to one and all. Guru further says that even if a person becomes a celebrity or a powerful person in this world, this does not ensure that God will approve him or her due to their celebrity status. In God's judgement, they may turn out to be a guilty person with several negative forces working within them.

It is a common knowledge that people can ensure a celebrity status by careful advertising and marketing. Professionals are hired to do this. People even campaign to obtain prestigious awards. Guru calls this kind of mentality worms of negative forces working within the minds of people. They might get a celebrity status in the world, but in the court of God they are declared guilty. No one can manufacture virtues for himself or herself, these are bestowed upon by God. A proof of what Guru said above is the suicides by many celebrities. When they get sick of falsehood around them, they kill themselves. There are many noble laureates in this world. There are many who deserved but did not get the noble prize. And there are many who did not deserve but got one. There is lot more that goes behind the scenes other than

the qualities of a person who gets an award by various organizations in this world. Ironically most of the awards given by SGPC and Akal Takhat (both Sikh organizations) are also prefect examples of dirty politics rather than acknowledgement of good work. Guru gives the fundamental concept here that no one in this world can manufacture virtues for himself or for others. They are all gifts granted by God. We hear lot of stories saying that such and such person is a personification of honesty, bravery or justice. All these qualities or virtues are bestowed upon these people by God. No one can create and add to the virtues of God. A genuine celebrity will always acknowledge this. That is why they are so humble in their life.

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਿਧ ਪੀਰ ਸਾਹਿ ਨਾਥ ॥
ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪਰਤਿ ਧਵਲ ਆਕਾਸ ॥
ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੀਪ ਲੋਅ ਪਾਤਾਲੁ ॥
ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪੇਹਿ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਕਾਲੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥
ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੮॥

*Listening leads to
The spiritual status of the enlightened
Realization of reality about the earth,
the mythical bull and the sky
Understanding of continents and different worlds
Obliterates the fear of death
Says Nanak, those who listen to Hukam
live a life of bliss
Suffer no agony and do not indulge in sin.*

In the preceding stanza, Guru described how people try to advertise themselves showcasing their goodness. In the next eight stanzas Guru describes the right path to acquire virtues. This path is to listen to and accept the Hukam (the laws that operate this universe) of God. First four stanzas concentrate on listening to the Hukam and the next four broach on acceptance of Hukam.

Guru clarified what is to be listened to and accepted when he used the word Nam in the last

four stanzas. Nam is synonymous of Hukam in Sikhism. Elsewhere in Guru Granth Sahib it has been clarified that acceptance of Nam or Hukam is to follow the wisdom of Guru which among other things translates to being rational and logical. There is a catch also. Being rational or logical sometimes ends up in total irrationality due to a person's ego. We must be careful about it.

Listening to Hukam leads to a stage of spiritual loftiness where ripeness is all. In Indian sub-continent, such persons are known as Sidh, Pir or Nath. If we pay attention to the operation of Hukam or the way God is operating in this cosmos we can understand the reality about earth, different continents, sky and cosmos. We will be able to see through the falsehood of the story of mythical bull holding this earth on its horns. This will result in spiritual upliftment to the realm of saints and we will no longer fear death because of realization that all this is happening as per the operation of laws of nature under the Hukam of God. Those who start loving this Hukam are always in a kind of bliss with no agony or sin in their lives. History across the globe, is replete with examples of great people who accepted death with a smile on their faces.

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਈਸਰੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਇੰਦੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਲਾਹਣ ਮੰਦੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਨਿ ਭੇਦ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਾਸਤ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਵੇਦ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੁਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥ 9 ॥

*Listening leads to
 Truth about gods like Issar, Brahma and Inder
 Understanding and praise of why
 what we think is bad
 Secrets of yoga and body are revealed and
 divine knowledge attained
 Says Nanak, those who listen to Hukam
 live a life of bliss
 Suffer no agony and do not indulge in sin.*

Guru continues to discuss effects of paying attention to the Hukam of God, the way God operates this cosmos. It results in bursting the balloon of so many myths about different gods operating this cosmos like we have Issar, Brahma, Inder etc in Hinduism. These gods in Hinduism are said to be the creators and destroyers of life on this earth. Once we start listening to and understand the way God operates this cosmos, we no longer believe in these mythical gods. It also blesses us with an understanding of reasons and causes behind bad things that happen in this world. Bad things happen only when we mess up with the operation of Hukam of God. A perfect example of this is the global warming and its consequences on mankind. Another example is irresponsible tapping of underground water for rice cultivation in Punjab which is having deleterious effect on climate there. With this understanding we spontaneously praise God whenever something bad happens. We admire God because this puts us to the right direction for corrective actions if we want to take one. It helps us understand not only the cosmos but also the secrets of our body and gives us the divine knowledge supposedly contained in religious books. That is why those who start loving this Hukam are always in a kind of bliss with no agony or sin in their lives.

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਕਾ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਮਾਨੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਚਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੁਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥ 10 ॥

*Listening leads to
 Truthfulness, contentment and wisdom
 Gives benefits of pilgrimages
 Leads to Learning and honour
 To a focused and tranquil mind
 Says Nanak, those who listen to Hukam
 live a life of bliss
 Suffer no agony and do not indulge in sin.*

Continuing his argument Guru tells us that listening to Hukam leads to truthfulness and contentment in life. People go on to pilgrimages to achieve this. Hindus have sixty-eight places of pilgrimage where they go to seek knowledge and contentment in their life. All this can be obtained by paying attention to the operation of Hukam of God. It helps us to deeply study and analyse this universe that gives us lot of knowledge and fame. It will result in a tranquil mind and life perfectly balanced full of peace and poise. That is why those who start loving this Hukam are always in a kind of bliss with no agony or sin in their lives.

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਰਾ ਗੁਣਾ ਕੇ ਗਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸੇਖ ਪੀਰ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਅੰਧੈ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਰਾਹੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਹਾਥ ਹੋਵੈ ਅਸਗਾਹੁ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਚਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੧੧॥

*Listening leads to
 Fathoming the oceans of virtues
 Climbing to the spiritual heights of the
 enlightened
 Shows the way to the lost
 Have a measure of truth immeasurable
 Says Nanak, those who listen to Hukam
 live a life of bliss
 Suffer no agony and do not indulge in sin.*

Guru finishes his discussion about listening to Hukam in this stanza saying that it leads to the cognition and attainment of oceans of virtues and qualities. It will make you spiritually enlightened like Sheikhs and Pirs and other divine personalities. It will guide us to the right path. Without this all of us are hovering around trying to find our ways like a blind person. It helps us to understand the inscrutable truth and the grasp of the fathomless ocean of knowledge. That is why those who start loving this Hukam are always in a kind of bliss with no agony or sin in their lives.

Science and spirituality stands testimony to the truth Guru described in these four stanzas about listening or paying attention to the operation of Hukam or order in this Cosmos. People who have listened to or paid attention to the way God operates this cosmos has gained tremendous knowledge and fame and have served humanity in the best possible way.

ਮੰਨੇ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਰੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਛਤਾਇ ॥
 ਕਾਗਦਿ ਕਲਮ ਨ ਲਿਖਣਹਾਰੁ ॥
 ਮੰਨੇ ਕਾ ਬਹਿ ਕਰਨਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਐਸਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਨਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਮਨਿ ਕੋਇ ॥੧੨॥

*Acceptance helps Nurture a state of mind
 that defies description*

*If someone has a go, ends up in frustration
 Reflecting on this state you find*

*No wordsmith can capture it by pen and paper
 Those who accept Hukam know it is
 inexpressibly immaculate.*

In the next four stanzas Guru describes the mental status of those who accept the Hukam, the way God is operating this Universe. It is pertinent to note here that most of the people, be a theist or an atheist, do not accept the way God is operating this universe instead they try their best to manoeuvre this operation to benefit themselves. Guru has used the word Naam here which is synonymous with Hukam in Sikh philosophy. Guru qualifies it with the word “Niranjan” which means something which is spotless without blemishes. So “Niranjan Naam” means Hukam that is flawless. The way God operates this universe is flawless and immaculate. Those who accept this reach spiritual heights that cannot be explained or described. Anyone who tries to do so ends up saying that he or she has not been able to capture it in full. In fact, the words are unable to express it. That is why those who have accepted Hukam know that even though they realize the full import of it still they cannot describe it.

ਮੰਨੇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਮਨਿ ਬੂਧਿ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਸਗਲ ਭਵਣ ਕੀ ਸੁਧਿ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਮੁਹਿ ਚੇਟਾ ਨ ਖਾਇ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਜਮ ਕੈ ਸਾਬਿ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
 ਅੈਸਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਨਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਮਨਿ ਕੋਇ ॥ 13 ॥

*Acceptance helps
 Mature cognition into rational intellect
 Understand operation of cosmos
 Avoid to say then eat our words
 Save from spiritual death
 Those who accept Hukam know it is
 inexpressibly immaculate.*

In this second stanza about acceptance Guru tells us that acceptances of the operation of the laws of the Universe help to transform our knowledge into rational intellect. We become aware of the entire universe and do not say any silly things about its operation. This saves us from claiming something and then retracting from our statements when proven wrong. People who have made statements about the time this Universe was created have to eat their words when what they said was proved to be incorrect. It is pertinent to know here that there has not been a single utterance in Guru Granth Sahib which has so far been proven incorrect by science. This transformation also provides spiritual strength and riddance from fear of death. Acceptance of Hukam promotes rational thinking. That is why those who have accepted Hukam know that even though they realize the full import of it still they cannot describe it.

ਮੰਨੈ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਠਾਕ ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਪਤਿ ਸਿਉ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਜਾਇ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਮਹੁ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਪੰਥ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਧਰਮ ਸੇਤੀ ਸਨਬੰਧੁ ॥
 ਅੈਸਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਨਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਮਨਿ ਕੋਇ ॥ 14 ॥

Acceptance helps

Clear all the obstacles
*To live and leave a legacy of good name behind
 Avoid disorientation from cults of various kind
 Connect to the right path
 Those who accept Hukam know it is
 inexpressibly immaculate.*

Continuing his argument Guru says that by accepting the laws of operation of this universe the road ahead becomes very clear with no roadblocks or obstacles to stop our march to truth. This also ensures that we live and leave this world with honour and respect. This also ensures that we are not disoriented and carry on our march ahead unwaveringly to achieve our target. No cults and sects can distract us from our goal. All these cults and sects, spring up in the name of religion, are in fact pitfalls in our way to truth. Once you analyse them you realize that they do not accept Hukam or the laws set by God for operation of this cosmos. They present themselves as someone who can interfere in this operation and make things happen in their own way. This has been rejected by Sikhism. That is why it is said that those who have accepted Hukam know that even though they realize the full import of it still they cannot describe it. You cannot manoeuvre something which you cannot even know in full.

ਮੰਨੈ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਮੋਖੁ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਪਰਵਾਰੈ ਸਾਧਾਰੁ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਤਰੈ ਤਾਰੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ॥
 ਮੰਨੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਭਵਹਿ ਨ ਭਿਖ ॥
 ਅੈਸਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਨਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਮਨਿ ਕੋਇ ॥ 15 ॥

*Acceptance helps
 Find the way to liberation
 Provide a base to help those around
 Teach and learn the way of liberation
 Does not wander around begging for help
 Those who accept Hukam know
 it is inexpressibly immaculate.*

In this last stanza about acceptance Guru tells us

that it opens the doors of liberation. Liberation is from falsehood. It is not something personal confined to the individual. Guru makes it clear in the next line when he says that it also gives inspiration to those around you to help liberate themselves. It is not some kind of a miracle. Liberation happens with learning from and teaching each other. Once we have accepted Hukam we cease to wander around seeking help at the doors of various sects. We now understand that they can only lead us astray for their own mundane benefits. Those who have accepted Hukam know that even though they realize the full import of it still they cannot describe it. We can only accept and appreciate it.

ਪੰਚ ਪਰਵਾਣ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ ॥
 ਪੰਚੇ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਮਾਨੁ ॥
 ਪੰਚੇ ਸੋਹਹਿ ਦਰਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥
 ਪੰਚਾ ਕਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਏਕੁ ਧਿਆਨ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਹੈ ਕਰੈ ਵਿਚਾਰ ॥
 ਕਰਤੇ ਕੈ ਕਰਣੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਸੁਮਾਰੁ ॥
 ਧੋਲੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਾ ਪੂਤੁ ॥
 ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਬਾਪਿ ਰਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਸੂਤਿ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਬੂਝੈ ਹੋਵੈ ਸਚਿਆਰੁ ॥
 ਧਵਲੈ ਉਪਰਿ ਕੇਤਾ ਭਾਰੁ ॥
 ਧਰਤੀ ਹੋਰੁ ਪਰੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਹੋਰੁ ॥
 ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਭਾਰੁ ਤਲੈ ਕਵਣੁ ਜੋਰੁ ॥
 ਜੀਅ ਜਾਤਿ ਰੰਗਾ ਕੇ ਨਾਵ ॥
 ਸਭਨਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਫੁੜੀ ਕਲਾਮ ॥
 ਏਹੁ ਲੇਖਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
 ਲੇਖਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕੇਤਾ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਕੇਤਾ ਤਾਣੁ ਸੁਆਲਿਹੁ ਰੂਪੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਦਾਤਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੌਣੁ ਕੂਤੁ ॥
 ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ ॥
 ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥
 ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਵਣ ਕਹਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਵਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਵਾ ਏਕ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਜੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਕਾਰ ॥
 ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਸਲਾਮਤਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ॥ 16 ॥

**The Enlightened leads, the Enlightened prevails
 The Enlightened wins respect with God**

**The Enlightened adds glory to the court of kings
 The Enlightened deliberate with
 discerning intellect
 Thinking deep and hard find there is no end
 to the creation of God
 Law of merciful God is the White Bull holding
 the cosmos in perfect poise
 One who understands the Law knows the truth
 The mythical bull cannot hold this weight
 There is no end to the earth and no force for the
 bull to stand on.
 Diverse creatures of diverse colours are all linked
 together in continuity
 None can keep a count, the more we count
 the bigger it becomes
 Wow! What a creative power, what a beauty,
 what a bounty
 No one can have a measure of it
 God expanded with one set of laws,
 Million streams of life followed
 I am not able to describe it all
 O God, sacrificing a life in your service is not
 enough
 Whatever you do is best for us
 You are formless and exist forever.**

In this stanza, Guru describes the attributes of those who have listened and accepted Hukam or Naam. They become enlightened to lead the world and win respect. They also behove in the court of kings. One may ask the question that there are “leaders” in this world who are not listening to God instead they act as if they themselves are the superpowers. We must understand here that these so-called leaders do not lead the world instead they are pushing the wheel of time backwards. The real leadership in this world has always come from those people who have listened to and accepted the laws of God. These people can be men of religion or men of science or from any other field. They are not necessarily political leaders. One thing common in these people is that they derive their inspiration or strength from logic and reason.

These people may not be holding political positions but they have served mankind by leading

them out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge. In Guru Granth Sahib "Vivek", a Punjabi word which means discriminating intellect or rational thinking, has been called the Guru. This rational thinking demolishes so many old myths like a white bull holding the earth on its horns. Guru discards this myth and tells us that the laws of nature designed by merciful God are holding this earth and the entire cosmos in perfect poise. It is not possible for the bull to hold the earth as there is an earth and another earth beyond it. Moreover, what does the bull stand on while lifting the earth on its horns. This story of bull is from Hinduism. There are similar stories in other religions like the one of a giant tortoise holding the earth on its back. All these stories fail the test of reason and logic. Guru further tells us that God created this world with one set of laws and million streams of life ensued. There are diverse creatures in this world having a whole panorama of colours and shades. One cannot even count them. One can only wonder at the beauty, power and gifts we receive from God. In the concluding four lines Guru says that even if I spend this life to the service of God, thanking him for and counting his bounties, it won't be enough. One can only say that whatever God does is good for mankind. God is formless and eternal. The last four lines are common to this and next three stanzas

ਅਸੰਖ ਤਪ ਅਸੰਖ ਭਾਉ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਪੂਜਾ ਅਸੰਖ ਤਪ ਤਾਉ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਗਰੰਥ ਮੁਖਿ ਵੇਦ ਪਾਠ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਜੋਗ ਮਨਿ ਰਹਹਿ ਉਦਾਸ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਭਗਤ ਗੁਣ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੀਚਾਰ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਸਤੀ ਅਸੰਖ ਦਾਤਾਰ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਸੁਰ ਮੁਹ ਭਖ ਸਾਰ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਮੌਨਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ਤਾਰ ॥
 ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਵਣ ਕਹਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ॥
 ਵਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਵਾ ਏਕ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਜੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਕਾਰ ॥
 ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਸਲਾਮਤਿ ਨਿਰਕਾਰ ॥ 17 ॥

Millions meditate and recite in love of God

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*Millions perform rituals and practice austerities
 Million scriptures and million recitations
 Millions renounce the world
 and wander around pursuing Yoga
 Millions contemplate on your virtues
 in fond devotion
 Millions seek God in charities
 Millions display exemplary valour in war
 Millions stay calm and quiet in meditation
 I am not able to describe it all
 O God, sacrificing a life in your service
 is not enough
 Whatever you do is best for us
 You are formless and exist forever.*

In this stanza, Guru paints a panorama of mankind busy in pleasing God in different ways. Countless people are reciting God's name for love or fear. Some perform various rituals to worship God and live an ascetic life. Some keep on reciting from scriptures as their daily routine. Some go for Yoga and renounce this world living a very sad and austere life. Some just sing God's praises in devotion and dwell on God's virtues. Some find solace in doing charity work. And there are others who lay down their life fighting bravely in the name of God or country. Some just keep quiet for ages trying to shut their minds. All these ways end up in ritualism. However, all this is happening as per Hukam of God. In the last lines, Guru says that one cannot measure God's powers. Even if we sacrifice this life to the service of God, thanking him for and counting his bounties, it won't be enough. One can only say that whatever God does is good for mankind. God is formless and eternal.

ਅਸੰਖ ਮੂਰਖ ਅੰਧ ਘੋਰ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਚੋਰ ਹਰਾਮਖੋਰ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਅਮਰ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਜੋਰ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਗਲਵਚ ਹਤਿਆ ਕਸਾਹਿ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਪਾਪੀ ਪਾਪੁ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਕੂਝਿਆਰ ਕੂੜੇ ਫਿਰਾਹਿ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਮਲੇਛ ਮਲੁ ਭਖਿ ਖਾਹਿ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਨਿੰਦਕ ਸਿਰਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਭਾਰ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਨੀਚ ਕਰੈ ਵਿਚਾਰ ॥
 ਵਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਵਾ ਏਕ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਕਾਰ ॥
 ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਸਲਾਮਤਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ॥ 18 ॥

*Million fools grope in the darkness
 Millions steal and misappropriate
 Millions rule by tyranny
 Millions slaughter for no reason
 Million sinners live in sin
 Million liars are lost in the cycle of their lies
 Million wicked rot in lower depths
 Millions carry the load of guilt of slander
 Says Nanak the lowly
 O God, sacrificing a life in your service
 is not enough
 Whatever you do is best for us
 You are formless and exist forever.*

In this stanza, Guru shifts his focus to another colour in the spectrum of humanity. There are millions of fools struggling to understand and groping in the darkness. Fool here does not mean dumb witted or a person with a very low IQ. Gurbani calls that person a Fool who is blinded by the impact Maya which is the sum of his ego, greed, anger, lust and attachments. That is why he is groping in the dark. Under this impact millions steal and embezzle other people's property. Millions become tyrant rulers and dictate their will on others.

There are others who have no compunction in killing innocent persons. Millions keep on sinning for their whole life and millions manage to build a cocoon of falsehood around them and keep on lying every day. Some plunge to the lower depths of society and live a life of wickedness. There are million others who indulge in slander and blame good people for no reason. They carry the load of this guilt for their entire life. In the concluding lines Guru says with utmost humbleness that one cannot measure God's powers. Even if we sacrifice this life to the service of God, thanking him for and counting his bounties, it won't be

enough. One can only say that whatever God does is good for mankind. God is formless and eternal.

ਅਸੰਖ ਨਾਵ ਅਸੰਖ ਥਾਵ ॥
 ਅਗੰਮ ਅਗੰਮ ਅਸੰਖ ਲੋਅ ॥
 ਅਸੰਖ ਕਹਹਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਭਾਰੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਅਖਰੀ ਨਾਮ ਅਖਰੀ ਸਾਲਾਹ ॥
 ਅਖਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਗੀਤ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਹ ॥
 ਅਖਰੀ ਲਿਖਣੁ ਬੋਲਣੁ ਬਾਣਿ ॥
 ਅਖਰਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਸੰਜੋਗ ਵਖਾਣਿ ॥
 ਜਿਨਿ ਏਹਿ ਲਿਖੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਸਿਰਿ ਨਾਹਿ ॥
 ਜਿਵ ਫੁਰਮਾਏ ਤਿਵ ਤਿਵ ਪਾਹਿ ॥
 ਜੇਤਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਤਾ ਨਾਉ ॥
 ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋ ਥਾਉ ॥
 ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਵਣ ਕਹਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਵਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਵਾ ਏਕ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਕਾਰ ॥
 ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਸਲਾਮਤਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ॥ 19 ॥

*Million places with million names
 Million planets beyond beyond our reach
 Innumerable does not say what I want to say
 Language is the means to articulate
 Naam and glories
 Language is the vehicle of wisdom and virtues
 Language we write in and
 language we speak with
 Language helps explain connections in cosmos
 The one who scripted this
 is not in the connections
 It works to his orders
 His creations are his glories manifest
 Not a place sans the glories
 I am not able to describe it all
 O God, sacrificing a life in your service
 is not enough
 Whatever you do is best for us
 You are formless and exist for ever.*

In this stanza, Guru shifts his focus from earth to cosmos. There are millions of places with umpteen names. There are planets we cannot even reach to. To say that these are countless is also short of truth. You can't express this in words. However, we have no other means to express. We use words

to express God's glories and Hukam. Words are used to convey thoughts of wisdom and tenets of virtues. We write with words and speak with words. Words are used to convey the coherence of connections in this cosmos. But God who designed these connections is beyond these connections though all the connections work as per his laws.

All these creations are signatures of his glories. You can't find a place that does not sing his glories. What this means is that everything in this cosmos is a kind of melody if we are fortunate enough to be able to hear it. In the last four lines Guru says that one cannot measure God's powers. Even if we sacrifice this life to the service of God, thanking him for and counting his bounties, it won't be enough. One can only say that whatever God does is good for mankind. God is formless and eternal.

ਭਰੀਐ ਹਥੁ ਪੈਰੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ॥
 ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਉਤਰਸੁ ਖੇਹ॥
 ਮੂਤ ਪਲੀਤੀ ਕਪੜੁ ਹੋਇ॥
 ਦੇ ਸਾਬੁਣੁ ਲਈਐ ਓਹੁ ਧੋਇ॥
 ਭਰੀਐ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਪਾ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ॥
 ਓਹੁ ਧੋਪੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ॥
 ਪੁੰਨੀ ਪਾਪੀ ਆਖਣੁ ਨਾਹਿ॥
 ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਲੈ ਜਾਹੁ॥
 ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਆਵਹੁ ਜਾਹੁ॥ 20॥

*Water washes the body smeared with dirt
 If pee and shit is on the clothes
 soap cleans it away
 If mind get murkier with sins,
 then Naam is the remedy
 Obeying laws of nature
 restores neat and tidy mind
 Sin and virtue are not mere empty words
 Good and bad deeds impact you for sure
 As we sow so shall be reap is the law of nature
 Spiritual birth and death
 is the fruit we pick as per Hukam.*

In this stanza, Guru says that if our body gets dirty with dust or soil we will be able to wash it clean by water. And if our clothes are sullied with human feces and urine we wash them using soap or other detergents. However, if we have a dirty mind then the only remedy is Naam. Naam as we have mentioned before is the synonym of Hukam, the laws that operate this cosmos. We need to appreciate and understand those laws which are also manifestation of God's attributes. For example, all laws in this cosmos operate with utmost equity discriminating with no one. That is how our life should be. These laws are also fearless. That is how we should conduct ourselves. Once we start living our life per these laws our mind will start regaining its pristine beauty. Guru further tells us that sin or virtue is not just words in the books. They are real in life. In the prevailing religious atmosphere sin is not taken as seriously as it should be. People have devised rituals to expiate sins which has led people to keep on sinning again and again. Guru makes it clear that whatever you sow in your life you will reap that crop yourself in this life. No one else can help you. As soon as you commit a sin you suffer a spiritual death and as soon as you get on to the right path God gives you another life. Getting on the right path does not mean doing some rituals. It means a change in the life style.

ਤੀਰਥੁ ਤਪੁ ਦਇਆ ਦਤੁ ਦਾਨੁ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਪਾਵੈ ਤਿਲ ਕਾ ਮਾਨੁ॥
 ਸੁਣਿਆ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਮਨਿ ਕੀਤਾ ਭਾਉ॥
 ਅੰਤਰਗਤਿ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਮਲਿ ਨਾਉ॥
 ਸਭਿ ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ॥
 ਵਿਣੁ ਗੁਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥
 ਸੁਆਸਤਿ ਆਥਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਰਮਾਉ॥
 ਸਤਿ ਸੁਹਾਣੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਨਿ ਚਾਉ॥
 ਕਵਣੁ ਸੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਵਖਤੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਬਿਤਿ ਕਵਣੁ ਵਾਰੁ॥
 ਕਵਣਿ ਸਿ ਰੁਤੀ ਮਾਹੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਹੋਆ ਆਕਾਰੁ॥
 ਵੇਲ ਨ ਪਾਈਆ ਪੰਡਤੀ ਜਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਲੇਖੁ ਪੁਰਾਣੁ॥
 ਵਖਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਓ ਕਾਦੀਆ ਜਿ ਲਿਖਨਿ ਲੇਖੁ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ॥
 ਬਿਤਿ ਵਾਰੁ ਨਾ ਜੋਗੀ ਜਾਣੈ ਰੁਤਿ ਮਾਹੁ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ॥
 ਜਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਿਰਠੀ ਕਉ ਸਾਜੇ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ॥

ਕਿਵ ਕਰਿ ਆਖਾ ਕਿਵ ਸਾਲਾਹੀ ਕਿਉ ਵਰਨੀ ਕਿਵ ਜਾਣਾ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਆਖਣਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਆਖੈ ਇਕ ਦੂ ਇਕੁ ਸਿਆਣਾ ॥
 ਵਡਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਵਡੀ ਨਾਈ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਹੋਵੈ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਆਪੋ ਜਾਣੈ ਅਗੈ ਗਇਆ ਨ ਸੋਹੈ ॥ 21 ॥

*Pilgrimage, penance and donation in compassion
 Carry little reward
 Listening accepting and loving from
 the core of heart
 Cleanse all the mud off your mind
 O God! Not a single virtue do I have,
 all come from you
 Without cultivating your virtues,
 love for you is hollow
 Salute to the creator!
 Eternal, stunning in perfect bloom
 What was the time, the moment, the day,
 the date or month?
 When did, genesis start, no one knows
 The Pundit does not have in the Puran
 The Qazi does not have in the Quran
 The Yogi does not have a clue
 about the date or day
 It did not start in any month or season
 Only the Creator knows the time of creation
 How to describe, how to admire, I got no idea
 Know-all claim to know more than each other
 Lord is great laws are great that ordain all
 Says Nanak, any claim to know ends up in
 disgrace and pall*

In the previous stanza, Guru talked about the remedy to cleanse our mind. In this stanza, Guru talks about some of the popular remedies people resort to like going on pilgrimages, doing penance and charity work. Guru says that all this does not carry much weight in the court of God. In the previous stanza, Guru also told us that by appreciating the Creator we can inculcate good virtues in our mind. Here Guru says that all these virtues are with God and love for God happens only when we cultivate these virtues in our life and make them our way of life. Then we realized that God is eternal, stunning and always in blissful bloom.

We salute to his creations and virtues. However, Guru warns us that there is also a pitfall in this path. Instead of appreciating God, people can start laying claims to know everything about God. No one can know God in its totality. No one knows when and why God created this cosmos. It is not in any religious book. Hindus don't know it. Muslims don't know it. If anybody has claimed to know it, that has been proven wrong. Though people claim to know everything but reality is that only God knows these secrets. We need to remember that Lord is great and his laws are great. Everything happens per his orders. There are people who claim to be wiser than each other and make statements about the creation of God. At the end of the day, they are all proven wrong and cut a sorry figure.

ਪਾਤਾਲਾ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਲਖ ਆਗਾਸਾ ਆਗਾਸ ॥
 ਓੜਕ ਓੜਕ ਭਾਲਿ ਥਕੇ ਵੇਦ ਕਹਨਿ ਇਕ ਵਾਤ ॥
 ਸਹਸ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਕਹਨਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਅਸੁਲੂ ਇਕੁ ਧਾਤੁ ॥
 ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੈ ਹੋਇ ਵਿਣਾਸ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਵਡਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪੁ ॥ 22 ॥

*Million worlds underneath and
 million skies above
 Tired of counting say the Vedas
 Eighteen thousand say the Semitic scriptures
 God is manifest as cosmos through Maya
 Is not countable,
 any attempt comes to naught for sure
 Says Nanak, God is great
 who alone knows himself.*

In this stanza, Guru continues his argument from previous stanza. No one can have a full measure of God's creations. There are planets beyond planets without an end. Hundreds of thousands of earths and skies without an end. The sages who wrote Vedas tried to have a guess but gave up at the end. The Semitic scriptures mention about eighteen thousand realms. Truth is that God has become manifest as cosmos through Maya. And this creation is not countable. Anyone who tried has perished before he finished. Let us give up and

salute to the greatness of God. He alone knows his imperceptible ways. In our life, we struggle to know who we are and if we claim to know God it is only something laughable.

ਸਾਲਾਹੀ ਸਾਲਾਹਿ ਏਤੀ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਆ ॥
 ਨਦੀਆ ਅਤੇ ਵਾਹ ਪਵਹਿ ਸਮੁੰਦਿ ਨ ਜਾਣੀਅਹਿ ॥
 ਸਮੁੰਦ ਸਾਹ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਗਿਰਹਾ ਸੇਤੀ ਮਾਲੁ ਧਨੁ ॥
 ਕੀੜੀ ਤੁਲਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਨੀ ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਨਹੁ ਨ ਵੀਸਰਹਿ ॥੨੩॥

*None has the intellect
 To account for all the glories of God
 A river flowing into the ocean
 can never know its depth
 A king with mountains of wealth is poorer
 Than the destitute
 who has God in mind all the time.*

In this stanza, Guru touches on the subject from another angle. At the very start it has been recommended that we should appreciate and admire God's virtues. However even if we do this from the core of our heart for a long long time, we won't be able to account for all his virtues. This fact is being continuously corroborated by science with new inventions and discoveries. Guru further says that a person admiring God is like a river that flows back into the ocean and merges with it, losing its identity. In other words, that person becomes incapable of saying anything. But that does not mean that praising God is an exercise in futility. This makes you spiritually rich. A poor person who has God in mind all the time is richer than the king who has mountains of wealth. Guru has used the symbol of an ant for a destitute or a penniless person. It is significant to know that an ant always works hard as a team with utmost patience.

ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਸਿਫਤੀ ਕਹਣਿ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥
 ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਕਰਣੈ ਦੇਣਿ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥
 ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਵੇਖਣਿ ਸੁਣਣਿ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥
 ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਕਿਆ ਮਨਿ ਮੰਤੁ ॥
 ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਕੀਤਾ ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥
 ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰੁ ॥

ਅੰਤ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਬਿਲਲਾਹਿ ॥
 ਤਾ ਕੇ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਪਾਏ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
 ਏਹੁ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
 ਬਹੁਤਾ ਕਹੀਐ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਵਡਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਉਚਾ ਥਾਉ ॥
 ਉਚੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਉਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥
 ਏਵਡੁ ਉਚਾ ਹੈਵੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
 ਤਿਸੁ ਉਚੇ ਕਉ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇਵਡੁ ਆਪਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪਿ ਆਪਿ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮੀ ਦਾਤਿ ॥੨੪॥

*Endless glories; endless narrations
 Limitless are your bounties and creations
 Watch and listen with no end in sight
 Inscrutable is your creative mind
 Boundless are your designs and formations
 Impossible to find the end of your creations
 Millions toiled hard and failed to find the end
 No one will ever know the end
 The more you find the vast it becomes
 Great Lord operates from a position great
 With a command, potent and great
 To know him well need to reach that stature
 No one else is privy to your greatness
 Bless me with the gift of this understanding
 says Nanak.*

Guru continues his argument from the previous stanza. God's glories or praises are so many that we cannot count them or finish relating them. His gifts are enormous. His creations are limitless. One can study these creations for as long as one can but there is no end to it. No one can know what is in God's mind regarding his creations. Many have tried in vain. The more we try to know about these creations, the more we realize our ignorance. It is interesting to note that the encyclopaedia of ignorance is much bigger than the encyclopaedia of knowledge man has been able to gather so far. God is operating from a high pedestal where no one can reach. Hence no one can know God in full. We should seek God's blessing to provide us with an understanding that God alone know his ways.

ਬਹੁਤਾ ਕਰਮ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ ॥
 ਵੱਡਾ ਦਾਤਾ ਤਿਲੁ ਨ ਤਮਾਇ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਜੋਧ ਅਪਾਰ ॥
 ਕੇਤਿਆ ਗਣਤ ਨਹੀ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਖਪਿ ਤੁਟਹਿ ਵੇਕਾਰ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਮੁਕਰੁ ਪਾਹਿ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਮੂਰਖ ਖਾਹੀ ਖਾਹਿ ॥
 ਕੇਤਿਆ ਦੂਖ ਭੂਖ ਸਦ ਮਾਰ ॥
 ਏਹਿ ਭਿ ਦਾਤਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਦਾਤਾਰ ॥
 ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੀ ਭਾਣੈ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਹੋਰੁ ਆਖਿ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੇ ਖਾਇਕ ਆਖਣਿ ਪਾਇ ॥
 ਓਹੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੇਤੀਆ ਮੁਰਿ ਖਾਇ ॥
 ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪੇ ਦੇਇ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਸਿ ਭਿ ਕੇਈ ਕੇਇ ॥
 ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਬਖਸੇ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ॥ 25 ॥

*Blessings too many to record
 The Great Giver gives with no motive
 Warriors great beg at your door
 Million others can't even count
 Umpteen others tried in vain
 Many get but still deny
 Many more are gluttonous fools
 Score others live under the spell
 of greed and misery
 This bondage works as per your command
 Redemption is in acceptance of Hukam
 One can see no other way
 If a moron claims, ends up in shame
 You know when to give when to deny
 Those who love and adore your ways
 Are the Kings among kings! Says Nanak.*

In this stanza, Guru tells us about the gifts and favours we get from God. They are too many to be counted. One thing peculiar about this is that unlike the gifts we receive from our friends, the gifts from God are not a give and take situation. God gives without any requirement on our part to pay him back in gifts or money. In fact, as Guru told us earlier in Jap that there is nothing that we can offer to God. Everything we have in this world

is a gift from God. However, we can see people all the time seeking favour from God in exchange of doing something or offering something to God. Guru tell us that warriors can be seen begging at the door of God.

We cannot even count the number of people asking favours from God. This is evident from the crowds at all religious places. Some get their wishes fulfilled but still many get frustrated. Many get the gifts but do not give credit to God. There are others who keep on consuming the gifts of God like voracious gluttons. There are others who fall into the vicious cycle of greed and suffering for their entire life. They are in a kind of bondage they can't break out free. The freedom comes with acceptance of God's Hukam because this bondage also works per the laws of nature operating under Hukam. This is the only way of redemption. Any claim otherwise will lead to frustration at the end. There are many who understand that it is up to God only to decide to give or deny any one. Nanak says that those who love and adore God's Hukam are the real Kings.

ਅਮੁਲ ਗੁਣ ਅਮੁਲ ਵਾਪਾਰ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲ ਵਾਪਾਰੀਏ ਅਮੁਲ ਭੰਡਾਰ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲ ਆਵਹਿ ਅਮੁਲ ਲੈ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲ ਭਾਇ ਅਮੁਲਾ ਸਮਾਹਿ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਅਮੁਲੁ ਦੀਬਾਣੁ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲੁ ਤੁਲੁ ਅਮੁਲੁ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲੁ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਅਮੁਲੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲੁ ਕਰਮੁ ਅਮੁਲੁ ਫਰਮਾਣੁ ॥
 ਅਮੁਲੇ ਅਮੁਲੁ ਆਖਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
 ਆਖਿ ਆਖਿ ਰਹੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਵੇਦ ਪਠ ਪੁਰਾਣੁ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਪੜੇ ਕਰਹਿ ਵਖਿਆਣੁ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਬਰਮੇ ਆਖਹਿ ਇੰਦ ਆਖਹਿ ਗੋਪੀ ਤੈ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਈਸਰ ਆਖਹਿ ਸਿਧ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਬੁਧ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਦਾਨਵ ਆਖਹਿ ਦੇਵ ॥
 ਆਖਹਿ ਸੁਰਿ ਨਰ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨ ਸੇਵ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਆਖਹਿ ਆਖਣਿ ਪਾਹਿ ॥

ਕੇਤੇ ਕਹਿ ਕਹਿ ਉਠਿ ਉਠਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
 ਏਤੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਹੋਰਿ ਕਰੇਹਿ ॥
 ਤਾ ਆਖਿ ਨ ਸਕਹਿ ਕੇਈ ਕੇਇ ॥
 ਜੇਵਡੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਤੇਵਡੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਜਾਣੈ ਸਾਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਅਖੈ ਬੋਲ_ਵਿਗਾੜੁ ॥
 ਤਾ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਸਿਰਿ ਗਾਵਾਰਾ ਗਾਵਾਰੁ ॥ 26 ॥

*Invaluable virtues; precious exchange
 Invaluable traders; precious stock
 Invaluable patrons; precious deals
 Invaluable love; invaluable submission
 Invaluable the law; invaluable the court
 Invaluable the rule; invaluable the logic
 Invaluable the grace; invaluable the stamp
 Invaluable the blessing; invaluable the order
 Invaluable beyond description,
 many tried in deep meditation
 Vedas tried, Puranas tried;
 the learned discuss and discourse
 Brahma or Inder, Krishna and his beloveds
 Shiva and the siddhas, many a Buddha
 The gods and demons;
 the angels, the silent sages and the devout
 Millions tried to describe;
 Millions continue to have a go
 Millions tried, millions more will try;
 All will fail to describe
 Nanak says you are what you want to be;
 known only to yourself
 One who brags to know your size,
 is known as illiterate and unwise.*

In this stanza, Guru dwells on the virtues of God from another angle. They are not only innumerable they are also priceless. They are so invaluable that those who inculcate and promote those values also become invaluable. These virtues are not in any religious book but are manifest as set of laws operating in this cosmos. These laws are fair and square to the core. Those who live these virtues are blessed ones and are always immersed in love for God. We can take an example. Everybody is treated with equality and fairness under the laws of God or Hukam operating in this cosmos. Anybody

who practices this value in his life automatically falls in love with humanity.

When these values are reciprocated, they become even more invaluable. It is not at all possible to describe these virtues in full. Vedas and Puranas tried but failed. The learned give discourses on these virtues but they also fall short of the exact description. They talk about Brahma, Inder, Krishan and his beloved Gopies. They talk about Shiva, siddhas and Buddha. They tell us about angels and demons, sages who never speak and the devout followers. All of them failed to describe the virtues. People are still doing it. They will keep on doing it. But none of them will succeed. Because only God knows his size. God can be of any size he wants to be. Some brag to know God in full. They end up being described as stupid morons.

ਸੋ ਦਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਸੋ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥
 ਵਾਜੇ ਨਾਦ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਸੰਖਾ ਕੇਤੇ ਵਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਰਗ ਪਰੀ ਸਿਉ ਕਹੀਅਨਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਗਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਤੁਹਨੋ ਪਉਣੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ
 ਗਾਵੈ ਰਾਜਾ ਧਰਮੁ ਦੁਆਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣਹਿ
 ਲਿਖਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਈਸਰੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਦੇਵੀ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਵਾਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਇੰਦ ਇਦਾਸਣਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਦਰਿ ਨਾਲੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਸਿਧ ਸਮਾਪੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਸਾਧ ਵਿਚਾਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਨਿ ਜਤੀ ਸਤੀ ਸੰਤੋਖੀ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਵੀਰ ਕਰਾਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਨਿ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਪੜਨਿ ਰਖੀਸਰ ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਵੇਦਾ ਨਾਲੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਮੇਹਣੀਆ ਮਨੁ ਮੇਹਨਿ ਸੁਰਗਾ ਮਛ ਪਇਆਲੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਨਿ ਰਤਨ ਉਪਾਏ ਤੇਰੇ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਨਾਲੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰਾ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਖਾਣੀ ਚਾਰੇ ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡਾ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਰਖੇ ਧਾਰੇ ॥
 ਸੇਈ ਤੁਧੁਨੇ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵਨਿ
 ਰਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਭਗਤ ਰਸਾਲੇ ॥
 ਹੋਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਸੇ ਮੈ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਨਿ
 ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ॥
 ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਸਦਾ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਚੀ ਨਾਈ ॥
 ਹੈ ਭੀ ਹੋਸੀ ਜਾਇ ਨ ਜਾਸੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਰਚਾਈ ॥

ਰੰਗੀ ਰੰਗੀ ਭਾਤੀ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ
ਜਿਨਸੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਈ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਕੀਤਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਜਿਵ ਤਿਸ ਦੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥
ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਕਰਸੀ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਰਣਾ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਸੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸਾਹਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹਿਬੁ
ਨਾਨਕ ਰਹਣੂ ਰਜਾਈ ॥ 27 ॥

*What kind of door; What kind of mansion
Where you mind your creation
Some sing out your place having
Million symphonies; million musicians
Million musical modes: million singers
Deity of air, deity of water, deity of fire
and the deity of death
Chitgupat keeping all the accounts
of deeds good and bad
The Brahma, the Shiva and beautiful consorts
around
Inder on his throne; lot of angels around
The siddha in deep meditation and devout saints
The celibates, the warriors brave
The learned Pundit giving discourses
on Vedas since long long time
The charming damsels from heaven,
earth and the nether world
The jewels churned out of ocean;
sixty-eight pilgrimages
The mighty warriors;
four ways of breeding
The planets, their circles, the cosmos sustained
They all sing as per your will in loving devotion
Many more, cannot even recall
what can Nanak say
Eternal Lord and his eternal glories,
always resides in his creation
The creator is there now;
will always be there
Manifest in diverse colours and kinds
Enjoys what he creates;
that is his greatness
Creates what he likes;
not to any one's order
Nanak surrenders to this King of Kings*

In this stanza, Guru answers an often-asked question. Where is God? Where he lives? Can we see him? Can we meet and talk to him? In the first part, he describes the answers given by various religions and then in the last part he gives his own opinion. People paint a picture of heaven where God resides having the best music, the best songs etc. This picture is often juxtaposed with horrific scenes from hell to entice people for a place in heaven. In some descriptions, we have so many deities serving God in his heaven. So many beautiful and alluring ladies are enchanting with their dance moves. Chitargupat is said to be keeping all accounts of good and bad deeds of mankind on behalf of God. We have god Inder ruling in this heaven with so many gods to assist him. We also have scholars engaged in intricate discussions about complex issues. Then we have celibates, the warriors the saints- all attending the court of God. Guru gave this account from what he understood from the available sources of information. He further says that there could be other accounts about which he is not aware of.

In the second part Guru says that all he knows that God who created this cosmos has always been there and will always be there no matter what happens to this creation. He created this cosmos of varied colours and kinds and is residing in his creations. He is not separate from his creations and enjoys what he creates and does not take any order to create. As opposed to other religions, God here is not deemed to be separate from his creation. There is not a single thing in this cosmos, good or bad, which is not a part of God. At the same time, there is not a single thing in this cosmos which can be called God. There is not a single place in this cosmos where god is absent. At the same time, there is not a single place which can be described as residence of God. God is the king of kings. Nanak surrenders to his will.

ਮੁੰਦਾ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਸਰਮੁ ਪਤੁ ਝੋਲੀ ਧਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਕਰਹਿ ਬਿਤੂਤਿ ॥
ਖਿੰਥਾ ਕਾਲੁ ਕੁਆਰੀ ਕਾਇਆ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਡੰਡਾ ਪਰਤੀਤਿ ॥

ਆਈ ਪੰਥੀ ਸਗਲ ਜਮਾਤੀ ਮਨਿ ਜੀਤੈ ਜਗ ਜੀਤੁ ॥
 ਆਦੇਸੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਆਦੇਸੁ ॥
 ਆਦਿ ਅਨੀਲੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਅਨਾਹਤਿ ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥ 28 ॥

*Let contentment be your earrings;
 hard work your begging bowl
 Smear ash of contemplation all around
 Remembrance of death be your robe;
 untainted body be the technique
 Make knowledge as your walking stick
 Universal brotherhood is the elite Yoga
 Master of the mind is the master of the world
 Salute to the immaculate lord
 with no beginning and end
 Perennial throughout the ages*

In the next four stanzas Guru talks about Yogis. Yogis followed a different path than the mainstream Hinduism. They shun the normal life of a householder and spend their life hiding in jungles or caves. The Yogis consider Shiva as their God and the most famous Yogi is Gorakhnath. The yogic cult developed fast and there were 12 branches of Yogis. They claimed to have obtained miraculous powers by doing Yoga. They wear hooped earrings through the cartilages of their ears, which is cut open with a dagger at the time of initiation. They smear ash on their bodies. Most of them are naked or wear only scanty clothes. Whenever Yogis meet, they salute each other saying “aades tise aades” which means “salute to that one” referring to the head of their cult. Guru disapproved of their way of life and these four stanzas are addressed to them.

O Yogi instead of renouncing this world and becoming a sanyasi, let contentment be your earrings of initiation into Yoga. And instead of begging for food earn it through hard work. Be aware that God is always with you and wear the remembrance of death as your yogic robe. Keep your body pure by not indulging in any bad deed and walk with the help of the stick of knowledge. If you treat and love everybody alike you will be become the best yogi. Conquering your mind is

akin to conquering the world. Instead of saluting Shiva or your cult Guru always salute to God who has no beginning or end, is immaculate, and has been the same throughout the ages.

ਭੁਗਤਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਦਇਆ ਭੰਡਾਰਣਿ
 ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਵਾਜਹਿ ਨਾਦੁ ॥
 ਆਪਿ ਨਾਥੁ ਨਾਥੀ ਸਭ ਜਾ ਕੀ
 ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਅਵਰਾ ਸਾਦੁ ॥
 ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ਵਿਜੋਗੁ ਦੁਇ ਕਾਰ ਚਲਾਵਹਿ
 ਲੇਖੇ ਆਵਹਿ ਭਾਗੁ ॥
 ਆਦੇਸੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਆਦੇਸੁ ॥
 ਆਦਿ ਅਨੀਲੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਅਨਾਹਤਿ
 ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥ 29 ॥

*Make knowledge the food and
 let compassion to wait upon
 Listen to the celestial melody in one and all
 The Master controls everything;
 Indulgence in miracles is a diversion
 Birth and death runs the life cycle;
 doling out what we deserve
 Salute to the immaculate lord
 with no beginning and end
 Perennial throughout the ages*

O yogi, pay attention to the sound of God vibrating in one and all. Let knowledge be your favourite food and share it with all around you without any discrimination. Remembers that God is in control of everything no one else can make things happen. All the supernatural powers you brag off are leading you up the wrong path. They are a kind of diversion leading you away from truth. Birth and death carry on the business of life on this earth. All of us will die one day and will get only what we deserve. Instead of saluting Shiva or your cult Guru always salute to God who has no beginning or end, is immaculate, and has been the same throughout the ages.

ਏਕਾ ਮਾਈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਵਿਆਈ ਤਿਨਿ ਚੇਲੇ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥
 ਇਕੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਇਕੁ ਭੰਡਾਰੀ ਇਕੁ ਲਾਏ ਦੀਬਾਣੁ ॥
 ਜਿਵ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਤਿਵੈ ਚਲਾਵੈ ਜਿਵ ਹੋਵੈ ਫੁਰਮਾਣੁ ॥

ਓਹ ਵੇਖੈ ਓਨਾ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਏਹੁ ਵਿਡਾਣੁ ॥
 ਆਦੇਸੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਆਦੇਸੁ ॥
 ਆਦਿ ਅਨੀਲੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਅਨਾਹਤਿ
 ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥ 30 ॥

*Single Maya got pregnant by a trick;
 producing three kids
 One creates, one sustains and one destroys
 is alleged
 God operates this cosmos the way he likes
 Himself invisible, but watches it all
 Is a puzzle for us all?
 Salute to the immaculate lord
 with no beginning and end
 Perennial throughout the ages*

In this stanza, Guru refers to a mythical story about the creation of the trinity of Hindu Gods who are said to be running this Universe. All three are believed to be the progeny of one power called Mayee or mother. Brahma, the eldest son, is said to be the creator, Vishnu takes care of nursing and preservation while the youngest son Shiva is the god for destruction of this universe. They were born when their mother Mayee or Maya got pregnant by a kind of trick. Guru disapproves of this story and theory and says that the universe is being run by God who provides for us all and do not need any help. The most incredible and wonderful thing about this is that while God is watching everything, no one else can see him. Instead of saluting Shiva or your cult Guru always salute to God who has no beginning or end, is immaculate, and has been the same throughout the ages.

ਆਸਣੁ ਲੋਇ ਲੋਇ ਭੰਡਾਰੁ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕਿਛੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੁ ਏਕਾ ਵਾਰੁ ॥
 ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੇ ਕੀ ਸਾਚੀ ਕਾਰੁ ॥
 ਆਦੇਸੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਆਦੇਸੁ ॥
 ਆਦਿ ਅਨੀਲੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਅਨਾਹਤਿ
 ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸੁ ॥ 31 ॥

*Resides in all the planets, replete with treasures
 Provided everything in one go
 Watches the continuous creation carefully
 O Nanak, the Eternal lord's creations are eternal
 Salute to the immaculate lord
 with no beginning and end
 Perennial throughout the ages*

Guru continues his argument from the last stanza. We don't need any god to provide for the creatures on planets. God has made such an arrangement that he provided for everything everywhere. And God is present at all places or planets. He has provided for everything for that planet in one go. A creature comes into existence only when the environment is ready for its existence. Everything on this earth is already there for the creatures to live upon. This is also proved correct by the fact that no one has been able to create any matter on this earth. All that man is doing is changing the shape of matter to create new things. However, God is also imperceptibly running creative activity on all the planets. This creative activity is within the material already provided on each planet. Whatever he does is eternal truth because he himself is truth. Instead of saluting Shiva or your cult Guru always salute to God who has no beginning or end, is immaculate, and has been the same throughout the ages.

ਇਕ ਦੂ ਜੀਭੋ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਲਖ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਲਖ ਵੀਸੁ ॥
 ਲਖੁ ਲਖੁ ਗੇੜਾ ਆਖੀਅਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਗਦੀਸੁ ॥
 ਏਤੁ ਰਾਹਿ ਪਤਿ ਪਵਤੀਆ ਚੜੀਐ ਹੋਇ ਇਕੀਸੁ ॥
 ਸੁਣਿ ਗਲਾ ਆਕਾਸ ਕੀ ਕੀਟਾ ਆਈ ਰੀਸੁ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਕੂੜੀ ਕੂੜੇ ਠੀਸੁ ॥ 32 ॥

*If I had a million tongues,
 even twenty times more
 Each tongue uttering the word God
 millions of times
 Is this being the step leading
 to realization of truth
 It is like the lowly yearning to emulate the elite
 Says Nanak, without grace of God
 all else is just bunkum*

In this stanza, Guru refers to a popular misconception that if we keep on uttering the name of God incessantly for many years we can realize God. There are stories about this in Hinduism which has inspired many to go into hiding away from the hustle bustle of life to do this and realize God. Guru says that this won't happen even if we have millions of tongues and all utter the name of God millions of times together. This is simply a case of an undeserving person wishing to emulate the achievements of great people without following their teachings. We cannot force God. That is why the most important thing is the grace of God. Once our actions are accepted by God only then we can hope to get some reward. You may not utter the name of God even for once. Elsewhere in Guru Granth Sahib it has been clearly stated that God knows our intentions even if we do not give them any words. Everything else without acceptance of God is mere claptrap and hogwash. We are deceiving none but ourselves.

ਆਖਣਿ ਜੋਰੁ ਚੁਪੈ ਨਹ ਜੋਰੁ ॥
 ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਮੰਗਣਿ ਦੇਣਿ ਨ ਜੋਰੁ ॥
 ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਜੀਵਣਿ ਮਰਣਿ ਨਹ ਜੋਰੁ ॥
 ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਰਾਜਿ ਮਾਲਿ ਮਨਿ ਸੋਰੁ ॥
 ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਸਰਤੀ ਗਿਆਨਿ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥
 ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਜੁਗਤੀ ਛੁਟੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥
 ਜਿਸੁ ਹਥਿ ਜੋਰੁ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਸੋਇ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਉਤਮੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ 33 ॥

*Speech or silence is not in our control
 To solicit or supply is not in our control
 Life and death is not in our control
 Power, pelf and agitated mind
 is not in our control
 Acquiring and discussing knowledge
 is not in our control
 Salvation is not in our control
 The Controller controls everything
 No one is superior or inferior, says Nanak.*

In the previous stanza, Guru talked about the futility of attempts to force God to grant favours.

In this stanza, Guru makes it further clear that nothing can be achieved by force. God is controlling everything through the set of laws operating in this cosmos. The reality is that we do not even have freedom or power to speak or remain silent. We cannot obtain something by force or give something by force. Death and life are beyond our control. The power, the pelf and all the turbulences in our mind are not running as per our will. Nor can you attain salvation by some concerted efforts. God is the controller who has hegemony over all this. The good thing about all this is that God does not favour any one nor does he dislikes anyone. All of us are equal in his eyes. We will get a fair deal in the court of God. So, we should focus on doing good deeds and leave it to God to give us the reward. We do not need to make any extra effort to showcase the good we are doing.

ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਬਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥
 ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ ॥
 ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਕੇ ਰੰਗ ॥
 ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਨੰਤ ॥
 ਕਰਮੀ ਕਰਮੀ ਹੋਇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਸਚਾ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥
 ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਪਵੈ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥
 ਕਚ ਪਕਾਈ ਓਥੈ ਪਾਇ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਗਇਆ ਜਾਧੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ 34 ॥

*Nights and seasons; days and weeks
 Positioned in air, water and fire
 Earth is a school of righteousness
 Where countless varied creatures
 with varied names
 Are judged for their deeds By God
 fair and square
 The deserving noble get honoured
 and acknowledged
 The truth and falsehood are sifted apart
 Says Nanak, only the result testifies achievement.*

In the previous stanza, Guru rejected the concept of repeating God's name incessantly for millions of time to understand and realize God and the idea of forcing our ways into the realm of truth. In the next four stanzas Guru gives his own opinion. Guru starts in a realistic and scientific manner. We are born on this earth which is blessed with air, water and fire and we have seasons, days and nights happening on it. This earth is like a school where we sit for an exam and are judged by the deeds we write in the length and breadth of our age. God is the impartial and just examiner and only the deserving gets rewarded and acknowledged. No one can put a claim to the reward saying he or she has done this or that good deed. It is for the judge to decide. Only the final award is the proof that you have passed successfully from this school or in other words the deeds you have done have been acknowledged and accepted as good deeds.

ਧਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਏਹੋ ਧਰਮ ॥
 ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਆਖਹੁ ਕਰਮੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਵੈਸੰਤਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕਾਨ ਮਹੇਸੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਬਰਮੇ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਅਹਿ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਕੇ ਵੇਸੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕਰਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਮੇਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਧੂ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਇੰਦ ਚੰਦ ਸੂਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਮੰਡਲ ਦੇਸੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਸਿਧ ਬੁਧ ਨਾਥ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਵੇਸੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵ ਦਾਨਵ ਮੁਨਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਰਤਨ ਸਮੰਦੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਖਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੀਆ ਬਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੇ ਪਾਤ ਨਿਰਿੰਦੁ ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੇਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥ 35 ॥

*The school of righteousness runs on this canon
 Discuss the consequence of learning obtained
 Reality dawns upon and truth revealed
 About gods of air, water and fire,
 the Krishna and Shiva
 The varied creations of Brahma
 The multitude of action fields,
 the mountains, the multitude of sermons
 Countless Indra, Moons, Suns and planets
 Countless Siddhas' and Buddha;
 Naths and angels
 The gods and demons;
 silent sages,*

*the oceans and treasures
 Countless ways to breed;
 countless languages and kings
 Countless beliefs and die-hard followers
 Incalculable is the end of this creation,
 says Nanak.*

Continuing his thought, Guru says that when a person is working hard and honest in this school of earth he or she gains tremendous knowledge. This school is not to be confused with a place where principles of ethics or righteousness are learnt. This earth is a school where one lives and learns. This is a school where you practice life with the tools of learning. Or we may put it like this is a school where your learning or wisdom is tested in the lab of life. To succeed here, you need to nurture and cherish rational thinking which leads to lot of knowledge. With the dawn of this knowledge, whole truth about universe is revealed. You can see through the reality of various gods and demons. The rationale behind the emergence of the philosophical thoughts is clear now. You can only wonder at this awesome creation. Various languages and various belief patterns followed strictly by their followers. Countless ways the life springs up in this world and countless planets. There is no end to this creation.

ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡੁ ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੋਡ ਅਨੰਦੁ ॥
 ਸਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪੁ ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਐ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਨੂਪੁ ॥
 ਤਾ ਕੀਆ ਗਲਾ ਕਥੀਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਰੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਛਤਾਇ ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਬੁਧਿ ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਾ ਸਿਧਾ ਕੀ ਸੁਧਿ ॥ 36 ॥

*Realm of knowledge is learning aflame
 Spectacle of melodies; tranquillity galore
 Leading to realm of creativity and toil
 Chiselling life into a beauty beyond words
 Cannot be described;
 cannot be explained
 Any attempt ends in repent*

*Learning transformed to wisdom
ingrained in mind
Shaping man into an angel accomplished*

Knowledge is the fruit of rational thinking and brings lot of joy and pleasure in life. However, the greater joy comes when this knowledge is put into practice which however involves lot of hard work. It results in lot of innovations and creations. Life becomes exemplary and beautiful. It is not possible to describe this beauty. Knowledge matures into intellect capable of controlling the mind and chisels it into perfection.

ਕਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੇਰੁ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰੁ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰ ॥
ਤਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਸੀਤੇ ਸੀਤਾ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਮਾਹਿ ॥
ਤਾ ਕੇ ਰੂਪ ਨ ਕਥਨੇ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਨ ਠਾਗੇ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਰਾਮੁ ਵਸੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਭਗਤ ਵਸਹਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਅ ॥
ਕਰਹਿ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਸਚਾ ਮਨਿ ਸੋਇ ॥
ਸਚ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲੁ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡ ॥
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਥੈ ਤ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਅੰਤ ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਲੋਅ ਲੋਅ ਆਕਾਰ ॥
ਜਿਵ ਜਿਵ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ ॥
ਵੇਖੈ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਕਰਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਥਨਾ ਕਰੜਾ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ 37 ॥

*Grace speaks in the language of strength
Nothing holds back from here;
where mighty bold and valiant
See the universe filled up with God
Divinity running through every single seam
Beauty brilliant beyond words
They do not die nor get duped
whose mind is filled with God
In this realm live the loved ones
in a blissful state*

*Entuned to truth watching Invisible Creator
relishing
Designing regions and spheres
millions beyond count
Shaping galaxies of planets
Operating as per the grand design
The Creator reflects upon
and rejoices in creation.
Core of design hard to describe, says Nanak.*

After knowledge gained is applied and followed in real life, the natural concomitant is the grace of God. Which further results in a lot of strength of character and personality brave enough to challenge any authority in this world. Now one can experience God operating in this universe. Every single particle of Universe smells of God. Those who reach this stage do not die because they don't have any delusion about the duality in this universe. They understand that there is no death or birth as such. The only time a person dies, is when he becomes oblivious of the presence of God. They fall in love with the entire creation of God and are always in a blissful state of mind. They feel the Creator literally at work. Chiselling new regions and spheres one cannot even count. Formation of planets and galaxies operating in grand design of God. They can see that the creator is in deep contemplation and enjoying his creation. All this cannot be described in full.

ਜਤੁ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ ॥
ਅਹਰਣਿ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ਹਥੀਆਰੁ ॥
ਭਉ ਖਲਾ ਅਗਨਿ ਤਪ ਤਾਉ ॥
ਭਾਂਡਾ ਭਾਉ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ ॥
ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲੁ ॥
ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਤਿਨ ਕਾਰੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲੁ ॥ 38 ॥

*Let self-restraint be the smithy
and patience the goldsmith
Strike your understanding
with hammer of knowledge
Fan the heat of hard work
with winds of divine awe*

*Pour this eternal wisdom
in the crucible of love
To coin the Word in this true mint
Blessed are those who do this
And rejoice in God's glance of grace,
says Nanak.*

In this last stanza of Jap Guru talks about the way to capture the reality of God and his creation in words. Capturing this reality is like coining words in a mint. Taking an example of a goldsmith Guru tells us that control over all the temptations should be the smithy fuelled by hard work and reverence to God. In this smithy understanding is to be melted and hammered by knowledge to convert it into wisdom. This wisdom is then boiled in the pot of love for God to get rid of all the impurities and make the required material for coining the Word. This is not something everybody can do and accomplish. Only those who are blessed by God can do and enjoy it. No one can do this on purpose with deliberate efforts.

॥ ਸਲੋਕੁ ॥ ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ
ਮਹਤੁ ॥ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲ
ਜਗਤੁ ॥ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਚੈ ਧਰਮੁ
ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥ ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਰਾਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ
ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ 1 ॥

*Guru is air, water the father and earth is mother
Day and night are nursing nannies
The world grows up under their care
Actions good and bad are considered by God
Some go through and some fail
Those who worked hard and good
Have a smile on their face
and lit up their surroundings.*

These are the concluding lines of Jap. Guru paints a picture of life on this earth in beautiful poetry. Life starts with water(semen) from father and grows in the womb of mother earth. Knowledge or Guru sustains this life like the air we breathe. Just as we die the moment we do not breathe, similarly

if we turn our back to the teaching of Guru we die a spiritual death. Day and night are like nannies taking care of the whole world. Nannies feed the child and make sure that child has proper sleep at proper time, Nature has designed the cycle of day and night to ensure this for the whole world. During the day, we work and eat and at night we sleep to refresh our energies. The way we live is important. Because all of us are judged for what we do and achieve in life. Based on our achievements we are closer or farther away from the truth. Those who work hard and manage to achieve good results have a smile on their face. They also spread this happiness all around by inspiring others.

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WHERE IS GOD?

**He is in the fiery rays of the burning sun
and in the coolness of the luminous moon
He is in the tears of millions of suffering souls
and in the beautiful smiles of joyful beings**

**He is in the peace and tranquility of a quiet lake
and in the thunder and lightning of a roaring storm
He is in the silence of deep meditation
and in the sweet melody of devotional music**

**He is in the living energy of a new born child
and in the invisible, mysterious force that transforms
a living human being into a dead body
causing grief and sadness in the hearts of loved ones**

**He is beyond human thought, scientific technology and logic
and beyond the artificial, narrow boundaries of countries and religions
He is limitless, boundless, nameless and formless
A pure cosmic energy permeating the entire universe**

Manjeet

(Courtesy Dr. Harpal Singh Buttar ED)

(This Pauri 2 explains the system of the Nature, to increase our awareness.)

1. Evolution of all entities is the outcome of Hukam, the Cosmic Law, author of which is beyond our intellectual perception.
2. All sentient beings are pre-programmed to survive by consuming gifts of nature and in turn are responsible to conserve the ecology.
3. Our manual or intellectual status is as per cosmic laws; tears or laughter must be taken as a part of a balanced life.
4. Cosmic law gives us a freedom of choice to be ethical and be blessed or get entangled in false dogmatic ritualism.
5. Events occur in consonance to a constitutional system, nothing happens extrinsically, or out of control of cosmic law.
6. If we can realize the fragility of our perishable and ephemeral existence, then our ego will get humbled all by itself.

[Translation by Col. Manmohan Singh Scout]