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Ik oānkār sat̄ nām kartā purakh̄ nirbhāo nirvair akāl mūrati ajūnī saibhān gur parsād̄.



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EDITORIAL

SACROSANCT AKAL TAKHAT AND ITS HUKAMNAMAS

Akal Takhat for the Sikhs represents a symbol of divine sovereignty. It is the most revered institution and the other four Takhats are viewed as subordinate to it. Every Sikh looks up to it as having an ecclesiastical decree with divine sanction. It is required to guide the spiritual progress of the Sikhs through proper interpretation of Gurbani and checking any divagation from the essence of its message without any personal bias or preferences. It is required to act in concert with the other four revered Takhats (Kesgarh Sahib, Damdama Sahib, Patna Sahib, and Hazoor Sahib, Naderr) in making any decisions which will affect the future religious practices of the Sikhs. Appointed head sevadars of the five Takhats are called Jathedars and form a council of five under the chairmanship of the Akal Takhat Jathedar. Any directive or announcement called hukamnama is made in the name of Akal Takhat. It is the imperative duty of the Jathedars that all hukamnamas must be carefully deliberated to comply with the commandments of Gurbani of Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji.

During an address to the intellectuals in the Teja Singh Samundari hall on December 10, 1994, Singh Sahib Professor Manjit Singh, the then Jathedar of Akal Takhat, who was being accused of acting under the dictates of SGPC president Gurcharan Singh Tohra in summoning Mr. Badal to Akal Takhat, explained the position of the Jathedar in these words.

ਤਖਤ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਦੀ ਦੇਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਸਰਦਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਅਮਾਨਤ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸੇਵਾ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਭਾਉਣਿਆਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਦੇ, ਕਿਸੇ ਜਬੋਬੰਦੀ ਦੇ, ਕਿਸੇ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੇ ਭੈਅ ਅਧੀਨ, ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਅਧੀਨ, ਕਿਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਅਧੀਨ ਪਖਪਾਤੀ ਹੋਕੇ ਜੇ ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾ ਨਿਭਾਈ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਆਪਣਾ ਲੋਕ ਪੁਲੋਕ ਗਵਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਗਲ ਹੈ॥

This is the ideal understanding of the working of Akal Takhat institution. It is an inherited idea, an archetypal, existing as a mental image in the minds of the Sikh masses created by the use of the words “Akal” and “Takhat” meaning throne of the Almighty, Waheguru.

However, it has never worked that way except for couple of times when the position of the Akal Takhat Jathedar was occupied by the pious individuals who were upright and independent of any political influence. The Akal Takhat Jathedars had always danced to the tune of their political masters without any concern that their actions and behavior may be an affront to the Sikh religious community and their eternal Guru, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. **Any occupant of this exalted position, when perceived to not serving the purpose of his political masters, gets summarily dismissed and tossed on the heap of other dismissed Jathedars in the dustbin of history.** Akal Takhat Jathedars never felt any shame even in honoring with saropas, the butchers and mass murderers of the Sikhs. The butcher of Jalian Wala Bagh, General Dwyer, was one of the earliest recipients of this honor.

Since the Indian army's attack, code named blue star, on Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat in 1984, the position of the Jathedar has been one of a revolving door. Some of these appointees behaved quite boorishly during the period they served and they lacked any moral and spiritual qualifications for this pristine position. For example one Jathedar, Giani Pooran Singh, declared the Sikhs to be the decedents of Luv and Kush, two sons of Hindu god Rama. He excommunicated his boss, the president of SGPC by sending a fax message from south India and not from the Akal Takhat. He got removed from the position unceremoniously but then few days later got appointed Head Granthi of Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple). Now his son a Ragi and SGPC employee visiting British Columbia, Canada, on behest of SGPC to preach Gurnat, was convicted by a court in Abbots ford BC last week and sent to prison for molesting an underage minor daughter of his host.

A recent Hukamnama issued by the Jathedar of Akal Takhat sahib commands Sikhs not keep Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji if they have also built an alcohol bar in their homes. The reason explained for this directive is that having a bar at home is a disrespect to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. **While there should be no objection to such a directive, I along with many other individuals feel curious to know why the Jathedar Sahib did not order the elimination of the alcohol bar rather than the removal of Sri Guru Granth sahib Ji from their homes.** The Sikhs in the diaspora cannot help but wonder what motivated issuance of

such a pronouncement as it is not applicable to all sections of the worldwide Sikh community.

This Hukamnama seems to be aimed at the Sikh diaspora especially in the English speaking countries in the western hemisphere and also at the financially well to do Sikhs in India. It appears the council of Singh Sahibs under the chairmanship of Akal Takhat Jathedar did not fully deliberate on this issue before making the pronouncement. As far as the Sikh diaspora is concerned this type of hukamnama is unwise because it is not applicable here. For example a review of the retail liquor trade in California showed almost 80% of all liquor stores are owned and operated by Sikh immigrants from Punjab. These Sikh liquor business owners are also the presidents and members of Gurdwara management committees of almost all the Gurdwaras in California and elsewhere in the USA. Smoking and touching tobacco is strictly forbidden for a Sikh, yet almost 100% specialized cigarette and tobacco retail stores are owned and operated by the Sikhs in this state. I wonder how this hukamnama will be accepted by these Sikh liquor businessmen with whom the successive Jathedars have been visiting and maintain kowtow relationship.

Instead of issuing useless and unenforceable hukamnamas Singh Sahib Ji should be leading the campaign against the evils of alcohol freely being sold in the villages of Punjab with the approval and sometimes by the insistence of the Government through its excise department. Majority of the Sikhs in Punjab live in villages where alcoholic consumption per capita is the highest than any other state of India. Many village Panchayats have been passing resolutions every year against opening Liquor vends in their respective villages which are rejected by the Akali/BJP Government. I reproduce here the following news as proof of the Punjab Government's evil policy of boosting liquor tax revenue at the expense of the rural Sikh youths.

Internet Tribune, Chandigarh, October 3, 2013

As many as 57 village panchayats in Sangrur district passed resolutions this year against opening liquor vends at their respective villages in the financial year 2014-15. Recent rejection of similar resolutions by the excise department failed to deter the villagers from passing these resolutions. In 2010-11, of the 72 resolutions passed by village panchayats against the

opening of liquor vends in the state, 44 were passed in Sangrur district alone. As per the provisions of the Panchayati Raj Act, any Panchayat that does not want a liquor vend to be opened in its area has to pass a resolution in this regard by September 30, every year.

When Guru Gobind Singh Ji tested his Sikhs by saluting with his arrow, the grave of a Muslim saint, he conferred all his Sikhs with the right to question even the highest authority going astray from what is proper and desirable.

I am aware it will not make me popular with Akal Takhat Jathedar Sahib and his political masters, when I dare to exercise my Guru given right to ask this simple question to the Jathedar Sahib. Why the Jathedar Sahib so far has not called the President of the Akali Dal, the ruling party, to appear at Akal Takhat to explain this heinous policy of his Government which is so noxious to the health of Sikh youths and rural Sikh public of Punjab?

Gurpal Singh Khaira
Editor In Chief

CONCEPT OF SUNN (ਸੁੰਨ) IN NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY

ABSTRACT

ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) as ਸੁਨਯਾ (Sunya) has been studied extensively in ancient philosophy (Hinduism, Naathism, Yogism and Buddhism). Guru Nanak's discussion about Sunn with Siddhas in 'Siddh Gost' and in his Bani, especially in Raga Maru, indicates a new insight about the meanings of Sunn. The application of scientific knowledge, especially Physics and the Theory of Big Bang leads us to conclude that the Sunn of Guru Nanak is very close to that of 'Nothingness' of some scientists and 'Singularity' of others, which burst into the Universe according to the Big Bang Theory of 20th century.*

(*Please also see the 'Special Note' at the end of this article.)

INTRODUCTION

ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) as ਸੁਨਯਾ (Sunya) is very ancient word which has been extensively used in Hinduism

(including Naathism and Yogism) and Buddhism [2, 5, 12, 13]. Many theologians consider God as a Creator but It (God) was in a *Sunn* state (void, emptiness, equipoise, tranquility or primordial trance) before the creation of the Universe. These interpretations make God different from Universe/Nature. According to Dhaliwal [4] '*Sunn*' is the state of equipoise where Absolute Entity exists in Primordial Trance along with the creation. There, the essence of Enlightenment and the Ultimate Reality are hidden and inscrutable in the realm of celestial peace and bliss. However, Virk [15] describes that: "*Sunya* is not equated with void or emptiness in Guru Granth Sahib. Rather, it represents the entire state of equipoise where Absolute Lord exists in primordial trance called *Sunya Samadhi*." He further states: "*Sunya* is compared to a primordial void where God exists in His full effulgence."

'*Sunn*' is the word which has been used as '*Sunya*' before Guru Nanak in different contexts in ancient philosophy. So is the case with many Sikh theologians. **But Guru Nanak has used *Sunn* in a very specific and limited context in his Bani.** This paper draws on current research to explore the concept of *Sunn* as used in the Bani of Guru Nanak, more specifically in the **Siddh Gost and Raga Maru**. The application of scientific knowledge, especially of Physics and Theory of Big Bang, widely accepted by scientists, leads us to conclude that the *Sunn* of Guru Nanak is very close to that of NOTHINGNESS described by some scientists or SINGULARITY by others [9].

WHAT IS SUNN?

Bhai Kahn Singh's Mahan Kosh [14] defines *Sunn* as: ਸੁੰਨ = (2) ਜੜ੍ਹ (Root: Meaning the fundamental cause, basis, or essence of something, or the source from which something derives.), (5) ਅਫੁਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ (Brahm – the God).

And

Sunn Samadh as:

ਸੁੰਨਸਮਾਧਿ = (2) ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਉਹ ਅਵਸਥਾ, ਜਦ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਤਿ ਲੈ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸ੍ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਰਾਜਦਾ ਹੈ (That state of Brahm- God where the whole Universe is in It). And *Mahan Kosh* further defines Brahm as follows: **ਭ੍ਰਹਮਨ- ਬ੍ਰਹਮ = ਸੰ. (ਭ੍ਰਹ- ਬ੍ਰਿਹ ਯਾ ਵਯਥਾ)** (*Brahm* is derived from *Breh* meaning 'to expand'.)

Jodh Singh [12], through his extensive study of *Sunn*, indicates that: “*Though, as we shall see hereafter, the word Sunya (Sunn) has been used by Guru Nanak denoting different meanings, mostly it (is) used by him in the sense of Brahman. This usage is not inconsistent due to the fact that etymologically Sunya is derived from the root ‘Svi’ which means ‘to swell or to expand’. Curiously enough the word Brahman too is derived from the root ‘Brh’ which also means ‘to swell or to expand’. We generally find this word used in the ontological sense, ignoring its etymological significance and its implications*”².”

From the above, Jodh Singh [12] indicates that the above meanings given are by Jaidev Singh [11] as indicated by reference of superscript # 2 in above paragraph. But Jodh Singh missed to give reference to Jaidev Singh while writing another article [13]. Consequently, Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon [5] has expressed it as if these meanings are given by Jodh Singh from his book as follows:

“ਡਾ. ਜੋਧ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਸੁੰਨ ਅਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਉਂਤਪੱਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਸੁੰਨ ‘ਸਵੀ’ ਧਾਤੂ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ‘ਬ੍ਰਿਹ’ ਧਾਤੂ ਤੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਧਾਤੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਹਨ ‘ਵਿਸਤਾਰ’ ਜਾਂ ‘ਫੈਲਾਵ’। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਵਿਉਂਤਪੱਤੀ ਦੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਕੋਣ ਤੋਂ ‘ਸੁੰਨ’ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ‘ਬ੍ਰਹਮ’ ਵਦੇਰੇ ਢੁਕਵਾਂ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ।”

According to *Mahan Kosh* we can conclude that *Sunn* means ‘**Root**’ (Meaning the fundamental cause, basis, or essence of something, or the source from which something derives.) And *Sunn* also means **Brahm**, the God (Brahm is derived from *Breh* meaning ‘to expand’). Jod Singh is following Bhai Kahn Singh that *Sunn* means ‘to expand’ and is equated to Brahman since it also means ‘to expand’. Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon follows the above assertion of Jodh Singh.

Finally, we get the following equation:

- **Sunn is the Brahman (the God).**
- **Sunn and Brahman** both mean ‘to expand’ .
- Therefore, **Sunn** or **Brahman** (God) is an Entity which expands Itself into the Universe.

It is ironic that many of the theologians failed to explore the above etymological meanings of *SUNN* and

BRAHM in interpreting the Bani of Guru Nanak. If **Sunn** is the **Root** or the *Svi* and is same as **Brahm**; and both **Sunn** or **Brahm** can expand to Universe then it raises a question:

Who is the creator?

Similarly, ਨਿਰਗੁਣ (*Nirgun*) state of God in Siddh Gost can be equated to Nothingness (without any attribute of the Universe) and the same *Nirgun* State of God becomes the ਸਰਗੁਣ (*Sargun*) state (with all the attributes of the Universe) as is evident from the following phrase:

ਅਵਿਗਤੇ¹ ਨਿਰਮਾਇਲੁ² ਉਪਜੇ³ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ⁴ ਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ⁵ ਬੀਆ⁶

॥

Avigato nirmā'il upje nirgun te sargun thīā.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ:1, ਪੰਨਾ 940 [1].

Nirgun⁴ (God - without any attributes of Universe) originated³ from purely² Nothingness¹; then this Nirgun⁴ became⁶ Sargun⁵ (with all attributes of the Universe). AGGS, M 1, p 940 [1].

It is evident from the above discussion that *Sunn* (Nothingness) is *Nirgun* state of God and the *Sargun* state of God is the Universe.

Let us examine from the Bani of Guru Nanak if our above thesis is right?

Jodh Singh [12] while defining the Brahman and identifying Him with seedless trance (*Sunn*) quotes that: Guru Nanak says “*O Brahman, you are 'Sunn Samadhi, the exceedingly supreme object (Maha Parmartha) and the Lord of the three worlds*”²:

ਸੁੰਨ¹ ਸਮਾਧਿ² ਮਹਾ ਪਰਮਾਰਥੁ³ ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਣ⁴ ਪਤਿ⁵ ਨਾਮ⁶ ॥

Sunn samādhi mahā parmārath tīn bhavaṇ paṭ nāmān.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 634.

Here Jodh Singh equated *SUNN* Samadhi to BRAHMAN (BRAHM) whereas; many other scholars translate *SUNN* Samadh literally to ‘primordial trance’, ‘deep void or ‘tranquility’ as follows:

The Embracer of primordial trance^{1,2}, the Exceedingly supreme being³ and the Lord of three worlds⁴ art Thine Names⁶, O Master⁵. [Manmohan Singh, SGPC, from Ref # 17]

However, if we look into the theme of this phrase then I would interpret it as:

The greatest truth³ is that complete² nothingness¹ is not nothingness but contains the mythical three worlds⁴ (the whole Universe) and this nothingness is controlled by NAAM^{5,6} (the Laws of Nature).

AGGS, M 1, p 634.

Note: ‘Naam’ in the above phrase has been interpreted as Laws of Nature according to the following phrases of Guru Arjan:

ਨਾਮ¹ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ² ਸਗਲੇ³ ਜੰਤ⁴ ॥

Nām ke dhāre sagle jant.

All³ living beings⁴ are under² the Laws of Nature¹.

ਨਾਮ¹ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ² ਖੰਡ³ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ⁴ ॥

Nām ke dhāre khand barahmand.

All the galaxies⁴ and stars³ and planets³ are under² the Laws of Nature¹.

ਨਾਮ¹ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ² ਅਗਾਸ³ ਪਾਤਾਲ⁴ ॥

Nām ke dhāre āgās pātāl.

The space³ and the mythical underworlds⁴ are under² the Laws of Nature¹.

Finally, Guru Arjan sums up ਨਾਮ as ‘Laws of Nature’:

ਨਾਮ¹ ਕੇ ਧਾਰੇ² ਸਗਲੇ³ ਆਕਾਰ⁴ ॥

Nām ke dhāre sagal ākār.

ਅਗਾਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 284.

All³ the celestial bodies⁴ are under² the Laws of Nature¹. AGGS, M 5, p 284.

These phrases convey clearly that every action and reaction in this Universe and living beings are being carried on under the Laws of Nature. The above phrases of Guru Arjan are explaining the basic principle of ਹੁਕਮ (Hukm - Laws of Nature) of Guru Nanak [3]:

ਹੁਕਮੈ¹ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ² ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ³ ਹੁਕਮ⁴ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

Hukmai andar sabh ko bāhar hukam na ko'e

ਅਗਾਸ, ਜਪੁ 2, ਪੰਨਾ 2.

Every action and reaction² in this Universe and living beings are carried on under the Laws of Nature⁴ and there is nothing outside³ these Laws of Nature¹.

AGGS, Jap 2, p 2.

I agree with Jodh Singh’s interpretation that SUNN SAMADH – The Brahm is ‘supreme object’ and is ‘the

Lord of three worlds’ because in other words the SUNN SAMADH is a state of BRAHM (GOD).

If we accept the interpretation of the above phrases about *Sunn* of Guru Nanak it becomes clear that the *Sunn* is the Brahm which expands to the Universe by Itself rather than created by any other Entity. Now it is time to understand what does this SUNN of Guru Nanak mean in Science?

SUNN (ਸੁੰਨ) – IS IT NOTHINGNESS?

Many theologians consider *Sunn* equivalent to God in tranquility or deep meditation. However, we have just discovered from previous discussion that *Sunn* and Brahm (God) are same and both can expand into the Universe. Does this *Sunn* of Guru Nanak have any resemblance with that of NOTHINGNESS or SINGULARITY of scientists?

What is Nothingness in Science?

LaFee [9] says: “The meaning of ‘Nothingness’ is a persistent philosophical conundrum, but it is also a matter of intense, if somewhat unrequited, scientific inquiry on both the largest and smallest of scales.” He further says: “More than 99 percent of atoms are empty space. The vast majority of the Universe appears to consist of something best described as nothing. It is space containing absolutely no recognizable matter: nothing solid, liquid or gas. Yet numerous astronomical studies indicate that something is out there, something unseen that exerts force and influence on a cosmic and quantum scale, binding both atoms and galaxies together.” This ‘Nothingness’ is different than that of *Sunn* of Guru Nanak and ‘Nothingness’ of Kaup.

Kaup [8] defines ‘Nothingness’ as follows:

“Nothingness Theory defines nonexistence as being the absence of existence, the absence of nothingness, and the absence of absence. It is what is not being referred-to under any circumstances. Nonexistence by definition is that which cannot be referred-to, named, or defined. So referring-to it in any way violates its strict definition. But this fundamental paradox is at the basis of Nothingness Theory and must be referred-to anyway. Despite it’s not being, absolute nonexistence exerts a detectable force. We have proven through simple logic that the Universe has and always will exist. Therefore, the Universe must have existed before the “Big Bang” and will exist forever. This also

means that the state of nothingness from which the Universe burst into existence must have existed relative to absolute nonexistence given that absolute nonexistence is not achievable. So space/time – matter/energy can attain relative nonexistence by collapsing into infinite density, which is a uniform state of static equilibrium. Examples of this state of relative nonexistence can be seen throughout the Universe in the form of **'black holes'**."

A **'black hole'** is created when matter and space become concentrated so that there is no differentiation between them. To apprehend the full meaning of existence, nonexistence, energy, matter and force, one must embrace the paradox embodied in a black hole. The essence of a black hole is that it isn't there, but it has a location relative to existing systems upon which it exerts the most powerful cosmic force. It is an area of nonexistence that has no area. The so called super-massive black holes, apparently at the center of every galaxy, swallow up entire solar systems and yet contain nothing inside of them because they have no inside to fill up.

'Nothingness' does not mean 'without anything'. In fact the thing is there but it is in a so small volume that it appears to be 'Nothingness'. **This 'Nothingness' as described by Kaup [8] actually is the pinnacle of perfectly symmetrical uniformity of matter, space, energy and time.** According to the 'Big Bang Theory' the energy was in such a small volume that has been termed as **'Nothingness'** by some scientists and as **'Singularity'** by others [18].

It is also important to understand the contents of the 'Universe'. Kaup [8] defines 'Universe' as follows: *"The Universe is anything that has been, or ever will be detectable by humans. It is the manifestation of temporal existence – composed of matter, energy, space, and time, and is the macro-system of which all natural systems are a sub-set."*

This 'Nothingness' was already termed as ਸੰਨ (Sunn) by Guru Nanak during 15th century. It is also termed as 'Jot' (highly condensed energy) by Guru Nanak. The following discussion will further strengthen it. But it is also necessary to understand 'what the Matter and Energy are' to grasp the meanings of *Sunn* of Guru Nanak.

What are Energy and Matter?

Albert Einstein is perhaps the most famous scientist of the 20th century. One of his most well-known accomplishments is the formula $E = mc^2$ (**E = Energy, m = Matter, c = Speed of Light**). Despite its familiarity, many people don't really understand what it means. I hope the following explanation will help [16].

One of Einstein's great insights was to realize that matter and energy are really different forms of the same thing. Matter can be turned into energy, and energy into matter. For example, consider a simple hydrogen atom, basically composed of a single proton. This subatomic particle has a mass of 0.000 000 000 000 000 000 000 001 672 kg. This is a tiny mass indeed. But in everyday quantities of matter there are *a lot* of atoms! For instance, in one kilogram of pure water, the mass of hydrogen atoms amounts to just slightly more than 111 grams, or 0.111 kg.

Einstein's formula tells us the *amount* of energy of this mass would be equivalent to, if it were all suddenly *turned* into energy. It says that to find the energy, you multiply the mass (m) by the square of the speed of light (c), this number being 300,000,000 meters per second (a *very* large number):

$$E = mc^2$$

$$E = 0.111 \times 300,000,000 \times 300,000,000$$

$$E = \mathbf{10,000,000,000,000,000 \text{ Joules}}$$

This is an incredible amount of energy! A Joule is not a large unit of energy ... one Joule is about the energy released when you drop a textbook to the floor. But the **amount of energy in 30 grams of hydrogen atoms is equivalent to burning hundreds of thousands of gallons of gasoline!**

If you consider all the energy in the **full kilogram** of water, which also contains oxygen atoms, the total energy equivalent is close to **10 million gallons of gasoline!** Now one can easily imagine how much Energy were there in that **ਸੰਨ (Sunn)** / Nothingness / Singularity from which the infinite amount of matter of this Universe appeared.

CONCEPT OF ਸੰਨ (SUNN) IN NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY

According to the Punjabi-English Dictionary [7], ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) means 'Nothingness', non-existence, emptiness, absolute silence, without thought and feeling. And ਸੁੰਨ ਮਸੁੰਨ (Sunn masunn) means dismal, desolate (solitary, lonely), deserted, uninhabited, eerie (causing a feeling of mystery). But I think that ਸੁੰਨ ਮਸੁੰਨ (Sunn masunn) is the highest state of 'Nothingness'. According to Bhai Kahn Singh [14] ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) also means empty, void, without consciousness.

Although the word ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) was known in the ancient philosophy, it was Guru Nanak who had explained ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) very scientifically and logically. For example, during the discourse between Guru Nanak and the Siddhas, the Siddhas posed a number of questions about ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) to Guru Nanak (for details consult Siddh Gost in AGGS pp 938-946). A few questions posed by the Siddhas to Guru Nanak about ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) are as follows:

The Siddhas posed the question about ਆਦਿ (Aad) and ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) to Guru Nanak as follows:

ਆਦਿ¹ ਕਉ ਕਵਨੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ² ਕਥੀਅਲੇ³ ਸੁੰਨ⁴ ਕਹਾ ਘਰ ਵਾਸੇ⁵ ॥

Āḍ kaṁo kavan bīchār kathīṁale sunn kahā ghar vāso.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 940.

What do you think² and say³ about Aad¹ and where does the Sunn⁴ exist⁵?
AGGS, M 1, p 940.

Guru Nanak replied as follows:

**ਆਦਿ¹ ਕਉ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੁ² ਬੀਚਾਰੁ³ ਕਥੀਅਲੇ⁴ ਸੁੰਨ⁵ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ⁶ ਵਾ
ਸੁ⁷ ਲੀਆ ॥**

Āḍ kaṁo bismād bīchār kathīṁale sunn nirantar vās līā.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 940.

One can think³ and talk⁴ only in term of wonders² about Aad¹ (the period before the beginning of time and space) that during this state of Aad¹ the Nothingness⁵ was completely⁶ dwelling⁷ in Nothingness.
AGGS, M 1, p 940.

Here ਸੁੰਨ⁵ (Sunn) is referred to the state of 'Nothingness'.

ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ⁶ (Nirantar) means 'completely inside', 'without any difference' [14]. In both cases it means completely one thing without any difference.

Origin of ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn)

Now in the following verse Guru Nanak is talking about the origin of ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn).

First three phrases are in the form of questions. Here Sunn has been interpreted as 'Nothingness':

ਸੁੰਨੁ ਕਹੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

Sunno sunn kahai sabh koī.

ਸੁੰਨੁ³ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਹੋਈ⁴ ॥

Anhaṭ sunn kahā te hoī.

ਸੁੰਨਿ⁶ ਰਤੇ⁷ ਸੇ ਕੈਸੇ⁸ ॥

Anhaṭ sunn ratē se kaise.

Everyone speaks about the Nothingness¹.

How did Infinite² Nothingness³ originate⁴?

How⁸ can one understand⁷ the Infinite⁵ Nothingness⁶?

Then Guru Nanak answers it as follows:

ਜਿਸ⁹ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੇ¹⁰ ਤਿਸ¹¹ ਹੀ ਜੈਸੇ¹² ॥

Jis te upje tis hī jaise.

From which that⁹ (Nothingness) originated¹⁰ it becomes like that (Nothingness) again^{11,12}.

Now in the following phrase Guru Nanak is indicating that this Nothingness is God (Sunn) That does not take birth or dies since Sunn is always present in one form or others:

ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਮਰਹਿ ਨ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥

Oṁe janam na marēh na āvahi jāhi.

That It (Sunn/God) neither takes birth nor dies nor come into cycle of lives.

Finally, Guru Nanak advises that try to understand this Sunn of Nanak:

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਨੁ ਸਮਝਾਹਿ ॥੫੨॥

Nānak gurmukh man samjhāhi. ||52||

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 843.

Oh Guru-oriented! Orientate your mind so that you can understand the above fact. 52.

AGGS, M 1, p 943.

In the following phrase of the above verse,

(ਜਿਸ^੯ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੇ¹⁰ ਤਿਸ¹¹ ਹੀ ਜੈਸੇ¹² ॥Jis te upje tis hī jaise. From which that^੯ (Nothingness) originated¹⁰ it becomes like that (Nothingness) again^{11,12}.)

Guru Nanak is explaining that when Nothingness became the Universe after the Big Bang then it will go back to Nothingness. There is evidence that black hole is appearing in the center of our galaxy and possibly in other galaxies and these Black Holes will lead to the formation of Nothingness again.

Guru Arjan has further explained the above philosophy of Guru Nanak that from Nothingness to Universe to Nothingness again as follows:

ਕਈ¹ ਬਾਰ² ਪਸਰਿਓ³ ਪਾਸਾਰ⁴ ॥

Kaī bār pasriō pāsār.

ਸਦਾ^੧ ਸਦਾ^੨ ਇਕੁ^੩ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ^੪ ॥

Sadā sadā ik ekankār.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 276.

The Universe⁴ came into existence³ many¹ times². But the One^੬ (Sunn – Nothingness or Ekankaar - Singularity) remains One and Only⁷ all the time⁵.
AGGS, M 5, p 276.

The above two stanzas support our views that the *Sunn* (Nothingness/Singularity) is the God of Guru Nanak.

ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) – Origin of Everything

In Raga Maru Sohlay Guru Nanak has explained that everything (elements, galaxies, stars, planets, moons, etc) in this Universe originated from ਸੁੰਨ

(Sunn):

ਸੁੰਨ¹ ਕਲਾ ਅਪਰੰਪਰਿ² ਧਾਰੀ ॥

Sunn kalā aprampar dḥārī.

ਆਪਿ³ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ⁴ ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰੀ⁵ ॥

Āp nirālam apar apārī.

ਆਪੇ⁶ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ⁷ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖੇ ਸੁੰਨਹੁ ਸੁੰਨ⁸ ਉਪਾਇਦਾ⁹ ॥੧॥

Āpe kudratī kar kar dekḥai sunnahu sunn upāidā. ॥1॥

The Nothingness¹ (God) is the state beyond² which there is nothing.

The Nothingness³ (God) is flawless⁴ and beyond⁵ which there is nothing.

The God⁶ Itself is Nature⁷ and see that it originated⁹ from Nothingness⁸.1

ਸੁੰਨਹੁ¹⁰ ਚੰਦੁ¹¹ ਸੂਰਜੁ¹² ਗੈਣਾਰੁ¹³ ॥

Sunnahu chand sūraj gaināre.

ਤਿਸ¹⁴ ਕੀ ਜੋਤਿ¹⁵ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ¹⁶ ਸਾਰੇ ॥

Tis kī jotī taribḥavan sāre.

ਸੁੰਨੇ¹⁷ ਅਲਖ¹⁸ ਅਪਾਰ¹⁹ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ²⁰ ਸੁੰਨੇ²¹ ਤਾੜੀ²² ਲਾਇਦਾ ॥

੫॥

Sunne alakḥ apār nirālam sunne tārī lāidā. ॥5॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 1037.

Moons¹¹ and Suns¹² (stars and planets) have originated¹³ from Nothingness¹⁰ (Sunn).

The Energy¹⁵ of That¹⁴ (Sunn / God) pervades in the whole Universe¹⁶ (mythical three worlds).

The Ineffable¹⁸, Infinite¹⁹, without any flaw²⁰ (God) originated from the Nothingness¹⁷ and is imbibed²² in the same Nothingness²¹.5

AGGS, M 1, p 1037.

And

ਪੰਚ²³ ਤਤੁ²⁴ ਸੁੰਨਹੁ²⁵ ਪਰਗਾਸਾ²⁶ ॥

Panch tat sunnahu pargāsā... 14

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 1038.

The five²³ (all) elements²⁴ have originated²⁶ from Nothingness²⁵ (Sunn)...14.

AGGS, M 1, p 1037-1038.

If we examine the above stanzas of Guru Nanak it becomes evident that it is the SUNN (Nothingness) from which the Universe originated but not created by any other Entity since *Sunn* is the Brahm (God) Itself. Or in other words the Brahm has expanded Itself into Universe since Brahm has been equated to *Sunn* by Dhillon, Jodh Singh, and Bhai Kahn Singh [5, 12, 13, 14].

According to the standard theory of Big Bang, our Universe sprang into existence around 13.7 billion years ago from "singularity" - an infinitesimally small, infinitely hot, and infinitely dense point [18].

This point is called 'Singularity' by some scientists and 'Nothingness' by others [8]. But Guru Nanak calls 'Nothingness' as 'ਸੁੰਨ' (*Sunn*) which is a 'Singularity' as '੧' (One and Only). Both ੧ and ਸੁੰਨ have been

represented by Guru Nanak in a logo as **ੴ**, i.e. ‘ੴ’ (One and Only) is ‘ੴ’ (Oh) That is ‘ੴ’ ‘Infinite’.

The Birth of Cosmos (Universe) according to Big Bang is as follows [18]:

- *After 10^{-43} second of Big Bang:* The cosmos goes through superfast ‘inflation’ expanding from a size of an atom to the size of a grapefruit in a tiny fraction of a second.
- *After 10^{-32} seconds:* Post-inflation, the Universe is a seething, hot soup of electrons, quarks and other particles.
- *After 10^{-6} second:* A rapid cooling cosmos permits quarks to clump into proton and neutrons.
- *After 3 minutes:* Still too hot to form into atoms, charges electrons and protons prevent light from shining, the Universe is superhot fog.
- *After 300,000 years:* Electrons combined with protons and neutrons to form atoms, mostly hydrogen and helium. Light can finally shine.
- *After one billion years:* Gravity makes hydrogen and helium gases coalesce to form the giant clouds that will become galaxies; smaller clumps of gas collapse to form the first stars.
- *After 13.7 billion years (now):* The galaxies cluster together under gravity, the first stars die and spew heavy elements into space, and these will eventually form into new stars and plants.

The Big Bang Theory of 20th century was described by Guru Nanak during the 15th century with the following single phrase and rest of the expansion of the Universe has been explained in Raga Maru at pages 1037-1038 earlier:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ ॥

Kīṭā pasāo eko kavāo.

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥

Fis te ho'e lakh darīāo.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 16, ਪੰਨਾ 3.

However, our pioneer Sikh scholars have translated/interpreted this phrase as “Creation” rather as “Evolution” or “Origin” according to their understanding:

Faridkot Vala Tika [17]:

ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਪਸਾਰਾ ਇਕ (ਕਵਾਉ) ਇਕ ਵਾਕ ਤੇ ਭਾਵ ਐਸੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਕੀਆ ਕਿ ਮੈ ਏਕ ਸੇ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਹੋ ਜਾਵਾਂ॥

ਤਿਸ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਕਰਣੇ ਸੇ (ਲਖ) ਬਹੁਤੇ ਹੀ (ਦਰੀਆਉ) ਭਾਵ ਪਰਵਾਹ ਰੂਪ ਜਗਤ ਹੋਤੇ ਭਏ

Manmohan Singh (SGPC) [17]:

ਇਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨਾਲ ਤੂੰ ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਖਿਲਾਰਾ ਕਰ ਦਿਤਾ

ਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਲਖਾਂ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਹਿਣੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਏ।

Prof Sahib Singh [17]:

(ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੇਆਪਣੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਬਣਾ (ਦਿੱਤਾ,

ਉਸ ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਲ ਬਣ ਗਏ। ਲੱਖਾਂ ਦਰੀਆ (ਹੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ)

(Manmohan Singh (SGPC) in English [17]:

With One Word Thou didst affect the world's expansion.

and where by lacs of rivers began to flow.

Sant Singh Khalsa [17]:

You created the vast expanse of the Universe with One Word!

Hundreds of thousands of rivers began to flow.

DP Singh [10 - p 28-29]:

ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਇਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ (ਜਾਂ ਨਿਯਮ) ਨਾਲ ਸਾਰੀ ਸਿਰਸ਼ਟੀ ਰਚ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ ਦਰਿਆ ਬਣ ਗਏ।

A critical analysis of above translations/interpretations indicates that the first exegesis of AGGS known as Faridkot Vala Tika interpreted the above phrase under the influence of Vedic and Vedantic philosophies as:

God created the Universe with one word from that hundreds of thousands rivers (and living beings) were created.

The same theme has been kept without making any improvement by all the other famous Sikh scholars except Manmohan Singh's SGPC and Sant Singh Khalsa who have even eliminated to mention living beings. Thereafter, some Sikh scholars (including some Sikh scientists like DP Singh) followed Prof Sahib while others followed Manmohan Singh's English translations.

Now the question is:

Why do modern Sikh scholars avoid interpreting

Gurbani with an application of Science and logic?

I am sure a new and more accurate interpretation representing the real theme of Gurbani will appear after the application of Science and logic. Einstein's view about this approach is as follows:

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

Now let us try to interpret this phrase of Guru Nanak by the application of Science and logic:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ¹ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ² ॥

Kīṭā pasā^o eko kavā^o.

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ³ ॥

Fis te ho^e lakh darī^a.

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 16, ਪੰਨਾ 3.

The Universe exploded with one sound² (bang) and started to expand¹.

Thereafter many things³ appeared.

AGGS, Jap 16, p 3.

I have interpreted the word **ਕਵਾਉ** as 'sound'; in fact, it means 'Bang' (the swift release of a store of effective force or energy. When the Bang occurred for the first time there was no sound produced.) . Moreover, **ਕਵਾਉ** does not mean a 'Word' or 'Sabd' as usually interpreted by many authors but it means 'Hukm' (order) according to *Mahan Kosh* [14]. However, *Mahan Kosh* also says that **ਕਵਾਉ** is from **ਕਵਾ** which means 'Energy'. This meaning has been ignored by almost all the scholars. Now I have modified the above interpretation while keeping in view the meaning of **ਕਵਾਉ** (**ਕਵਾ**) as 'Energy' as follows:

The Universe exploded from one source of energy² (Singularity) and started to expand¹. Thereafter many things³ appeared.

Because:

1. **ਪਸਾਉ** (*Pasao - Pasara*) means to expand.
2. **ਕਵਾਉ** (*Kavao*) means 'sound' or 'word' or 'note' or 'Hukm' (Order). But here **ਕਵਾਉ** is from **ਕਵਾ** which means energy according to *Mahan Kosh* [14]. Therefore, **ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ** means 'From one source of

Energy' (**ਏਕੇ** stands for 'Singularity', which is also called 'Nothingness').

ਦਰੀਆਉ (*Daryao*) has been literally interpreted as rivers by many scholars. Keeping in view the methodology used by Guru Nanak to express his philosophy '**ਦਰੀਆਉ**' **has been used as a metaphor for 'things'**. What are those things? Scientifically what appeared after the 'Big Bang' was a large number of galaxies each composed of a large number of stars (suns) and their planets? Therefore, the '**ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ**' (*Lakh Daryao*) has been used to represent 'many things' because of limited vocabulary available at that time. However, one must understand that no water was formed immediately after the Big Bang. It took billions of years to form Earth and water in the Universe. Therefore, '**ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ**' (*Lakh Daryao*) is a metaphoric expression of 'many things' (that means starting from elementary particles to particles to nucleosynthesis to nuclear to atoms which gave rise to many galaxies.

The concept of '**ਦਰੀਆਉ**' (*Daryao*) in Nanakian Philosophy as 'things' has been explained by Guru Arjan so that the metaphor, '**ਦਰੀਆਉ**' (*Daryao*), may not be misunderstood as 'Rivers' as has been understood by some scholars in the above phrase of Guru Nanak:

ਏਕ ਕਵਾਵੈ¹ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ² ਹੋਆ ॥੧॥

Ēk kavāvai te sabh ho^a. ॥1॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 1003.

From one source of energy¹ (Singularity) everything² appeared.

AGGS, M 5, p 1003.

'**ਏਕ ਕਵਾਵੈ**' in the above phrase is same as '**ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ**' of Guru Nanak's previous phrase. And **ਕਵਾਵੈ** is from **ਕਵਾ**. **ਕਵਾ** means 'Energy' according to *Mahan Kosh* [14].

The above discussion clearly leads us to believe that Guru Nanak had explained Big Bang in one phrase:

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ¹ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ² ॥ ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ³ ॥

(Kīṭā pasā^o eko kavā^o. Fis te ho^e lakh darī^a.)

God Originated by Itself

As discussed previously that the *Sunn* is the Brahm which can expand into the Universe. In the following verse Guru Nanak makes it clear that the *Sunn* or Brahm or the God was ‘Created by Itself’ or ‘Self Originated’:

[ਆਪੀਨ੍ਹਰੈ¹ ਆਪੁ² ਸਾਜਿਓ³ ਆਪੀਨ੍ਹਰੈ⁴ ਰਚਿਓ⁵ ਨਾਉ⁶ ॥](#)

Āpīnhai āp sāji^o āpīnhai rachī^o nā^o.

[ਦੁਯੀ⁷ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ⁸ ਸਾਜੀਐ⁹ ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ¹⁰ ਡਿਠੇ¹¹ ਚਾਉ¹² ॥](#)

Duyī kudraṭ sājī^{ai} kar āsaṇ dīṭhō chā^o.

ਅਗਗਸ, 1, ਪੰਨਾ 463.

This is very difficult verse to be interpreted in its real perspective. The literal translations by some authors do not reveal the real theme. Let us attempt to interpret it in such a way that the real theme is revealed:

Here [ਆਪੀਨ੍ਹਰੈ](#) means ‘by Itself’ and [ਆਪੁ](#) means the *Sun/Nothingness/Singularity/Brahm (God)*.

[ਸਾਜਿਓ](#) means ‘originated’ ; [ਰਚਿਓ](#) means ‘formulated’;

and [ਨਾਉ](#) means ‘Laws of Nature’, as explained by Guru Arjan earlier.

Universe (God)¹ came into existence³ by Itself² (from Sunn/Nothingness/Singularity). And Laws of Nature⁶ were also created⁵ by itself⁴.

The next phrase explains the same theme.

Thereafter⁷, the Nature⁸ (Universe) was originated⁹ (under these Laws of Nature) and then metaphorically (poetically) expressed as if the God pervades¹⁰ in the Nature/Universe and pleases¹² Itself for watching¹¹ it.

AGGS, M 1, p 463.

If God was Originated/Created by Itself and expanded into the Nature/Universe then It cannot sit as a separate Entity in the Nature/Universe and to watch its actions as is traditionally translated/interpreted by many authors. This is a metaphoric (poetical) expression of Guru Nanak to indicate that the Nature is God Itself. The above fact, the Nature is the God, has been further explained by Guru Nanak as follows:

[ਨਾਨਕ¹ ਸਚ² ਦਾਤਾਰੁ³ ਸਿਨਾਖਤੁ⁴ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ⁵ ॥੮॥](#)

Nānak sach dātār sinākhat kudratī. ||8||

Nanak says1:

The Nature⁵ (the Universe) is the recognition⁴ of the Ever-existing² Bountious³ (God).

AGGS, M 1, p 141.

Here Guru Nanak is equating God with Nature (Universe). That means “God is Nature”.

Nature: 1. Physical World - all natural phenomena and living things.

2. The forces and processes collectively that control the phenomena of the physical world independently of human volition or intervention.

The previous verse on page 463 of the AGGS is continued:

[ਦਾਤਾ¹³ ਕਰਤਾ¹⁴ ਆਪਿ¹⁵ ਤੂੰ ਤੁਸਿ ਦੇਵਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਸਾਉ¹⁶ ॥](#)

Dātā kartā āp tūn tus devēh karahi pasā^o.

Oh God! You Yourself¹⁵ are responsible¹⁴ for expansion¹⁶ and You are the Bounteous¹³ (Giver).

Here again the above phrase is a metaphoric (poetical) expression which is usually different than that of the factual one. The next two phrases are also the metaphoric expression rather than the factual ones and are almost repetition of the above two phrases. Here Guru Nanak metaphorically (poetically) gives all the powers (Laws of Nature) to God (ਤੂੰ – Nothingness/Singularity), Who knows how to create life (to give and take life) from the Energy:

[ਤੂੰ¹⁷ ਜਾਣੇਈ¹⁸ ਸਭਸੈ¹⁹ ਦੇ ਲੈਸਹਿ²⁰ ਜਿੰਦੁ²¹ ਕਵਾਉ²² ॥](#)

Tūn jāṇēī sabhsai de laisahi jind kavā^o.

You (God)¹⁷ know¹⁸ how to create life²¹ for all¹⁹ from energy²² and take this life back²⁰.

Thereafter, Guru Nanak repeats his previous phrase that:

[ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ²³ ਡਿਠੇ²⁴ ਚਾਉ²⁵ ॥੧॥](#)

Kar āsaṇ dīṭhō chā^o. ||1||

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 463.

As if the God pervades²³ in the Nature/Universe and pleases²⁵ Itself for watching²⁴ it.

AGGS, M 1, p 463.

The first phrase, [ਆਪੀਨ੍ਹਰੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ](#) ..., in the above verse also explain the meanings of [ਸੈਭੰ](#) (*Sebhan*) used by Guru Nanak to explain an attribute, Created by Itself or Self-originated, in the Commencing Verse (Mool Mantra) of the AGGS. The meanings of [ਸੈਭੰ](#) (*Sebhan*) as ‘Created by Itself’ or ‘Self-originated’ are explained by Guru Nanak as *Nirgun-Sargun* state of God in Siddh Gost:

ਨਿਰਮਾਇਲੁ² ਉਪਜੇ³ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ⁴ ਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ⁵ ਥੀਆ⁶ ॥

Avigato nirmā'il upje nirgunṭ te sargunṭ thīā.

ਅਗਸ, ਮ:1, ਪੰਨਾ 940.

Nirgun⁴ (God - without any attributes of Universe) originated³ from purely² Nothingness¹; then this Nirgun⁴ became⁶ Sargun⁵ (with all attributes of the Universe).

AGGS, M 1, p 940.

This phrase indicates that *Nirgun* state is Nothingness/Singularity and *Sargun* state is the Universe.

If God is *Sebhan* (Created by Itself or Self Originated) and Its *Nirgun* state (Nothingness) becomes *Sargun* (the Universe) then it raises a question:

Is there any other Entity for creation of the Universe?

Besides the above discussion about ਸੁੰਨ (Sunn) there is still another verse in Siddh Gost which is also very difficult to interpret.

ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸੁੰਨੈ¹ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਸੁੰਨੈ ਤਿਭਵਣ² ਸੁੰਨ ਮਸੁੰਨੈ³ ॥

Anṭar suna'n bāhar suna'n ṭaribḥavaṇ sunn masu'nnān.

ਚਉਥੈ ਸੁੰਨੈ⁵ ਜੋ ਨਰੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਤਾ ਕਉ ਪਾਪੁ ਨ ਪੁੰਨੈ ॥

Chā^uthe sunnai jo nar jānai tā ka^o pāp na pu'nnān.

I have reproduced the translation by Manmohan Singh (SGPC) [17] of the first two phrases which are also translated in the same sense by many other theologians: *Within us is God¹, without us is God and the God alone³ is filling the Three worlds².*

The man, who realises the Lord in the fourth state; Him vice and virtue effect not.

If *Sunn* is Nothingness as discussed previously then it cannot be inside or outside of us and also in the mythical three worlds because *Sunn* (Nothingness) is such a state like Black Hole that engulfs everything, therefore, there cannot be inside or outside of anything (or us) or even three mythical worlds in *Sunn* (Nothingness) state. Then how could we know the ਚਉਥੈ ਸੁੰਨੈ (fourth Sunn) in the next phrase? I

reproduced the translation of Manmohan Singh [17] for these phrases only to show that he and other scholars think that it is Guru Nanak's philosophy about *Sunn*. But it is not like that. Careful analysis of the above two phrases indicates that this is the concept of *Sunn* of Siddhas. Next phrases are the answer to this question.

The following interpretation is mine to make clear the concept of *Sunn* of Guru Nanak:

ਘਟਿ⁶ ਘਟਿ ਸੁੰਨ⁷ ਕਾ ਜਾਣੈ ਭੋਉ⁸ ॥

Gḥat gḥat sunn kā jānai bhē^o.

ਆਦਿ⁹ ਪੁਰਖ¹⁰ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ¹¹ ਦੇਉ ॥

Ād purakhḥ niranjan dē^o.

Everybody⁶ knows the secret⁸ of that Nothingness⁷ (God) that:

The One¹⁰, who existed before the time and space appeared⁹, is the Flawless¹¹.

ਜੋ ਜਨੁ ਨਾਮ¹² ਨਿਰੰਜਨ¹³ ਰਾਤਾ ॥

Jo jan nām niranjan rātā.

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋਈ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਬਿਯਾਤਾ¹⁴ ॥੫੧॥

Nānak so^oi purakhḥ bidhātā. ||51||

ਅਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 943.

The one, who has understood the Laws of Nature¹² of the Flawless¹³ (God); Nanak says that one understands that One is also the Bounteous¹⁴.51.

AGGS, M 1, p 943.

Here ਨਾਮ¹² (*Naam*) has been equated to “Laws of Nature” by Guru Arjan as reported earlier.

ਪੁਰਖੁ ਬਿਯਾਤਾ¹⁴ : The Bounteous - The One Who has provided all the necessary resources for sustaining life on this Earth.

CONCLUSIONS

- According to Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon, Jodh Singh and Bhai Kahn Singh [5, 12, 13, 14] *Sunn* means ‘to expand’ and Brahm (God) also means ‘to expand’, therefore, *Sunn* has been equated to Brahm (God).
- The *Sunn*/Brahm expanded to the Universe (Various elements to Galaxies containing billions of Stars (Suns), Planets).
- Explanation of *Sunn* in the Bani of Guru Nanak when analyzed with the application of Science, especially Physics and the Theory of Big Bang leads us to conclude that the *Sunn* of Guru Nanak is same as ‘Nothingness’ of some scientists or ‘Singularity’ of others since this ‘Nothingness’ or ‘Singularity’ expanded into the Universe according the Big Bang Theory accepted by many scientists.
- Is not Guru Nanak representing ‘ਸੁੰਨ’ (*Sunn*) -

‘Nothingness’, which is ‘Singularity’ as ‘ੴ’ (One and Only) in a logo as **ੴ**, i.e. ‘ੴ’ (One and Only) is ‘ੴ’ (Oh), That is ‘•’ ‘Infinite’?

- All this information raises a question: If *Sunn*/Brahm (God) can expand Itself to the Universe then could there be any Entity responsible for creation of the Universe?

Special Note:

Controversy about Big Bang - Origin of Universe

Although the Big Bang Theory is widely accepted for the origin of Universe by many scientists, however, some have started to put new theories - String Theory, Anti-inflationary Theory, Quantum Theory, etc. - against Big Bang Theory. Amanda Gefter, Consultant for *New Scientist*, puts this controversy as follows [6]:

“Cosmologists are still digesting the new proposal, with some questioning whether the assumptions it makes are justified. Guth says that as yet no one is sure about the validity of the specific holographic correspondence Hertog, Hawking and Hartle have employed. “*It’s certainly a worthwhile line of research, but what they are trying to establish is a very difficult thing*”, he says.

We are not yet there, at the true story of the beginning of the Universe. But it seems undeniable now that working out whether inflation is the imposter doubters such as Tegmark believe it is will depend on finding some way to consistently apply quantum theory to the fabric of the Universe. Only then will we truly know what kind of a bang the Big Bang was.”

Guru Nanak has rightly answered the question about the ‘Aad’ in ‘Siddh’ Gost during the 15th century as follows:

ਆਦਿ ਕਉ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਕਥੀਅਲੇ ਸੁਨੈ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਵਾ

ਸੁ ਲੀਆ ॥

Ād kaᵒ bismād bīchār kathīᵒale sunn niranṭar vās līᵒā.

ਅਗਰਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 940.

One can think³ and talk⁴ only in term of wonders² about Aad¹ (the period before the beginning of time and space) that during this state of Aad¹ the Nothingness⁵ was completely⁶ dwelling⁷ in Nothingness.
AGGS, M 1, p 940.

It looks like that the time before the origin of the Universe will remain a mystery for a quite long time.

However, Liz Kruesi gives quite convincing evidence that Stellar Black Holes do exist within the galaxy and Super-massive Black Holes in the centers of the galaxies. Our Milky Way Galaxy has both types of Black Holes.

These Black Holes are comparable to that of 'Singularity' from which this Universe appeared after the Big Bang. It appears to me that ultimately all the Stellar Black Holes within a Galaxy will be engulfed by the Super-massive Black Holes in the center of the Galaxy. Ultimately all such Black Holes of all the Galaxies would form a single Black Hole - 'SINGULARITY' ('Nothingness' /Sunn) which will give rise to a new Universe exactly the way it happened with our Universe about 13.7 billion years ago. If it is so then all theories trying to disprove Big Bang will fall apart and Singularity/Sunn to Universe to Singularity/Sunn cycle will continue as mentioned by Guru Arjan:

ਕਈ ਬਾਰ ਪਸਰਿਓ ਪਾਸਾਰ ॥

Kaᵒī bār pasriᵒo pāsār.

ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਇਕੁ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ॥

Sadā sadā ik ekankār.

ਅਗਰਸ, ਮ: 5, ਪੰਨਾ 276.

The Universe⁴ came into existence³ many¹ times². But the One⁶ (Sunn – Nothingness or Ekankaar - Singularity) remains One and Only⁷ all the time⁵.
AGGS, M 5, p 276.

(*Kruesi, Liz. 2012. How We Know Black Holes exist. Astronomy. April, pp 24-29.)

www.astronomy.com

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If there is still any flaw then that is my incapability to explain the Gurbani in its real perspective.

The Gurbani in Unicode and its transliteration in Roman and some interpretations are reproduced as the courtesy of Dr Kulbir Singh Thind, USA from his Web site: www.srigranth.org

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GURU DIAN KHUSHIAN

It is over a year now. The President of the Gurdwara sahib announced from the stage that they were planning to have 25 Akhand Paths, one every week, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Gurdwara sahib at its present location. He was exhorting members of the sangat to sponsor these Akhand paths. The slogan was “Akhand Path Karao, te Guru Deian Khushian lae ke Jao.”

Two months later on a Friday evening in the langar, a friend of mine asked me to join him for the bhog ceremony of the Akhand path, next Sunday morning, to be followed by Kirtan and langar. After the ceremony was over, and the first batch of devotees had finished partaking of the langar, I went to the langar. As I sat down, my friend came over to serve me. I asked him to join me if he had finished serving, which he did.

As we sat down, I asked the reason for the Akhand Path. He stated that it was to celebrate his son's birthday and sponsor an Akhand path. My next question and the answers are penned here under:

Question:

Were you able to listen to the recitation of the gurbani, and for how long?

Answer:

Uncle, to tell you frankly, I tried twice. First day I came early from the office to listen, but the Pathi ji was reading only in his mouth. We made parkarma around Guru Granth sahib twice to make him aware of our presence, but no result. We sat there for 15 minutes but you cannot sit in a vacuum for long. So we came to the langar to serve others.

Second day, when we came, the pathi ji was reading loud enough; but was doing it so fast that we could not understand it. So, after half an hour we left for langar.

Question:

If you could not listen to or understand anything, was there any purpose served.

Answer:

No. Now that I think of it, it boils down to pure karam kand.

He then shot a question at me. Uncle, since it is only a karam kand, why does the Akal Takhat sahib not put a ban on this practice?

Answer:

The Akal takhat Sahib does not want to put a ban, because four interests are interwoven and converge.

1. Your interest. Your (Sangat) psyche has been so tuned (moulded) that you consider getting an Akhand Path done as a matter of great religious merit. Guru kian Khushian in abundance. What else could be easier? You do not have to make any changes to your life style or attitude to life. No effort is required to try and live a truthful and ethical life. Just spend few hundred dollars and you have the Guru kian Khushian.
2. The Pathi Singhs interest. They get paid for doing the path. Forget about Guru Nanak's dictum "Trig ten ka java lakh Vichar neon" Here it is a case of Parch Vichar neon. Most of them (Pathis) are kirtanias or Katha wachaks from India. They come here to North America after spending huge sums of money. Hence, this payment is a great attraction to them. That is why you never hear any Kirtania or Katha Wachak asking the sangat to do path themselves, try and understand gurbani and contemplate on it. Only then can one have a glimpse of the Devine wisdom contained in Shri

Guru Granth Sahib. For them it is "Rotian karan puran tal".

3. The Giani ji or Granthi ji is no better. He also does the Ardas " Hai sache Patsha, is akali bani the akhand Path sahib ji da sacha te sucha bhav flana singh ji nu milae". He has made divine wisdom transferable in return for money without any effort. He is only following the trend and management instructions. He adds the superlative of "Guru Ghar de Tahliae"
4. The last is the Gurudwara managements including SGPC. Akhand Paths have become a cash cow for them. Hence at all levels they make every effort to promote this karam kand. You invited all your friends, relatives and acquaintances for the bhog ceremony. Even those who normally do not attend the gurdwara on that particular day will come because of your invitation. It has become a social function. Now everyone who comes to the ceremony will put some money in the golak and to the ragi Singhs. You also paid for the langar for your invitees.

So you see different interest complement each other. Even if a truth loving and courageous Jathedar of Akal Takhat sahib does issue an addict to ban this ungurmat practice (of paid Akhand Paths) he will run into so many self-interests that he is more likely to be moved out than anything happening on the ground.

We have reached a stage where at Shri Harimander Sahib in Amritsar, readymade Akhand Paths are available for sale. Just go and do the Ardas.

All this, in spite of Guru Arjan's dictum in Rag Ramkali at Ang 962 " Nan tu avain vas Ved parhavne....."

Is there any hope?

Avtar Singh, Canada

THE CONCEPT OF EQUALITY IN SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

The world today is torn by enmity and religious hatred. A lasting and peaceful society is impossible unless we follow the path shown by our holy scriptures. SGGS teaches equality of mankind. It is a model for inter- religious understanding and shows us

the path of mutual respect, toleration and harmony. It guides us not only in spiritual matters but also teaches us to work for the welfare of all so that a balanced society may develop. The Sikh Gurus aimed at the uplift of humanity without any discrimination. Many sacred hymns advise us to treat others as equals.

At the time of Guru Nanak, the Hindu society was divided into four castes, Brahmins for learning, *Kshatriyas* for defense, *Vaishas* for trade and agriculture, and *Shudras* for all sorts of menial work. This system had become static and rigid. The Hindus had become most orthodox people on account of this caste system. Thus false pride of superiority and isolation led to the neglect of the defense of the country. *Gurbani* strongly condemns inequality which was prevalent in India in the 15th century. It is not supported in *Gurbani*. The Sikh Gurus and all those whose compositions are included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib tried their best to eradicate it and wrote against it. Guru Nanak Dev has written: ਜਾਤਿ ਬਰਨ ਕੁਲ ਸਹਸਾ ਚੁਕਾ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਬੀਚਾਰੀ ॥(SGGS:1198)

“Social class and status, race, ancestry and skepticism are eliminated, following the Guru's Teachings and contemplating the Word of the *Shabad*.”

Gurbani teaches that we all are the Offspring of the Same Father.

Gurbani has stressed that all human beings are the creation of the same Lord, children of one God and have equal rights. We may look different, but all of us are from the same source as a potter shapes different kinds of vessels from the same clay. Light from the same Lord is radiant within all of us:

ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ਤਿਸ ਦੈ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਇ ॥(Guru Nanak Dev.SGGS:13)

“Amongst all is the Light-You are that Light. By this Illumination, that Light is radiant within all.”

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਦੁਹੂੰ ਮਹਿ ਏਕੈ ਕਹੈ ਕਬੀਰ ਪੁਕਾਰੀ ॥(Bhagat Kabir. SGGS:483)

“The One Lord is within both Hindu and Muslim; Kabeer proclaims this out loudly.”

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥(Guru Arjan Dev.SGGS611)

“The One God is our father; we are the children of the One God. We have the same Guru.”

ਚਾਰੇ ਵਰਨ ਆਖੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਿੰਦ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਓਪਤਿ ਹੋਈ ॥

“Everyone says that there are four castes, four social classes. They all emanate from the drop of God's Seed.

ਮਾਟੀ ਏਕ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ॥ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਘੜੈ ਕੁਮਾਰਾ ॥ (Guru Amar Dass.SGGS:1128)

The entire universe is made of the same clay. The Potter has shaped it into all sorts of vessels.”

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ॥

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਦੇ ॥

(Bhagat Kabir.SGGS:1349)

“First, *Allah* (God) created the Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad?”

A Piece of Advice to Proud Brahmins.

Gurbani admonishes the proud Brahmins who treated themselves superior of all the four castes, ill treated and exploited those who belonged to low castes:

ਜੋ ਤੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੀ ਜਾਇਆ ॥

ਤਉ ਆਨ ਬਾਟ ਕਾਹੇ ਨਹੀ ਆਇਆ ॥

ਤੁਮ ਕਤ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਹਮ ਕਤ ਸੂਦ ॥

ਹਮ ਕਤ ਲੋਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਕਤ ਦੂਧ ॥

(Bhagat Kabir. SGGS:324)

“If you are indeed a Brahmin, born of a Brahmin mother, then why didn't you come by some other way? How is it that you are a Brahmin, and I am of a low social status? How is it that I am formed of blood, and you are made of milk?”

ਗਰਭ ਵਾਸ ਮਹਿ ਕੁਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਤੀ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਿੰਦੁ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਉਤਪਾਤੀ ॥

(Bhagat Kabir.SGGS:324)

“In the dwelling of the womb, there is no ancestry or social status. All have originated from the Seed of God.”

Guru Amr Dass has also stressed this point in the following words:

ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰੀਅਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਿੰਦੇ ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਹੋਈ ॥

ਜਾਤਿ ਕਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਰਖ ਗਵਾਰਾ ॥

ਇਸੁ ਗਰਬ ਤੇ ਚਲਹਿ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਵਿਕਾਰਾ ॥(SGGS:1127)

“No one should be proud of his social class and status. He alone is a Brahmin, who knows God. Do not be proud of your social class and status, you ignorant fool! So much sin and corruption comes from this pride.”

Not Religion or Caste, but Meditation and Good Deeds Matter.

According to Gurbani, meditation and good deeds and not religion and social status matter in the court of the Lord. All deeds which teach brotherhood of mankind are true and good. It does not matter who performs them. Rather Gurbani treats all those who forget God as outcast:

ਖਸਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਹਿ ਤੇ ਕਮਜਾਤਿ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਵੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਸਨਾਤਿ ॥

(Guru Nanak Dev.SGGS:10)

“Those who forget their Lord and Master are vile and despicable. O Nanak, without the Name, they are wretched outcasts.”

ਜਾਤੀ ਦੈ ਕਿਆ ਹਥਿ ਸਚੁ ਪਰਖੀਐ ॥

ਮਹੁਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਥਿ ਮਰੀਐ ਚਖੀਐ ॥

(Guru Nanak Dev.SGGS:142)

“What good is social class and status? Truthfulness is measured (in the Lord's court). Pride in one's status is like poison-holding it in your hand and eating it, you shall die.”

ਜਾਣਹੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਨ ਪੂਛਹੁ ਜਾਤੀ ਆਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਹੇ ॥

(Guru Nanak Dev.SGGS:349)

“Recognize the Lord's Light within all, and do not consider social class or status; there are no classes or castes in the world hereafter.”

ਆਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਤੇਹਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੇਹੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ॥

(Guru Amar Dass.SGGS:363)

“Social status and beauty will not go with you hereafter. As are the deeds done here, so does one become.”

ਜਾਤਿ ਅਜਾਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਿਨ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਤਿਨ ਪਰਮ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਇਆ

॥(Guru Raam Dass.SGGS:574)

“Whether of high or low social status, one who meditates on the *Naam* obtains the supreme treasure.”

ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਤ ਤਰਿਆ ॥

ਧੰਨਾ ਜਟੁ ਬਾਲਮੀਕੁ ਬਟਵਾਰਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਰਿ ਪਇਆ॥

(SGGS: 995)

“O my mind, chant the Naam, the Name of the Lord, and cross over. Dhanna the farmer, and Balmik the highway robber, became Gurmukh, and crossed over (the world ocean).”

ਅਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਪੁਛੀਐ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ ਸਾਰੁ॥

(Guru Amar Dass.SGGS:1094)

“Hereafter, no one is questioned about social status; excellent and sublime is the practice of the Word of the Shabad.”

SGGS also Contains Compositions of persons of Different Religions & Low caste.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib contains compositions of not only Sikh Gurus, but also those of low caste holy persons like Kabir, a weaver, Naam Dev, a tailor and Ravi Daas, a shoe maker. It considers the merit of the composition and not the caste or religion of the composer as composition of Sheikh Farid, a Muslim, is also included in it. When we bow before SGGS, we bow before the teachings of all those persons without the consideration of their caste or creed. Thus Gurbani has eliminated the difference between the low castes and the high castes.

Gurbani is for All.

Teachings of SGGS like unity of God, meditation, honest earning, life of a house holder, sweet tongue, humility, celibacy, respect for females and brotherhood and equality of mankind etc are meant for all persons :

ਖੜੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੂਦ ਵੈਸ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਹੁ ਵਰਨਾ ਕਉ ਸਾਝਾ॥

(SGGS: 747/48)

“The four castes - the Kh'shaatriyas, Brahmins, Soodras and Vaishyas - are equal in respect to the teachings.”

ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪਤਿਆ ਉਤਮ ਪਦਵੀ ਪਾਇ ॥

(Guru Raam Das .SGGS:733)

“When someone of low social class chants the Lord's Name, he obtains the state of highest dignity.”

ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮ ਆਪਨ ਕੀਨਾ ਹਮ ਸਭਨਾ ਕੇ ਸਾਜਨ ॥

(Guru Arjan Dev.SGGS671)

“I am a friend to all; I am everyone's friend.”

Gurbani Teaches us to Treat Everyone Equally.

Guru Nanak Dev belonged to a high caste, but in his compositions calls himself slave of a low caste. He preferred the dry food of *Bhai Lalo*, a carpenter belonging to a low caste, to the delicious food of *Malik Bhago*, the local lord, and proved what he preached in Gurbani:

ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੁ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸੁ ॥

(SGGS:15)

“Nanak seeks the company of the lowest of the low class, the very lowest of the low. Why should he try to compete with the great?”

According to Gurbani even God blesses the place where people of low caste are cared:

ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸੁ ॥

(Guru Nank Dev.SGGS:15)

“In that place where the lowly are cared for-there, the Blessings of Your Glance of Grace rain down.”

ਫਕਤ ਜਾਤੀ ਫਕਤੁ ਨਾਉ ॥
ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਇਕਾ ਛਾਉ ॥

(Guru Nank Dev.SGGS:83)

“Pride in social status is empty; pride in personal glory is useless. The One Lord gives shade to all beings.”

ਵਿਚਿ ਸਨਾਤੀ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਛੁਆ ਪਹਿਚੈ ਸੋਇ ॥

(Guru Nank Dev.SGGS:1256)

“And if someone from a low social class becomes a selfless servant, O Nanak, he shall wear shoes made from my skin.”

Conclusion

There is no doubt that Gurbani teaches us not to believe in or practice caste system in our daily life, but we who profess to be the followers of the teachings of Gurbani still have caste considerations. Sikh society particularly in our villages in the Punjab is clearly divided into castes. Our Gurdwaras are named after the castes of those who manage them. Let us think over this problem and become true followers of Gurbani by giving up false pride of our caste. We should treat all human beings equally.

Sawan Singh Gogia

**APPEAL TO PUNJABI SIKH DIASPORA:
ADOPT YOUR ANCESTRAL VILLAGE AND TOWN**

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੋਇ॥

"Ghall khae kush hatho deh,
Nanak rah pashanay seh"

One who works for his living and shares some of his earnings, says Nanak, he learns the true spiritual path.

“What we think determines what happens to us, so if we want to change our lives, we need to stretch our minds.” - Wayne Dyer

1. Historical perspective of Punjabi and Indian Diaspora

Diaspora literally means scattering or dispersion. It was originally used for the dispersion of Jews after their exile from Babylon in the 6th century BC, and today Diaspora is used to describe any group of people who are dispersed or scattered away from their ancestral homeland. The Punjabi Sikh Diaspora constitutes an important and in some aspects forceful unique people in the world culture. Turban wearing Sikh workers and professionals are seen globally and are represented in all walks of life. Many overseas Sikhs occupy prestigious positions as cabinet ministers and mayors, parliamentarians, professors and department heads, directors and deans of universities and colleges, leading physicians and surgeons, veterinary practitioners; they in every major industry and government positions, transport business, and in police force. Many first generation Punjabis have succeeded as lawyers, real estate owners, builders and developers, in the hotel/motel and restaurant businesses, import and export sector, car dealerships, and lumber industry as well as in diverse type of small businesses all over the world.

In countries such as the United Kingdom, United States and Canada, the Sikhs have made their presence visibly felt in politics, businesses and all types of professions. Some Punjabis are known for running tremendously successful agriculture and dairy farming in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America. Many overseas Sikh doctors and surgeons, businessmen and farmers are very wealthy and have earned respect as philanthropists in their communities and their adopted countries.

All immigrant communities across the world, especially the first generation immigrants, often maintain substantial link with their motherland. Some immigrants go back to their country of origin after retirement owing to various reasons.

The most significant pull factors for return to ancestral homeland are family ties, language and culture, nostalgia, and sometimes business venture as well as warm weather or healthy climate. Some home returning Punjabi professionals may be interested to undertake volunteer teaching in colleges and universities to promote education in rural Punjab, while other home returning NRIs may be interested to invest in well-designed rural development projects related to agro-food industry, food production and agro-biotechnology, water conservation through drip-irrigation, preservation of vegetables and fruits, alternate sources of energy production, and to promote tourist and hotel industry in Punjab, just to name a few investment ventures. Some such projects are already flourishing in urban Punjab, but much more is needed in rural Punjab.

According to Ashok Rao (2013), the estimated number of Indian Diaspora population, including Old, New and Gulf Diaspora, is around 30 million spread across 6 continents and 125 countries. Among the Indian migrants, Punjabi Diaspora constitutes the largest group numbering over 10 million worldwide (Thandi, 2006, Chanda and Ghosh, 2013). Among the New Diaspora, roughly 45-50% are considered to be of the Punjabi decent, and a significant number of Sikhs are currently living in developed countries.

Owing to their hard working nature and ambitious attitude, the Sikh Diaspora or Punjabi NRIs occupy the high earning bracket category. Provided, a conducive investment environment is created in the ancestral homeland, they have an enormous potential to invest in the rural development of Punjab that would create jobs, provide access to health care and education, and consequently improve living standards of the people of Punjab.

In the past, most Punjabi NRIs either temporarily working outside India or permanently settled abroad have made substantial monetary contributions to look after the welfare of their families, whereas some compassion-driven persons have been involved in social and charitable work in their ancestral villages and

towns. However, collective efforts are needed by the Punjabi Diaspora to improve the education and health, underground sewer system, and rural development.

2. Punjabi and Indian migrants' monetary and intellectual contributions

During a lecture delivered at the Punjabi University, Patiala, dated March 26, 2013, Dr. Thandi from Coventry University, UK, stated that "the contribution of immigrant population towards the homeland (India) in the form of remittances and FDI are currently around US 60 billion and Punjab alone receives about US 10-15 billion". He further elaborated that "The relationship between diaspora and homeland, which earlier used to be one-way have changed and now it is a two-way process in which transfer of people, money, goods, services, political ideas and socio-cultural values take place between the homeland and diaspora.

Ironically, Punjab's approach toward diaspora remains more of rhetoric than of concrete and continuous engagement as that of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Punjab must change the start-cum-stop approach to diaspora." Obviously, Dr. Shinder Singh Thandi has offered a very sound advice to the Government of Punjab for tapping the investment potential and transfer human resources from the Punjabi Diaspora for the socio-economic progress of Punjab.

The early migrants from India faced discrimination, oppression, injustice, and human rights violations. They survived on menial and low-paying manual jobs, shared crowded lodgings, and faced widespread hostility from neighbours. However, they managed to maintain their distinctive identity as persons of Indian origin, whether migrated from different parts of India or of different religions. They struggled and made their successive generations a contributing community in the adopted countries.

In modern times, the Indian Diaspora has contributed greatly through brain power and several Noble prizes have been awarded to persons of Indian origin working in research institutions in UK and USA. Many scientists from India are working for NASA in America. A significant number of professors are teaching at the prestigious universities and colleges in the developed countries and in the Middle East.

Several immigrants from Punjab and India now hold CEO positions for big businesses and corporations.

3. Investment skepticism of Punjabi Diaspora in ancestral homeland

The Punjabi Diaspora are diverse in more than one ways, and they are expected to hold different opinions for adopting their villages and towns or get involved in rural development projects. Some may argue about the lack of transparency and financial accountability, integrity and control of their investment, while others may have apparent skepticism about rampant corruption, red tape, bureaucracy, low rate of return on investment, difficulty in the transfer of profit, and unattractive income tax laws in Punjab and/or India. Nevertheless, Punjabis are known for their generosity and some may consider adopting their villages and towns based on compassionate and humanitarian grounds or on charity basis, while others may like to invest in well designed rural development projects provided they are assured about transparency and financial accountability, checks and controls as well as transfer of profits accrued from the investments.

Perhaps, the Government of Punjab should put together a team of prominent economists, bankers and lawyers, planners from Punjab/India plus representatives from the Punjabi Diaspora to solicit ideas for developing concrete business plans and investment model(s) to elicit investment from the Punjabi NRIs. Alternately, some existing business plans or economic models should be explored to attract investment in rural Punjab as are being used in the states of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

5. Range of activities where Punjabi Diaspora may contribute in ancestral homeland

In the era of knowledge-based economy, spending in scientific education and research, employment-oriented vocational training, and creation of skilled work force are all of paramount importance in any developing society. By investing in poly-technical and vocational education programs, the Punjabi Diaspora would not only help in creating employment for men and women in rural Punjab, but would also prepare the Punjabi youth for seeking industry-oriented jobs in other regions of India.

Further, by adopting their ancestral villages and towns, the Punjabi NRIs would assist to provide clean water, improve health care and sanitation, and ultimately alleviate poverty and bring prosperity in the ancestral homeland.

5. Leadership and vision

The Government of Punjab, especially the ministers of foreign affairs, finance, education, and economic development should provide leadership role to organise "The World Punjabi Diaspora Conference" and persuade overseas Punjabis to invest in poly-technical education and vocational-training programs intended for creating employment among Punjabi youth.

The Punjabi Diaspora should also be encouraged to make endowments at institutions of higher learning to spread education in rural Punjab. Cooperation between the Indian and Punjab Government is required to give tax incentives and assurance of transfer of earnings to the Punjabi Diaspora who may like to invest in Punjab. To attract foreign investments in India, the Central Government has already created tax incentives and transfer of profit model for the foreign companies and corporations. The same existing investment model could be used for the Punjabi NRIs who are willing to invest in rural Punjab. The Assembly of Punjabi Diaspora may serve as a useful platform to develop consensus and seek support from overseas Punjabis to initiate such development projects like 'Adopt Your Own Village and Town' where the rural people are in dire need for help.

The Indian Government should welcome unrestricted NRI investment, and perhaps make changes in tax policy - combined with permissive charity and endowment policy in colleges and universities. To solicit the help of NRI professionals, continuing education programs should be developed in every scientific discipline all over India geared to draw the benefit from Indian professionals settled abroad. At the same time, interactive forums for the exchange of scientific and technology information among the Diaspora scientists and Indian scientists should be created at the state funded and private research and development institutions. Through such measures, India shall draw a huge benefit by inviting the NRI scientists, biomedical professionals, and businessmen

who understand their ancestral homeland much better than the foreign consultants. The author has himself experienced and has eye-witness account about the professional exchange program being used by the Universities of Hong Kong and China, where they invite experts to deliver lecture/seminars and short courses to undergraduate and graduate students. These universities provide free accommodation and hospitality to the invited guest speakers, without any honorarium or salaries.

6. Creation of Punjabi Diaspora academia talent bank

All vice chancellors of the new and old universities in Punjab should join hands and consider for creating sustainable Punjabi Diaspora Academia Talent Bank by inviting the Punjabi professionals and businessmen settled abroad. The Academia Talent Bank would be comprised of Doctors, Scientists, Professors, Bankers, Economists, Engineers, Lawyers, Philanthropists, IT experts etc. It would also include successful business men and women, farmers, builders, and entrepreneurs living abroad. One important objective of The Academia Talent Bank participants would be to motivate and inspire Punjabi students, particularly the young men and women of rural Punjab, so that they can tap their learning potentials and achieve excellence in their chosen fields of higher education, research, and vocational careers.

7. World Punjabi Diaspora Conference

World Punjabi Diaspora Conference may be organized at Amritsar or Chandigarh to showcase accomplishments of Punjabi migrants and to explore investment possibilities in rural Punjab.

In the author's opinion, The World Punjabi Diaspora Conference would provide a stage where the Sikhs settled abroad would be able to showcase their success stories, accomplishments and the preservation of Punjabi language, culture and heritage during the last 125 years in Canada, America, Malaysia, Singapore, and other countries. Also, The World Punjabi Diaspora Conference would serve as a useful platform to exchange information and views, and consequently develop a consensus to explore possibilities for bringing together human resources and potential investment possibilities in rural Punjab.

The Punjabis, particularly the Sikhs, are known for their generosity and their collective efforts and wisdom can make things happen in Punjab. The Diaspora has the strength and potential to make socio-economic changes those are urgently needed in rural Punjab. Importantly enough, synergy must be created between the Punjab and Indian Government for tax incentive and transfer of profits by the foreign investors.

Creation of conducive investment environment is absolutely essential for inviting investment from the Punjabi NRIs to promote skill-oriented education and vocational training for rural Punjabi men and women in areas, for example, agro-food and dairy industry, health and maternity care, availability of clean water, prevention of soil and land erosion, water conservation, building of roads and infrastructure, telecommunication, and promotion of tourism and hotel/motel business in the province of Punjab.

There is no question that the economic picture in rural India has brightened marginally, but on average, the economic growth in cities has far exceeded in comparison with the villages since the late 1990s. In global context, the long-term outlook of village economy is not good. Generally, rural India's median economic growth has chronically lagged behind their urban counterparts where the concentration of wealth has always remained several-fold higher.

In recent years, the economy of Punjab has dwindled, and so have the job opportunities, resulting in double digit unemployment rate among the Punjabi youth. The college and university education has become very expensive all over India. Many private colleges, universities, and English language teaching schools have mushroomed in India and have become a lucrative business venture in this country.

Unfortunately, the college and university education is becoming very expensive and is getting out of reach for lower income people. The annual tuition fees for university education range from eighty to one hundred thousand rupees in Punjab. The fee-structure, of course, vary for the art and science courses. The greedy owners of private schools/colleges/universities charge soaring high tuition fees. The Punjabi Diaspora should not only be encouraged to invest in rural development of Punjab, but also adopt their own

villages and towns to promote poly-technical education among the Punjabi youth. Additionally, the College Principals and Vice Chancellors of Universities should make an official appeal to the Punjabi Diaspora for creating Endowments at colleges and universities in Punjab, set up Merit Awards and Merit-cum-means Scholarships for the poor and needy students who would be able to develop vocational skills for self-employment and have jobs near their homes.

As said earlier, such endeavours would not only help to alleviate poverty in the Punjabi Diaspora's ancestral homeland, but would also bring economic prosperity and restore the glory of Punjab, where at one time, the start of Green Revolution produced enough food to feed whole of India.

8. Decentralization and overhauling of education in Punjab.

Education is the birth right of every human being. All government funded modern and old universities, medical and dental colleges, engineering and poly-technical institutes, agriculture and veterinary colleges, and pharmacy and nursing schools are presently located in the cities of Punjab, wherefrom the city dwellers have maximally benefited in providing professional education to their children with comparatively far lesser investment. The system has been churning out doctors, engineers, teachers, and scientists from urban areas for a long time. On the other hand, the overwhelming rural taxpaying population of Punjab has been deprived of the overall educational benefits of higher learning, owing to the lack of financial resources and affordability problems faced by the parents of village students. On account of these reasons, over a number of decades, a lop-sided development situation has existed in rural Punjab and rest of India due to the lack of competitive education and knowledge, causing discrepancy in employment opportunities for the village folks.

To transform a developing nation into a developed one ultimately requires level and plain field for unleashing its native genius, viz., equal opportunity and accessibility to higher education and technological skills to deserving young men and women living in villages. The creation of professional colleges and institutions of high learning in rural areas is urgently needed to reverse the lop sided development trend in rural Punjab and other regions of India. In all fairness to

rural Punjabis and rural people of India, the planners and education policy makers should consider the decentralisation of professional colleges and university campuses near a cluster of villages for teaching basic courses to students who can commute daily for attending college/university without requiring residential accommodation. This approach would help in reducing the education cost for young men and women living in the villages. At present, simultaneously sending of 2 children to professional colleges or to institutions of high learning has become out of reach for many parents in rural Punjab.

9. Discrepancies in acquiring higher education and employment opportunities among urban versus rural Punjabis and Indians

The burgeoning population growth in the Indian subcontinent has created intense competition for admission in IITs and other prestigious universities in India. Mostly, the urban students are well prepared and have better chances of admission in these high ranking institutions in comparison with the students coming from rural Punjab and other rural regions of India.

Reservation of seats for government jobs and admission in medical, engineering and other professional colleges for under-privileged-class students with poor academic grades have sadly compromised the principles of merit. Society must provide an equal opportunity to the under-privileged-class for acquiring professional education and for sharpening the knowledge and skills for government jobs, however, the principles of merit shouldn't be undermined.

Occasionally, large sums of monetary donations and a high degree of political influence are used to admit mediocre students in leading colleges and universities. The rich and middle-class urbanite Indians are too busy in making money and sending their children abroad, on the other hand, the poor people of India keep on struggling to earn the day-to-day living.

All of these factors have not only created a big socio-economic gap between the wealthy and poor in Punjab and other parts of India, but also are forcing many professionals and skilled labour from India to go to the Middle Eastern countries, Europe and other English speaking countries. Many university degree holders from Punjab have already left or will be migrating to

Canada, America, Australia, New Zealand, and perhaps South America in search of job opportunities and for the betterment of their own lives as well as their close families.

It makes one wonder about India as a global economic power where lop-sided development has occurred in urban centres and cities, resulting in overpopulated and polluted cities with traffic jams, while Indian leaders have virtually disregarded and neglected the welfare of 70-75% population living in poverty-stricken villages and towns! It is a high time for the provincial and federal parliamentarians and planners to look back at the past and make future plans for the overall good of all citizens of India.

10. Khushwant Singh's views on Punjab politics

On August 12, 2013, the prominent Sikh scholar Khushwant Singh from Chandigarh (not to be confused with Delhite Khuswant Singh) sent a short but stern message to the Political Masters of Punjab, underscoring the overall deteriorating socio-economic-political situation in the province of Punjab. Sardar Khushwant Singh hit-the-nail-on-the-head and made an awakening call to the 'Sirs of Punjab'. He pointed out that "Which leader amongst you stands committed for development in the real sense of it? Please don't give me the list of foundation stones as a corollary. Development is an environment and not merely a dictionary word. Development ushers where education flourishes. Flowers of progress blossom in the land where its stakeholders invest in the land's intellectual wealth by creating institutes of excellence research and development". He further wrote that "growth does not come with ribbon-cutting exercises, foundation stone laying ceremonies or gathering people in huge numbers to listen to your voice. It comes to the land that attracts and welcomes the best minds as well as offers the locals the best infrastructure and safe environment". In the concluding sentence, Mr. Singh said that "... as history characteristically spares none. In bold letters it will be advertised, when Punjab was squandered by its very own".

Although this author is not in a position to predict the outcome and impact of Khushwant Singh's message sent to the Political Sirs of Punjab, he can only pray to the Almighty Sat Guru for the quick reversal of disappointing situation in his ancestral homeland and

wish best of luck to the people of Punjab whom he loves so much. As anyone can hypothesize, mending the progressively deteriorating socio-economic-political conditions in Punjab not only require serious commitment but also need honest and benevolent leadership for the rural development of Punjab.

Long live the Punjabi Sikh Diaspora and long live our Punjab!!

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12. Foot Note:-

From the author's perspective, the best way to make a change is actually to be a part of it. Since generosity begins at home, the author has done the following things in his ancestral homeland Punjab.

1) Has established Annual Merit Award for a female student coming from rural Punjab and pursuing Master or Doctoral degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences. This Annual Merit Award was initiated in 2010 with an endowment of over one lakh rupees given as charity donation to the Punjab Academy of Sciences, Patiala, Punjab.

2) Has built a room for primary class students in the memory of his beloved mother at his village, Bharowal, District Tarn Taran.

3) Donated funds for buying books and paid fees for the poor and needy students in his village.

- 4) Donated money for repairing and building the school perimeter wall in his village.
- 5) Has committed Rs. 20,000.00 for the Master's degree Best Thesis Award in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.
- 6) Based on his scientific and academic accomplishments, in the year 2012, the author was appointed as Visiting Professor at Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Amritsar, to teach short-term courses in Basic & Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. This three-year Visiting Professorship appointment neither involves any honorarium nor any salary from GNDU. It is totally a Nishkam Sewa with no strings attached.

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SUKHMANI, SIKHI AND FRAUDULENT BABAS: Ritualizing or Spiritualizing?

This article has two objectives: to bring about genuine appreciation of Sukhmani Sahib within the Sikh reader's mind; and secondly to help remove the plethora of *dera*-concocted myths and tales that have succeeded in turning Sukhmani recital into a ritual.

After Japji and Rehras, the Sukhmani is believed to be the most widely recited *banee*. Why then is there a need to bring about appreciation of *banee* that is already widely read? The reasons have to do with the *motivations underlying* our recitation. The basic argument is that if our motives are misplaced, our reading of a *banee*, even if done on a *nitnem* basis renders it ritualistic. *Gurbani*, is divine enlightenment. And enlightenment is, in essence, the anti-thesis of ritual. But if our *Gurbani* reading is reduced to ritualistic reciting and chanting, then there can be no greater folly in the realm of one's spiritual journey.

SUKHMANI AND DERA-WAAD.

Few Sikhs would care to dispute the notion that no institution has played a greater role in popularizing the

reciting of Sukhmani amongst modern day Sikhs than our *deras* and their *babas*, *sadhs* and *sants*. The Sikh Rehat Maryada (SRM) does not mention Sukhmani as a *nitnem banee*, but due to the *parchar* of the *deras*, a substantial number of Sikhs – especially Sikh women - have made Sukhmani a *nitnem banee*. The *dera* practice of “collective reciting” of Sukhmani has become part and parcel of the *maryada* of *diwans* even in mainstream gurdwaras. The SRM specifically states that the *maryada* of a *diwan* of a Gurdwara is *kirten* and *Katha*. But one would readily find Gurdwara *diwans* that do no more than recite Sukhmani. The agenda of an *Isteri satsang diwan* in the *Gurdwara* is hardly beyond just reciting Sukhmani “collectively”. The practice of doing the same during home-based *diwans* is also commonly observed.

While on the surface, the popularizing of Sukhmani may appear to be in line with the *Gurmat* principle of propagating the reading of *banee*, a careful analysis of the methods used and the motivations of the propagators are both necessary and helpful. This article is a call for the discerning Sikh to think in terms of both our actions (wide scale ‘collective’ reciting of Sukhmani as a ritualistic phenomenon) and our motives (why are we really doing it?). **In spirituality, motives matter prominently.** This article is a call to re-orientate our personal and spiritual connection with Sukhmani, via a *re-examination* of our motivations. It is a call to not *merely* recite Sukhmani, but to connect spiritually – in the real sense - with the *true messages* of this marvelous *banee*. It is further a call to revert to the SRM sanctioned *maryada* of *diwans* – *Kirtan* and *Katha*. **Put in other words, this article is a call for the Sikh to stop ritualizing Sukhmani and begin to spiritualize with it.**

WHY SUKHMANI?

Virtually every *Gutka* of Sukhmani, and every book extolling the virtues of reciting Sukhmani bears the stamp of one *dera* or other. *Deras* have invested heavily in producing beautifully bound Sukhmani *Gutkas* and flooded our homes and Gurdwaras with them. These *Gutkas* contain introductory essays whose core message is that tremendous worldly good would fall into the laps of Sikhs who recite Sukhmani daily. It is worth noting that these *deras* have yet to produce a single decent and genuine *translation* of Sukhmani. **Getting Sikhs to understand Sukhmani is not their concern**, getting to Sikh masses to keep reciting and

chanting it is. So much so that it appears as if **getting Sikhs to mis-understand Sukhmani appears to be the underlying agenda.**

To this end, *deras* have ventured to produce relevant material. The latest book *Nine Wonders of Sukhmani* by Guriqbal Singh of the Mata Kaulan Dera¹ is illustrative. While appearing to be an explanation of Sukhmani, that is what it is precisely not. It provides nine “reasons” why Sikhs should recite Sukhmani as one’s daily prayer as well as “collectively” (in a *Sangat*). These nine “reasons” would be analyzed in a later section of this article.

It is clear that the underlying reason why our *deras* have placed great emphasis on the Sikh masses reciting Sukhmani has nothing to do with spiritual altruism but everything to do with the fact that three of the 24 *Astpadees* (chapters) use the vocabulary of *Sadh*, *Sant* and *Bhram Gyani*. These 3 chapters - **through mis-interpretation** - allow for the continuous propagation of the agendas of *derawalla*. *Astpadee* number 7 expounds Godly virtues using the terminology of “*Sadh*.” *Astpadee* number 8 does the same using the term “*Bhram Gyani*” while number 13 deploys the term “*Sant*.” These are the three titles that *dera fellows* have bestowed upon themselves and their ancestors. The direct implication (through purposive mis-interpretations) is that these three *Astpadees* are really about *derawallahs*. **The implied (and false) claim is that Sukhmani is primary evidence that *Sadhs*, *Sants*, and *Bhram Gyanis* are part and parcel of *Gurmat*, they have a special place in Sikhi, and Sikhs in general ought to provide reverence and unquestionable obeisance to these self acclaimed and self appointed people.** The basis of such a false assertion by these *dera fellows* is the false notion that Guru Arjun himself bestowed such a place in Sukhmani (and hence in the GGS) to mortal *Sadhs*, *Sants* and *Bhram Gyanis*.

To the *derawallahs*, it hardly matters that Guru Arjun was *not* referring to any physical or human *sadhs*, *Sants* and *Bhram Gyanis* – let alone the fraudulent people who are now laying claim to these terms. These terms were **non-existent** for use for human beings during the

times of the Gurus. Guru Nanak’s lifelong companion was called *Bhaee* Mardana. The writer of the first copy of GGS (*pothee* sahib then) was given the same title and called *Bhaee* Gurdas by the fifth Guru. During Guru Teg Bhadur’s time – the three Sikhs who were sawn into two, boiled alive and burnt to death were referred to as *Bhaee* Mati Das, *Bhaee* Dyala and *Bhaee* Sati Das. Decades after the Gurus, the Sikh community referred to its countless martyrs as *Bhaee* – *Bhaee* Taru Singh, *Bhaee* Sukha Singh, *Bhaee* Mehtab Singh, *Bhaee* Manee Singh etc. The term “*sant*” was not used even during the reign of Sikh Raj.²

But for those who desired to miss-appropriate elevated terms of spirituality for themselves, it also did *not* matter that Guru Arjun has provided explicit definitions (within Sukhmani itself) regarding these three terms. For instance, *Bhram Gyani Aap Parmesar* – *Astpadee* 8 (meaning: *Bhram Gyani* is God Himself). *Nanak Sadh Prabh Bhed Na Bhaee* – *Astpadee* 7 (meaning *Sadh* and God are without distinction, one and the same). *Nanak Sant Bhavey Taan Laye Milaye* - (meaning if God is pleased, He allows for union with Him). Taken in totality, none of these terms refer to the physical being. It further does not matter that **the essence of Sukhmani is not to connect with the physical being but with God.** *Manus Kee Tek Birthee Sabh Jaan, Devan Ko Ekay Bhagwaan Astpadee 14* (Meaning : the reliance on a human is sheer waste, because there is only one giver God).

What mattered was simply that these *dera-wallahs* **hijacked these terms for themselves.** What further mattered was that the Sikh masses perpetually remained misinformed about the real meanings of the words *Sadh*, *Sant* and *Bhram Gyani*. The word “*Bhaee*” implied equality. How could these frauds be equal to the masses? What the *dera-wallahs* wanted was a much higher status in title and name – even if they

² My own research indicates that the first Sikh individual associated with the term “*sant*” was Attar Singh of Mastuanna (1866 – 1927). Though his student and biographer, Teja Singh (1877-1965) too went on to use the term for himself, its popularization had to wait till the Akali political leaders such as Fateh Singh (1911-1972) added it to their names. Its widespread and indiscriminate usage came about in the aftermath of the Indian government attack on Darbar Sahib and Akaal Takhat, leading to speculation that a large number of these “*sants*” and their *deras* were propped up by the machinations of the authorities to weaken the authority of genuine Sikh institutions.

¹ Bhai Guriqbal Singh, *Sikhmani Sahib Deean Nau Visheshataeeaan (Nine Wonders of Sukhmani)* (Punjabi), Amritsar: Bhai Chattar Singh Jeewan Singh, 2008.

were utterly unworthy. Consequently, they bestowed the title of *Sant* to themselves, some called themselves *sadhs*, and some claimed they were *Bhram Gyani*. They realized they needed a spiritual and *Gurbani*-based stamp of approval for their fraudulent titles. And they found an answer to their devious agenda in the mis-interpretation of Sukhmani. This *banee* has 83 verses that use the term *Sant*, 124 verses that use the term *Sadh*, and 74 verses that use the word *Bhram Gyani*. This was a gold mine for them. And **so long as the reader Sikh did not bother too much with the real meaning of the words as used by Guru Arjun, lots of people could be fooled.**³

Such an agenda however could *only* be achieved if the reciting of Sukhmani was popularized amongst Sikhs to the extent that it would become part of Sikh life; encroach into Sikh *Maryada* and become pivotal activity of our *Diwan Maryada*. The aim therefore was to let the **mere recital** of Sukhmani become the central pillar of Sikh *parampra* – especially relating to the practices of *Sangat* based spirituality. *Diwans* that begin and end with *collective reciting* of Sukhmani was the aim. Even if there was to be *Kirtan* after the Sukhmani recital it would be limited to one or two *shabads* since the recital had already taken an hour and half to two hours. *Katha* (*Gurbani* discourse) was obviously un-necessary altogether. The *sangat* was already too tired after a ninety minute collective recital of Sukhmani.

Such a goal was to be achieved by the publication and distribution of countless Sukhmani *Gutkas* and the creation of a whole plethora of fables, stories, *sakhis*, and mythological reasons of the greatness of reciting Sukhmani. Equally important was that the *understanding* of Sukhmani and its real and intended messages remained beyond the reach of Sikhs in general. This is probably why no *dera* has ventured to produce a translation of Sukhmani that is worth talking about.

³ Sukhmani uses the word *Prabh* in 280 verses. Other references to God (*Guru, Satguru, Parmeshar, Ram etc*) similarly used in the verses. This gives the reader the sense of Guru Arjun's style of picking one name of God and then writing an entire *Asthpadee* or more using that name. Within such appreciation, it becomes clear that Guru Arjun is using *Sant, Sadh* and *Brhram Gyani* to refer to God too.

RECITE, RECITE, RECITE, SUKHMANI.

The most basic argument why Sikhs should recite Sukhmani at every available opportunity is stated in the vocabulary of a pseudo science that fits nowhere except within the precincts of a *dera*. There are five corollaries of this pseudo scientific theory,⁴ namely: (i) There are 24 hours in a day. (ii) The human being takes 24,000 breaths per day. (iii) The Sukhmani has 24,000 *Akhar* (words) – 1,000 words in each of its 24 *Ashtpades*. (iv) One Sukhmani (24,000 words) is daily *daswandh* for 24,000 breaths (v) If a Sikh partakes in such *daswandh*, his or her entire 24 hours and 24,000 breaths become blessed (*safal*) as a result.

Needless to say, a cursory examination will reveal that **all** five corollaries are patently false. Let us begin with the second; that *the human being takes 24,000 breaths per day*. Common sense will indicate that the number of breaths taken by an individual per day would depend on one's age, gender, state of health, emotional state, and level of physical activity, the weather and a myriad of other factors. If one follows the estimates of the medical professionals that provide a *range* of 14 -60 breaths per minute⁵, this translates as 20,160 to 86,400 breaths per day. But the *dera-wallas* insist it is 24,000 to the dot for every human being that walks the face of the earth.

The Nanaksar *dera* has taken this figure to a higher level of absurdity. In the Sukhmani *Gutka* published by this group, they have included a couplet⁶:

⁴ Gyani Gurbachan Singh Khalsa Damdamee Taksaal, *Gurbane Paath Darshan*, (Punjabi), Amritsar: Bhai Kirpal Singh Jawahar Singh Bazar Main Sewan, 1969, page 34.

⁵ Medical professionals provide the respiratory as follows: birth to 6 weeks: 30–60 breaths per minute; 6 months: 25–40 breaths per minute, 3 years: 20–30 breaths per minute; 6 years: 18–25 breaths per minute; 10 years: 15–20 breaths per minute; adults: 14–18 breaths per minute. See Wilburta Q. Lindh; Marilyn Pooler; Carol Tampo; Barbara M. Dahl in [Delmar's Comprehensive Medical Assisting: Administrative and Clinical Competencies](#). Cengage Learning, 2009 p. 573

⁶ Page 14 of Sukhmani Gutka, Nanaksar Dera. This argument is credited to Baba Isher Singh Rarre Walley.

*Baithat Baran, Chalat Atharan, Soey Jaengey Tees.
Maithan Kartey Chausath Javey, Kion Na Bhajey
Jugdees.*

This fraudulent composition is given the form of a *salok*, perhaps to fool the reader into believing that this couplet is from *Gurbani* or even *Sukhmani*. It is not.⁷ The meaning: Sitting takes up twelve (breaths per minute), while walking and sleeping takes 18 and 30 respectively. While copulating 64 breaths per minute are gone, so why not contemplate on God? Anyone with basic understanding of the human body will know that one's breathing slows down considerably while asleep, but Nanaksari science says that sleeping requires more breaths per minute than walking. The fact that copulation and Godly contemplation can be put together within one couplet says quite a bit about such science and its adherents. Canadian writer Gurcharan Singh Jeonwala, in critiquing the Nanaksar group asks a revealing question: the *Sants* and *Babas* of Nanaksar are supposed to be celibate, how then do they know that 64 breaths per minute are expanded during the sex act?⁸ To this one may add another revealing question: what exactly do these fraudulent *Babas* do in their sleep to be expanding 30 breaths per minute when even Wikipedia says that the average breathing rate for adults (when awake) is 14 – 18 breaths per minute.⁹

The third corollary of *dera* science says that *Sukhmani* has 24,000 *Akhar* (words) or 1,000 words per *Asthpadee*. This is an equally fraudulent assertion. These *derawallahs* did not know then, (and probably still don't know) that due diligence will reveal this lie quite simply. The word count for the entire *Sukhmani* is 12,871. If one elects to remove the *dandees* that punctuate every line because they are not words, then the figure is 10,603. There are a total of 2,268 punctuation marks. If one then proceeds to remove even the numerals that are used by *Guru Arjun* to keep count of the *Saloks* and *Asthpadees*, (total 240 numerals) the resultant figure is 10,363. There is simply no way one could arrive at the magical 24,000

⁷ The source of this couplet is *Gurbilas Patshahi* 6. The (unknown) author of this *Akaal Takhat* banned publications attributes it to the *Bachittar Natak* Granth.

⁸ "Clarifying the lies relating to *Sukhmani Banee* by Babey, Sadhs and Sants and Frauds" in *SIKH BULLETIN*, December 2008.

⁹ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Respiratory_rate.

figure given by these *dera* fellows. If the argument is that by *Akhar* they mean not words but characters, then the count for characters for *Sukhmani* is 42,260.

So why are the *derawallahs* fixated on the 24,000 figure? The author's guess is that this is a case of building a series of lies on a single contemporary truth. The contemporary truth is the simple notion of a 24 hour day; and the fact that *Sukhmani* has 24 *Asthpadees*. The figure of 24 is thus falsely extrapolated into 24,000 breaths per day and 24,000 words. The "*daswandh*" (10 percent) of 24 hours works out just nice too – just over 2 and half hours – for the duration of a *diwan* or even personal reading of *Sukhmani*. So long as one has a believing lay audience and believes that no one would venture to manually do the math for the number of words in *Sukhmani*, such pseudo science will stand. The reality is that it can crumble even without having to do any math.

The truth of the matter is that during the time of the *Gurus*, the concept of a 24 hour day was non-existent in India. So the first corollary that there are 24 hours per day – is also false *when applied to the period of Guru Arjun*. The manner of determining time intervals then was *pehrs*. The day and night was divided into four *pehrs* each, with counting beginning from dawn. Each *pehr* was then divided into *gharees* (roughly 24 minutes in today's measure). The smaller units were *Chasas*. The terms *pehr* and *gharee* are found repeatedly in the *GGs* when time is being talked about. For instance in this verse of *Guru Nanak* on page 357 of the *GGs*

ਵਿਸੁਏ ਚਸਿਆ ਘੜੀਆ ਪਹਰਾ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਮਾਹੁ ਭਇਆ ॥ ਸੂਰਜੁ
ਏਕੋ ਰੁਤਿ ਅਨੇਕ ॥

Chasas, Gharees, Pehrs, Weeks, Thiths, Months and Seasons all originate from the one sun. *Guru Arjun* on page 106 of the *GGs* uses the term *peher* to denote one complete day

ਨਾਨਕੁ ਦਾਸੁ ਕਹੈ ਬੇਨੰਤੀ ਆਠ ਪਹਰ ਤੁਧੁ ਧਿਆਈ ਜੀਉ ॥ *Nanak Prays* that I may Contemplate on You for Eight *Pehrs* (day and night).

Cororally four - that reciting *Sukhmani's* 24,000 words is daily *daswandh* for 24,000 breaths - is the height of general illogic. The meaning of *daswandh* is

ten percent. Ignoring the math of it still leaves one with the questions as to how *words* can be *daswandh* for *breaths*. It must take a very placid mind to not see such a fraudulent assertion. Imagine if one wins a lottery of 24,000 *Euros* and takes out a *daswandh* in Indonesian *Rupiahs*! Better still, offer 24000 paper clips as *daswandh* of winning 24,000 *Euros*!

Finally corollary (v) of the pseudo *dera* science states that if a Sikh partakes in such *daswandh*, his or her entire 24 hours and 24,000 breaths become blessed (*saful*) as a result. *Daswandh* is a concept that can apply to material things and it forms the guiding principle when it comes to giving money or material for benevolent activities. So if someone earns \$1,000 a month, the general rule would be that he or she would set aside \$100 per month for such a purpose. The rest is for the individual to use as he / she pleases. How this individual uses the remaining \$900 does *not* affect the \$100 that was donated. One may indeed lose it all remaining \$900 to a thief, give it back to the employer or throw it down the well. It is not a clever thing to do, but it would not affect the \$100 that has already been given out.

But *daswandh* cannot be applied to the notion of time when it comes to spirituality. In the spiritual realm, the measure is not *how long* we sit down to pray or *how much bane* we have read, but *how much of our mind* has been applied in the process. Going by such reasoning, we could have a person sitting down and reciting *bane*, or even listening to *paath* or *Kirtan* for 2 and half hours, but having one's mind on other things for the entire time except, say, 5 minutes. Cursory reading of *bane* tells us that it is the 5 minutes of *dhyaan* (contemplation) that count, not the 2.5 hours of sitting and reciting or hearing. As opposed to the money example in the preceding paragraph, what this individual does in the *remaining time* of the day WILL affect his 5 minutes of spiritual earning. What if he/she comes out of his/her 2.5 hour Sukhmani session and picks a 15 minute quarrel with another person? What if one indulges in 15 minutes of malicious gossip, slander or backbiting or decides to steal something (a 20 second act) after completing his/her 2.5 hour session? Is anyone going to say that the 15 minutes of quarrel, gossip, slander, backbiting or the 20 second act of stealing etc *don't* matter because *daswandh* has already been fulfilled when reciting Sukhmani? A more logical answer would be that they not only *DO* matter, they

would actually *negate* the 5 minutes of spiritual earning that was gained during the 2.5 hour sitting. For such reasons alone (and there are others), *daswandh* cannot, does not and should not be applied to time or volume of *bane* being recited.

Recent literature on *dera*-science provides new twists to this fable of 24,000 words and breaths. The claim now is that the figure for 24,000 breaths is indeed correct, but that the *Sants* only take 21,624 breaths per day¹⁰. The balance of 2,376 is saved. Similarly Sukhmani actually has 21,624 *complete* characters. There are 2,373 *incomplete* (half) characters. That makes a total of 23,997, three short of 24,000. To make up for the shortcoming, Guru Arjun converted the word *Sant* to *Santan* in three verses in *Asthpaddee* 13, thus achieving the magical figure of 24,000. Our *dera* fellows have taken us Sikhs to be extremely dim-witted to accept such nonsense. Yet that is exactly what this whole obsession with words, characters and breaths is all about. Pure and plain nonsense. By a bunch of frauds and scammers.

MORE PSEUDO SCIENCE FROM THE DERA WALLAHS.

Derawallahs further claim that if one recites Sukhmani once, 21 succeeding generations of the reciting Sikh will be saved.¹¹ What they mean by being "saved" is anybody's guess. Seven of this saved generations would be on the maternal side, 7 from the paternal side and 7 from the matrimonial side. Now these figures are much less complicated than the 2,400 words, 24,000 breaths stuff. Yet they are equally illogical and fraudulent.

One generation is 30 years. 21 multiplied by 30 gives us 630 years. It has been 413 years since Guru Arjun composed Sukhmani. This means that all of us Sikhs today are within the time frame of 630 years and within 21 generations. Surely each of us will have at

¹⁰ This argument is provided by Bhai Guriqbal Singh, *Sikhmani Sahib Deean Nau Visheshtaeaan (Nine Wonders of Sukhmani)*.

¹¹ Bhai Guriqbal Singh, *Sikhmani Sahib Deean Nau Visheshtaeaan (Nine Wonders of Sukhmani)*. The head granthi of Harmandar Sahib Gyani Gurbachan Singh has called this nonsensical book a "must read" for all Sikhs. He referred to it as "the illumination of the journey of Sikhi." See Rozana Spokesman of 4th May 2008.

least ONE ancestor who would have recited ONE Sukhmani sahib at least in the last 413 years. Going by the illogic of this argument, chances are we are all actually very much already saved. There is no real need to do anything anymore. Further, there are 217 years still remaining from the 630. This means that the next 7 generations of ours need do nothing too. They are also safe by virtue of the same ancestor who saved us.

The fact that such claims are rubbished by *Gurbani* is of little concern to these *derawallahs*. The basic principle of *Gurbani* and Gurmat is that *our* actions – and not those undertaken by our ancestors - decide our fate.

॥ਜੈਸਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਤੈਸਾ ਖਾਵੈ ॥ GGS 366 You reap as you sow.

ਆਪਣ ਹਥੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕਾਜੁ ਸਵਾਰੀਐ GGS 474.

One's own actions resolves one's own affairs.

ਬੀਜੈ ਬਿਖੁ ਮੰਗੈ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਵੇਖਹੁ ਏਹੁ ਨਿਆਉ ॥GGS 476

He sows poison, and expects Ambrosial Nectar. Behold — what justice is this?

Another pseudo claim perpetuated by our fake *Sadhs*, *Sants*, and *derawallahs* rests on the basic need for *Sukh* amongst the masses. They tell us that the word Sukhmani means this *bane* is the source of *Sukh* or joy. This distortion is fed by a myriad of concocted stories. In his book, *derawallah* Guriqbal Singh narrates the story of a woman with breast cancer who was given ten days to live¹². She instead chose to recite Sukhmani over a *jot* (oil lamp) fueled by purified ghee and then applied the butter on her affected breast. She was cured in ten days. The fact that Guru Arjun - the writer of Sukhmani himself set up a leper home in Taran Taran, Amritsar and hired medical men of the times (*hakeems* and *vaids*) to treat them escapes the *dera* fellows. The *dera* crowd needs to tell us why Guru Arjun did not read Sukhmani over oil lamps and rub that oil over the lepers.

An equally pseudo story talks about a “muslim” trader who asked a Nanaksari Baba for a way to stem his business losses. The Baba “gave” the trader half a couplet from Sukhmani - *Nirdhan Ko Dhan Tero Nao*

and told the trader to recite it one hundred times daily. One year later the trader came back and told the Baba he had followed the Baba's instructions and amassed immense wealth to last many lifetimes. His problem now was that he needed a long life to enjoy his wealth. The Baba then “gave” him the second part of the couplet *Nithavey Ko Nao Tera Thao*. The moral of the story is that repeated recitations of mere half couplets can do wonders even to a non-Sikh, imagine what good can be attained by reciting the whole *bane*. The choice is the couplet is deliberate. The first half contains the word “*dhan*” (wealth) twice, and the second “*thao*” (place) twice. The lay folk can be fooled into believing the Baba's humpty dumpty tale and that the Baba had a realistic formula indeed. It matters little that Guru Arjun is saying that for a Sikh, real wealth comes from acquiring Godly virtues (*Nirdhan Ko Dhan Tero Nao*).

As the fifth “wonder” of reciting Sukhmani, Guriqbal Singh says farmers can double the harvest of their farms if they recited Sukhmani over the water that is used to irrigate the crops. Going by such logic one could recite Sukhmani over documents (resume, loan applications, medical records!); clothes, furniture, food, and just about anything and expect positive results. One wonders if the English language even has a term for the proponents of such absurdity.

The underlying claim of such distortions is the suggestion that one's disease, sorrow, pain, loses and negative situations *go away* if one recites Sukhmani. The thinking Sikh would want to know if reciting Japji or Rehras or any *bane* other than Sukhmani *brings* disease, sorrow and pain? Isn't all of *Gurbani* for the benefit of us Sikhs? The discerning Sikh would also want to know why *Gurbani* then tells us to accept the Hukam, the Raza of God, to rise above Joy and Sorrow? Guru Nanak says in Japji:

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ॥ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ GGS 1. Meaning: how can one become truth imbued? And how can the wall of separation (between Man and God) be torn down? O Nanak the path to becoming truth –imbued is to obey the Hukam of His Command, and walk in the Way of His Will. ॥ 1 ॥

Guru Teg Bahadur ji illustrates the meaning of living in accordance with His Will as follows:

¹² See The Third Wonder, in *Nine Wonders of Sukhmani*, op.cit.

ਜੋ ਨਰੁ ਦੁਖ ਮੈ ਦੁਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਮਾਨੈ ॥ ਸੁਖ ਸਨੇਹੁ ਅਰੁ ਭੈ ਨਹੀ ਜਾ ਕੈ
ਕੰਚਨ ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਨੈ ॥ ੧ ॥ GGS 633. He who is not affected
by pain or pleasure, affection or fear, and who takes
gold to be dust; || 1 || Rahao || Who is not swayed by
slander or praise, nor affected by greed, attachment or
pride; who remains beyond joy and sorrow, honor and
dishonor; || 1 || Who is not touched by desire or anger;
within his heart, God dwells. || 2 || That man, blessed
by Guru's Grace, understands this way. O Nanak, he
merges with the Lord of the Universe, like water with
water. || 3 ||

So why are the *derawallahs* pushing Sukhmani as the magic potion for Sukh? For one thing, they have understood the psychology of the masses – namely a need for *Sukh*. Secondly, the dera fellows have found a way to latch on the *dera* agenda of self-propagation on Sukhmani. This *bane* has three full sections devoted to *Sadhs*, *Sants* and *Bhram Gyanis*. Sukhmani has a whopping 281 verses that reinforce these terms into the Sikh mind and psyche. So long as these terms remain mis-understood, the pseudo *Sants* and *Babas* are able to fool the Sikh masses into achieving their agendas and goals. Such a goal cannot be achieved through popularizing Bawan Akhree, or Ramkli Sadd or Sidh Ghosat, or Oangkar, or any other *bane*. It has to be Sukhmani.

The popularization of Sukhmani is thus done at the most basic level by equating Sukhmani to *Sukh*. The *dera* argument is that the meaning of Sukhmani is ਸੁਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਣੀ *Sukha(n) dee Manee*. In the world of snake charmers, ਮਣੀ (*manee*) refers to the topmost vertebra of a particular species of a snake that is used as the cure-all for snake bites.¹³ Being the snake-oil salesmen that our present day fraudulent *Sants* and *Babas* have become, it comes as no surprise that they would chose to distort the meaning of the title of this wonderful *bane*. Such distortion aids them in their agendas. It works because the Sikh masses desire *Sukh* and have accepted that *bane* is simply a *mantar* or magical spell to achieve this *Sukh*.

The truth is that within the 24 *Saloks* and *Ashtpadees* of Sukhmani, there is only a single *Rahao* line. Since the *Rahao* acts as the summarized title of the *shabad* or

bane, and contains the jist of the composition, the meaning of *Sukhmani* is therefore to be derived from this *Rahao* verse, as follows:

ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸੁਖ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਬਿਸੁਮ ॥
ਰਹਾਉ ॥ GGS 262. *Sukhmani* is about the joy derived from knowing the ambrosial virtues (*amrit prabh naam*) of God. *Sukhmani* is about His beloved people (*bhagats*) wanting these virtues to reside within their minds.

This then is the jist of the *bane* and the meaning of the word *Sukhmani*. The rest of the *bane* is a long, serialized, step by step exploration and explanation of the ambrosial virtues of God. Every *Ashpadee* describes a different facet of God and encourages the *Bhagat* Sikh to accept those virtues. The concluding verse of *Sukhmani* sums it all up:

ਸਭ ਤੇ ਉਚ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਬਨੀ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਗੁਣਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ॥
Highest of all spiritual actions is to **praise** (*sobha*) Him. Nanak, *Sukhmani* is therefore about these descriptive virtues (*Gun Naam*) of God.

Sukhmani is certainly NOT about any particular class of human beings. It is NOT about some people labeling themselves as *Sadhs*, *Sants*, or *Bhram Gyanis*. It is also not about people wanting to ward off physical *dukh* and replace it with *sukh*. If one must view *Sukhmani* in the context of *Sukh* and *Dukh*, then this *bane* is intended to give the Sikh the courage and strength to bear and accept all *dukh* that come with the *hukam* and will of God. Because this is exactly what Guru Arjun the author of *Sukhmani* did when he endured the epitome of physical *dukh* in the form of unspeakable tortures leading to his martyrdom. This single fact alone ought to make any Sikh ponder as to whether *Sukhmani* is intended to be a *sukh* inducing *mantar*.

DISTORTING THE MARYADA OF OUR *DIWANS*.

The Maryada of the Sikh *Diwan* as prescribed by the Sikh Rehat Maryada is as follows:

(ਹ) ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਗਤ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਆਮ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਇਉਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ:-

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼, ਕੀਰਤਨ, ਕਥਾ, ਵਖਿਆਨ, ਅਨੰਦ

¹³ See *Punjabi English Dictionary*, Punjabi University Patiala, 2002 Edition, pp662.

ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਅਰਦਾਸ, ਫਤਿਹ, ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਦਾ ਜੈਕਾਰਾ ਤੇ ਹੁਕਮ।

Translation: The program of the *Sangat* within a Gurdwara normally is as follows: The *Prakash* of the SGGGS, *Kirtan*, *Katha*, Lecture, Anand Sahib, Ardas, *Fateh*, *Jaikara* of *Sat Sri Akaal* and *Hukumnama*.

It is clear that collective recitations of *Gurbani* are NOT part of SRM *Diwan Maryada*. There are good reasons for it. The first relates to the nature of *Gurbani*. In the *Sangat* atmosphere *Gurbani* is sung as *Kirtan* to allow for comprehension and appreciation of its inner messages. The singing (in raag and taal) slows down considerably the rate of *banees* read-out. This slowed rate and musical rendition allows for some understanding of the messages to take place. The *Katha* (by definition it is the lay explanation of *Gurbani*) is an integral part of the *Diwan* because *Gurbani* is meant to be understood, appreciated, internalized and then walked upon. *Kirtan* and *Katha* help accomplish these follow up actions that Sikhi demands.

Reciting *Gurbani* in the *Sangat* can produce no understanding and internalization of its messages except for one or two individuals who have studied *Gurbani*. This is because *Gurbani* is NOT prose. *Gurbani* is composed in poetry which is condensed, idiomatic; complex at times, and deploys a number of different languages. Hence reciting *banees* is not the *Maryada* of our *Diwans*. Reciting *Gurbani* falls within the domain of individual contemplation.

Collective recitation of *Gurbani* has its own problems. People walk in at any time, pick up a *gutka* and join in just about from anywhere. Usually when the Sukhmani recital begins, the *granthi* is all alone or joined by a handful of dedicated people. By the time the recital ends, a large number would have joined it – some from midway some from the closing sections. There are issues of speed – the one leading it recites fast and many are simply lost trying to catch up. More than numerous mistakes are made; words, entire lines and even whole couplets being glossed over. This is gross disrespect of *Gurbani*. At the end of it, in the *Ardas*, a lie is propagated by the *Ardasia* who tells the Guru that the *Sangat* has done ਬੇਅੰਤ multitude / countless of Sukhmani recitals. A multitude of people sitting down with a multitude of open *guthkas* does NOT constitute a multitude of Sukhmani recitals. Obviously no understanding of any kind takes place, because the entire objective is to get it over with. **The end result is**

that we have made collective Sukhmani recital into a ritual.

Sukhmani is an ਇਕਾਂਤੀ *ekantee banees*. It is to be read alone, in deep contemplation, with a desire to praise God using innovative names (*Prabh*, *Sadh*, *Sant*, *Bhram Gyani* etc) and to understand God using novel virtues. The ultimate aim is to understand and apply these concepts in our daily lives.

Even though the SRM has specified a Sikh's *Nitnem banees*, Sikhs can add on to one's personal *nitnem*, it is indeed laudable that Sikhs make Sukhmani or Oangkar or Sidh Ghosat or Ramkali Sad of any other *banees* from the 1430 pages as their *Nitnem*. The SRM actually calls for the Sikh to individually and personally keep doing a *Sehej Paath* (slow and contemplative) reading of the GGS from start to end – 5 – 10 pages a day as part of one's *nitnem*. Yet the underlying objective must be spiritual, not ritualistic, and certainly not a means to material gains such as *Sukh*.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE PSEUDO SCIENCE OF THE DERA WALLAHS ?

The source of it all is a discredited and *panth*-banned book called the *Gur Bilas Pathshai 6*.¹⁴ Even though

¹⁴ Published in 1718 by an unknown author who harboured anti-Sikh and anti-Gurmat agendas, it purports to recount the life of Guru Hargobind, the Sixth Guru. Its anti-*gurmat* messages and anti-*Gurbani* messages and in particular its overt bhramanical tones are clearly evident. The Sikh panth, in 1920 decided that *Gurbilas* should not be preached in Sikh Gurdwaras. In 1998, the Dhram Parchaar Committee of SGPC (of all institutions !) re-published the book under the authorship of Akaal Takhat Jathedar Joginder Singh Vedanti and Dr Amarjeet Singh. In what appeared to be a concerted effort to have the book accepted by the Sikh masses, this republished version carried acknowledgments from the Who's Who of Sikhs such as the SGPC chief Tohra, the Jathedars and Granthis of the Takhts, Preachers such as Sant Singh Maskeen, Jaswant Singh Parwana, and writers such as Joginder Singh Talwara. Shortly after its republication, Gyani Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afgana in a book titled *Gurbani di Kasvati Tay Gurbilas Patshai 6* diligently and systematically exposed the folly of not just *Gurbilas 6*, but the agenda behind its republication. Kala Afgana's book took on each story of *Gurbilas* and analyzed it on the touch stone (*Kasvati*) of *Gurbani*. He managed to establish

eminent Sikh researchers have rubbished large portions of *Gurbilas*, it remains the core source for *deras* and *granthis*, *parcharaks* and *ragis* who are *dera* trained or identify with *dera* thought. The entire story of the *dera* science as narrated above appears on pages 92 – 94 of *Gurbilas 6* as follows:

Simrat Shastar Bed Bkhaney. Chavee Hazaar Swas Nar Thaney.

As Upav Kareay Ko Ta Tay. Swas Safal Hovey Sabh Yaa Tey.

Verse 378. Translation: The Simratis, Shastars and the Vedas reveal that the human being takes 24,000 breaths per day. (They further reveal) the need to undertake specific efforts to purify the entire number of breaths through those efforts.

Sukhmani Gur Muknon Ucharee. Munn Maal Mano Gur Dharee

Chavee Hazaar Akshar Eh Dharey. Upma Aap Sree Mukh Rarey.

Verse 396. Translation: The Guru recited Sukhmani. In His heart he resolved that it was the panacea vertebrae (ਮੁਠੀ) for material (gains). Twenty four thousand words therein. Such praise the Guru recited Himself.

CONCLUSIONS. The results of the *dera*-initiated and *dera*-inspired effort with regards to Sukhmani have been as follows:

that virtually every story in *Gurbilas 6* was a fabrication. The result was that in October 2000, the SGPC banned the book (its own book, really) a second time. Kala Afghana's suggestion that the republication of *Gurbilas* was a conspiracy involving the highest echelons of the Sikh establishment including the Akaal Takhat which had been infiltrated by *dera* thought seemed to have proven in the fact that while no action was taken against any of the 15 Who's Who, Kala Afghana earned the wrath of Jathedar Vedanti who had him excommunicated subsequently (in 2003) even though Afghana (a British resident) did not appear at the Akaal Takhat (on the basis of ill health) to answer the charges against him. In what has become a sad state of affairs for Sikhi parchaar, even though banned, *Gurbilas 6* seems to have become the primary source of *Katha* and *parchar* by Sikh *Kathakaars*, *parcharaks*, *ragis* and *granthis* – especially those who are *dera*-alined or *dera* trained.

One, there is now wide spread and wide scale mindless reciting / chanting of Sukhmani in our Gurdwara and Home based *Diwans*. Such reciting involves disrespect to the *banees*, given the severe limitations of collective reciting of any *banees*. Untold errors, people joining in half way, people leaving halfway, glaring omissions, etc make a mockery of the recital. For all intents and purposes – this collective reading has become a ritual and a very distorted one.

Two, such collective reciting takes away the time that a *Sangat* can devote to *Kirtan* and *Katha* – two very crucial spiritual activities of our *Sangat*-bases spiritual life. 2.5 hours of Sukhmani recital leaves no time for *Kirtan* and *Katha*.

Three, no real understanding comes from such collective recitation. The ritual of collective recitation has been going on for decades, yet its readers in particular and Sikhs in general have not gotten any wiser as to the messages of Sukhmani. If at all, collective reading has created misconceptions about the *Banees*.

Four, wide-scale and wide-spread recitals of Sukhmani has resulted in the instillation of fear amongst lay Sikhs from the class of individuals who call themselves *sadhs*, *sants* and *bhram gyanis*. It appears that large numbers of Sukhmani reciting Sikhs have swallowed hook line and sinker, the *dera wallahs* agenda that the terms *Sadh*, *Sant* and *Bhram Gyani* as used in Sukhmani refer to them and that Guru Arjun has provided the spiritual approval for these class of people. Any attempt to educate the lay *Sangats* with regards to the destructive ways of these group of frauds called *Sants* and *Babas* is often met with dire warnings with quotations from Sukhmani. *Sant Ka Dokhee*, *Sant Ka Nindak*, – is (mis) translated as 'Someone who expresses disapproval of these present day self acclaimed 'Sants', ' and literal translations follow. ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੁਖਨਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਸਭੁ ਜਾਇ Criticizing the 'Sant' takes away all your Sukh. ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੁਖਨਿ ਨੀਚੁ ਨੀਚਾਇ ॥ The critique of the "Sant" is lowliest of all. ਸੰਤ ਕੇ ਨਿੰਦਕ ਕਉ ਸਰਬ ਰੋਗ ॥ The critique of the 'Sant' will be inflicted with all the diseases. ਸੰਤ ਕਾ ਦੋਖੀ ਅਧ ਬੀਚ ਤੇ ਟੁਟੈ ॥ The critique of the 'Sant' will break into two in the middle.

The real meanings are of course different and related to the human mind denying God, challenging God's authority and Wisdom. The *Sukh Sabh Jaye* in ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੁਖਨਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਸਭੁ ਜਾਇ therefore refers to the spiritual joy explained in the Rahao line of the *banee*: ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸੁਖ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਬਿਸੁਮ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ Similarly *Aadh Beech Tay Tutey* in the verse ਸੰਤ ਕਾ ਦੋਖੀ ਅਪ ਬੀਚ ਤੇ ਟੂਟੈ refers to the midway breaking of the journey of spirituality that Sukhmani is all about. The derawallahs would want us to believe that *Aadh Beech Tay Tutey* means that anyone who critiques their Sants and Babas will have end up with his body broken into two right in the middle.

It appears therefore that the pseudo *dera-wallah sadhs*, *sants* and *bhram gyanis* have succeeded in their agenda of not only fooling the Sikh masses into accepting them, but overwhelmingly succeeded in creating fear in the minds of those who would want to question their fraudulent ways.

It is ironical that the author of Sukhmani was able to bear untold tortures and unfathomable pain with immense courage and bravery. Yet the Sikh masses who recite this same *banee* in unprecedented numbers are sinking into the depths of unfathomable fear and immense fright of a bunch of frauds whose only aim is to deceive us. This is simply because we have not attempted to UNDERSTAND the messages of Sukhmani.

Such then, is the result of our having made Sukhmani recital into a ritual. Any and every ritual, in essence, dulls the mind, paralyzes the intellect and euthanizes spirituality.

WHAT TO DO?

Educating ourselves and sharing it with others is perhaps the way to come out of the situation we have landed into. Some suggestions at the individual level are as follows:

One, if you are planning to sponsor a Gurdwara *Diwan* or have a *Diwan* in your home for any purpose at all, stick to the SRM mandated *maryada* of *Kirtan* and *Katha*. You will obtain the blessings of the Guru and the *Panth* for doing what is right.

Two, educate your family, friends and relatives about the issue. If you can find the courage within your convictions, tell them you will not attend a *diwan* which breaks the *maryada* of the *diwan* and which especially makes a mockery of *banee* in the so called "collective reading." As explained above, this collective reading is no more than a group of well meaning Sikhs getting together to collectively disrespect a wonderful *banee* – joining in as and where they please, opting out wherever convenient and skipping entire verses when the going gets too fast for them.

Three, if Sukhmani is your personal *nitnem*, continue to do so but make it a point to start UNDERSTANDING it – one couplet a day, one paragraph a week, one *Asthpadee* a month. Get a decent translation and a dictionary. Prof Sahib Singh's translation is a good start. Keep in mind that a vast number of Sukhmani "translations" are little more than manifestos of *dera-wallahs* aimed at converting ordinary Sikhs into becoming hordes of Sukhmani chanting ritualistic people.

Four, if your Gurdwara is blessed with an educated *granthi*, *parcharak*, *ragi* or *Kathakar*, persuade them to explain Sukhmani to the *Sangat* using a series of lectures – perhaps one *Asthpadee* at a time. Do keep in mind that a vast number of our *granthis*, *parcharaks*, *ragis* and *Kathakaars* are *dera*-trained or *dera* affiliated. Instead of helping the *Sangat* understand the true messages, they may re-inforce *dera* agendas instead. If such is the case, look for independent and enlightened members of the *sangat* who may be willing to do such a *sewa*.

Five, if you are a *parbhandhak*, recognize that it is your duty to have the Sikh Rehat *Maryada* instituted in your *Sangat*. Educate the management and *Sangat* that *Kirtan* and *Katha* are the sanctioned *maryada*. *Asa di Vaar diwans* for instance, cannot and should not be replaced by collective Sukhmani recitals. Nor should any other *diwan* be. If families insist on collective Sukhmani recitals, then ensure that such recitals are done outside of the prime *diwan* time (two hours before a *diwan* begins or some time after it has been concluded).

Six, as members of the *Sangat*, we have a collective right to expect and demand that our Gurdwaras serve the objective of providing *Gurbani* enlightenment. Each and every time we attend a Gurdwara *diwan* as part of the *Sangat*, the reward ought to be in the form of food for the soul (*Kirtan*) and *Gurbani gyan* (*Katha* and *Vikhyaan*). The Gurdwara is no place for *maryadas* of *derawallahs* or individualized practices (12 hour chanting of Japji, Chaupai, lights-off chanting of this or that *mantar* etc).

It is natural that when we have such issues and challenges we look for guidance from our Sikh institutions. The stark reality however is that our institutions themselves have succumbed to such follies. In some cases, they have become part of the problem. The issue at hand, as is the case with a vast majority of Sikh spiritual challenges is among those that require solutions at the individual level. As *Guru kay* Sikh, it is incumbent that we educate ourselves and those around us, and at the very least refuse to be part of any wrong or deviant practice.

Sikh readers and Parbhandhaks who wish to circulate or republish this article in their publications may request soft copies from the author at dhillon99@gmail.com.

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**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
FORMULATING METHODOLOGY FOR
INTERPRETING GURBANI
Dedicated to Max Arthur Macauliffe Centennial**

With the efforts of Prof. Davinder Singh Chahal, PhD, the Institute for Understanding Sikhism (IUS) came into existence in 1999 and it held its 1st conference in 2001. The aim of IUS is to spread the message of *Gurbani* in its real perspective as intended by Guru Nanak the founder of Sikhism. There are many translations of Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) available today. However, none can be called perfect as it is a difficult job to convey the message of *Gurbani* in its real perspective, especially when translated into foreign languages and even in Punjabi. On Sept 21, 2013 IUS held its 12th conference at Civic Center, Ville des Dollards-des-Ormeaux (near Montreal), Quebec,



Canada to highlight the methods that must be kept in mind when interpreting AGGS. Scholars from Canada, USA and UK presented their papers in the conference. This conference was dedicated to Max Arthur Macauliffe on his Centennial Anniversary, which was on March 15, 2013.

The conference started and ended by reciting of *Kirtan*; in the morning by Avneet Kaur Bhabra & Manmeet Singh Bhabra (*Vidyia vichari tan parupkaari...*) and in the evening by Mansirat Kaur & Nimrat Kaur (*Kot koti mere arja...*). After welcoming remarks by Dr. Parminder Singh Chahal, PhD and introduction of IUS by Gurinderjit Singh, B. Eng., M. Eng., Prof. Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD the founder of IUS, presented *Keynote Address* devoted to Macauliffe on his Centennial Anniversary who did 1st translation of *Gurbani* into English with the help of many Sikhs including Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha. Macauliffe noted that Sikhs who helped him with his job often translated the same verses of *Gurbani* very differently with entirely different meanings. The 1st translation of *Gurbani* in Punjabi was done by Giani

Badan Singh with the aid of a group of scholars by 1883 under the Patronage of Raja Ripuduman Singh of Faridkot and later by Prof Sahib Singh in Punjabi and by Dr Gopal Singh in English followed by that of Bhai Manmohan Singh who did translation into Punjabi and English as well. All these translations and that followed later have been heavily influenced by the earlier work of Faridkot Vala Tika. It is generally agreed that all available translations have serious deficiencies.

The next Session started with Dr. Avtar Singh Dhaliwal, MD, from North Carolina, USA who presented his paper titled “Explicative Methodology for Interpreting Gurbani” that highlighted many points for improving translations. This was followed by a paper present by Dr. Kulbir S Thind, MD, from San Mateo, California, USA titled “Some Pitfalls of Translation of Aad Guru Granth Sahib into English”.



Dr. Thind highlighted requirements for a good translation and of those issues that cause difficulties in translation of Gurbani into English along with many examples. After this Prof. Davinder Singh Chahal, Ph.D, from Laval, Quebec, Canada presented his paper “Application of Science and Logic in Interpreting Gurbani”. Prof. Chahal also explained in detail that application of etymological study can trace out real meanings of Gurbani words and if care is not taken it can result in entirely different interpretation. Dr. Harbans Lal, Ph.D, from Taxes, USA presented his paper and highlighted the point that translations must be consistent with Gurmat. He dedicated his paper to the Macauliffe Centennial Celebration. A paper was then

presented by Dr. Devinder Singh Sekhon, Ph.D, from Brampton, Ontario, Canada titled “Formulating Methodology for Interpreting Gurbani”. Dr. Sekhon, along with many other points he explained how some incorrect splitting of *Larivar* (continuous text) into words have caused some errors in the correct interpretation of Gurbani.

The final session of the conference dealt with two unrelated but important issues. Lovpreet Kaur a Ph.D student from Wolverhampton University, UK presented her paper on “Exploration of Gender Equality in Sikhism”. The last paper “Amrit Bani as a Trajectory of a Distinct Identity” was read by S. Charan Singh from Community College, Ashwa, Ontario, Canada. Prof. P.S. Bhandari, Montreal, Canada then presented a slide show of photos illustrating the role of IUS since its formation.

Resolutions

At the International Conference, *Formulating Methodology for Interpreting Gurbani*, held at Greater Montreal, Quebec, Canada on Saturday, September 21, 2013 the following two resolutions were passed:

1. In the above conference held by Institute of Understanding Sikhism, Montreal, Canada on September 21, 2013 and from its proceedings it was resolved that 'Formulation of Methodology for Interpreting Gurbani' by world class scholars is urgently needed. The resolution was moved by Dr. Kulbir Singh Thind, San Mateo, USA and seconded by Dr. Teja Singh, Brampton, Ontario, Canada and approved unanimously by the attendees with voice vote.
2. It was unanimously passed to bestow the honorific title of **GYANI** upon Max Arthur Macauliffe for his contributions to Sikhi (Sikhism) and introducing Sikhism to the English speaking people of the West. He will now be known as **Gyani Max Arthur Macauliffe**. The resolution was moved by Dr. Harpal Singh Buttar of Ottawa, Canada and seconded by Dr Teja Singh of Brampton, Ontario, Canada and was passed unanimously.

The following day scholars held a two-hour long round-table meeting to exchange ideas on how to

proceed further with the mission. The exchange was very useful and a tentative plan for another conference to be held in Toronto area, Canada, a year later was decided.

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ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਇੰਸ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਅਜੋਕੇ ਯੁਗ ਵਿਚ (ਭਾਗ-੯)

Gurmat and science in present scenario (Part-9)

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ
ਪਰੰਤੂ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ

**Akal Purkh cannot be seen with naked eyes but can
be realised through His creation**

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਗਈ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਅਚਰਜ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰੇ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਝਰਨਾਹਟ ਜਿਹੀ ਛਿੜ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੀ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਤਾਂ ਅਜੀਬ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਹੈਰਾਨਗੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਰਚਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਅਚਰਜ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਕਈ ਨਾਦ ਤੇ ਕਈ ਵੇਦ ਹਨ, ਬੇਅੰਤ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਜੀਵ ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਦਭੁਤ ਭੇਦ ਹਨ। ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਬਣਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਅਣਗਿਣਤ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਤੇ ਕਈ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਹਨ। ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਵ ਜੰਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਨੰਗੇ ਹੀ ਫਿਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਕਿਤੇ ਪਉਣ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿਤੇ ਕਈ ਅਗਨੀਆਂ ਅਚਰਜ ਖੇਡਾਂ ਵਿਖਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀਆਂ ਬਣਾਈਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਧਰਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਧਰਤੀ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਤਪੱਤੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਈ ਖਾਣੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਜੀਵ ਜੰਤੂ ਆਪਣੇ ਖਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੁਆਦ ਵਿਚ ਲੱਗੇ ਹਨ। ਕਿਤੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਪਸ ਵਿਚ ਮੇਲ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਤੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਵਿਛੋੜਾ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਮਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਕਿਤੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੁੱਖ ਸਤਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿਤੇ ਉਹ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦਾ ਭੋਗ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਭਾਵ, ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਜੀਵ ਆਪਣੀ ਲੋੜ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਛਕੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਕਿਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿਤੇ ਜੀਵ ਅਸਲੀ ਰਾਹ ਤੋਂ ਖੁੰਝ ਕੇ ਭਟਕ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਕਿਤੇ ਠੀਕ ਰਸਤੇ ਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ

ਹਨ, ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਅਚਰਜ ਖੇਡ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਹੈਰਾਨਗੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸੱਭ ਕੁਝ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਕੋਈ ਆਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨੇੜੇ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਆਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ, ਕੋਈ ਆਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸਭ ਥਾਈਂ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਅਚਰਜ ਕੌਤਕ ਨੂੰ ਤੱਕ ਕੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਝਰਨਾਟ ਛਿੜਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਕਿ ਇਸ ਇਲਾਹੀ ਤਮਾਸ਼ੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਡੇ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

*ਸਲੋਕ ਮ: ੧ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਦ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਵੇਦ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਜੀਅ
ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੇਦ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰੰਗ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਗੇ
ਫਿਰਹਿ ਜੰਤ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਪਉਣੁ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਪਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਅਗਨੀ
ਖੇਡਹਿ ਵਿਡਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਧਰਤੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਖਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ
ਸਾਦਿ ਲਗਹਿ ਪਰਾਣੀ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਵਿਜੋਗੁ ॥
ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੁਖ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੋਗੁ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਲਾਹ
॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਉਝੜ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰਾਹ ॥ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨੇੜੈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੇਖੈ ਹਾਜਰਾ ਹਜੂਰਿ ॥ ਵੇਖਿ ਵਿਡਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਬੁਝਣੁ ਪੂਰੈ ਭਾਗਿ ॥੧॥ (੪੬੩-੪੬੪)*

ਧਰਤੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਧੁਰੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ ਘੁੰਮਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਦਿਨ ਤੇ ਰਾਤ ਬਣਦੇ ਹਨ। ਧਰਤੀ ਸੂਰਜ ਦੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ ਵੀ ਚੱਕਰ ਲਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਅਜੇਹੇ ਇਕ ਚੱਕਰ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਾਲ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਸਮਾਂ ਜਾਨਣ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਅਪਨਾਏ, ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਾਲੈਂਡਰ (ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ, ਗਰੀਗੋਰੀਅਨ, ਜੂਲੀਅਟ, ਆਦਿ) ਪਰਚੱਲਤ ਹਨ। ਪੁਰਾਨੇ ਸਮਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਾਂ ਮਾਪਣ ਲਈ ਵਿਸੁਏ (ਅੱਖ ਦੇ ੧੫ ਫੋਰ), ਚਸੇ (੧੫ ਵਿਸੁਏ), ਪਲ (੩੦ ਚਸੇ = ੧ ਪਲ), ਘੜੀਆਂ (੬੦ ਪਲ = ੧ ਘੜੀ), ਪਹਰ (ਸਾਡੇ ੭ ਘੜੀਆਂ = ੧ ਪਹਰ), ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤ (੮ ਪਹਰ = ੧ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤ), ਬਿੱਤਾਂ (੧੫), ਵਾਰ (੭), ਮਹੀਨਾ (੧੨) ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਰੁੱਤਾਂ ਆਦਿਕ ਵਰਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਸੱਭ ਕੁਝ ਇਕੋ ਹੀ ਸੂਰਜ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸ ਸੂਰਜ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਿਚ ਅਸੀਂ ਰਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ। ਅਜੇਹੇ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਸੂਰਜ ਮੰਡਲ ਇਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕਰਤੋ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਸੱਭ ਕੁਝ ਕਰਤੋ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਰੂਪ ਹਨ। ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਜੋ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਸੱਭ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

*ਵਿਸੁਏ ਚਸਿਆ ਘੜੀਆ ਪਹਰਾ ਬਿਤੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਮਾਹੁ ਹੋਆ ॥ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਏਕੋ
ਰੁਤਿ ਅਨੇਕ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਰਤੇ ਕੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਵੇਸ ॥੨॥੨॥ (੧੨-੧੩)*

ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਭ ਬੂਟਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਹਰ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਗ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੀ, ਪਰ ਸਭ ਬੂਟਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਅੱਗ ਗੁਪਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਬੂਟਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਗ ਲਗਾਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਹੀ ਪਤਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਅੱਗ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਦੁੱਧ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰੋਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਘਿਉ ਜਾਂ ਮੱਖਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਹਰੇਕ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੇ ਦੁੱਧ ਵਿਚ ਘਿਉ ਮੱਖਣ ਗੁਪਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਕਿ ਦੁੱਧ ਚਿੜਕਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਹੀ

ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਉੱਚੇ ਨੀਵੇਂ, ਚੰਗੇ ਮੰਦੇ, ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਹਰੇਕ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਹੈ, ਧਰਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਸਭ ਥਾਂਈਂ ਰਮਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ, ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਭਰਮ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਦੂਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰੰਤੂ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਸਦਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਮੋਹ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਾਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।

**ਸੋਰਠਿ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਘਰੁ ੨ ਦੁਪਦੇ ॥ ੧੬ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਸਗਲ
ਬਨਸਪਤਿ ਮਹਿ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ ਸਗਲ ਦੁਧ ਮਹਿ ਘੀਆ ॥ ਉਚ ਨੀਚ ਮਹਿ
ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਮਾਧਉ ਜੀਆ ॥੧॥ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ
ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਹਿਓ ॥ ਪੂਰਨ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਰਬ ਮਹਿ ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ
ਰਮਈਆ ਆਹਿਓ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਗੁਣ ਨਿਧਾਨ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਸੁ ਗਾਵੈ
ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਇਓ ॥ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਸਦਾ ਅਲੇਪਾ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ
ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇਓ ॥੨॥੧॥੨੯॥ (੬੧੨)**

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ, ਪਰੰਤੂ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਰੱਖਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਹਰੇਕ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਵੱਸਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਫਿਰ ਭੀ, ਉਸ ਉੱਪਰ ਮਾਇਆ ਦਾ ਰਤਾ ਵੀ ਲੇਪ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ, ਭਾਵ ਉਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਜੀਭ ਉਤੇ ਵੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ, ਸੰਤ ਜਨ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ।

**ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਵਾਸੀ ਲੇਪੁ ਨਹੀ ਅਲਪਹੀਅਉ ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹਤ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਰੇ ਲੋਗਾ ਸੰਤ ਰਸਨ ਕੇ ਬਸਰੀਅਉ ॥੨॥੧॥੨॥
(੨੦੦)**

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸੱਭ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਦਿਸ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਲੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸੱਭ ਦਾ ਤੇ ਸੱਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡਾ ਪਾਤਿਸ਼ਾਹ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਪਾਤਿਸ਼ਾਹ ਨਿਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੱਸ ਰਿਹਾ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਦਿੱਸਦੇ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਵੀ ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਵੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵੇਦ ਜਾਂ ਕਤੇਬ ਆਦਿਕ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਿਆਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ। ਪਰੰਤੂ, ਉਹ ਪਾਤਿਸ਼ਾਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਚੀ ਹੋਈ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਵਿਚ ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਦਿੱਸ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

**ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਹਭਾ ਹੂੰ ਬਾਹਰਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸ਼ਾਹੁ ਦਿਸੈ
ਜਾਹਰਾ ॥੪॥੩॥੧੦੫॥ (੩੯੨)**

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਪੈ ਕੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣ ਸਦਕਾ ਹੁਣ ਮੈਂ ਜਿਧਰ ਵੀ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਹਾਂ, ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਹੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਵੱਸਦਾ ਦਿੱਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਸਦਕਾ ਹੁਣ ਇਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਰਾਹੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਂਦੀ। ਪਰੰਤੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਬੰਧਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਤੱਵ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਦਾ ਥਿਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਰਮ ਕਾਂਡ ਕਰਨਾ, ਸਭ ਪਖੰਡ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਰਮ ਕਾਂਡਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਜਾਂ ਦੂਸਰਿਆਂ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਕਰਵਾਈ ਪੂਜਾ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਖੁਆਰ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ।

**ਜਹ ਜਹ ਦੇਖਾ ਤਹ ਤਹ ਸੋਈ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭੇਟੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸਚੁ ਏਹ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਹੋਰੁ ਸਭੁ ਪਾਖੰਡੁ ਪੂਜ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥੬॥
(੧੩੪੩)**

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਰੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਵ, ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੱਕਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਾਇਕ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਲਾਲਸਾ ਕਦੇ ਮੁੱਕਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਗੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਵਧਦੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਤ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨਾ ਅਧੀਨ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਉਹ ਪਿਆਰਾ (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ) ਦਿੱਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ। ਉਹ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਪਤੀ (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ) ਦਿੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਜੇਹੀਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਤ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨਾ ਅਧੀਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੀ ਲਾਲਚ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਕਰਤੇ ਵਿਚ ਲੀਨ ਰਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾ ਲਿਆ, ਉਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਣ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਸਮੇਤ ਆਪ ਵੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਸਫਲ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਤਾਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**ਮਃ ੫ ॥ ਲੋਇਣ ਲੋਈ ਡਿਠ ਪਿਆਸ ਨ ਬੁਝੈ ਮੁ ਘਣੀ ॥ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੇ
ਅਖੜੀਆ ਬਿਅੰਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਡਿਸੰਦੇ ਮਾ ਪਿਰੀ ॥੩॥ (੧੦੯੯, ੧੧੦੦)**

ਸਿਰਫ ਇਕ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਹੀ ਸੱਭ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਵਸ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਵਿਚਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਸੂਰਜ, ਚੰਨ, ਤਾਰੇ, ਸਾਰੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਹੀ ਵਿਚਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਵੇਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਪੁਰਾਣਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਓਸੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖੋ। ਚੰਦ੍ਰਮਾ, ਸੂਰਜ, ਤਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਉਹੀ ਹੈ। ਹਰੇਕ ਜੀਵ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਹੀ ਬੋਲਦਾ ਹੈ, ਭਾਵ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਹੀ ਬੋਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰੰਤੂ ਸਭ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਅਡੋਲ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕਦੇ ਡੋਲਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਤਾਕਤਾਂ ਰਚ ਕੇ ਜਗਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਖੇਡਾਂ ਖੇਡ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਉਹ ਮੁੱਲ ਖਰੀਦਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਹ ਅਮੋਲਕ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ, ਇਸ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਜੋਤਾਂ

ਵਿਚ ਜਗ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਮਾਲਕ ਤਾਣੇ ਪੋਟੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ ਆਸਰਾ ਦੇ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰੰਤੂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਸਦਾ ਕਾਇਮ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਤੇ ਸਰਬ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਦਾ ਯਕੀਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਰਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਟ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਮਹਿ ਦੇਖੁ ॥ ਸਸੀਅਰ ਸੂਰ ਨਖੁੜੁ ਮਹਿ ਏਕੁ ॥
ਬਾਣੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੈ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਅਭੋਲੁ ਨ ਕਬਹੂ ਡੋਲੈ ॥ ਸਰਬ
ਕਲਾ ਕਰਿ ਖੋਲੈ ਖੋਲ ॥ ਮੋਲਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਐ ਗੁਣਹ ਅਮੋਲ ॥ ਸਰਬ ਜੋਤਿ
ਮਹਿ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਜੋਤਿ ॥ ਧਾਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ॥ ਗੁਰ
ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਭਰਮ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਏਹੁ ਬਿਸਾਸੁ ॥੩॥
(੨੯੪)**

ਜਿਸ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੇ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਅਕਾਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਟਿਕਾ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਪਵਣ, ਸਰੋਵਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਲ, ਅੱਗ ਤੇ ਅੰਨ ਆਦਿਕ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਸਦਕਾ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਮਾ ਤੇ ਤਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਦਿਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜ੍ਹਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਅਨੇਕਾਂ ਪਹਾੜ ਰਚੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਰੁੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਫੁੱਲ ਤੇ ਫਲ ਲਾਏ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ, ਮਨੁੱਖ ਤੇ ਸੱਤ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਤਿੰਨੋਂ ਭਵਣ (ਧਰਤੀ, ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਤੇ ਪਾਤਾਲ) ਟਿਕਾ ਰੱਖੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹੀ ਇਕ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਸਦਾ ਅਟੱਲ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸਦਾ ਅਟੱਲ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ, ਉਸ ਦੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲਤਾ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਹੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਸੋਮਾ ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਸਦਕਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲਤਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਮਨੁੱਖਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਸਫਲ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

**ਰਭ ॥ ਜਿਸਹਿ ਧਾਰਿਉ ਧਰਤਿ ਅਰੁ ਵਿਉਮੁ ਅਰੁ ਪਵਣੁ ਤੇ ਨੀਰ ਸਰ
ਅਵਰ ਅਨਲ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਕੀਅਉ ॥ ਸਸਿ ਰਿਖਿ ਨਿਸਿ ਸੂਰ ਦਿਨਿ ਸੈਲ
ਤਰੁਅ ਫਲ ਫੁਲ ਦੀਅਉ ॥ ਸੁਰਿ ਨਰ ਸਪਤ ਸਮੁਦ੍ਰੁ ਕਿਆ ਧਾਰਿਓ
ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਜਾਸੁ ॥ ਸੋਈ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਤਿ ਪਾਇਓ ਗੁਰ ਅਮਰ
ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸੁ ॥੧॥੫॥ (੧੩੯੯)**

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਕਦੋਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਇਹ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ, ਉਹ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਇਹ ਜਗਤ ਬਣਿਆ ਸੀ, ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਕੀ ਸਮਾਂ ਸੀ? ਕਿਹੜਾ ਵਖਤ ਸੀ? ਕਿਹੜੀ ਥਿੱਤ ਸੀ? ਕਿਹੜਾ ਵਾਰ ਸੀ? ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਰੁੱਤ ਸੀ? ਅਤੇ ਕਿਹੜਾ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਸੀ? ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੱਸ ਸਕਦਾ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਕਦੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਦਾ ਪੰਡਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਾ, ਜੇ ਪਤਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਮਜ਼ਮੂਨ ਉੱਤੇ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਜ਼ੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਬਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗ ਸਕੀ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਲੇਖ ਲਿਖ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਇਤਾਂ ਇਕੱਠੀਆਂ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਕੋਈ ਜੋਗੀ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਕਿ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਥਿੱਤ ਸੀ? ਕਿਹੜਾ ਵਾਰ ਸੀ? ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਰੁੱਤ ਸੀ? ਅਤੇ ਕਿਹੜਾ

ਮਹੀਨਾ ਸੀ? ਜਿਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਜਗਤ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ, ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਗਤ ਕਦੋਂ ਰਚਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਦੋਂ ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਬਣਿਆ?

**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
ਕਰਾਣੁ ॥ ਬਿਤਿ ਵਾਰੁ ਨਾ ਜੋਗੀ ਜਾਣੈ ਰੁਤਿ ਮਾਹੁ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਜਾ ਕਰਤਾ
ਸਿਰਠੀ ਕਉ ਸਾਜੇ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ ॥੨੧॥ (੪, ੫)**

ਜਦੋਂ ਸਿਰਫ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪਣੀ ਮੌਜ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਟਿਕਿਆ ਬੈਠਾ ਸੀ, ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਜੰਮਣਾ, ਮਰਨਾ ਤੇ ਮੌਤ ਕਿਥੇ ਸਨ? ਜਦੋਂ ਉਹ ਪੂਰਨ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿਰਫ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਸੀ, ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਮੌਤ ਦਾ ਡਰ ਕਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ? ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਲੇਖਾ ਪੁੱਛਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਕੋਈ ਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਗੁਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਉਹ ਅਚਰਜ ਰੂਪ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਰਗਾ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਕਾਰ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ।

**ਆਪਨ ਆਪ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਅਚਰਜਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਨ ਰੂਪ ਆਪ ਹੀ
ਉਪਰਜਾ ॥੩॥ (੨੯੯)**

ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਸਦਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਨੂੰ ਪੜਤਾਲਿਆ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਇਆ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਸਭ ਅੰਦਰ ਗੁਪਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਸਹਾਰਾ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਫਲ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਲੱਗਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਹੜੇ ਆਤਮਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਚਲਦੇ ਹਨ।

**ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਆਪੁ ਉਪਾਇ ਉਪੰਨਾ ॥ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਵਰਤੈ ਏਕੁ
ਪਰਛੰਨਾ ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਸਾਰ ਕਰੇ ਜਗਜੀਵਨੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਅਪਣਾ ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਤਾ ਹੇ
॥੧॥ (੧੦੫੧)**

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਗਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਜਗਤ ਰੂਪੀ ਖੇਡ ਦਾ ਲੇਖਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਾ ਸਕਦਾ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਖੋਜ ਖੋਜ ਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਵੀ ਥੱਕ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਰੂਪੀ ਧਾਗੇ ਵਿਚ ਪਰੇ ਰੱਖੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਿਉ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੇ ਰਚੇ ਹੋਏ ਜੀਵ, ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ।

ਜਾ ਕੀ ਲੀਲਾ ਕੀ ਮਿਤਿ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਦੇਵ ਹਾਰੇ ਅਵਗਾਹਿ ॥ ਪਿਤਾ

ਕਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਕਿ ਜਾਨੈ ਪੁਤੁ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਪਰੋਈ ਅਪੁਨੈ ਸੁਤਿ ॥ (੨੮੪)

ਜੇ ਕਰ ਉਪਰ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ, ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿਖਿਆਵਾਂ, ਨੂੰ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਕਰੀਏ ਤਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਨਿਸਚੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਗਈ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਸਭ ਥਾਈਂ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

- ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਭ ਬੁਟਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਹਰ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਗ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੀ, ਪਰ ਸਭ ਬੁਟਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਅੱਗ ਗੁਪਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਦੁੱਧ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰੋਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਘਿਉ ਜਾਂ ਮੱਖਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਹਰੇਕ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੇ ਦੁੱਧ ਵਿਚ ਘਿਉ ਮੱਖਣ ਗੁਪਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ, ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹਰੇਕ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਸਭ ਥਾਈਂ ਰਮਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਭਰਮ ਤੇ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਦੂਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।
- ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਰੱਖਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ, ਉਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਸਦਕਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਬੰਧਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਤਵ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਦਾ ਬਿਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਰਮ ਕਾਂਡ ਕਰਨਾ, ਸਭ ਪਖੰਡ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਰਮ ਕਾਂਡਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਖੁਆਰ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ।
- ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਅਧੀਨ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਸ ਸਕਦਾ। ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾ ਲਿਆ, ਉਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਣ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਸਮੇਤ ਆਪ ਵੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਸਫਲ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਤਾਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ।
- ਸਿਰਫ ਇਕ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੀ ਸੱਭ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਵਿਚਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਮਾਲਕ ਤਾਣੇ ਪੇਟੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ ਆਸਰਾ ਦੇ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਕੋਈ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੱਸ ਸਕਦਾ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਕਦੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ? ਜਿਸ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਜਗਤ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਗਤ ਕਦੋਂ ਰਚਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਦੋਂ ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਬਣਿਆ?
- ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਰੂਪੀ ਧਾਗੇ ਵਿਚ ਪਰੋ ਰੱਖੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਿਉ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਦੇ ਰਚੇ

ਹੋਏ ਜੀਵ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ।

- ਇਹ ਸੱਭ ਸਿਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਪਰੰਤੂ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਰੱਖਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਉਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਾ ਲਿਆ, ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਸਮੇਤ ਆਪ ਵੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਸਫਲ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਤਾਰ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

“ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ”

(ਡਾ: ਸਰਬਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ)

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FAUJA SINGH



The world's oldest marathon runner, the 102 year-old Fauja Singh has run in marathons across the world. A world record holder, Fauja Singh has been featured in campaigns by Adidas alongside David Beckham and Muhammad Ali.

When he runs, Fauja Singh says he “feels connected to God.” He uses his marathons to support charities and bring awareness of the Sikh experience, as he did when he ran in the New York City Marathon in 2003. He set the world record for fastest time by a runner above the age of 90 in 2003 and became the first 100 year old to complete a marathon in Toronto in 2011. He carried the Olympic torch as part of the 2012 London Olympic Games.

[Honoured by SALDEF at their National Gala in Washington, DC on October 12, 2013 with the Sikh Image Award.]

QUOTES FROM GURU GRANTH SAHIB

ਬਿਸਰਿ ਗਈ ਸਭ ਤਾਤਿ ਪਰਾਈ॥ ਜਬ ਤੇ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਪਾਈ॥
ਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ॥

since I have found universal love, there are no more enemies and strangers. AGGS, p. 1299 Guru Arjan.

*

(ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਐਸਾ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਭਸੈ ਲਏ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਜੀਉ॥ AGGS, p 72

O Nanak, know him as the true guru, who unites all with the Lord).

*

(ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ॥; AGGS, Jap 1, p 1

ultimate truth or God was there before all ages began; was there in the past; is there in the present, O Nanak; and will be there in the future forever).

*

ਸਚ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ॥ AGGS, Jap 37, p 8

in the realm of truth, the formless Lord abides.

*

ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ ॥AGGS, p 62

Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful living.

*

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ॥ AGGS, Jap 1, p 1

How to become truthful; and how can the veil of illusion be torn away?

Answer “ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ॥AGGS, Jap 1, p 1

walk in the way of His Will.

*

ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੋ ਬੁਝੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥; AGGS, Jap 2, p 1

O Nanak, one who understands ‘Divine Will,’ is freed from ego.

*

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਅਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ॥ AGGS, p 441

O’my soul you’re the image of Divine light; so know your source.

*

ਮੈ ਉਪਰਿ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੀ ਪਿਰਿ ਸਾਚੈ ਮੈ ਛੋਡਿਅੜਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਤੇਰਾ ॥ AGGS, p.561, Guru Ram Das

I tender my gratitude to the Eternal Wisdom that granted me the gift of inner understanding towards abandoning every distinction between mine and others.

*

ਧੌਲੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਾ ਪੂਤੁ॥ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਸੂਤਿ॥

Dhaul dharam daya ka poot; santokh thap rakhiya jin soot. AGGS, Jap 16, p3).

The implication is that “Be compassionate to others; and be content within yourself.”

*

ਹਕੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਉਸੁ ਸੁਅਰ ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਹਾਮਾ ਤਾ ਭਰੇ ਜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ ॥(SGGS:141)

'To take what rightfully belongs to another, is like a Muslim eating pork, or a Hindu eating beef. Our Guru, our Spiritual Guide, stands by us, if we do not eat those carcasses (usurp others rights.)'