



ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥  
Ik oānkār sat̃ nām kartā purakh̃ nirbh̃ao nirvair akāl mūrati ajūnī saibh̃a'n gur parsād̃.



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## Editorial

### Obsessing Over Numbers.

Why are Sikh religious leaders within Punjab infatuated with the notion of increasing the percentage of Sikh population within the state? Why are they fixated on the view that the number of Sikhs in Punjab are dwindling? Are they really concerned about the welfare of Sikhs and the future of Punjab? Or is there something else at play here? A look at the reasoning behind three calls by three leaders will help shed some light on the issue.

In May 2024, the head of Dera Chowk Mehta, known as Damdami Taksal from the 1970s onwards, Harnam Singh Dhuma called on Sikh families to have at least five children. He added that if the families could not afford to raise the children, then four of them should be handed over to the Dera to be brought up. He said that his organization would raise and nurture all these children. “You should not limit yourself to one child, otherwise, in the coming times, Sikhs will be a minority and will suffer,” he said.

He added that his Dera would transform children handed over to them as Sikh preachers who would promote the religion in an effective manner.

In August 2023, then Takht Damdama Sahib Jathedar and ormer Akal Takhat Interim Jathedar Harpreet Singh called on members of the Sikh community to not migrate from Punjab. He was concerned that the Sikh population within the state was dwindling due to migration and that such a trend was bad for the state.

In May of 2015, then Akal Takhat Jathedar Gurbachan Singh had called on every Sikh family to have at least 4 children. Facing criticism – both for the suggestion and for his dubious reasons behind the call, he doubled down during a media conference a few days later and said “it is easier for parents to discipline many children than just one.”

The Hindustan Times, on May 16, 2015 reported Gurbachan Singh as saying: “Sikhs have followed the national family planning concept religiously and limited their numbers.” He added that “We

adopted the two-child theory first and single-child idea now. It has done more harm than good to the community. Single children get an overdose of love and affection, which spoils them, eroding human values and family discipline," he explained. The Jathedar further claimed that in the "good old days", families had three, four, or even more children; with no favorites and everyone treated equally and kept in check. "If one of the four children turns out to be bad, there still are three good ones; but when a single child goes astray, it shatters the family," he contended.

**THE HOLLOWNESS OF IT ALL.** All three calls by all three religious leaders are just different shades of a hollowness that rings loud and clear – even if disguised as being driven by “Sikh anxieties or panthik trepidations”. They are empty calls devoid of sound logic, proper reasoning, and rigorous rationality.

Jathedar Gurbachan Singh could not be bothered about the economic consequences of having large families and its impact on society. He had no answer to the criticism that his call – if implemented - would aggravate unemployment and make agricultural land holdings smaller.

Interim Jathedar Harpreet Singh did not appear concerned that Sikhs who migrated out of Punjab did so for pressing and legitimate reasons – chief amongst which being the inability of Sikhs to find gainful employment within Punjab – even if they had acquired decent education. Many a Sikh family had found it financially sound to spend their money to send their children out of Punjab rather than pay huge sums of money to corrupt officials to secure employment in Punjab. Harpreet Singh did not think that the push factors were as strong, if not stronger than the pull factors.

Harnam Singh Dhumma appeared least perturbed by the fact that if every family handed him four children to be turned into Sikh preachers, what would be the future of these “un-employable” persons. Is he trying to tell us that Sikh organizations have a severe shortage of Sikh preachers and are waiting for Dhuma’s outfit to produce them? Or is Dhumma merely concerned about keeping his dying outfit relevant? In any case, wouldn’t Dhuma’s call be going against the “don’t migrate” call of Harpreet Singh? After all, large numbers of Sikh parcharaks are lining up to migrate overseas – to fill up positions at diaspora Gurdwaras or become truck drivers or fast food join workers in Western countries.

All three calls by all three religious leaders are also not based on facts and figures. The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India had reported that the percentage of Sikh populations had increased by 1.24% over the period of 1950 to 2015, while that of Hindus declined by 7.82%. So, if its anyone whose religious leaders should be sounding the alarm, it ought to be ones of Hindu organizations.

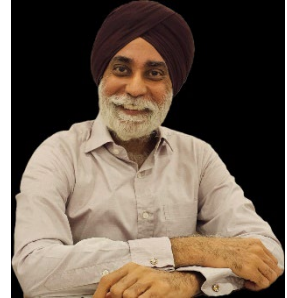
Sikhs have finally come to realize that they served the function of being regularly called to the streets to take part in protests, agitations and demonstrations for an unending but unproductive slew of issues and demands. Sikh youth especially have realized that the time has come for them to put their own interests above those of their religious leaders. Migration out of Punjab is perhaps one solution for our youth. It may well be that the crux of the worry of our religious leaders is that they have become generals without an army to command.

Come to think of it; what’s the use of fussing to increase the population of Sikhs in Punjab, if large number of Sikhs are eventually going to fall prey to the colossal onslaught of religious conversion that is taking place in Punjab now. Given that these Sikh religious leaders are either un-concerned about this monumental shift in the religious demographics of Punjab; or actually have no response to it – are they even genuine in their concerns over the dwindling Sikh population in Punjab? After all, our religious leaders have told the Sikh world that there really is no such problem of religious conversion. It only concerns the “lower castes” and this group has no relevance within the designs and parameters of our religious leaders. It may well be that our religious leaders are losing their relevance within the parameters of Punjab and Sikhism – hence their nonsensical calls.

**Karminder Singh Dhillon, PhD.**  
**Chief Editor.**

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This *shabd* is composed by Guru Nanak and recorded on page 15 of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji (SGGS). It is the fourth *shabd* of Sri Rag – the first rag of the SGGS.

ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ *Sri Raag Mehla 1.*  
Sri Rag First Mehl.

**Labb** – Greed. **Kutta** - Lit. Dog; Barking, Howling. Sp. Traits of Greed within the mind. **Koorr**- Lit. Fakery. Sp. Absence of Godliness, devoid of divinity. Note: Koor in Gurbani is defined as the antonym (opposite) of Sach. The word Sach in Gurbani (From the Sanskrit Words Sat and Satya) refers to the Creator. So Koor is the state of “absence of the Creator” as in the Verse of Guru Nanak: ਨਾਨਕੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਾਝੁ ਕੂੜੇ ਕੂੜੁ ॥ ੧ ॥ *Nanak Vekhaneiy Benti Tudh Baajh Kooro Koor*. SGGS 468. Meaning: *Koor of Koor* comes to exist whence Your existence has been denied. **Choohra** – Lit. Low Caste. Sp. Lowest Rung. **Thug** – Cheat, Deceive. **Khadha** - Consumed; Grab. **Murdar** – Lit. Carcass. Sp. Rightfully Belonging to Others.

**Constant Howling in Greed, Desire to Grab by Deceit the Rightful Possessions of Others, and the Absence of Divinity Have Resulted in My Mind-set Being Relegated to the Lowest Rung of Humanity.**

ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਪਰ ਮਲੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸੁਧੀ ਅਗਨਿ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਚੰਡਾਲੁ ॥ *Par Ninda Par Mal Mukh Sudhee Agan Krodh Chandaal.*

**Par** – Others. **Ninda** – Condemn. **Mal** – Lit. Dirt; Derogatory. **Mukh** – Lit. Face, mouth. Metap. Speak. **Sudhee** - Complete, Forever. **Agan** – Fire, burning. **Krodh** – Anger. **Chandaal** – Demon.

**The Demon of Anger Within Fans the Ever Burning Desire of Condemning and Speaking Derogatively of Others.**

ਰਸ ਕਸ ਆਪੁ ਸਲਾਹਣਾ ਏ ਕਰਮ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਰਤਾਰ ॥ ੧ ॥ *Russ Kuss Aap Slahna E Karm Mayray Kartar.*

**Russ Kuss** – Indulgences. **Aap** – Self. **Slahna** – Praise, Acclaim. **E Karm** – These Deeds. **Mayray** – Mine. **Kartar** – Creator.

**These Then Are the Indulgences and Self-Acclaimed Deeds of Mine, O Creator.**

ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲੀਐ ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥ *Baba Boleay Patt Hoey.*

**Baba** - O Mind of mine. **Boleay**- Lit. Talk; Discourse. **Patt** – Lit. Dignified; Godly, Divine. **Hoey** – Is.  
**O Mind, The Discourse of Spirituality is One of Divine Deeds.**

ਉਤਮ ਸੇ ਦਰਿ ਉਤਮ ਕਹੀਅਹਿ ਨੀਚ ਕਰਮ ਬਹਿ ਰੋਇ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

*Utam Sey Dar Utam Kaheah Neech Karm Beh Roye. Rahao.*

**Utam** – Elevated. **Sey Dar** – Lit. that door; Journey towards Realization. **Kaheay** – Is, said to be. **Neech** – Lowly. **Karm** – Actions. **Beh Roye** – Idiom. Regret, Remorse, Shame.

**The Journey of Realization Entails Elevation to Divine Heights; But I Suffer Shame on Account of my Actions.**

**ਰਸੁ ਸੁਇਨਾ ਰਸੁ ਰੁਪਾ ਕਾਮਣਿ ਰਸੁ ਪਰਮਲ ਕੀ ਵਾਸੁ || Russ Soena Russ Ruppa Kaaman Russ Parmal Kee Vaas.**

**Russ** - Desire for the Essence. Indulgence. Penchant. **Soena** - Gold. **Ruppa** – Silver. **Parmal** - Perfume. **Vaas** – (from Vaashna) Sp. Craving. **Kaaman** – Permeated in Desire; Imbued in Kaam, Defining of Kaam.

**My Desires, Indulgences and Cravings for Gold, Silver and Fragrances Have Made Me Imbued in Desire;  
Defining my Kaam.**

**ਰਸੁ ਘੋੜੇ ਰਸੁ ਸੇਜਾ ਮੰਦਰ ਰਸੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਰਸੁ ਮਾਸੁ || Russ Ghorey Russ Seyja Mandir Russ Meetha Russ Maas.**

**Ghorey** – Lit. Horses; depiction of Travel. **Seyja** – Lit. Bedding; Comforts. **Mandir** – Dwellings. **Meetha** – Sweet. **Maas** – Lit. Meat. Metap. Palate, Tastes.

**I Possess Desires and Cravings for Dwellings and Comforts of Travel; and Indulge in Penchants of the Palate.**

**ਏਤੇ ਰਸੁ ਸਰੀਰ ਕੇ ਕੈ ਘਟਿ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਵਾਸੁ || ੨ || Etey Russ Sareer Kay Kaey Ghat Nam Niwas.**

**Etey** – Abundant, Copious. **Sareer Kay** – Of the Body, Physical. **Kaey Ghat** – How within the Mind? **Nam** – Godly Virtues. **Niwas** – Reside.

**So Abundant are my Physical Desires, Indulgence and Cravings; How then Will Godly Virtues Come to Reside  
Within my Mind.**

**ਜਿਤੁ ਬੋਲਿਐ ਪਤਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਸੇ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ || Jit Boleay Patt Payeay So Boleya Parvan.**

**Jit** – Which. **Boleay** – Discourse. **Patt** – Spiritual Dignity. **Payeay** – Earned, Realized. **Parvan** – Acceptable.

**The Acceptable Discourse (of Spirituality) is one that Brings About Spiritual Dignity.**

**ਫਿਕਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਵਿਗੁਚਣਾ ਸੁਣਿ ਮੁਰਖ ਮਨ ਅਜਾਣੁ || Fikka Bol Viguchna Sunn Murakh Mun Ajaan.**

**Fikka** – Devoid of Godly or Divine Essence; Absorbed in Worldly Essence. **Bol** – Discourse. **Viguchna** – Conduct. **Sunn** – Lit. Listen. Sp. Realize. **Murakh**- Self-centered. **Mun** – Mind. **Ajaan** – Unenlightened.

**Realize, O Self-Centered and Unenlightened Mind – Discourse and Conduct that is Absorbed in Worldly  
Essence is Devoid of Divine Essence.**

**ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਹਿ ਸੇ ਭਲੇ ਹੋਰਿ ਕਿ ਕਹਣ ਵਖਾਣੁ || ੩ || Jo Tis Bhavey Sey Bhaley Hor Key Kehn Vakhaan.**

**Jo** – Those, That. **Tis Bhavey** – Acceptable to the Creator, in His will or Hukm. **Bhaley** – Good. **Hor** – Other, Else. **Kay** –What use? **Kehn Vakhaan** – Empty Talk.

**That Which is Acceptable to the Creator in His Hukm is Good O Mind; of What Use is All Else if not Mere Empty  
Talk?**

**ਤਿਨ ਮਤਿ ਤਿਨ ਪਤਿ ਤਿਨ ਧਨੁ ਪਲੈ ਜਿਨ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ || Tin Mutt Tinn Patt Tinn Dhan Jinn Hirdey Raheya  
Samaye.**

**Tin Mutt** – Of the right Mind-set. **Tinn Patt** – Of Spiritual Dignity. **Tinn Dhan** – Inner Wealth. **Palley** – Earned, Acquired, Possesses. **Hirdey** – Within; Mind. **Raheya** – Remain. **Samaye** – God Realized.

**The God Realized Being Possesses the Correct Mind-set, Earns Spiritual Dignity and Acquires Inner Wealth.**

**ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਕਿਆ ਸਾਲਾਹਣਾ ਅਵਰ ਸੁਆਲਿਉ ਕਾਇ || Tin Ka Kya Salahna Avar Sualeyo Kaye.**

**Tin Ka** – Of Such (Realized Beings). **Kya** - What. **Salahna** –Offering of Praises. **Avar** – Other, Else. **Sualeyo** – Inner / Spiritual Beauty. **Kaye** – Who.

**What Praises Can Be Offered of Such Realized Beings; Who Else Can Be of Higher Inner Beauty?**

**ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਬਾਹਰੇ ਰਾਚਹਿ ਦਾਨਿ ਨ ਨਾਇ || ੪ || Nanak Nadree Bahrey Rachey Daan Na Naye.**

**Nadree** – Blessings of the Creator. **Bahrey** – Devoid, Barren, Bereft. **Rachey** - Immersed. **Daan** – Gifts of Material, Worldliness. **Naye** – Godly Virtues.

**Nanak, To Remain Immersed in God Given Gifts (of Worldly Material) Instead of Godly Virtues is to Remain Barren of the Blessings of the Creator.**

**Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind.**  
Samuel Ullman

**The duty of youth is to challenge corruption.**  
Kurt Cobain

**Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children.**  
Walt Disney

**We must teach our children to dream with their eyes open.**  
Harry Edwards

**The power of the youth is the common wealth for the entire world.**  
Kailash Satyarthi

**The dreams of our youth are the future’s promise.**  
Edgar Whisenant

**SIKHI in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
**Relevant?**



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrLQm\\_GIRxU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrLQm_GIRxU)

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<https://youtu.be/bFxl-yqupX0>

## THE CONCEPT OF REINCARNATION IN SIKHI AND SIKHISM – ADVOCATED OR PRECLUDED?

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**ABSTRACT.** *Reincarnation is widely accepted as a reality of the afterlife amongst large sections of Sikhs. The concept, however, stands critiqued and rejected within Gurbani.*

*The preclusion of reincarnation from the Sikhi of Guru Nanak becomes apparent once the notion of redefining pre-1469 concepts is considered. This redefining has primarily been left unexplored or ignored purposively by the early interpreters of Gurbani, who relied on Vedic and snatan interpretations of the concepts within Gurbani. This shortcoming is a defining characteristic of the Fareedkoti Teeka, which has remained the basic reference for modern-day translations. Guru Nanak deployed virtually all religious concepts in existence in the pre-1469 belief systems because they were ingrained within the religious canvas of his era and widely accepted by humanity then. For this reason, they are mentioned in his writings as contained within the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. But mention does not equate to acceptance or advocacy. Guru Nanak went beyond critiquing these concepts and beliefs. He redefined them to fit his spiritual canvas. Reincarnation needs to be understood within such a framework.*

### INTRODUCTION

There are five primary assertions within this essay. The first is that reincarnation is believed, accepted and advocated within the parameters of Sikhism – the term Sikhism is taken to mean the institutionalized religion that the Sikhs practice. All aspects of the religion of Sikhism – its beliefs, practices, and rituals – indulge in the notion of reincarnation as a reality of the afterlife. And all facets of the institution of Sikhism, namely the clergy that consists of *granthis, ragis, parcharaks, and kathavachaks*; the Gurdwaras as the central body of the practice of Sikhism; the majority establishments of the religion with which a vast majority of Sikhs associate themselves, particularly the *deras, taksals, and sampardayi* outfits; and writers, speakers, and content creators associated with or otherwise influence by these establishments – promote the notion of reincarnation as a truth of the afterlife that cannot be denied.

This first assertion is taken as a given within Sikhism. No attempts are made in this essay to establish this assertion other than stating it as a plain “on-the-ground” reality.

The second assertion is that the notion of reincarnation is rejected within the framework of Sikhi – the term Sikhi being taken to mean the philosophical foundations that Guru Nanak laid; the spiritual messages of Guru Nanak and 34 other composers of Gurbani that are contained within the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS); and the body of enlightenment that is termed as the spirituality of ੴ.

The third assertion is that while there exists a whole gamut of underlying causes for the divide of such starkness between Sikhism the religion and Sikhi the spirituality on the notion of reincarnation – the primary one being the need by the clergy and the establishment of religion to exert control over their followers through the twin instruments of fear and promise in the afterlife; the divide is sustained by the chasm in interpreting Gurbani. The proponents of reincarnation interpret Gurbani through Snatan and Vedic lenses, arguing that the *mention* of reincarnation within Gurbani is proof of its acceptance and advocacy. This influence comes primarily from the first exegesis of the AGGS that a group of Benares-based Nirmlas undertook in the form of the *Fareedkoti Teeka*. The underlying hypothesis of this *Teeka* is that the AGGS is no more than a simplified presentation of the four Vedas.

Consequently, all the concepts, beliefs, and practices that make up the body of knowledge within the four Vedas are accepted within the writings of the AGGS.

The fourth assertion is that Guru Nanak rejected all prevalent religious beliefs, practices, and institutions. He rejected the institution of clergy by identifying the then-prevalent ones (Brahmin, Kadee, Mullah, and Yogi) as the destroyers of spirituality within humanity. He rejected the instruments of fear and promise constructed on concocted notions of the afterlife. He rejected belief systems that were engrossed with the idea of the afterlife. In short, he rejected the notion of Religion. In place, he advocated spirituality, humanity, and the unity of both. He replaced the twin instruments of fear and promise with love and bliss (*Anand*). He critiqued religion's preoccupation with the afterlife and advocated a spirituality for the here and now. He achieved this by re-defining all the concepts in 1469 about death, after death, and the afterlife. Concepts such as the court of judgement *dargah*, heaven and hell, 8.4 million life-forms, *Jumdoots*; *Dharam Raj*, the account keepers of the afterlife *Chitergupt*, etc. were redefined to fit the parameters of his spirituality of the here and now. Such is also the case with the notion of reincarnation. In short, the *modus operandi* of Guru Nanak's – and by extension Sikhi's – exclusion of prevalent pre-1469 beliefs lay not in the *exclusion of mention* of these beliefs but by the novel and innovative re-defining of them all to fit his notions of spirituality of the here and now. The basic thesis about this fourth assertion is that *mere* mention of any pre-existing concept within Gurbani does *not* equal its acceptance. More often than not, mentioning this and any other pre-1469 concept allows for a stringent critique based on logic, reason, and justification.

The fifth and final assertion is that those individuals, groups, and establishments within Sikhism that promote the notion of reincarnation as a truth of the afterlife have either inadvertently missed grasping the principle of re-defining that runs as a common thread within the pages of the AGGS; or have purposively neglected, ignored and rejected the principle altogether because it does not serve the objectives and designs of the religion of Sikhism that has come to exist today. So much of the self-preservation designs, livelihoods, and futures of these individuals, groups, and establishments are invested in the religion of Sikhism that the consideration of any view other than its perpetuation is unthinkable for them.

This state of affairs, however, cannot obliterate the fact that the notion of reincarnation is rejected within the framework of Sikhi, the philosophical foundations that were laid by Guru Nanak, within Gurbani, and within the considerations of enlightenment that is termed as the spirituality of ੴ. Gurbani makes it clear that reincarnation in the afterlife is a concocted notion, which, together with the entire gamut of related notions, runs the chariot of religion on the wheels of real fear and an unreal promise in the afterlife. It is thus worthy of critique and preclusion from Sikhi's spirituality.

#### **UNDERSTANDING THE NOTION OF REDEFINING.**

Even if “redefining” can be understood within the confines of lay and common language, the analogy pertaining to portrait painting will be used here to help explicate the notion.

When Guru Nanak wanted to create a portrait of Sikhi in 1469, the primary challenge was that the spiritual canvas on which he intended to create that image of Godly spirituality was neither clean nor blank. The human mind's spiritual canvas was already painted on with images of heaven and hell, 8.4 million life forms to be lived after death, soldiers of death, angels of death, and the cycle of births and deaths *Ava Gaun* and reincarnation. The existing canvas had images of salvation after death, judgment by *Dharam Raj*, and all-encompassing reports of our deeds to *Dharam Raj* by *Chitar Gupat*. The canvas also had images of punishment, of accounting of our deeds after death, and of our deceased ancestors. The existing canvas further had images of pre-ordained stuff carried over from our past lives and unfinished activities carried into our afterlives.

How does one paint over a canvas that is already painted and contains a thousand images? But the challenge for Guru Nanak did not end there. There was something else. The existing canvas had a definite focus - a focus on death. It was a canvas that had an obsession with life after death. It has a fixation with the afterlife. The existing canvas had a preoccupation with securing a good and comfortable afterlife. A life that no one had seen. A life that no one had experienced. A life that no one really knew anything about. A life that no one knew if it even existed in the first place.

The portrait that Guru Nanak intended to paint was different. It was starkly different. It was one whose focus was *not* on death but on life and on living. It was one whose emphasis was on the here and the now. Not on life after death.

Guru Nanak establishes this primary principle as follows:

**ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥**  
**ਸੁਣਿ ਮਨ ਮਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ ਮਿਲੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਹੈ ਇਹ ॥ ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਜੋਬਨਿ ਸਾਸੁ ਹੈ ਤਬ ਲਗੁ ਇਹੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ ॥**

*Sri Rag Mehla 1.*

*Sunn Man Miter Piareya Mil Veyla Hai Eh. Jab Lag Joban Saas Hai Tab Lag Eh Tan Deh.*

AGGS, M. 1, p. 20.

Guru Nanak is saying: O beloved mind, ਮਨ ਮਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ *Man Miter Piareya*, listen ਸੁਣਿ *Sunn*. The time to realize the Creator is the here and now - ਮਿਲੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਹੈ ਇਹ *Mil Veyla Hai Eh*. Divinity must be acquired and lived *now* while there is life and breath in me - ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਜੋਬਨਿ ਸਾਸੁ ਹੈ *Jab Lag Joban Saas Hai*. The translation of the above verses is thus:

O beloved mind, listen! The time to realize the Creator within is the here and now. Divinity must be acquired and lived now while life and breath are in me. AGGS, M. 1, p. 20.

It's clear that the spirituality of Guru Nanak is for the here and now. Bhai Gurdas puts it this way.

**ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਪੰਥ ਚਲਾਇਆ ॥** *Nanak Nirmal Panth Chlaeya.* Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 1, Pauri 45 -4.

The spirituality of Guru Nanak was *Nirmal*. It was pure. It was *Nirmal* because it did not have the contaminants of the existing beliefs. It was *Nirmal* because it was free from the impurities of the old canvas. Free from the *focus* of the old canvas, which was the afterlife. Above all, it was *Nirmal* because it presented a spirituality to be lived – not for some unknown and unknowable *future* – but lived in the *present* – lived in the Here and Now. Bhai Gurdas further writes of the spirituality of Sikhi.

**ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਹੋਵਣਹਾਰ ਸੋਈ ਪਰਵਾਣਾ ॥ ਕਾਰਣ ਕਰਤਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੈ ਸਿਰ ਧਰ ਮੰਨ ਕਰੈ ਸ਼ੁਕਰਾਣਾ ॥**

*Vartman Vich Vartda, Hovanhar Soyee Parvanna. Karann Karta Jo Kraiy Ser Dhar Man Kraiy Shukranna.*

Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 18-21- Pauri 3 & 4.

The word ਵਰਤਮਾਨ *Vartman* means the present. The phrase ਵਿਚ ਵਰਤਦਾ *Vich Vartda* means living and existing in the here and now. The word *Parvaan* means – Accepted. The phrase ਸਿਰ ਧਰ ਮੰਨ *Ser Dhar Man* means willingly accepts; ਕਰੈ ਸ਼ੁਕਰਾਣਾ *Kraiy Shukranna* means with gratitude, and ਕਰਤਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੈ *Karta Jo Kraiy* means the Creator's doing, the Creator's Will. The Meaning of the above verse is therefore:

*The accepted Sikh of Guru Nanak lives in the present. He accepts whatever happens in the here and now with gratitude as the creator's will.* Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 18-21- Pauri 3 & 4.



So this living in the present and in the here and now was the uniqueness of Sikhi. This was the *Nirmalta* of Sikhi.

In doing so, Guru Nanak turned the entire foundation of spirituality on its head. This required an entirely new canvas. There was a need for new concepts. There was a need to discard the concepts of the old canvas.

Why, then, one may ask, are all the concepts of the old canvas mentioned in the AGGS? The related question is: if the old canvas had been painted over by Guru Nanak, why is the old portrait still visible within the pages of the AGGS? It needs to be noted that the canvas we are talking about is a *mental* canvas. It's a canvas that exists in our minds. It's a canvas that sits as our mindset.

Believe it or not, even though Guru Nanak's Sikhi has been with us for more than five and a half centuries - a large percentage of Sikhs still walk around with that old canvas within our spiritual psyches. A vast majority of our *granthis*, *ragis*, *parcharaks*, clergy, thinkers, intellectuals, and writers are holding on to the old canvas, subscribing to it, and believing and accepting it.

A vast majority of Sikhs are Sikhs on the exterior. Unique in our looks. But our *mindsets* are framed by the canvas that Guru Nanak rejected.

The manner of painting over it that Guru Nanak employed is novel, innovative, and marvelous. It's a manner that speaks of Guru Nanak's spiritual genius, his inner wisdom, and his devotional enlightenment. It's called redefining. Guru Nanak painted over the pre-1469 old canvas by *redefining* everything on it. It was *revolutionary* redefining.

All the existing concepts are redefined. Each one of them is given a new meaning. They are *mentioned* by Guru Nanak and in Gurbani because people identified spirituality with those concepts. Removing them from the canvas was not an option. These concepts had been ingrained within the deepest recesses of the human mind. They have been carved within the deepest portions of the spiritual psyche. They had settled within the inner depths of the human conscience and soul.

Redefining was the way. The appropriate and correct manner. This was the only way to provide people with a new mindset. Guru Nanak re-defined them all. He gave new meanings to everything that existed on the old canvas. The new definitions were meant to fit his canvas of life and the here and the now.

If the question is: where exactly are the redefined meanings of these concepts recorded, the answer is "within the pages of the AGGS." It's a voluminous text. Massive by any standards. It is a wholesome text. A complete text. Any and every concept that is used in the text is defined *within* the text. Any concepts that are borrowed from the pre-existing canvas are re-defined.

So, the question is plain. When we want to understand Gurbani, to interpret it or translate it, then do we resort to the pre-1469 dictionary that Guru Nanak discarded, or use that dictionary that is embedded within the pages of the AGGS itself? It may seem like a rhetorical question. But the reason it has to be asked is simple. Virtually all our translations and *weeks* use the pre-1469 old and discarded dictionary to explain the concepts of Gurbani as used within the SGGS.

The outcome is that, by and large, Sikhs have reverted Sikhi to the old canvas. So the question then is: why are Sikhs living the discarded canvas? Why are Sikhs living the old canvas and accepting the old canvas as Sikhi? Why have we reverted to it? Why has this pre-1469 discarded canvas become our spiritual canvas? There can be three reasons for this first, is that we are unaware of the re-defining. The second reason could be that we are aware but have chosen, consciously or otherwise - to ignore the redefining. The third possible reason is that we choose to reject the redefining for purposes that are clear. Those who reject it are those who desire to take the Sikhi of Guru Nanak back into the clutches of the old canvas. These people aim to prove that Sikhs belong to the pre-1469 canvas. That Sikhi is not unique and not *nirmal*. But that Sikhi is merely an offshoot of the old canvas. That Sikhi is simply a branch of the big old tree, the old canvas.

There are, of course dire consequences of such a state of affairs. One glaring one is that while all of us Sikhs are living physically in the 21st century, most of us live in 1468 in the spiritual sense. In other words, for a vast majority of us, Guru Nanak has yet to be born into our lives. For a vast majority of us, Guru Nanak's portrait of Sikhi has *not* been painted over our old canvas. We are still living the old canvas and thinking (wrongly, of course) that the old canvas is what Guru Nanak's Sikhi really is.

How do we know if we are living the old canvas? Well, we can ask ourselves if the Sikhi we practice is one of fear: fear of God, fear of Guru, fear of pain, fear of sorrow, and fear of all things negative. We can ask if our spirituality is one of making deals with God or Guru – that we will make so many offerings, langars, and *Akhand path* recitals *if* and *after* our demands are met. We can ask if our spirituality is one of begging, of constantly asking for this and that, of rubbing our noses to plead to be given this and that. We can ask ourselves if our spirituality is a spirituality on behalf, where we ask our clergy to do our *ardas* asking for this and that, the *pathis* to do our *paths* for us upon payment. We can ask if concerns of life drive our spirituality after death, of heaven and hell, of 8.4 million life forms, and of reincarnation. We can ask if our spirituality is one of rituals. We can ask if our spirituality is one in which we expect and wait for miracles to take place.

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, we need to know that these are the pillars of the discarded canvas. These are the foundation blocks of the pre-1469 canvas. A vast majority of the practices in our Gurdwaras, a good deal of Sikhism that is preached in our Gurdwaras by our clergy, and a good deal of the discourses about beliefs and practices of Sikhism that are available on the social media and our published literature are based on the pre-1469 and discarded canvas.

The pillars of Guru Nanak's canvas are starkly different. The spirituality of joy, bliss, and love replaces the spirituality of fear. Gurbani calls it *Sohela*, *Vigas* or *Anand*. The spirituality of contentment replaces the spirituality of making deals with God and Guru. Gurbani calls it *Santokh*. The spirituality of getting clergy to do it on our behalf is replaced by the spirituality of *Kiret* and the spirituality of our effort.

**ਆਪਣ ਹਥੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕਾਜੁ ਸਵਾਰੀਐ ॥** *Apan Hathee Aapna Apat Hee Kaaj Swareaiy.*

I myself resolve my affairs. AGGS, M. 1, p. 474.

and

**ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ ॥** *Apey Beej Apey Hi Khah.*

The self sows what the self reaps. AGGS, M. 1, p. 4.

The spirituality of outsourcing to the clergy is thus replaced by the spirituality of the self, by the self, for the self. Guru Nanak forbade us from having a clergy class.

The spirituality is driven by concerns of life after the spirituality of here and now replaces death. The spirituality of rituals is from the pre-1469 canvas. In Guru Nanak's canvas, it is replaced by the spirituality of enlightenment. The spirituality of expecting miracles of the old canvas is discarded. In its place, Guru Nanak puts the spirituality of *Hukm* – of abiding in His will.

**ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥** *Hukm Rajayi Chalna Nanak Likhiya Naal.*

The way to Realize the Creator within is to) Remain within the confines and abide in His Hukm, as contained within us. AGGS, M. 1, p. 1.

Guru Nanak's spirituality tells us to stop waiting for miracles to happen. And to *become* the miracle we seek, in the here and now. Sikhi is the spirituality of *becoming* and becoming divine.

The question arises here: How did Sikhi revert to the discarded canvas? Especially when it comes to understanding Gurbani within the AGGS. The answer is straightforward: the canvas of Sikhi that Guru Nanak gave us got lost in translation. These translations and *teekas* of the AGGS – because they are largely referenced from

the Fareedkoti Teeka have unfortunately fallen back on the concepts within the discarded canvas and inserted them right back into Gurbani – *through* the translations.

There is no denying that Sikhs – in the last 300 years especially - have lost the ability to understand Gurbani independently. All of us need translations. Given the infiltration of the *Fareedkoti Teeka* into virtually all existing translations, our understanding of Gurbani has been permeated with the old pre-1469 discarded canvas. The concepts of the discarded canvas adulterate our understanding.

Then we have dozens of writings that we call “classical texts,” primarily *sakhis* or stories about the lives of our Gurus that help ingrain the concepts from the rejected canvas. Texts include *Gurbilas Patshahi 6*, *Suraj Parkash*, and the six main *Janam Sakhis*. In these classical texts, we have what are essentially tall tales disguised as *sakhis* about our Gurus acting and living very much in accordance with the old canvas. For example, fake *sakhis* of Gurus constructing a well with 84 steps to represent the 8.4 million life forms, concocted *sakhis* of Gurus talking to wolves which were reincarnated Sikhs, and feel-good *sakhis* of Gurus pulling out Sikhs from the fires of hell by their long hair – suggesting that the Guru would not be able to pull out those without it.

Such corruption - conducted, condoned, accepted, and preached over long periods- has had this effect. The canvas of Guru Nanak and the canvas of the Sikhi of Guru Nanak got discarded. The re-painted canvas was the one that got discarded. In its place, the old canvas has become re-established within the psyche of the Sikh. The old canvas has become our Sikhi of today. The redefining that was the core and essence of the uniqueness, *nirmalta* and revolutionary re-writing of spirituality got lost.

A vast majority of Sikhs make claims that Sikhs believe in heaven and hell, believe in reincarnation, believe in 8.4 million life forms in the afterlife, believe in judgement day, believe in *Dhram Raj*, etc. – all of which are from the old canvas. Our clergy, *granthis*, *ragis*, *kathakars*, preachers, and writers do not just hold on to the old canvas; they preach the old canvas because it is *mentioned* in the AGGS. Mention is equated to acceptance without understanding the context. And without understanding the critique and the redefining.

The outcome is stark indeed. What we have done is that we have brought ourselves to the same crossroads that Guru Nanak stood in 1469. And we have chosen to travel the road he decided not to take. We are traveling the road; he told us not to travel. We are traveling the road he discarded. What’s worse, we are traveling the discarded road, claiming that he – Guru Nanak – told us to travel this discarded road because he *mentioned* it in Gurbani. We have reverted, regressed, and lapsed into the discarded canvas. This is because we have ignored the fact that all the existing concepts in the discarded canvas are *redefined*. We ignored that Guru Nanak gave them new meanings – to fit his canvas of life and the here and the now.

## UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF REINCARNATION IN SIKHI AND SIKHISM

It is necessary to begin with Reincarnation, as advocated by the pre-1469 canvas. The primary claim is that after traveling for one *baras*, or one year, the departed soul arrives for judgment before an entity named *Dharam Raj*, who listens to a full accounting of the soul’s deeds from Chitergupt - the reporter cum accountant who is said to sit on our shoulders and earnestly record all our deeds while we are alive.

The claim then is that *Dharam Raj* orders the soul to either go to heaven or hell or to take on a new physical form – meaning to reincarnate – in a specific life form as determined by the outcome of the judgment of *Dharam Raj*. And the soul thus begins the cycle of 8.4 million life forms. The best souls are reborn straightaway as human beings. Lesser souls go through a shorter cycle to be born again as humans, and bad souls go through a longer cycle. The worst ones go through the entire cycle of 8.4 million.

It is worth pondering over the fact that more than 100 billion people have lived and died until this writing, and not a single one of them has come back to file a report on any of these happenings. Yet, this cycle’s

chilling and scary details are presented as a religious fact and religious truth. Reincarnation is presented as a reality of life and believed and accepted by millions.

What is most chilling being that this narrative of reincarnation – drawn from the pre-1469 canvas - is the one that is presented by our clergy – our *granthis*, *ragis*, *kirtanias*, and our *parcharaks* in our Gurdwaras - as Sikhi beliefs, as Gurbani advocated concepts.

The outcome is that - the narrative held within the psyche of a vast majority of Sikhs is not the narrative of Gurbani but that of the discarded canvas. And this enormous majority of Sikhs mistakenly accept and believe that reincarnation is the narrative of Gurbani.

Nothing can be further than the truth.

So what is the narrative of Reincarnation or *Ava Gaun* within Gurbani? We can develop the fundamental principles by examining some verses that discourse the concept.

### DEBUNKING REINCARNATION

The first thing Gurbani does is to debunk the notion that Reincarnation of the soul is the *outcome* of a judgment of deeds of the soul after death. This AGGS verse shreds this concocted theory of reincarnation and throws it out of the spiritual window.

ਸੁਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ 5 ॥

ਜਬ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੀਓ ਤਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਆਇਆ ॥

ਅਪਨਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖੈ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥ 1 ॥

*Suhee Mehla 5.*

*Jab Kach Na Sio Tab Kya Karta Kavan Karam Kar Aiya. Apna Kheyl Aap Kar Daykhaiy Thakur Rachan Rachayea.*

When nothing existed, what deeds were being done then? And what deeds were the criteria for a human being to come into existence? Creation is by the Creator; he Himself oversees it all.

AGGS, M. 5, p. 748.

Guru Arjun is asking:

When the entirety of species was created for the *first time*, made in its original form *for the first time* – ਜਬ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੀਓ *Jab Kach Na Sio* what judgment or what criteria of deeds and actions was used to decide which soul takes what form? ਕਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਆਇਆ *Kavan Karam Kar Aiya*. And obviously, there was no one around to do any deeds. ਤਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਤਾ *Tab Kya Karta*.

So, since there were no deeds being performed, what did this so-called Chiter Gupt record? What deeds did he have to report about?

Logic has a force of its own. And this is very powerful logic being presented by Guru Arjun. Suppose a Sikh of Gurbani thinks for himself or herself. In that case, this one couplet alone is sufficient to debunk the whole concocted theory of judgment, of 8.4 Million life forms of *Ava Gaun* and reincarnation. That is how powerful Gurbani is. One verse is enough to debunk an entire theory.

Guru Nanak has this verse regarding reincarnation within the AGGS.

ਆਵਾ ਗਉਣੁ ਬਜਾਰੀਆ ਬਾਜਾਰੁ ਜਿਨੀ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥

ਇਕੁ ਥਿਰੁ ਸਚਾ ਸਾਲਾਹਣਾ ਜਿਨ ਮਨਿ ਸਚਾ ਭਾਇਆ ॥ ੨੫ ॥

*Ava Gaunn Bjaraya Bajar Jini Rachayea.*

*Ek Thir Scha Salahna Jin Man Scha Bhaya.*

The notion of *Ava Gaun* is the creation of those for whom God is a trade. (But) Those in whose minds the One Creator is realized are in eternal praise of Him. AGGS, M. 1, p. 1290.

Guru Nanak is saying the notion of reincarnation or *Ava Gaun* – as it exists - has been created or concocted ਰਚਾਇਆ *Rachayea* by those who have turned spirituality into a trade ਬਾਜਾਰੁ ਜਿਨੀ ਰਚਾਇਆ *Bajar Jini Rachayea*. Guru Nanak is straightforward in his critique. ਆਵਾ ਗਉਣੁ ਬਜਾਰੀਆ *Ava Gaunn Bjariya* means this notion is of those who made spirituality into a means of earning their living.

Again, this couplet alone is sufficient for the Gurbani-believing Sikh to discard the concocted notion of the *Ava Gaun* of 8.4 million life forms or reincarnation.

This is a good verse for those who parrot the claim that Guru Nanak believed in and accepted *Ava Gaun* or reincarnation because he *mentions* it in his Bani. Well, he *says* it in this verse above. But it is clear that Guru Nanak is mentioning it to critique, debunk, and discard it. He mentions it to tell us that this notion is of those who made spirituality into a means of earning their living.

The second thing that Gurbani does is to make clear that the life that we have in the here and now is the one and only Life that we have and we will have. Gurbani makes it absolutely clear that this life is *all* we have. Such is made clear within this verse of the AGGS.

**ਕਬੀਰ ਮਾਨਸ ਜਨਮੁ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਹੈ ਹੋਇ ਨ ਬਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ ॥  
ਜਿਉ ਬਨ ਫਲ ਪਾਕੇ ਭੁਇ ਗਿਰਹਿ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨ ਲਾਗਹਿ ਡਾਰ ॥ ੩੦ ॥**

*Kabeer Manus Janam Dulambh Hai Hoey Na Barey Baar.*

*Jion Bunn Fal Pakey Bhoey Girey Bahur Na Laghey Daar.* AGGS, Kabir, p. 1366.

Kabeer is saying that human life ਮਾਨਸ ਜਨਮੁ *Manus Janam* is priceless ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਹੈ *Dulambh Hai*. Why is human life priceless? The answer as provided by Kabir is: ਹੋਇ ਨ ਬਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ *Hoey Na Barey Baar*. The words ਬਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ *Barey Baar* mean - ਬਾਰ ਬਾਰ *Baar Baar*, ਬਾਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਫਿਰ ਬਾਰੀ *Baari to(n) Fir Baari*, ਇਕ ਬਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਬਾਰੀ *Ek Baari to(n) Dujee Baari*, or ਦੁਬਾਰਾ *Dubara*. Meaning: A second time, second opportunity, or a second chance.

So, human life is priceless *because* It does *not* occur a *second* time. To make the point clear, Gurbani provides a definite example. ਜਿਉ ਬਨ ਫਲ ਪਾਕੇ ਭੁਇ ਗਿਰਹਿ *Jion Bunn Fal Pakey Bhoey Girey* just like a fruit that drops to the ground when it ripens, it does not ever go back to the branch again ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨ ਲਾਗਹਿ ਡਾਰ *Bahur Na Laghey Daar*.

The meaning of the verse is thus:

Kabeer human life is priceless and does not occur a second time. Just like a fruit that drops to the ground when it ripens, it never returns to the branch again.

AGGS, Kabir, p. 1366.

This single verse destroys completely and destructs fully – the notion of reincarnation. There is no second life ਹੋਇ ਨ ਬਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ *Hoey Na Barey Baar*. This one single verse also destroys entirely and destroys completely the idea of going through 8.4 million life forms to come back in the human form again.

Then there is this verse within the AGGS.

**ਇਹੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਉਸਰੁ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਾਰ ॥ ਘਟ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਤੂ ਦੇਖੁ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ ॥**

*Ehee Tera Ausar. Eh Teri Baar. Ghat Bheetar Tu Dekh Bichar.*

This is your one and only opportunity. Contemplate within to realize it. AGGS, Kabir, p. 1159.

The word ਇਹੀ *Ehee* means only this, this, and only this. The phrase ਤੇਰਾ ਅਉਸਰੁ *Tera Ausar* means your opportunity. And the words ਤੇਰੀ ਬਾਰ *Teri Baar* mean your chance. ਇਹੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਉਸਰੁ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਾਰ *Ehee Tera Ausar. Eh, Teri Baar* means this is your one and only opportunity, Your one and only chance. The phrase ਘਟ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਤੂ ਦੇਖੁ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ *Ghat Bheetar Tu Dekh Bichar* means contemplate within and you will realize. Contemplate within,

listen to your conscience, and you will know the truth. Listen to your conscience, and it will tell you are not coming back again. Listen to your rationale conscience, and it will ask you to stop feeding yourself with a delusion.

The message within this verse is clear. It is an unequivocal call – a clarion call - to discard the concocted narrative of reincarnation and *Ava Gaun*, to abandon the tale of going through the 8.4 million life forms to come back in the human form again, and to dispose of the clergy-created fabrication that we will come back a second time to finish our unfinished business.

Here, just one word ਇਹੀ *Ehee* and just one phrase ਇਹੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਉਸਰੁ *Ehee Tera Ausar* is sufficient to destroy entirely and destruct completely the notion of going through 8.4 mill life forms to come back in the human form again.

The call of Gurbani is ਘਟ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਤੂ ਦੇਖੁ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ *Ghat Bheetar Tu Dekh Bichar* - contemplate deep within your conscience, and you will realize the reality of your life. And what is that reality? It is in the first part of the couplet: ਇਹੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਅਉਸਰੁ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਾਰ *Ehee Tera Ausar. Eh, Teri Baar* – this human life is your only opportunity. One and Only Chance. There is no return, re-run, repeat, second chance, or coming back. No Reincarnation.

Guided by the verses mentioned above, the choice is hence ours to make – to contemplate deep within our conscience - directed by Gurbani – and to realize the reality or to believe the concocted tales that have been created by those who have turned spirituality into a trade and a market place and into a means of earning their living ਆਵਾ ਰਾਉਣੁ ਬਜਾਰੀਆ ਬਾਜਾਰੁ ਜਿਨੀ ਰਚਾਇਆ *Ava Gaunn Bjariya Bajar Jini Rachayea*.

Yet another verse within the AGGS establishes the notion that there is simply no coming back in any form whatsoever.

**ਬਹੁਰਿ ਹਮ ਕਾਰੇ ਆਵਹਿਗੇ ॥ ਆਵਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੁਝਿ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥ 1 ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥**

*Bahur Hum Kahey Avehgy. Avan Jana Hukm Tisey Ka Hukmeiy Bhujh Smavehgy. Rahao.*

Why would I come again? Coming and going is within His Hukm; I have merged into Him.

AGGS, Kabir, p. 1103.

Merging is the antithesis of coming back. Merging is the antonym, the opposite of reincarnation. When one *merges* ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੁਝਿ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ *Hukmeiy Bhujh Smavehgy* in the here and now – there is no coming back or going anywhere.

The point is clear. The *Hukm* of the Creator is that there is no coming back. ਬਹੁਰਿ ਹਮ ਕਾਰੇ ਆਵਹਿਗੇ *Bahur Hum Kahey Avehgy*. Living in the *Hukm* is to discard the concocted narrative of reincarnation and *Ava Gaun* and dispose of the clergy-created fabrication that we will come back a second time with or without going through the 8.4 million.

## REINCARNATION REDEFINED IN GURBANI.

Before understanding how the notion of Reincarnation or *Ava Gaun* is defined or redefined in Gurbani, it is worth noting that the notion of death itself is redefined within the AGGS.

Physical death in Gurbani is defined as the return of elements to the source. It is the return of our life, our *jyot*, our spirit, our soul, our light, our *atma* – or whatever one may wish to call it – to the source too. The following verses provide such a reality.

**ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥**

**ਪਵਨੈ ਮਹਿ ਪਵਨੁ ਸਮਾਇਆ ॥ ਜੋਤੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥**

**ਮਾਟੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਹੋਈ ਏਕ ॥ ਰੇਵਨਹਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਕਵਨ ਟੇਕ ॥ ੧ ॥**

Ramkli Mehla 5.

*Pavney Meh Pavan Smaya. Jyotee Mey Jyot Ral Jaya.*

*Matee Matee Hoee Eyk. Rovenharey Kee Kavan Teik.*

Air merges into air. Consciousness merges into the Supreme Consciousness. The dust returns to dust. Why lament in grief, then? AGGS, M 5, p 885.

The *sabd* is all about all the elements constituting the human being returning to its source. When things return to their source, root, or origins, they don't come back.

Here is another set of verses within the AGGS that speak of the return of the elements of life to their source.

**ਪਾਂਚ ਤਤ ਕੇ ਤਨੁ ਰਚਿਓ ਜਾਨਹੁ ਚਤੁਰ ਸੁਜਾਨ ॥ ਜਿਹ ਤੇ ਉਪਜਿਓ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਲੀਨ ਤਾਹਿ ਮੈ ਮਾਨੁ ॥ ੧੧ ॥**

*Panch Tutt Ko Tan Racheyo Janho Chatur Sujaan. Jeh Te Upjeyo Nanaka Leen Tahe Meh Maan.*

The enlightened are aware that the physical body is composed of basic elements. Nanak will merge into the same elements from which I originated.

AGGS, M 9, p 1427.

Death in Gurbani is redefined as *spiritual* death. This is the death that concerns Gurbani and our spirituality because we can do something about it – avoid it and not let it happen. If death as a root concept of the afterlife is redefined, then the afterlife, too gets redefined as what happens after spiritual death. Consequently, reincarnation, or *Ava Gaun*, or cycle of life and death, is redefined as the cycle of *spiritual* life and *spiritual* death.

Spiritual life is on account of our acquiring divine virtues, and spiritual death is on account of indulging in human vices. Our spirituality is thus cyclic. It is now you see it, now you don't. One moment, I am spiritual; the next moment, I have lapsed. This is the cycle of concern to Gurbani. It is the cycle that matters. This is the cycle we can do something about. This is the *redefined* cycle.

The idea is to break free from this cycle to be permanently in spiritual Life. The objective is to *become Ajooni* – free of the cycle of spiritual life and death.

This Gurbani definition of *Ava Gaun* or reincarnation is clear from these verses within the AGGS. On page 971 of the SGGS.

**ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਹਮ ਐਸੇ ਅਪਰਾਧੀ ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਥਾ ਦੀਆ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਭਾਉ ਭਗਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਸਾਧੀ ॥ 1 ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥**

**ਪਰ ਧਨ ਪਰ ਤਨ ਪਰ ਤੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਪਰ ਅਪਬਾਦੁ ਨ ਛੂਟੈ ॥ ਆਵਾ ਗਵਨੁ ਹੇਤੁ ਹੈ ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ ਇਹੁ ਪਰਸੰਗੁ ਨ ਤੂਟੈ ॥**

*Gobind Hum Aisey Apradhi. Jin Prabh Jio Pind Tha Deea Tis Kee Bhao Bhagat Nahin Sadhi. Rahao.*

*Par Dhan Par Tan Par Tee Ninda Par Apbaad Na Chutey. Ava Gavan Hot Hai Fun Fun Eh Parsang Na Tutey.*

O Creator, such is my vice-filled life. I have failed to be in the devotion of the One Who Created my being and gave me life. Rahao. The vices of desire towards material, vilification, and disparagement of others do not leave me. This cycle does not break and occurs in the blink of an eye. AGGS, Kabir, p. 971.

The final verse contains the concept of *Ava Gaun* and defines it in the Gurbani sense.

ਆਵਾ ਗਵਨੁ ਹੇਤੁ ਹੈ ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ *Ava Gavan Hot Hai Fun Fun* means: the cycle is taking place within me – in my life - at every split second. *Fun Fun* is the time taken to blink our eyes.

The 8.4 million cycle and reincarnation of the old pre-1469 canvas talk about a process that presumably takes place somewhere. And out there, every life form has its life span, none of which has a life span of the blink of an eye.

In the verses above, the reincarnation or *Ava Gaun* of Gurbani is a cycle that takes place *within* me. Within my mind. Within my conscience. It takes place in the blink of an eye. The phrase ਇਹੁ ਪਰਸੰਗੁ ਨ ਤੂਟੈ *Eh*

*Parsang Na Tutey* means this narrative; this cycle does not end, does not break, keeps happening. And that is the problem.

But what is the cycle? The cycle is clarified in the verse immediately preceding. ਪਰ ਧਨ ਪਰ ਤਨ ਪਰ ਤੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਪਰ ਅਪਬਾਦੁ ਨ ਛੁਟੈ *Par Dhan Par Tan Par Tee Ninda Par Apbaad Na Chutey*. This is a list of human mindsets filled with human vices – desire for things that are not supposed to be mine. The word ਪਰ *Par* comes from ਪਰਾਇਆ *Praeya*, meaning foreign.

The phrases ਪਰ ਤੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ *Par Tee Ninda* and ਪਰ ਅਪਬਾਦੁ *Par Apbaad*, too are denoting mindsets filled with vices. These mindsets are supposed to be foreign to me. These vice-filled mindsets are not supposed to be mine, not supposed to be within me. Yet they are.

The first verse makes this point: ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਹਮ ਐਸੇ ਅਪਰਾਧੀ. *Gobind Hum Aisey Apradhi Apradh* is vice. Meaning: O Creator Such is my Vice Filled Life.

So the *Ava Gaun*, or the cycle oscillates between mindsets of divine virtues and human vices. This oscillation happens in a ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ *Fun Fun* manner – in the blink of an eye. Our attitudes change in the blink of an eye.

The *redefined* Reincarnation of Gurbani is the process by which I keep being born again and again ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ *Fun Fun* into mindsets that are dictated by human vices.

The *Ava Gaun* of Gurbani is a cycle that swings like a pendulum between *spiritual* life on account of virtues and *spiritual* death on account of vices. And this cycle happens in a ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ *Fun Fun* manner. Only this kind of *Ava Gaun* can occur in a ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ manner.

Here is another verse from the AGGS that reinforces this point.

**ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਲੋਭ ਮੋਹ ਮੂਠੇ ਸਦਾ ਆਵਾ ਗਵਣ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਸਿਮਰਣ ਮਿਟਤ ਜੋਨੀ ਭਵਣ ॥ ੩ ॥**

*Kam Krodh Lobh Moh Muthey Sda Ava Gavan. Prabh Prem Bhagat Gopal Simrann Mitet Joni Bhavan.*

The vices of desire, anger, greed, and attachment deprive me (of my divinity), and the cycle remains in perpetuity. This cycle of mindsets is eliminated through devotion and love of the Creator Lord.

AGGS, M 5, p. 502.

Here, Guru Arjun is outlining – in the clearest of language – what *Ava Gaun*, or reincarnation of Gurbani, is. It is the swinging of the pendulum between vices and virtues. Guru is saying human vices ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਲੋਭ ਮੋਹ ਮੂਠੇ *Kam Krodh Lobh Moh Muthey* rob us of our divinity to ensure we are perpetually in the cycle - ਸਦਾ ਆਵਾ ਗਵਣ *Sda Ava Gavan*. And Guru Ji says in the next verse – this cycle of reincarnation in the here and now can be eliminated ਮਿਟਤ ਜੋਨੀ ਭਵਣ *Mitet Joni Bhavan* by acquiring divine virtues and realization of the Creator within ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਸਿਮਰਣ *Prabh Prem Bhagat Gopal Simrann*.

Guru Nanak has this verse within the AGGS that forms the basis of the above verse of Guru Arjun Ji.

**ਭਰਮੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਭਉ ਕਬਹੁ ਨ ਛੁਟਸਿ ਆਵਤ ਜਾਤ ਨ ਜਾਨੀ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਡੂਬਿ ਮੁਏ ਬਿਨੁ ਪਾਨੀ ॥**

*Bhrm Bheyd Bhou Kabho Na Chutes Avat Jaat Na Jani. Bin Har Nam Ko Mukat Na Pavas Doob Moey Bin Pani.*

Illusion, separation, and fear do not leave me; this cycle does not dissipate. None get emancipated (from this cycle) except by realizing divine virtues; other ways are self-destructing.

AGGS, M 1, p 1127.

The three words ਭਰਮੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਭਉ *Bhrm Bheyd Bhou*, namely illusion, separation, and fear, are all negative mindsets that are experienced in the here and now. Then Guru Nanak says mindsets do not leave me for good ਕਬਹੁ ਨ ਛੁਟਸਿ *Kabho Na Chutes*, which means they come and go in a cyclic nature. Then Guru Nanak says ਆਵਤ



ਜਾਤ ਨ ਜਾਨੀ *Avat Jaat Na Jani* which means this is my *Ava Gaun*. This is my reincarnation again and again. This is my cycle. This is my reincarnation, my *Ava Gaun*.

The next verse provides the panacea. ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਵਸਿ *Bin Har Nam Ko Mukh Na Pavas*. The word ਮੁਕਤਿ *Mukt* means to be emancipated, to be free. Guru Nanak is saying that the way to be free from this cycle and end this cycle is through the becoming of divine virtues. The word ਕੋ *Ko* makes evident that there is no other way for anyone. ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਵਸਿ *Bin Har Nam Ko Mukh Na Pavas*

Guru Arjun ji consolidates this view of the Gurbani meaning of *Avan Jaan, Ava Gaun* in his verses as follows:

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ 5 ॥

ਫੂਟੇ ਆਂਡਾ ਭਰਮ ਕਾ ਮਨਹਿ ਭਇਓ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ॥ ਕਾਟੀ ਬੇਰੀ ਪਗਹ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੁ ॥ 1 ॥

ਆਵਣ ਜਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਓ ॥

*Maru Mehla 5.*

*Futou Aanda Bhrm Ka Mneh Bhayeo Pargas. Katee Beyri Pgeh Tay Gur Kini Band Khlaas.*

*Avan Jaan Raheyo.*

My mind has been enlightened within; my illusions and delusions have been shattered. I uprooted these mindsets, and my Guru liberated me (from them). My *Ava Gaun* cycle is eliminated.

AGGS, M 5, p 1002.

The phrase ਆਵਣ ਜਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਓ *Avan Jaan Raheyo* means my cycle of *Ava Gaun* has been eliminated. This claim is about the here and the now.

Two things are being articulated within these verses: One, what was the cycle all about, and two, how has it been eliminated? ਫੂਟੇ ਆਂਡਾ ਭਰਮ ਕਾ *Futou Aanda Bhrm Ka* means: I broke out of the eggshell of illusion and delusion. ਮਨਹਿ ਭਇਓ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ *Mneh Bhayeo Pargas* means: I am now enlightened.

So, the cycle was the oscillation between enlightenment and illusion. The termination of the cycle is in the phrase ਕਾਟੀ ਬੇਰੀ ਪਗਹ ਤੇ *Katee Beyri Pgeh Tay*, meaning: I cut the roots of the growing creeper of delusion and illusion. ਗੁਰਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਬੰਦਿ ਖਲਾਸੁ *Gur Kini Band Khlaas* means the Guru helped me free myself, liberate myself from ਆਵਣ ਜਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਓ *Avan Jaan Raheyo* from the cycle.

Guru Nanak has this verse within the AGGS, which sheds light on understanding the issues under discussion.

ਭਾਗਹੀਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਗਰਭ ਜੂਨੀ ਨਿਤਿ ਪਉਦਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ 3 ॥

*Bhagheen Satgur Nhi Paya. Manmukh Garbh Jooni Nit Paunda Jio.*

Not realizing the Satguru is unfortunate, the Manmukh puts himself in daily life cycle.

AGGS, M 1, p 95.

The phrase ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਗਰਭ ਜੂਨੀ ਨਿਤਿ ਪਉਦਾ ਜੀਉ *Manmukh Garbh Jooni Nit Paunda Jio* is of significance. It means the *Manmukh* puts himself or herself in the cycle of *Joons* ਗਰਭ ਜੂਨੀ *Garbh Jooni* on a daily basis, ਨਿਤਿ ਪਉਦਾ ਜੀਉ *Nit Paunda Jio* on an everyday basis, and on a ਫੁਨਿ ਫੁਨਿ *Fun Fun* basis as alluded to by Bhagat Kabir in his verse above.

This is a narrative of the here and the now. The reincarnation of Gurbani, the *Ava Gaun* of Guru Nanak, happens to us in *this* life, not the after-life. And we decide for ourselves - if we want to put ourselves into the cycle ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਗਰਭ ਜੂਨੀ ਨਿਤਿ ਪਉਦਾ ਜੀਉ *Manmukh Garbh Jooni Nit Paunda Jio* or remain out of it ਆਵਣ ਜਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਓ *Avan Jaan Raheyo*.

The choice is ours. The choice is in the here and now because the cycle is in the here and now.

In essence, then, what Gurbani within the AGGS has done is to *redefine* death and everything that follows death - *Joons*, 8.4 million life forms, the cycle, and Reincarnation. And the reason has to do with the basic and foundational principle of Guru Nanak's canvas of Sikhi, which is that the spirituality of Sikhi is for the here and now. Essentially, the reason for the redefining is to ground the notions of 8.4 million, Joons, reincarnation, Ava Gaun, etc., into our one and only life.

This, then is what is meant by revolutionary and innovative re-defining.

## CONCLUSIONS

Understood within the parameters of the redefining as expounded above, the concept of reincarnation as advocated within the pre-1469 belief systems is rejected within the framework of Sikhi – the term Sikhi being taken to mean the philosophical foundations that Guru Nanak laid; the spiritual messages of Guru Nanak and 34 other composers of Gurbani that are contained within the AGGS; and the body of enlightenment that is termed as the spirituality of ੴ.

Those individuals, groups, and establishments within Sikhism that promote the notion of reincarnation as a truth of the afterlife have either inadvertently missed grasping the principle of redefining that runs as a common thread within the pages of the AGGS, or have purposively neglected, ignored and rejected the principle altogether because it does not serve the objectives and designs of the religion of Sikhism (as opposed to the spirituality of Sikhi) that has come to exist as the mainstream belief amongst present day Sikhs.

A perpetuation of this (wrong) belief about reincarnation, as is advocated by these individuals, groups, and establishments, is expected, given that many of their self-preservation designs, livelihoods, and futures are invested in such perpetuation. The plain truth is that reincarnation in the afterlife (together with the entire gamut of related notions) runs the chariot of religion on the wheels of genuine fear and fake promise in the afterlife. It acts as a powerful, effective, and potent tool for the clergy to control the minds of the follower masses. Such fear and promise keep the faithful but unenlightened Sikhs chained to the dictates of the clergy and accountable to the institutions that the clergy dominates.

This state of affairs, however, cannot obliterate the fact that the notion of reincarnation is rejected within the framework of Sikhi, the philosophical foundations that Guru Nanak and Gurbani laid, and within the considerations of enlightenment that are termed as the spirituality of ੴ. The relevant contents of the AGGS make such a stance clear by providing a critique if it, precluding it from the spirituality that is Sikhi, and redefining it to fit the canvas of the spirituality and philosophy of Guru Nanak.

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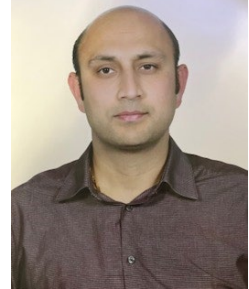
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## Debunking The Myth of Karma of Previous Lives

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ਸੂਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥

ਜਬ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੀਓ ਤਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਆਇਆ ॥

ਅਪਨਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖੈ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਮੁਝ ਤੇ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਾਏ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਸੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਗਣਤੀ ਗਣੀ ਨ ਛੂਟੈ ਕਤਹੂ ਕਾਚੀ ਦੇਹ ਇਆਣੀ ॥ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਰਣੈਗਾਰੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ॥੨॥  
ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਤੁਹੀ ਧਿਆਈਐ ॥ ਤੇਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੂਹੈ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੀਮ ਨ ਪਾਈਐ ॥੩॥

ਨਿਰਗੁਣੁ ਮੁਗਧੁ ਅਜਾਣੁ ਅਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣਾ ॥

ਦਇਆ ਕਰਹੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵੈ ਮਿਠਾ ਲਗੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਭਾਣਾ ॥੪॥੬॥੫੩॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 748}

Jab kachh na sīo tab kiā kartā kavan karam kar āiā.

Apnā khel āp kar dekhai thākur rachan rachāiā. ||1||

Mere rām rāe mujh te kachhū na hoī. Āpe kartā āp karāe sarab niranṭar soī. ||1|| rahāo.

Gaṅṭī gaṅī na chhūtai kathū kāchī deh iāṅī. Kirpā karahu parabh karṇaihāre terī bakhās nirālī. ||2||

Jīa jantṭ sabh tere kīte ghat ghat tuhī dhīāi. Ferī gaṭ mitṭ tūhai jāneh kudratṭ kīm na pāi. ||3||

Nirgunṭ mugadhṭ ajāṅ agiānī karam dharam nahī jāṅā.

Daīā karahu Nānak guṅ gāvai miṭhā lagai terā bhāṅā. ||4||6||53||

Do we only live once? It all depends on one's perspective. If you think we're nothing but chemicals with no soul, then yes, it is the end. If you believe in only one life and then it's heaven or hell, then no. It's especially not the end if you happen to believe in reincarnation. Reincarnation suggests this is not our first life on Earth and it's most likely not our last. The Hindu perspective suggests we have been around for millions of lifetimes and that there may be millions ahead. In that sense, we are all "old souls." In each of our lives, somehow through some inconceivable system, all our positive and negative deeds are recorded. This means, no one gets away with anything. The mind propels us into action based on its conditioning which is based on actions of past life. So, when the body reaches its demise, the mind and soul get transferred into, hopefully, another human womb (human rebirth may not be guaranteed and a person can reincarnate into a different species). Even while in the womb, the mind may remain active and recall events from the previous life. The concept of reincarnation suggests that the soul moves through different bodies until it ultimately purifies itself of anger, greed, pride, and other vices.

The mind functions kind of like a hard drive with millions of files on it. If a hard drive is transferred into a different computer, the new computer will have all the same information as the previous one. So, when the mind and soul are relocated into a new body, the exterior is different, but all the programming stored in the mind are the same. This programming will make the person behave in very much the same way as they did in the previous life because the conditioning and impressions are the same. The car may be different, but the driver is the same. Hence, we are not very different from who we were in our previous life.

Having said all that, Gurbani does not agree with the concept of reincarnation and karma. The Gurbani takes the ball out of a higher court and places it firmly in our court. For our pain and pleasure, we can blame neither God nor a devil nor some third outside party. If some outside party is responsible for all our troubles, then

we humans have no responsibility for our actions in our present life. Then why should we follow any religion, or engage in Gurbani-Vichar etc. It does not make any sense.

The concepts of reincarnation and karma are old, worn out and illogical, while Gurbani concepts are new, fresh, and logical. Yes, there are words used in Gurbani that may imply that Gurbani agrees with Karma of previous lives and Reincarnation. These words are merely used as examples to explain doctrines of Gurbani. It's like using some logic that someone already understands to explain something new. Simply put, an example does not equate to the message or the doctrine.

On page 1366 Bhagat Kabir Ji tells us the human life is priceless (Kabīr mānas janam ḡulambḡ hai). Every moment in life is precious and every single moment that passes cannot come back again. We do not get to live our life for the second or third or the infinite times (ho<sup>o</sup>e na bārai bār). When some fruit ripens, it falls from the tree (Ji<sup>o</sup>o ban fal pāke bh<sup>u</sup>o<sup>e</sup> girēh). It cannot reattach itself with the tree again (bahur na lāgēh dār). Similarly, we do not get a second chance to live our life (i.e. no reincarnation).

**ਕਬੀਰ ਮਾਨਸ ਜਨਮ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਹੈ ਹੋਇ ਨ ਬਾਰੈ ਬਾਰ ॥  
ਜਿਉ ਬਨ ਫਲ ਪਾਕੇ ਭੁਇ ਗਿਰਹਿ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨ ਲਾਗਹਿ ਡਾਰ ॥੩੦॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 1366}**

Kabīr mānas janam ḡulambḡ hai ho<sup>o</sup>e na bārai bār.  
Ji<sup>o</sup>o ban fal pāke bh<sup>u</sup>o<sup>e</sup> girēh bahur na lāgēh dār. ||30||

Like the logical message from Bhagat Kabir Ji, Guru Arjun Dev Ji logically debunks the theory of Karma in this *shabd*.

**ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਮੁਝ ਤੇ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਾਏ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਸੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
Mere rām rā<sup>e</sup> mujḡ tē kachḡhū na ho<sup>o</sup>ī. Āpe kartā āp karā<sup>e</sup> sarab niranṡar so<sup>o</sup>ī. ||1|| rahā<sup>o</sup>.**

Since these are the Rahao lines, the central message of the *shabd* is contained within these lines. When reading and understanding the remaining lines, we need to relate them back to these. Rahao lines can also be considered as the title of the *shabd*. To gain full understanding of the *shabd* each line of the *shabd* must be related or linked back to the meaning or message within the Rahao lines. When singing the *shabd*, the Rahao lines must be sung multiple times.

To express his humility, Guru Ji while conversing with the Creator within, says that O' My God (Mere rām rā<sup>e</sup>) I can do nothing without you (mujḡ tē kachḡhū na ho<sup>o</sup>ī). He credits everything to God, saying that O' God you are omni present (sarab niranṡar so<sup>o</sup>ī). You are the creator (Āpe kartā), you are everywhere and within everyone (sarab niranṡar so<sup>o</sup>ī). Everything that happens, happens within your will (Hukam or Systems, āp karā<sup>e</sup>). Godly systems include, life and death, all the eco systems that sustain us on earth, sun, air, water, everything that goes on within our body and infinite other things which are beyond the comprehension of humans. A simplistic way to think about God is that God is the universal energy, that makes everything function.

Some people may think that all the actions humans perform (good or bad) are ordered by God (āp karā<sup>e</sup>). Such thinking is short sighted and illogical. Such thinking cannot be further from the truth. God and goodness are synonymous with each other. Evil, corrupt, immoral, unethical, dishonest, tainted actions of humans cannot be attributed as orders of God. Few excerpts from Gurbani suggest that humans have free will/choice to do what they want. Not everything a person does is pre-approved by God.

**ਆਪਿ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਇ ॥੨॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 25}**

Āp bīj āpe hī khāe. ||2||

**ਜੇਹੀ ਮਨਸਾ ਕਰਿ ਲਾਗੈ ਤੇਹਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਏ ॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 116}**

Jehī mansā kar lāgai tēhā fal pāe.

**ਜੇਹਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਸੇ ਲੁਣੈ ਕਰਮਾ ਸੰਦੜਾ ਖੇਤੁ ॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 134}**

Jehā bījai so luṇai karmā sandṛā khēt.

**ਜੈਸਾ ਸੇਵੈ ਤੈਸੇ ਹੋਇ ॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 223}**

Jaisā sevai t̄aiso hoē. ||4||

Simply put, we reap exactly what we sow. As indicated in the Gurbani, man is the architect of his own fate or destiny because every past or present thought and action lays the foundation for our future. Hence, self-effort called, “*Uddam*”, is a very important aspect of our life. In life, our self-effort is the best help we can count on. If we need to improve in any aspect of life, no magic will help us. A person does not become a doctor or a professional athlete without self-effort, without self-will, without hard work, without determination to succeed etc. As discussed previously, there is no hard drive with hard work and determination from previous life (concept of Karma) that propelled a person to become a doctor or a professional athlete.

To summarize, the Rahao lines tell us that everything that happens around is due to and within the Hukum and Systems of God. There is nothing that is outside of Hukum and Systems of God, except the evil, corrupt, immoral, unethical, dishonest, tainted actions of humans.

**ਜਬ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੀਓ ਤਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਆਇਆ ॥**

**ਅਪਨਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖੈ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥੧॥**

Jab kachḥ na sīo t̄ab kiā kartā kavan karam kar āiā.

Apnā khel āp kar ḥkhai ḥhākur rachan rachāiā. ||1||

The definition of Karma suggests that we get to live either a happy and satisfied life or a life full of suffering based on the deeds and actions we accumulate in our previous lives. These actions are somehow tagged to our soul that transmigrates into a new body. Guru Ji debunks this definition. As mentioned, many times before, Gurbani is applicable within our present life only. It is for here and now. The concept of Karma is used within Gurbani but to represent the result of our present actions, NOT previous life. The outcome of good, moral, and ethical actions in our present life is good and the outcome of the evil, corrupt, immoral, unethical, dishonest and tainted actions in our present life is bad.

Guru Ji uses logic to kill the concept of Karma across multiple life terms. He questions the believers of Karma that when there was nothing (there was no life, Jab kachḥ na sīo) what Karma’s did you accumulate before you were born (t̄ab kiā kartā kavan karam kar āiā). What Karma’s shaped your very first life? Guess what, such logical questions stump people who believe in such illogical concepts.

Guru Ji and Gurbani want people to live their present life in the best possible way, without having to worry about what they did in the past or what will happen to them after they die. This implies that anyone can reach the pinnacle of success within their life. Everyone has the built-in capacity and capability to reach their goals. God does not hold anyone back. There is nothing from their past life that should impact their present life.

In the Rahao lines we learned that everything that happens around is due to and within the Hukum and Systems of God. The human life we get is not a result of Karma’s from our previous life. This life and everything

around us are given to us by the one God (ṭhākur rachan rachāiā). The life as we see it originated from God (Apnā khel) and he is part of/within his creation (āp kar dekhai).

**ਗਣਤੀ ਗਣੀ ਨ ਛੁਟੈ ਕਤਹੁ ਕਾਚੀ ਦੇਹ ਇਆਣੀ ॥  
ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਰਣੈਹਾਰੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ॥੨॥**

Gaṇṭī gaṇī na chhūṭai kaṭhū kāchī deh iāṇī.

Kirpā karahu parabh karṇaihāre tērī bakhas nirālī. ||2||

The people who were slaves to the religious leaders during the lifetime of Guru Ji believed that we have been around for millions of lifetimes and that there may be millions ahead. In each of our lives, somehow through some inconceivable system, all our positive and negative deeds are counted or recorded. There could be a tax return (of good and evil) at the end of life, and we must pay the outstanding bill in our future lives. The most shameful thing is that many Sikh's (followers of Gurbani) still believe in such nonsensical rhetoric. Read this *shabd*, read this line and determine for yourself if such a tax bill needs to be paid across multiple lives.

The concept of reincarnation suggests that the soul moves through different bodies until it ultimately purifies itself of anger, greed, envy, and pride. Guru Ji says that to believe that when the count (Gaṇṭī gaṇī) of our good deeds outnumbers our bad deeds somehow the transmigration (na chhūṭai kaṭhū) of soul from one living body to another will stop is illogical and nonsensical (iāṇī). Our body is fragile (kāchī deh) and once our present life ends there is nothing after that. There is no transfer of tax bill of our good and bad deeds to the next life. There is no next life.

In the Rahao lines we learned that everything that happens around is due to and within the Hukum and Systems of God (parabh karṇaihāre). The human life we get is not a result of Karma's from our previous life. This life and everything around us are given to us by the one God. The life as we see it originated from God and he is part of and within his creation. Here Guru Ji says that we should ask God for unique (tērī bakhas nirālī) blessings (Kirpā karahu) in our present life. What is this unique blessing that Guru Ji is talking about? This unique blessing is to live present life with Godly virtues, such that all the deeds that we perform, all the actions we take (in our present life) align with the Godly characteristics.

**ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਤੁਹੀ ਧਿਆਈਐ ॥  
ਤੇਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੁਹੈ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੀਮ ਨ ਪਾਈਐ ॥੩॥**

Jīa janṭ sabh tere kīṭe ghat ghat tuhī dhiāīai.

Ferī gaṭ mitṭ tūhai jāṇeh kudraṭ kīm na pāīai. ||3||

In the Rahao lines we learned that everything that happens around is due to and within the Hukum and Systems of God. The life as we see it originated from God (Jīa janṭ sabh tere kīṭe) and he is part of and within everything (ghat ghat) in his creation. Everything that is living and all the systems that assist in sustenance of life are serving God (tuhī dhiāīai). The details of how God works (Ferī gaṭ mitṭ), how his systems work is known only by God (tūhai jāṇeh). Humans measure everything in units of price. How much is house, how much is your car, how much do you make... etc., are the common questions asked to assess the value of a human. Guru Ji says that no one can assess the value of the limitless God (kudraṭ kīm na pāīai) and the Godly systems. Measuring value of God is incomprehensible for humans.

**ਨਿਰਗੁਣੁ ਮੁਗਧੁ ਅਜਾਣੁ ਅਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣਾ ॥  
ਦਇਆ ਕਰਹੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵੈ ਮਿਠਾ ਲਗੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਭਾਣਾ ॥੪॥੬॥੫੩॥**

Nirgun mugadh ajāṅ agiānī karam dḥaram nahī jāṅā.  
 Ḍaṅiā karahu Nānak guṅ gāvai miṭḥā lagai ṭerā bhāṅā. ||4||6||53||

Guru Ji in his most humble self, calls himself to be virtue-less (Nirgun), foolish (mugadh), thoughtless (ajāṅ) and ignorant (agiānī). He says that he does not know of any deeds (karam) or any religious ceremonies or prayers that could please God (dḥaram nahī jāṅā). Of-course Guru Ji is not virtue-less, foolish, thoughtless, and ignorant. He is using these words to describe that state of mind of normal humans who think so highly of themselves but in a spiritual sense they are pure duds.

In line 2 of this *shabd*, Guru Ji says that we should ask God for unique (ṭerī bakḥas nirālī) blessings (Kirpā karahu) in our present life. What is this unique blessing that Guru Ji is talking about? This unique blessing is to live present life with Godly virtues, such that all the deeds that we perform, all the actions we take (in our present life) align with the Godly characteristics. Here too he is asking God for blessings (Ḍaṅiā karahu). The blessing he is seeking are that of establishing Godly virtues within his mind (Nānak guṅ gāvai). Ask yourself, when we ask God for blessings, what do you ask for? Are your requests in line with what Guru Ji is asking for? The most likely answer is NO. Most likely the Godly virtues and characteristics will not be readily acceptable to our mind. We may adopt Godly virtues due of fear of something, rather than love for God. As part of blessings that Guru Ji is seeking from God, he wants his mind to accept all the Godly virtues purely based on love for God. The results of acting based on Godly virtues may not always be favorable, yet the lovers of God, do not care about such unfavorable results. While enacting life based on Godly virtues, all results (good or bad, favorable, or unfavorable) seem to be sweet to them (miṭḥā lagai ṭerā bhāṅā). Our Guru's lived their lives based on this principle.

<p>੧. ਬਾਬਾ ਬੁੱਢਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਗੱਦੀ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲੀ?          ੨. ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਅਤੇ ਲਖਮੀ ਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਆਪਣੇ          ਮੱਤ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰੀ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਾ ਸਕੇ?          ੩. ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਰਾਜ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ?</p>  <p>ਸਰੋਤਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਵਾਬ ਭਾਗ ੧            Sarotian de swalan de java...</p>	<p><b>Editor's Pick Video</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k25fFCBflwM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k25fFCBflwM</a></p>
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*One reason why birds and horses are not unhappy is because they are not trying to impress other birds and horses.*

Dale Carnegie, American Writer (1888 – 1955)

**Realpolitik: Panacea or Perdition***Jogishwar Singh, PhD Switzerland**jogishwarsingh@gmail.com*

Realpolitik or politics devoid of ethical or moral considerations is nowadays the flavor in several if not most countries in the world. Refined by spin meisters like the late Dr Henry Kissinger, it is touted as a shorter path to economic development, be it the rise of Communist China or the now rapidly growing Asian countries which are rightly claiming a slice of the cake till now pretty much monopolized by Western countries. Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1971 to jettison Taiwan for recognition of Maoist China is cited as an example of Realpolitik. This ignores the fact that this step far from being Realpolitik, was a simple correction of a major mistake which should not have occurred in 1949 in the first place when the Americans backed Taiwan as a permanent member of the UNO, excluding Communist China from such membership. Such short-term thinking is typical of Realpolitik. History shows us so many examples of this. Metternich imagined that he had saved monarchical systems of governance in Europe through his Concert of Europe, ignoring popular desire for more representative governance systems. His Realpolitik managed to preserve absolutist monarchies till the revolutions of 1848 gave a first major blow to this status quo. The First World War of 1914-1918 sounded their death knell.

Protagonists of ethical and moral considerations as touchstones of politics have been sidelined by pragmatists lauding the virtues of Realpolitik disguised as a component of liberal democracy as an idealized form of government. Francis Fukuyama's book "The End of History and the Last Man", published in 1992, argues that with the ascendancy of Western liberal democracy, humanity has reached not just the transition from a specific period of post-war history but the end of history as such. Western liberal democracy is presented as the final form of human government, as a culmination of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal values. It would be interesting to know what Fukuyama thinks now of this hypothesis when we look around the globe where populist governments are busy stoking popular passions ignoring all ethical or moral principles to hang on to power by hook or by crook.

The events in Washington on January 6th, 2021, are an example of a large part of Americans being fooled by a consummate practitioner of Realpolitik into believing that he had won an election which he had lost. UK has a Prime Minister not elected by the public but by a small group of members of Parliament of the Conservative Party. Russia and China are ruled by dictators, the former in because of managed elections and the latter by the iron fist without any such camouflage. Belarus saw a totally rigged election which makes the latest Pakistani election look like a joke in comparison. North Korea has "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" as its official name while China styles itself as People's Republic of China. The preamble of the Constitution of India defines it as a "Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic committed to Justice, Equality and Liberty for the people". How much of this is still true in practice is left to readers to judge.

Alternative systems of social organization have been proposed but in the name of Western predominance of "Laicité" (principle meaning complete separation of Church and State) been rejected as retrograde. The Sikh holy scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji contains hymns by Bhagat Ravidas, a great saint and poet who lived in India in the 14th-15th centuries. He offers a remarkable vision of a casteless society based on ethical and moral considerations as a sort of utopia. Bhagat Ravidas defied the rigid caste system then prevailing (and prevailing even now).

Bhagat Ravidas envisioned Begumpura as a socio-political system free from caste distinctions, grief and untouchability. Everyone in Begumpura would have equal access to food. There would be no class or caste differences. His ideas, as also the teachings of the Sikh Gurus, incorporated into the Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji,



continue to inspire even today. They are an ethical and moral precursor to socialist ideas, predating the rise of socialism in Europe by centuries. His utopian polity envisioned citizens living free from poverty and inequality, reflecting a compassionate worldview. Begumpura constitutes a timeless testament to equality, compassion and a world free from discrimination.

This visionary concept left a profound impact on Indian society. It challenged the deeply entrenched caste system still prevalent in India. It advocated a casteless society where everyone would be equal. His teachings, further refined by the Sikh Gurus, inspired people to question their social roles based on birth through recognition of the inherent dignity of all individuals. Sikh Gurus emphasized that spiritual advancement and salvation was not tied to caste or social status. Instead, it came through devotion to inculcating the Name of God, Name being defined as Divine Virtues outlined in the very first lines of the first Bani of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji, the Jup Bani, commonly known as Japji Sahib.

Guru Nanak's egalitarian message resonated with marginalized sections of society, encouraged them to assert their rights and reject oppression. Guru Nanak was a true social revolutionary whose message was such a challenge to prevalent ruling elites that sustained efforts have continued over centuries to dilute the essential egalitarian character of his message by distorting it to look like just another offshoot of previous religious practices.

Begumpura concept influenced subsequent movements, including those led by Dr B.R. Ambedkar and the Dalit Panthers in India. As the framer of the Constitution of India, Dr Ambedkar ensured that this Charter formally outlawed the Caste System as a bedrock of society. Whether this has happened in India is another issue. Notwithstanding this or Realpolitik's sidelining of moral or ethical considerations in politics, Begumpura remains a beacon of hope, urging society to strive for a world where every citizen is treated with dignity and compassion. Begumpura as an idea transcends ages. It serves as a stark reminder that social transformation begins with envisioning an inclusive, egalitarian and just society, not a society ruled by Realpolitik imbued power-hungry people.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, both products of 19th century Europe in which the established political order based on ruthless Realpolitik was leading to constant wars, came up with their Communist doctrine which in practice has proved to be just another dictatorial way of ruling the masses employing brutal methods. Russia, China, Belarus, Cuba are living examples of how Realpolitik completely distorted the ideas of Marx and Engels. Brutal regimes suppressed popular aspirations under the garb of Marxism. A crass example of Realpolitik is the Soviet-German Pact of August 1939 which gave a carte blanche to Hitler to launch his invasion of Poland and started the Second World War, the bloodiest conflict in human history. Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Mao are just the precursors of present-day populists justifying such methods of ruling over people in the name of Realpolitik as a means of political stability for economic development. They justify their iron fisted rule as an essential precursor to economic development, a trickle-down effect which would percolate downwards from the corporate honchos with their mega fortunes to the poor farmers, peasants and laboring classes.

This becomes particularly relevant in the present context where farmers are agitating not just in India but in most countries in Western Europe as well for better protection of their livelihoods. Images of farmers being tear gassed, being shot at with real/plastic/rubber bullets for demanding their constitutional right of peaceful protest raise a basic question: why are central governments almost always trying to deliberately distort the image of farmers through blatant use of captive national media, rightly called Godi Media, to present them as disturbers of social peace.

Drones have been used to drop tear gas bombs on protesting farmers in India. Tear gas has been used by French police on French farmers protesting French government policies. Swiss farmers have held mass demonstrations in Bern, the Swiss capital, and other areas for better protection of their profession. Major

highways from Punjab to Delhi have been barricaded as if Punjab were an alien land which needed to be quarantined, just like East Germany had built a wall with barbed wire to keep its citizens from moving to the West in 1961. The difference being that that wall was meant to keep citizens in while the Shambhu / Khanauri barriers in Punjab are meant to keep citizens out.

The German title of this article is directly derived from experiments done by different Realpolitik practitioner German governments in the past to deliberately brand certain sections of the population as inimical to the national interest, tarnish their reputation amongst general society and use this tactic to then consolidate absolute power by lining up visceral sentiments of a majority against the minority being branded as subversive. All this in the name of Realpolitik, lauded as pragmatism free of ethical or social considerations by various people like Henry Kissinger in the recent past and various others in the remote past.

Prince Otto von Bismarck, the first Chancellor of the German Empire established in 1871 in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles Palace after defeating imperial France under Napoleon III, is cited by some as a major practitioner of such ruthless Realpolitik. While he did ably maneuver Prussian policy to launch wars in succession against Denmark in 1864, Austria-Hungary in 1866 and France in 1871, he took care to modulate social dissatisfaction among German population by passing social security laws, old age pension schemes and subsidies to farmers. His Realpolitik did not seek to demonize sections of his own population, especially farmers, to gain political mileage. In fact, he himself belonged to the Junkers, landed gentry, who constituted the backbone of the German General Staff which became the chief instrument of Bismarck's policy of uniting Germany through military campaigns in Europe.

After Bismarck's dismissal by the young Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1890, German Realpolitik became even more aggressive, leading to the first *Götterdämmerung* (Destruction of the Gods), the title of the fourth part of Richard Wagner's tetralogy *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. But this was only an appetizer to the destruction that came in 1945 as a direct consequence of German Realpolitik from 1933 to 1945 by practitioners of hate who used mass propaganda to defame a certain section of society belonging to a particular religion as anti-national to consolidate absolute power by stoking hatred by the majority against this minority to silence all opposition in the name of defending national interest. Innocent citizens were subjected to unlimited brutality in the name of protecting national interest. All this was done by nationalistic patriots chanting patriotic ditties with mass fervor. Such images can be seen in many places today.

In India, Realpolitik practiced with respect to Punjab province has had ruinous consequences. The fact seems to be ignored that in discriminating against Punjab, perceived as the main place of residence of most Sikhs, such discrimination equally well affects a substantial percentage of non-Sikh population as well. There is speculation that if present fertility rates continue to decline, the Sikh population in Punjab might be in a minority within the next few years. No census has been carried out in India since 2011 but a properly done new Census now might establish this fact beyond any doubt. It remains to be seen whether Punjab will continue to suffer the same kind of discrimination as it has been subject to till now once the Sikh population there becomes a minority. Only time will tell.

The list of discriminations against Punjab since 1947 has been widely reported by various historians and journalists. It needs no extensive elaboration here but just some milestones can be mentioned. The betrayal began with the first Governor of post-1947 Punjab, Chandu Lal Trivedi, describing Sikhs as a criminal tribe. He issued instructions to all the Deputy Commissioners, in deference to the wishes of the Indian Prime Minister, "without reference to the law of the land, the Sikhs in general and Sikh migrants in particular must be treated as a criminal tribe. Harsh treatment must be meted out to them-----to the extent of shooting them dead so that they wake up to the political realities and recognize who are the rulers and who are the subjects" (S. Kapur Singh ICS, *Sachi Sakhi*, Amritsar, SGPC, 1993, Pp 4-5).

Article 25 of the Constitution of India describes the Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains as Hindus for legal purposes. Linguistic reorganization of India was done in 1956 but Punjab was excluded from it by not creating a Punjabi speaking state as a distinct linguistic entity, notwithstanding the fact that Punjabi is spoken not just by Sikhs but by Punjabis belonging to other religions as well. The situation after the 1965 war against Pakistan forced the then central government to finally accept the demand for the creation of a distinct Punjabi speaking state but only a moth eaten such entity was created in 1966, excluding large Punjabi speaking tracts from it. So much so that even Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab built after losing Lahore to Pakistan in 1947, was kept outside the new Punjab.

More than enough literature exists about the river waters of Punjab being diverted to non-riparian states in violation of all norms of riparian laws. Punjab was called upon to provide food grains to the rest of the country from 1965 onwards by motivating its resourceful farmers to fall into a nefarious what-rice crop cycle which has ruined the soil of this province. This crop cycle, encouraged by granting minimum support prices (MSP) has led to acute depletion of underground water levels in Punjab.

The list of discriminations against Punjab is endless. It is aggravated by a long chain of corrupt and venal political leadership and bureaucracy which has proven unable to rise above considerations of petty personal gain to think of welfare of the public. There is no political ideology guiding the action of such rulers, only personal aggrandizement. Laws have been flouted with impunity to favor relatives and sycophants. The present round of party hopping by politicians of all parties to get election tickets is pathetic. There is no ideological commitment, just self-aggrandizement.

The description by Guru Nanak of the rulers in his day seems so appropriate even today. The Guru's perspicacity deserves admiration. He had the courage to even challenge the emperor Babar by describing his army as a marriage party of sin. But these days even peaceful protesters are trampled upon, blinded by firing pellet guns at them and mercilessly beaten. Readers can decide what Guru Nanak would say watching the rulers of today.

History of several nations shows, however, that such Realpolitik provides only short-term gains. It fractures the social fabric, breeds extremism amongst oppressed minorities and leads to destructive wars, civil wars or other conflicts. The USA witnessed a destructive civil war from 1861 to 1865 because the Realpolitik of finding a compromise justifying the inhuman practice of slavery led to unavoidable social fractures leading to a long war. They had the good fortune of having Abraham Lincoln as their 16th President, perhaps their greatest President, who saw the damage such Realpolitik does to social harmony and acted against it. He paid for his courage with his life in 1865. His death led to a renewed period of Jim Crow in the South, the effects of which are haunting American society even today. There also, the rise of Donald Trump and his cohorts provides a precursor to the damage that will be done to that country in the long run. Demonization of minorities cannot strengthen a nation, only weaken it.

For one Alexei Navalny who is killed for opposing a ruler, several new Navalnys will arise in time. Maiming protestors by brutalizing them might bring a temporary relief to the rulers but sows the seeds of future turmoil. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 notwithstanding its thousands of nuclear weapons, missiles and soldiers. China is muzzling opposition in a brutal fashion as well but the jury remains out as to whether it will continue to progress to greatness by following this model.

Long term solutions must provide employment opportunities for farmers with small holdings who are being forced to sell their land by economic factors. Farming the world over under the Realpolitik capitalist model or even under the earlier collectivist Communist Stalinian model, is being done on an industrial scale, other than in some niche areas. Cooperative farming models were once considered as a viable alternative but have not proven to be so in practice. The need of the hour is a strategic plan for a new ecological farming revolution which needs to be based on organic, sustainable farming.

Also required is a massive diversification of economic models largely based on agriculture. Sectors like high-tech, tourism, education, health, energy need to be substantially increased as employment vectors. Political antagonisms must be subjected to national interest by opening up trade routes by equitable treaties with concerned countries. Corporate honchos, who have benefited from huge loan write-offs, unlike farmers, have to be pushed to massively invest in such diversifications.

Democracy has not always represented the usual order for human society. It is a relatively recent phenomenon which needs constant nurturing because it is the least bad form of governance. Dictatorships can bring rapid economic growth over a short period of time but always end up destroying the societies they rule over. It is a short road from Realpolitik to Götterdämmerung. World history is a witness to it. The message of Bhagat Ravidas and the Sikh Gurus needs wide dissemination so that Begumpura could be transformed from a theoretical concept into a more just social order which is recognized as such even by protagonists of Realpolitik or Laïcité who have generated only conflicts.

### ਚੁੱਪ ਤੇ ਭੁੱਖ

ਡਾ. ਆਸਮਾ ਕਾਦਰੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਲਹੌਰ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ

ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਦਾ ਸੱਚ ਵਿਖਾਉਂਦੀ ਏ ਚੇਤਰ ਦੀ ਧੁੱਪ। ਚਲੇ ਹੁਣ ਅੱਗੇ ਚੱਲੀਏ ਵੇਖੀਏ ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਦੀ ਸੱਚ ਸਿਆਣ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੱਲ ਕਿਸ ਪਾਸੇ ਟੇਰੀ ਹੈ।

**ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥**

**ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥** (ਪੰਨਾ 1, ਜਪੁ, ਮ: 1)

“ਸੋਚਿ” ਸੋਚਣ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ ਈ ਵਿਚਾਰਨ, ਧਿਆਨ ਕਰਨ, ਨਾਲ ਈ ਡਾਕਟਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਏਸ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਨਹਾਉਣ, ਧੋਵਣ, ਪਾਕੀ, ਸਫ਼ਾਈ ਵੀ ਦੱਸੇ ਨੇ। ਨਹਾਉਣ ਧੋਵਣ ਸਾਫ ਕਰੋਂਦਾ ਏ। ਪਾਣੀ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਕਰੋਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਮੈਲ ਕੁਚੈਲ ਲਾਹ ਕੇ। ਸੁੱਚਾ ਓਹਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਏ ਜੇ ਆਪ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਤਨ ਦੀ ਮੈਲ ਸਾਫ ਕਰੋਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਿਵੇਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਸੁਰਤ-ਸਮਝ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਮੈਲ ਸਾਫ ਕਰੋਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਤਾਹੀਓਂ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਪੋਂਹਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੱਲ ਸਫ਼ਾਈ ਦੀ ਹੈ, ਮਨ ਅੰਦਰ ਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਤਨ ਬਾਹਰ ਦੀ। ਪਾਕੀ ਸੁਥਰਾਈ ਨਿਰੀ ਤਨ ਦੇ ਧੋਵਨਿ ਪਾਰੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਆ ਸਕਦੀ। ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪਾਕੀ ਤੇ ਸੁਥਰਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝ ਸਕਣੇ ਹਾਂ। ਜਿਵੇਂ:

**ਮ: ੧ ॥ ਨਾਵਣ ਚਲੇ ਤੀਰਥੀ ਮਨਿ ਖੇਟੈ ਤਨਿ ਚੇਰ ॥ ਇਕੁ ਭਾਉ ਲਥੀ ਨਾਤਿਆ ਦੁਇ ਭਾ ਚੜੀਅਸੁ ਹੋਰ ॥**

**ਬਾਹਰਿ ਧੋਤੀ ਤੂਮੜੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵਿਸੁ ਨਿਕੋਰ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਭਲੇ ਅਣਨਾਤਿਆ ਚੇਰ ਸਿ ਚੇਰਾ ਚੇਰ ॥੨॥** ਪੰਨਾ 789

ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਸਾਫ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਏ:

**ਅਨਿਕ ਜਲਾ ਜੇ ਧੋਵੈ ਦੇਹੀ ॥ ਮੈਲ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਸੁਧੁ ਨ ਤੇਹੀ ॥** (ਪੰਨਾ 199-200, ਮ:5, ਸੁਖਮਨੀ)

ਮਨ ਜਦੋਂ ਤੀਕ ਪਾਕ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਨ ਦੀ ਪਾਕੀ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਕਰਨਾ। ਤਨ ਦੀ ਲੱਗ ਲਬੇੜ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਮੰਦੀ ਲਗਦੀ ਏ ਤਿਵੇਂ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਮੈਲ, ਮਨ ਦੀ ਦੂਈ, ਮਨ ਦਾ ਲੱਗ ਲਬੇੜ ਹੋਇਆ। ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਦੇ ਸੱਚ ਦੀ ਸੁਰਤ ਸਾਰ ਈ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਦੂਈ ਨੂੰ ਧੋ ਕੇ ਪਾਕ ਕਰੋਂਦੀ ਏ। ਇਹ ਪਾਕੀ ਨਿਰੀ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਆ ਸਕਦੀ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਰਨੀ ਬਣਨ ਨਾਲ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਹਸਤੀ ਜਮ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੇੜ ਪਾਰੋਂ ਦੂਈ ਵਿਚ ਫਾਤੀ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਂਝ ਵਰਤਾਰੇ ਪਾਰੋਂ ਮੁੜ ਪਾਕ ਥੀਂਦੀ ਏ। ਸਾਂਝਾ ਆਹਰ ਰਿਜ਼ਕ ਉਪਾਵਨ ਵੰਡਣ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਦੇ ਖੇਟ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਕਾ ਕੇ, ਸਾਫ ਕਰੋਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਹਸਤੀ ਨੂੰ।

ਬਾਕੀ ਸਫਾ ੨੪ ਤੇ.....

## Gurbani Verse Analysis

ਸਤਜੁਗਿ ਤੈ ਮਾਣਿਓ ਛਲਿਓ ਬਲਿ ਬਾਵਨ ਭਾਇਓ ॥  
 satjug tai maani-o chhali-o bal baavan bhaa-i-o.

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*This column is a regular feature for The Sikh Bulletin. As the name suggests, each issue will examine a popular verse from Gurbani for its authentic spiritual message. The purpose is to critically examine popular verses that are used or misused by people of groups to further their own agendas. The verses will be examined for their actual meanings and messages. Readers are invited to submit verses that are commonly used by Sikhs but in their distorted meanings and wrong usage. Writers, thinkers and Gurbani lovers are invited to conduct their own scrutiny on verses of their choice that they consider used wrongfully and submit their analysis for publication. Editor.*

The verses for this edition are taken from the compositions of the Bhattas, and have been sent by a reader with a request to shed light on how to interpret Bhatt *banni*, which in the reader's view is the subject of much confusion within the Sikh world.

When attempting to understand the writings of the Bhattas one needs to take into consideration the following three points which form the underlying context. Without such context, the understanding will remain literal and skewed.

One, that all the Bhattas were deeply religious people - steeped in Vedic and Snatan beliefs. They originated from South India, thus Dravid culture had a lasting influence on their writing style and metaphoric choices and usage. (Someone who has been a farmer his whole life will obviously use farming metaphors such as seed, earth, plow, water, etc etc).

Two, they came into the company of Guru Arjun and thus did a great deal of unlearning and relearning within their spiritual paradigms. The primary change of paradigm relates to the concept of *Guru* which is at the *crux* of Sikhi. Guru Arjun accepted their compositions because of this change at the *crux* level which they expressed in the REAL sense.

Three, their primary focus of veneration is the Guru. But never the physical Guru. So when they sing the praises of the five Gurus (this is the Dravid culture of Bhattas of South India - composing and singing praises of those they revere) they are referring to the Guru as the *shabd*, the Guru as the enlightenment, and the Guru as the source of spirituality within each Guru. This is the case - *even* if they mention the given names of all five Gurus (Nanak, Angad, Amardas, Ramdas, and Arjun ji).

This is the primary point of confusion amongst Sikhs and our translators. They take it to mean that the Bhattas are singing praises of our 5 Gurus in the physical sense. (By the way, 99 percent of Sikhs themselves are today unable to rise above the Guru in the physical sense - including the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) as our Guru which is no more than an article of worship). This cannot be the case for the following reasons:

First, the four preceding Gurus were no longer present in the physical sense when the Bhattas came to Guru Arjun. They could not be offering physical praise of persons they never met in person.

Second, had the Bhattas not transcended the physical Guru into the *Shabad* Guru, there would have been no unlearning, no re-learning, no change, no paradigm shift etc.

Third, had they not transcended the physical Guru - Guru Arjun would *not* have accepted their *banni* for inclusion into the SGGS and we would not be talking about them today. Our Gurus were not in the business of

being praised physically. The objective of the SGGS was purely and completely *spiritual*. Praises of any human being, including the physical Gurus would have no place within the text of Gurbani.

The consequence - as a result of ignoring the above 3 points - is that Sikhs and translators are unable to appreciate the proper way to interpret the metaphors that are being used by the Bhatt in the form of those they revered prior to their change in their spiritual paradigm.

The entire para on page 1390 needs to be understood in the above context and paying attention to the following three points:

One, when the Bhatt use Satyug, treyta, duapur and kaljug – and then tie them to Ram, Kishen, etc they are using it in terms of the existing understanding as physical time periods.

Two, the word ਤੈ Tai (You) hence refers to the persons being related to in that period – *not* to Guru Nanak. So in the first verse it refers to Bavan and in the second to Ram. All the translations I have read use the word ਤੈ Tai (You) to refer to Guru Nanak. The translations thus become nonsensical as – O Guru Nanak You Defeated Bal and Ruled in Satyug (Verse 1). O Nanak You Were the Ram who ruled the Raghu Clan in Treyta (verse 2). O Nanak, you were Krishen of Duapur who freed Kans (Verse 3) and so on. Such interpretation makes no sense because Guru Nanak (i) did not believe in the time periods or yugs as such and (ii) such an interpretation is against Gurmat which does not believe in the reincarnation of avatars etc.

Third, Sikhs are (stupidly) elated whenever anyone tells them that Guru Nanak was greater than Bhrama, Shivji, Vishnu, Ram Chander, Krishen, this or that King, or Prophet Mohd, Jesus Christ etc. They fail to understand that our Gurus, Bhagats and the SGGS does not indulge in such meaningless comparisons.

The translations and interpretations of the verses are as follows:

**ਸਤਜੁਗਿ ਤੈ ਮਾਣਿਓ ਛਲਿਓ ਬਲਿ ਬਾਵਨ ਭਾਇਓ ॥** satjug tai maani-o chhali-o bal baavan bhaa-i-o.

O Bavan, In Satgyug You Defeated Bal and Ruled.

**ਤ੍ਰੇਤੈ ਤੈ ਮਾਣਿਓ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਘੁਵੰਸੁ ਕਹਾਇਓ ॥** taraytai tai maani-o raam raghoovans kahaa-i-o.

In Treta Period, O Ram, In Treyta You Were Said to Have Ruled the Raghu Clan.

**ਦੁਆਪੁਰਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਨ ਮੁਰਾਰਿ ਕੰਸੁ ਕਰਤਾਰਥੁ ਕੀਓ ॥** du-aapur krisan muraar kans kirtaarath kee-o.

O Krishen Murar, In Duapur You Liberated Kans.

**ਉਗਰਸੈਣ ਕਉ ਰਾਜੁ ਅਭੈ ਭਗਤਹ ਜਨ ਦੀਓ ॥** ugarsain ka-o raaj abhai bhagtah jan dee-o.

You Gave Ugarsain, Your Devotee, His Kingdom

**ਕਲਿਜੁਗਿ ਪਰਮਾਣੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਅਮਰੁ ਕਹਾਇਓ ॥** kaljug parmaan nanak gur Angad amar khayeo.

O Nanak, Kaljug Bears Testimoy (ਪਰਮਾਣੁ) Of Your Enlightenment (ਗੁਰੁ) In The Form of Angad and Amar.

**ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਜੁ ਅਬਿਚਲੁ ਅਟਲੁ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖਿ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਓ ॥੭॥** sree guroo raaj abichal atal aad purakh furmaa-i-o.

||7||

Enlightenment That Was Delivered (ਫੁਰਮਾਇਓ) Pertaining to the Eternal (ਅਬਿਚਲੁ), Permanent (ਅਟਲੁ) and Primal Being (ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖਿ) Whose Kingdom (ਰਾਜੁ) Is Above All (ਸ੍ਰੀ)

Finally, there is a real reason why Guru Arjun included their writings last in the Pothi Sahib. The expectation was that a Gurbani reading and realizing Sikh would have been properly grounded in Gurmat philosophy, concepts and beliefs before he got to the Bhatt writings. Such grounding would then allow the Sikh to interpret the writings of the Bhatt in the context of Gurmat philosophy, concepts and beliefs. The irony is that Sikhs are interpreting Gurmat philosophy, Sikhi concepts and Gurbani beliefs in the context of the metaphors used by the Bhatt. This then is the source of our confusion.

## A Critical Appraisal of “The Sikhs and the Prospect of Pakistan: Their Relationship with Key Actors and their Responses to Proposals, between 1940 and 1947”<sup>1</sup>

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**Introductory Note:** This study by Jaskanwar Singh, a young Sikh Historian of Leicester University, explores the role of the Sikhs during the Partition of India. He establishes that only the Sikhs fought for United India while Muslim League, Congress, Hindu Mahasabha/RSS, and the British accepted the Partition of India based on Two Nation Theory. Sikhs raised the demand for Khalistan only to counter the propaganda for Pakistan. They made maximum sacrifices for freedom of India but also suffered the most in life and property, which is a dilemma unresolved till today. Sikh leaders stood like a rock to save Punjab for India.

Jaskanwar Singh is the author of this dissertation of 44 pages submitted to University Leicester for his BA degree. It has three Chapters followed by a vast Bibliography. It narrates the story of the Sikh community fighting for their existence by opposing the creation of Pakistan during 1940-1947. Jaskanwar writes: “From the proclamation of Pakistan in 1940 to the eventual partition of Punjab, the Sikh community resisted the formation of Pakistan and the loss of their heartland to Muslim domination. The Sikhs saw the possibility of complete Muslim domination as a threat to their existence, as even under the Unionist government, Sikhs found their way of life undermined and endangered. The Sikhs responded to proposals by the League, the British and Congress with their own demands. In response to the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League, Sikhs presented the idea of Khalistan”.

In the Introduction, the author laments that Sikhs bore the brunt of migration and their homeland, Punjab, was divided between India and Pakistan resulting in the massacre of millions of innocent Sikhs. The author gives the reason for undertaking this study: “Dr Indu Banga provides an informative piece on Sikh politics during the partition, where she explains how the Sikh leadership reacted to the potential of Muslim domination. However, the work fails to explain the justifications behind the Sikh responses, which is what I attempt to provide in my dissertation”.

He refers to the situation where the Sikhs felt ignored: “Historiography on the partition and the transfer of power in India favors the notion that there were three actors involved, namely the British, Muslim League and Congress, and grants a few references to the Sikhs, only emphasizing the situation the Sikhs found themselves in”. He clearly emphasizes the role played by the Sikhs during Partition: “The Sikhs were in favor of a united India, and any form of partition was the last resort. The unity of India was more important than a Sikh state”.

Chapter 1 describes the events leading to the concept of Pakistan, a Muslim State based on Two Nation Theory. The author writes: “The Lahore Resolution of 1940, was the ‘magna carta’ of Pakistan”. In the 1941 census, Muslims constituted 55% of the total population of Punjab. The Muslim League pleaded for inclusion of entire Punjab area in Pakistan. Gandhi and Nehru took this claim lightly but the Sikhs opposed and earned the wrath of Muslim League. The ruling Unionist Party in Punjab failed to checkmate the demand of Muslim league; rather it crumbled under its pressure. According to the author: “Amongst the Sikh community, the Lahore Resolution ‘presented the prospects of permanent Muslim domination’ in the province of Punjab. Hence, they launched a virulent campaign against it as it would jeopardize their political aspirations, economic advantages, and cultural traditions. The prospect of a ‘Pakistan’ was seen as a threat to the very existence of the Sikh community”.

To counter the Pakistan movement, the Sikhs demanded Khalistan: “Khalistan would act as a buffer state between Pakistan and India. During the All-India Sikh Conference of 1940, it was proclaimed that if the ‘Muslim

League insisted upon (Pakistan), the Sikhs would demand Sikh Raj in Punjab'. In the UP Central Sikh Conference, a resolution was passed against Pakistan: "Sikhs would aspire for 'complete swaraj' and any attempt made to 'divide India into communal provinces' would be met with opposition". However, the demand for Pakistan resurfaced in 1942 when Cripps Draft Proposal declared that the provinces had the right to secede from the centre. The 'local option' clause meant that if the Muslims desired, provinces with a Muslim majority could secede from the centre. This clause was seen to be the 'first public admission of the possibility of Pakistan'.

The author gives credit to the Sikhs to counter the scheme of Pakistan: "To weaken the prospect of Pakistan, the Sikhs would again propose a separate state. The idea of Azad Punjab was floated in July 1942 at the All-India Akali Conference with river Chenab as its western boundary and having a population balance with 40% Muslim, 40% Hindu and 20% Sikh, which would mean no single community could dominate, hence the name Azad – free. The Azad Punjab scheme was a defensive strategy that had been presented as a response to the recognition Pakistan received from the British through the Cripps Proposals. Sikhs believed that the 'creation of Azad Punjab' would get rid of Pakistan". However, the proposal of Azad Punjab was flawed; it needs to be understood as the Sikh attempt to cripple the prospect of Pakistan and safeguard their interests and existence.

Chapter 2 starts with a discussion of CR Formula proposed by Chakravarti Rajagopalachari. Gandhi supported it. Rajagopalachari had proposed not only the partition of India but also the potential partition of Punjab. According to author, CR Formula was used by Jinnah to build up his case for an independent Pakistan: "Jinnah insisted on a completely independent state that covered the Muslim majority provinces and had complete independence to decide on subjects of governance. Jinnah showed no signs of compromising over Pakistan. He was now openly advocating for Pakistan, claiming all six Muslim provinces. Any proposals to amend the boundaries were rejected by Jinnah".

The Sikhs reacted strongly to the C.R. Formula and the Gandhi-Jinnah talks. Gandhi's attempt to reach out to Jinnah and the Formula were seen as betrayals. The Formula was a breach of the 1929 Lahore pledge where Congress had promised to not do anything that affected the Sikhs without consulting them first. The author expresses the fear of the Sikhs: "The Sikhs with no majority in any district would be subject to Muslim and Hindu rule, putting them 'under perpetual slavery of the two. Gandhi and Jinnah were tyrants that wanted to 'impose Hindu and Muslim majorities on the Sikhs' through dividing India".

It is unfortunate that the community contributing 40% revenue to Punjab was pushed to the wall. Sikh survival was deemed at stake, as they were not involved in any negotiations despite being the most critically affected community. The Sikhs wanted to enjoy the fruits of freedom and not live on the charity of others. However, the demand for a separate Sikh state was the last resort, that was rooted in fear of Hindu and Muslim domination. The proposals made for a Sikh state were conditional; if Pakistan seceded, and India divided, then the Sikhs would want their own state. According to author: "The Sikhs stood for the unity of India first and foremost, and wished for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs to live together. A Sikh state was the last resort, and not a welcomed choice. Despite provocative speeches advocating for a Sikh state, it was clear from many Sikh stages that Sikhs would rather remain in a United India".

In the Punjab assembly election of 1946, the Muslim League fought on the manifesto of Pakistan. However, they failed to win the majority. The coalition of Congress, Unionist Party, and Akali Party formed the government but failed to provide stability. The Muslims in the Unionist Party supported the Muslim League and Governor's rule was imposed. In March 1946, a Mission was sent to India to decide the fate of India. On March 22, 1946, Sikh leaders met the Mission and demanded a Sikh state –Sikhistan – as an 'additional provincial unit' in United India. Sikhistan was different to Azad Punjab which was proposed as a redrawing of the boundaries of Punjab to exclude Muslim majority areas, therefore creating a province where no community could dominate.



Azad Punjab could not be seen as a Sikh state, however, Sikhistan would be a Sikh federation, and it would have a distinctly Sikh character. All significant Sikh Gurdwaras and shrines would be included in this area.

It was clarified that the demand for a Sikh state was not rooted in communalism but was the only guarantee for survival. On one hand the Sikhs faced Muslim hostility, which was a historical trend, and on the other, they had Hindu nationalism that attempted to 'reabsorb them into Hinduism'. The Sikh issues remained unresolved by the Mission as they had no bargaining power due to their population nowhere in majority in any district of Punjab. The Mission 'liquidated the position of the Sikhs' in their homeland.

Chapter 3 describes the crisis in Punjab created by the Muslim League. Its agitations collapsed the coalition government and proved too much for Khizar Hayat Khan, who resigned as the Premier of Punjab. Muslim animosity against Sikhs was evident. Sikh police were sometimes targeted by Muslim mobs. Congress would agree to a partition as the only solution to communal violence. Master Tara Singh also included partition of Punjab in his proposals.

The Sikhs were caught in a dilemma. The Akalis would adopt various strategies to keep the Sikh population together. Sikhistan, a state between Chenab and Jamuna, was revived, to be based on 'landed property, sacred shrines and other interests of the Sikhs. However, Mountbatten, who was deputed by the British government to decide the fate of India, made it clear that Sikhistan was not viable. The British, wishing to avoid the partition of Punjab and the bloodshed between communities, encouraged the Sikhs to consider an autonomous Sikh area within Pakistan. The Sikh community would remain intact as a fourteen percent minority in Pakistan, but in India, they would be submerged in the Hindu majority.

After prolonged parleys with Muslim League leader Jinnah, the Sikhs realized that their safety will be compromised if they join Pakistan. Unfortunately, Jinnah also provided no 'coherent and acceptable guarantee of their safety'. His indifference towards any agreement was matched by Sikh stubbornness. Jinnah proclaimed, 'Sikhs could go to the devil in their own way' as they 'demanded the partition of Punjab'. Riots targeting Sikhs increased the mistrust and fear of Muslim domination, therefore there was no understanding between the League and the Sikhs. Pakistan was not avoidable, rather it had become a reality.

According to the author: "The Mountbatten Plan of June 3, 1947, delivered the partition of India into two sovereign nations. Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh accepted the plan. The fate of the Sikhs lay in the decision of the Boundary Commission. The Commission was told that 'any partition that did not secure the integrity and solidarity of the Sikhs would be unacceptable and would create a difficult situation". No one was satisfied with the Awards. Sikhs had been unable to secure any substantial 'guarantee of their security' despite the violence in the province proving that Sikhs could not expect any security under Muslim domination.

Jaskanwar Singh concludes that the Sikhs were losers on all fronts: "The hopes for Sikhistan were buried by the Awards, and the Sikhs lost the land they had historical and cultural roots in, and the land they saved from many foreign invasions in the past. Their attempts at preventing Pakistan had failed, and their final fight to retain as much of Punjab had resulted in an unsatisfactory division that split their community. The largest mass migration of humans followed the partition, that saw millions of people killed or displaced".

#### Conclusions

1. It is evident from the above discussion that the idea of a Sikh State (Khalistan) was a means of opposing the idea of Pakistan through the repeated use of the phrase 'if Pakistan is to be conceded'. The Sikhs did not want their own state and understood the impracticality of their demand.
2. The toughest resistance to the Cripps proposal came from the Sikhs, who felt their cause had 'been lamentably betrayed'. The Congress, the Muslim League, and the British were responsible for partition of India. Only the Sikhs were fighting for United India against all odds.

3. The Sikhs had managed to save a significant portion of Punjab for India by opting to join India unconditionally.
4. The proposals of an Azad Punjab province, Khalistan or Sikhistan, and the autonomous Sikh area within Pakistan and the eventual formation of an East Punjab all prove the efforts made by the Sikhs to secure political safeguards as the British Raj came to an end.

<sup>1</sup> A dissertation submitted to University of Leicester by Jaskanwar Singh BA, May 2022.

ਚਲਦਾ ਸਫਾ ੨੮ ਤੋਂ.....

ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਜਿਵੇਂ “ਸੋਚਿ” ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਤਿਵੇਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਚੁੱਪ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਚੁੱਪ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਲਾਵਣ ਤਾਂ ਚੰਗੀ ਗੱਲ ਏ। ਪਰ ਪੁੱਛ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਜੇ ਸੋਚ ਹੈ ਕਾਹਦੀ। ਜੇ ਤੇ ਚੁੱਪ ਦਾ ਵਰਤ ਰੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਵਿਖਾਲੇ ਕਾਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਚੁੱਪ ਕੂੜੀ ਏ। ਜੇ ਚੁੱਪ ਸਾਧੀ ਏ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਲਾਹੇ ਦਾ ਹਿਸਾਬ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਕਰਨ ਕਾਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਕਿਸ ਕਾਰੀ। ਜੇ ਅੱਖੀਂ ਵੇਖੇ ਧਰੋਹ ਉੱਪਰ ਵੀ ਜੀਭ ਚੁੱਪ ਏ ਤਾਂ ਕੀ ਲਾਗ ਹੈ ਏਸ ਚੁੱਪ ਦਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਨਾਲ, ਜਿਉਂਦੇ ਜੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ। ਚੁੱਪ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ ਵਾਅ, ਪਾਣੀ, ਅੱਗ, ਮਿੱਟੀ, ਤੇ ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਦੀ, ਜੇ ਉਪਜਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਉਂਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਦੀ ਚੁੱਪ ਜੇ ਕੁੱਲ ਖਲਕਤ ਨਾਲ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਧਰੋਹ ਦਾ ਤਰੋੜ ਲੱਭਦੀ ਏ ਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਚੁੱਪ ਠੀਕ ਏ। ਕਿਉਂ ਜੇ ਏਸ ਚੁੱਪ ਨੇ ਕਰਨੀ ਬਣਨਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਚੁੱਪ ਕਰਨੀ ਨਾ ਬਣੇ ਉਹ ਚੁੱਪ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਕਰ ਏ, ਵਿਖਾਲਾ ਏ ਚੁੱਪ ਦਾ, ਧੋਖਾ ਦੇਵਣ ਕੀਤੇ। ਨਿਮਾਣੀ ਖਲਕਤ ਨੂੰ ਮੋਹਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਨਵਾਂ ਢੰਗ, ਨਵੀਂ ਫੰਦ ਫਰੇਬ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਖੁਸਣ ਦੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਪੱਜ। ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਏ ਇਹ ਚੁੱਪ ਨਹੀਂ ਏ। ਏਹਾ ਵੰਡ ਬਾਬਾ ਫਰੀਦ ਦੇ ਦੇਹੜੇ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਵਿਖਾਈ ਏ ਹੰਸ ਤੇ ਬਗਲੇ ਦੀ।

ਇੱਕ ਲੱਤ ਤੇ ਚੁੱਪ ਖਲੋਤਾ ਬਗਲਾ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਸੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਖੁੱਬਿਆ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਾਵਧਾਨ ਏ। ਮੱਛੀ ਦਿੱਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਝੱਪਟ ਲਈ। ਇਲਮ ਸਿਆਣਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਚੁੱਪ ਵੀ ਐਵੇਂ ਬਗਲੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਹੈ।

**ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ ਜੇ ਬੰਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਭਾਰ ॥**

**ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਤਾ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ 1, ਜਪੁ, ਮ: 1)**

ਭੁੱਖ ਖਾਵਣ ਨਾਲ ਤਾਂ ਲਹਿੰਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਜੇ ਖਾਵਣ ਨਾਲ ਭੁੱਖ ਲਹਿੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਮੱਲ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਹੁਣ ਤਾਈਂ ਰੱਜ ਗਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਸ਼ਬਦ ਏਹਾ ਸੁਰਤ ਪਿਆ ਦੋਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਖਾਹ ਖਾਵਣ ਨਾਲ ਤੇ ਕੋਠੇ ਭਰੀਵਣ ਨਾਲ ਰੱਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਰੱਜ ਵੰਡਣ ਪਾਰੋਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੁੱਲ ਜੀਆਂ ਜੂਨ ਨਾਲ ਟੁੱਕਰ ਸਾਂਝ ਈ ਰੱਜ ਹੈ। ਕਿਤਨਾ ਕੁ ਖਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਇੱਕ ਜੀ? ਅਸਲ ਰੋਲਾ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਦਾ ਹੈ, ਹਵਸ ਦਾ ਜੇ ਕਦੀਂ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੁੱਕਦੀ। ਢਿੱਡ ਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਲੋੜ ਇਤਨੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਤਨਾ ਜੋੜ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਮੱਲ ਮਾਰ। ਭੁੱਖ ਵਾਂਗ ਈ ਸਿਆਣਪ ਹੋਈ। ਸਿਆਣਪਾਂ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਪਈਆਂ ਹਾਕਮ ਦੀ ਹਾਕਮੀ ਥੰਮਣ ਦਾ, ਮੱਲਵਾਨ ਦੀ ਮੱਲ ਪੱਕੀ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ, ਜੁਲਮ ਜਬਰ ਦੀ ਬਾਂਹ ਬਣਨ ਦਾ। ਇਹ ਸਿਆਣਪਾਂ ਚਤੁਰਾਈਆਂ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਹੋਵਣ ਪਰ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਚੱਲਦੀਆਂ। ਚੱਲਣ ਵਿਚ ਟੋਰਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਤੇ ਮੱਲ ਮਾਰ ਸਮਝਾਂ ਬਣਦੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਖਲੋਤ ਪਾਰੋਂ ਨੇਂ। ਕੋਠੇ, ਕਾਰ-ਵਿਹਾਰ, ਧਨ-ਮਾਲ, ਸਭ ਆਪ ਬੱਝੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਜੋੜਨਹਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਏ।

ਕੁਦਰਤ ਦੇ ਦਾਨ ਹੋਏ “ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ” ਦੇ ਸੱਚ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸਾਰ ਕੇ ਕੁਰਾਹੇ ਪਏ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਝਾਕੀ ਵਿਖਾਈ ਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਅਸਾਂ ਨੂੰ।

*To be alone is only possible when the mind is outside the influence of society; when inwardly there is freedom from social disorder. This freedom is virtue because virtue is always alone; the morality of society is the continuance of disorder. Meditation is transcending this disorder and not the private pleasure of visions and expanding experiences.*

Jiddu Krishnamoorthy 1895 - 1986

## ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਤੰਡ

**ਨਿਰਧਨ ਸਰਧਨ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਭਾਈ ।**

ਮਨਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਨੇਡਾ

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ਇਸ ਲੇਖ ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ ਨੰਬਰ 1159 ਉਪਰ ਦਰਜ, ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਐਸੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਅਹਿਮ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਚਾਨਣ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਨਾ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਇਸ ਸਬਦਿ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਸਗੋਂ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਵੀ ਝਾਤ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਦੇਖਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੀ ਉਹ ਸੰਧਰਭ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ।

**ਨਿਰਧਨ ਆਦਰੁ ਕੇਈ ਨ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਲਾਖ ਜਤਨ ਕਰੈ ਓਹੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਧਰੇਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਜਉ ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਸਰਧਨੁ ਕੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਆਗੇ ਬੈਠਾ ਪੀਠਿ ਫਿਰਾਇ ॥੧॥ ਜਉ ਸਰਧਨੁ ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਕੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਦੀਆ ਆਦਰੁ ਲੀਆ ਬੁਲਾਇ ॥੨॥ ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਸਰਧਨੁ ਦੇਨਉ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕੀ ਕਲਾ ਨ ਮੇਟੀ ਜਾਈ ॥੩॥ ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਹੈ ਸੇਈ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥੪॥੮॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 1159}**

ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਝਾਤ ਮਾਰ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ :  
ਅਰਥ: ਕੋਈ (ਧਨੀ) ਮਨੁੱਖ ਕਿਸੇ ਕੰਗਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ। ਕੰਗਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਜਤਨ (ਧਨੀ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ) ਕਰੇ, ਉਹ ਧਨੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ (ਉਸ ਦੇ ਜਤਨਾਂ ਦੀ) ਪਰਵਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਦਾ।<sup>1</sup> ਰਹਾਉ। ਜੇ ਕਦੇ ਕੋਈ ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਬੰਦਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਧਨਵਾਨ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਚਲਾ ਜਾਏ, ਅੱਗੋਂ ਉਹ ਧਨੀ ਬੈਠਾ (ਉਸ ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਵਲੋਂ) ਪਿੱਠ ਮੋੜ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>1</sup> ਪਰ ਜੇ ਧਨੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਜਾਏ, ਉਹ ਆਦਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜੀ-ਆਇਆਂ ਆਖਦਾ ਹੈ।<sup>2</sup> ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਰਜ਼ਾ (ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੋਈ ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਧਨੀ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ) ਮਿਟਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ, ਉਂਵ ਕੰਗਾਲ ਤੇ ਧਨੀ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਭਰਾ ਹੀ ਹਨ (ਧਨੀ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਨਾ ਮਾਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ)।<sup>3</sup>

ਕਬੀਰ ਆਖਦਾ ਹੈ- (ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ) ਉਹ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਹੀ ਕੰਗਾਲ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ (ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਧਨ ਇੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਨਾਮ-ਧਨ ਨੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਭਣਾ ਹੈ; ਦੂਜੇ, ਕਿਤਨਾ ਹੀ ਧਨ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਕਰੀ ਜਾਏ, ਕਦੇ ਰੱਜਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਮਨ ਭੁੱਖਾ ਕੰਗਾਲ ਹੀ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ) ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗੇ:

1. ਜੇ ਇਸ ਸਬਦਿ ਤੋਂ ਇਕਦਮ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਸਬਦਿ ਦੇਖੀਏ ਤਾਂ ਪਤਾ ਲਗੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਸੰਧਰਭ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਖਾਂਦੇ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਜੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਹਾਉ ਪੰਕਤੀਆਂ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਹਨ : ਹਮਰਾ ਝਗਰਾ ਰਹਾ ਨ ਕੇਉ ॥ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਮੁਲਾਂ ਛਾਡੇ ਦੇਉ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ - ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਲ੍ਹਾ ਦੇ ਝਗੜੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹਾਂ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਤਿਆਗ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਵਿਚਾਰ ਅਧੀਨ ਸਬਦਿ ਤੋਂ ਅਗਲੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਹਾਉ ਪੰਕਤੀਆਂ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਹਨ: ਭਜਹੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਭੁਲਿ ਮਤ ਜਾਹੁ ॥ ਮਾਨਸ ਜਨਮ ਕਾ ਏਹੀ ਲਾਹੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ - ਇਨਸਾਨ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਲਾਹਾ ਲੈ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜ ਕੇ ਰਹੀਏ, ਉਸਨੂੰ ਭੁਲੀਏ ਨਾ। ਹੁਣ ਆਪਾਂ ਖੁਦ ਹੀ ਸੋਚੀਏ ਕਿ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਅਮੀਰ- ਗਰੀਬ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਟਾਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਕਿਥੋਂ ਆ ਗਿਆ? ਕਹਿਣ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਸੰਧਰਭ ਤੋਂ ਹਟਕੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਅਸਲ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ।

2. ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਰਜ਼ਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਕੋਈ ਗਰੀਬ ਅਤੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਹੈ, ਗਲਤ ਹੈ। ਪੈਸੇ, ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਆਦਿ ਦਾ Concept ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੇ ਬਣਾਇਆ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੇ ਨਹੀਂ। ਅਮੀਰੀ ਗਰੀਬੀ, ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਭਰ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਰਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਚਾਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਚਾਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸੰਭਾਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਲਈ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇਣਾ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਦਾ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ।

3. ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ, ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਮ ਵਾਂਗ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨੇ ਹਨ।

4. 'ਧਨ ਇੱਥੇ ਹੀ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਨਾਮ-ਧਨ ਨੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਭਣਾ ਹੈ' - ਇਹ ਠੀਕ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਧਨ ਇੱਥੇ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਣਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਇਹ ਸਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ 'ਨਾਮ ਧਨ' ਨਾਲ ਜਾਣਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਵੱਡੀਆਂ ਗਲਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਧਨ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਜੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਾਸ ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਰਟਨ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜਾ, ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਨਾਲ ਕੁਛ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਹ

ਭੰਬਲਭੂਸਾ ਸਿਰਫ ਗਲਤ ਅਰਥਾਂ, ਕਥਾਵਾਚਕਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਬਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਦੀ ਉਪਜ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖੀ ਜਿਓਂਦੇ ਜੀਅ ਮੁਕਤ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਢੰਗ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਬਣਕੇ ਆਨੰਦ ਮਾਨਣ ਦੀ ਜੁਗਤ ਹੈ।

ਆਓ, ਸੰਧਰਭ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਕੂਲ ਅਰਥ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰੀਏ:

**ਨਿਰਧਨ** - ਧਨ ਤੋਂ ਸੱਖਣਾ, ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣਾ ਤੋਂ ਸੱਖਣਾ। **ਕੋਈ** - ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ, ਕੋਈ ਜੁਗਤ, ਕੋਈ ਤਰੀਕਾ। **ਆਦਰੁ** - ਪਤਿ, ਜਦੋਂ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਆਪਣੀ ਅੰਤਰ-ਆਤਮਾ ਅੱਗੇ ਸ਼ਰਮਿੰਦਾ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਸਚਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਾ। **ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਧਰੇਇ** - ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਸ ਨਾ ਹੋਣਾ। **ਜਉ** - ਜਿਵੇਂ। **ਸਰਧਨ** - ਧਨਵਾਨ, ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣਾ ਵਾਲਾ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਮਨੁੱਖ। **ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਕਲਾ** - ਰੱਬੀ ਹੁਕਮ। ਨਾਮੁ - ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਬਰ, ਸ਼ੁਕਰ, ਨਿਰਭਉ, ਨਿਰਵੈਰਤਾ, ਦਇਆ, ਭੇਦਭਾਵ ਰਹਿਤ। **ਸਚਿਆਰ** - ਸਚੁ ਭਾਵ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਬੰਦਾ।

**ਨਿਰਧਨ ਆਦਰੁ ਕੋਈ ਨ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਲਾਖ ਜਤਨ ਕਰੈ ਓਹੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਧਰੇਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥**

ਗੁਣ ਹੀਣ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਜੁਗਤ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਾ ਸਕਦੀ। ਗੁਣ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰੇ ਵਗੈਰ ਹੋਰ ਜਿੰਨੇ ਵੀ ਜਤਨ ਕਰੇ ਜਾਣ, ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਚਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਵਸਦਾ। ਉਸਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਖ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ: ਜਿਨ ਗੁਣ ਤਿਨ ਸਦ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਅਉਗੁਣਵੰਤਿਆ ਦੂਰਿ ॥ ਪੰਨਾ 27 ॥ - ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਗੁਣ ਨੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਦਾ ਵਸਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਔਗਣਾਂ ਦੇ ਭਰਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਅਗਲੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਪੰਕਤੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੀ ਉਧਾਰਣ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

**ਜਉ ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਸਰਧਨ ਕੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਆਗੇ ਬੈਠਾ ਪੀਠਿ ਫਿਰਾਇ ॥੧॥**

ਜਿਵੇਂ ਗਰੀਬ ਬੰਦਾ ਅਮੀਰ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਅਮੀਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਪਿੱਠ ਕਰਕੇ ਬੈਠ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਭਾਵ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਆਦਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ।

**ਜਉ ਸਰਧਨੁ ਨਿਰਧਨ ਕੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਦੀਆ ਆਦਰੁ ਲੀਆ ਬੁਲਾਇ ॥੨॥**

ਪਰ ਅਮੀਰ ਬੰਦਾ ਗਰੀਬ ਕੋਲ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਅੰਦਰ ਬੁਲਾ ਕੇ ਆਦਰ ਦਿਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਥੇ ਉਧਾਰਣ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਤੇ ਵਾਪਿਸ ਮੁਖ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਉਪਰ ਆ ਗਏ।

**ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਸਰਧਨੁ ਦੇਨਉ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਕਲਾ ਨ ਮੇਟੀ ਜਾਈ ॥੩॥**

ਗੁਣ ਹੀਣ ਭਾਵ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਣਵਾਨ ਬੰਦਾ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਭਰਾ ਹਨ। ਭਰਾ ਉਹ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਇਕੋ ਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਾਏ ਹੋਣ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਮੱਤ ਲਈ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਵ ਮੱਤ ਹੀ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਨਮ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਹੀ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ। ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਹੁਕਮ ਬਦਲਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ।

**ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਨਿਰਧਨੁ ਹੈ ਸੋਈ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥੪॥**

ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਖੁਦ ਹੀ ਦੱਸ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਨਿਰਧਨ ਓਹੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਸਦੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਨਹੀਂ। ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਓਹੀ ਬੰਦਾ ਗਰੀਬ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਕੋਲ ਲੋੜੀਂਦੇ ਗੁਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ।

ਨਿਚੋੜ: ਇਸ ਸਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੇ ਨੇ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਅਹਿਮ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਇਕ ਦੁਨਿਆਵੀ ਉਧਾਰਣ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਵਲੋਂ ਸਿਰਜੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਧਨ ਦੌਲਤ ਪੱਖੋਂ ਗਰੀਬ ਬੰਦੇ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਇੱਜਤ ਮਾਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਅਮੀਰ ਬੰਦੇ ਦੀ ਹੀ ਇੱਜਤ ਹੈ। ਉਵੇਂ ਹੀ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਾਂ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਸਨਮੁਖ, ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਂਝੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਪਤਿ/ਇੱਜਤ/ਆਦਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਭਾਵ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਬਣਨਾ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਦਾ ਪਾਤਰ ਬਣਨਾ, ਸੰਭਵ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਹ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਵੱਡਾ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਇਸ ਸਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਵਿਣੁ ਗੁਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਬਿਨਾ ਰੱਬੀ ਗੁਣਾ ਦੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣੀ ਭਾਵ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਜਾਣਾ।

ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਤਰੀਕਾ ਇਥੇ ਕਾਰਗਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਨਾਮ ਰਟਣਾ, ਤੀਰਥ ਜਾਣਾ, ਅਰਦਾਸਾਂ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ, ਬਾਬਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਚੌਕੀਆਂ ਭਰਨੀਆਂ, ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਾਉਣੇ ਆਦਿ।

## ਕੰਵਰ ਦੀ ਕਲਮ ਤੋਂ...

### ਸੱਜਣਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ

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ਮਨੁੱਖ ਸਮਾਜਕ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਗੀ ਸਾਥੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸੰਗੀ ਸਾਥੀ ਵੀ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਹੋਣੇ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਹਿਣ ਅਤੇ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਸਾਥ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਨਾ ਵੀ ਦੇਣ। ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਆਖਦੀ ਹੈ:

**ਸਜਣ ਸੇਈ ਨਾਲਿ ਮੈ ਚਲਦਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ਚਲੰਨਿ॥**  
**ਜਿਥੈ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੰਗੀਐ ਤਿਥੈ ਖੜੇ ਦਿਸੰਨਿ॥** (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-729)

ਭਾਵ ਅਸਲੀ ਸੱਜਣ ਉਹ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਸਾਥ ਦੇਣ ਅਤੇ ਮਦਦਗਾਰ ਵੀ ਹੋਣ। ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੁੱਖ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਾਂ ਸੁੱਖ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹੋਵੋ ਉਹ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਪੁਰਾ ਸਾਥ ਦੇਣ। ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਸਹਾਈ ਹੋਣ। ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੰਗਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਭਾਵ ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਲੋੜ ਪਵੇ ਉਹ ਸੱਜਣ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਮਦਦਗਾਰ ਹੋਣ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਐਸੇ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਅਸਲ ਮਿੱਤਰ (ਸਜਣ) ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਵੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਐਸੇ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਲਭਣੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੁਮਕਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਰੋਟੀ ਦਾ ਸਾਧਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੀ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਐਸੇ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਦਸਦੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਹਿ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ: ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਮਾਲਿ ਤੂੰ ਬਧਾ ਛੁਟਹਿ ਜਿਤੁ॥ (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-729) ਭਾਵ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਨਾਮੁ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਬਣਾ ਲੈ ਉਹ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਦਦਗਾਰ ਵੀ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਜਦੋਂ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਬਣ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ, ਹਰ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਵਿਚ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਵੀ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਵੀ ਕੱਟ ਦੇਵੇਗਾ। ਤੇਰੀ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਸਮੇਂ ਵੀ ਤੇਰਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਵੀ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੀਆਂ ਸਭ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲਾਂ ਵੀ ਦੂਰ ਕਰ ਦੇਵੇਗਾ।

ਇਥੇ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਨਾਮੁ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ, ਸਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਸੋਚ, ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਬੁੱਧੀ, (ਡਿਵਾਈਨ ਵਰਚੂਅਜ਼ ਅਤੇ ਡਿਵਾਈਨ ਵਿਜ਼ਡਮ)। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਮੁੱਚਾ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੂਝ-ਬੂਝ, ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ, ਚੰਗੇ ਗੁਣ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਬੁੱਧ, ਸਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਸੋਚ ਆਦਿ ਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਅਸਲੀ ਮਿੱਤਰ (ਸਜਣ) ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸੁਚੱਜੀ ਸੋਚ (ਡਿਵਾਈਨ ਵਿਜ਼ਡਮ) ਅਤੇ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ (ਡਿਵਾਈਨ ਵਰਚੂਅਜ਼) ਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਜਿਥੇ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਸਾਥ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਥੇ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਮਦਦਗਾਰ ਵੀ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਵੀ ਕੱਢ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਇਸੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵੀ ਸਮਝਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ:

**ਨਾਮੁ ਇਸਟੁ ਮੀਤ ਸੁਤ ਕਰਤਾ ਮਨ ਸੰਗਿ ਤੁਹਾਰੈ ਚਾਲੈ॥** (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-213)

ਭਾਵ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਬੁੱਧੀ, ਸੁਚੱਜੀ ਮਤ ਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਸੱਜਣ ਹਨ, ਇਹ ਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ (ਸੁਤ) ਪੁਤਰ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਸੁਚੱਜੀ ਮਤ (ਡਿਵਾਈਨ ਵਿਜ਼ਡਮ) ਅਤੇ ਸਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਸੋਚ ਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਇਸ਼ਟ ਭਾਵ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਰੱਬ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨਾਉਣ ਦੀ। ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਅਪਨਾਉਣਾ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਬਣਾਉਣਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਵ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਚੱਜੀ ਮਤ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ।

ਹੁਣ ਜਦੋਂ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਅਪਨਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਿਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਹੈ:

**ਜਿਨਾ ਦਿਸੰਦਿਆ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਵੰਞੈ ਮਿਤੁ ਅਸਾਡੜੇ ਸੇਈ॥**  
**ਹਉ ਢੁਢੇਦੀ ਜਗੁ ਸਬਾਇਆ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਕੇਈ॥** (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-520)

ਇਸ ਸਲੋਕ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਲਿਤ ਅਰਥ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ: “ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਇਆਂ ਜਾਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਡੀ ਭੈੜੀ ਮੱਤ ਚਲੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਹੀ ਸਾਡੇ ਅਸਲ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਹਨ। ਫਿਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਫ਼ਰਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਰਾ ਜਗਤ ਭਾਲ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਹੈ, ਕੋਈ ਵਿਰਲੇ (ਅਜੇਹੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ)” ।

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਫ਼ਲਸਫੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਪੂਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਢੁਕਦੇ। ਕੇਵਲ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਵੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਭੈੜੀ ਮਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਦਲ ਸਕਦੀ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ:

**ਡਿਠੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜਿਚਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-594)**

ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਕਿ ਕੇਵਲ ਵੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਭਾਵ ਬੁਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਛੁਟਕਾਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਬੁਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਛੁਟਕਾਰਾ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨੀ ਭਾਵ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨਾਉਣਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਥੇ “ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ ॥” ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਲਾਗੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਜੇਕਰ ਆਪਣੀ ਭੈੜੀ ਮੱਤ ਦਾ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਆਪ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਪਵੇਗੀ, ਕੇਵਲ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਦੁਰਮੱਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਦਲੇਗੀ।

ਇਸੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ-943 ਤੇ “ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥” ਦਾ ਇਕ ਵੱਡਮੁਲਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੁਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਕਿ ਕੇਵਲ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਗਿਆਨ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਸ ਸਲੋਕ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝਣੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਮਝ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ: ਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਣ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਉਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ; ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ‘ਦੁਰਮਤਿ’ ਭਾਵ ਭੈੜੀ ਮੱਤ ਦੂਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ। ਲੋੜ ਤਾਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਸੁਹਿਰਦ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨਾਉਣਾ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸੁਹਿਰਦ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਘੱਟ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਜੇ ਵੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਬਹੁਤ ਘੱਟ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਹੀ ਸਾਡਾ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਲੋੜ ਤਾਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਕਰਨਾ ਨਾ ਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਕਰਨਾ।

ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਫ਼ਰਮਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ:

**“ਹਉ ਢੂਢੇਦੀ ਜਗੁ ਸਬਾਇਆ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਕੇਈ ॥”**

ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਤਾਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕਈ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਲੋਕ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਇਸੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਬਹੁਤ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਮੱਤ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬੁਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਕੇਵਲ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਦੂਰ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਐਸਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਮਰਾਹ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਮਤ ਪਲੀਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹੀ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਲੋਕ ਕਰਮਕਾਂਡਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫਸ ਕੇ ਇਕ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਫਿਰਕੇ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਫਰਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਲੜਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਸਭ ਬੁਰੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਖੋਜ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਂ ਪੜਚੋਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸੁਚੱਜਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਜਣ ਬਹੁਤ ਘੱਟ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਹੀ ਹੈ: ਵਿਰਲੇ ਕੇਈ।

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਜਦੋਂ ਦੁਰਮੱਤ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਚੱਜੀ ਮਤ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਭਾਵ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਬੁਰਾਈ ਦੂਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਮਤ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਜੋ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਬਣਦੀ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਫ਼ਰਮਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ:

**ਮਨ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਤੇ ਬੁਰਾ ਮਿਟਾਨਾ ॥ ਪੇਖੈ ਸਗਲ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਾਜਨਾ ॥ (ਗ:ਗ:ਸ: ਪੰਨਾ-266)**

ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਜਦੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਬੁਰਾਈ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ‘ਮਨ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਤੇ ਬੁਰਾ ਮਿਟਾਨਾ’ ਕਿਤਨਾ ਸਹਿਲ ਨੁਕਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਵੈਰ, ਵਿਰੋਧ, ਈਰਖਾ ਅਤੇ ਨਕਾਰਾਤਮਕ ਸੋਚ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਬੁਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੂਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਫਲਸਰੂਪ ਹਰ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਭਾਵ ਸਾਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਮਿੱਤਰ ਲੱਗੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਫਰਤ ਦੂਰ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਭ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਲੜਾਈ ਝਗੜੇ ਵੀ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਗੇ। ਕਿਤੇ ਖੂਨ ਖਰਾਬਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਇਕ ਸੁਚੱਜੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਨਾ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਇਹ ਹੀ ਤਾਂ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਸੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦਾ।

## ਜਿਉਣਵਾਲਾ ਜੀ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ...

### ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦੇ ਅਸਲ ਕਾਰਣ

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ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਣ, ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਤਾਣ, ਨਿਆਸਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਸਰੇ ਅਤੇ “ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰਹਾਈ” ਦਾ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਹਿਰ, ਜੋ ਗਰੀਬ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਧ-ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੱਢਣ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਦੀ ਨਾਲ ਆਮ ਜਨਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਕ-ਹਕੂਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਾਖੀ ਲਈ ਜੁਝ ਕੇ ਮਰਨ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਤਕ ਬਗੈਰ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਵੈਰ-ਵਿਰੋਧ ਦੇ ਚੱਲਦੀ ਰਹੀ। ਭਾਂਵੇਂ ਤੀਸਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਚੌਥੇ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਅਕਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਨਾ ਪਿਆ ਪਰ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਲਈ ਜਾਗੀਰਾਂ ਮਿਲੀਆਂ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਵੇਲੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਲਹਿਰ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਫੜ ਗਈ। ਲੋਕ ਸੇਵਾ ਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਈ ਸਾਰੇ ਉਪਰਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਸਨ 1595 ਵਿਚ ‘ਨੱਕੇ’ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ (ਝਨਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਵੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਕਾਰਲਾ ਇਲਾਕਾ) ਕਾਲ ਪਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਸਵੰਧ ਦੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਭੁੱਖਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਪੀੜਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੱਦਦ ਲਈ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਦਾ ਹੋਕਾ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਆਪ ਉੱਥੇ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਅੱਠ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਇੱਥੇ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਪੀੜਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥੀਂ ਮੱਦਦ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਕਬਰ ਵੀ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਆਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਉਪਰਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸ਼ੁਕਰੀਆ ਅਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੁੱਝ ਮਾਲੀਆ ਵੀ ਮੁਆਫ ਕੀਤਾ। ਐਸੇ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਖੀ-ਸਰਵਰ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਹਿਰ ਨਾਲ ਆ ਜੁੜੇ। ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਚਲਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਇਸ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੁੰਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆਂ ਵੀ ਅਕਬਰ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਵੱਲ ਕਹਿਰੀ ਅੱਖ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਦੇਖਿਆ।

ਪਰ ਸ਼ੇਖ ਅਹਿਮਦ ਸਰਹੰਦੀ ਜੋ ਨਕਸ਼ਬੰਦੀ ਇਸਲਾਮਕ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਦਾ ਮੋਢੀ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ ਦੇ ਵਜਦੇ ਨਗਾਰੇ ਇਸਲਾਮਕ ਰਾਜ ਲਈ ਖਤਰਨਾਕ ਭਾਸ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਜੋ 19ਵੀਂ ਸਦੀ ਦੇ ਅਖੀਰਲੇ ਸਾਲ 1899 ਵਿਚ, ਜਦੋਂ ਮਹਾਂਰਾਜੇ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੋਦਰੀ ਝੰਡੇ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਰਾਜ ਦਾ ਝੰਡਾ ਝੁਲਾਇਆ ਤਾਂ, ਸ਼ੇਖ ਅਹਿਮਦ ਸਰਹੰਦੀ ਦਾ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਸੱਚ ਸਾਬਤ ਹੋਇਆ। ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਅਕਬਰ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਸ਼ੇਖ ਸਰਹੰਦੀ ਨੇ ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਦਸ਼ਾਹ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਸ਼ਰਤ ਰੱਖੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਲਹਿਰ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਜੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਲਿਖਤ, “ ਮਕਤੂਬਾਤਿ ਅਮਾਮਿ ਰੱਬਾਨੀ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਜ ਹੈ। “ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਜੇ ਗੋਇੰਦਵਾਲ ਦੇ ਭ੍ਰਸ਼ਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਕਾਫਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਤਲ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਬੜੀ ਸ਼ੁਭ ਘਟਨਾ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਵੱਡੀ ਸਿਕਸ਼ਤ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਬਹਾਨੇ ਨਾਲ ਭੀ ਮਾਰ ਮਕਾਉਣ ਨਾਲ ਕਾਫਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਹਾਨੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਸ਼ੁਭ ਤੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਲਾਭ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਬਣੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬੇਈਮਾਨ ਦੇ ਕਤਲ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਦਿੱਬ ਸੁਪਨਾ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ (ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ) ਨੇ ਭ੍ਰਸ਼ਟ ਅਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਸਿਰ ਕੁਚਲ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਸ਼ਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ) ਕਾਫਰ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਦਾ ਜਗਤ-ਗੁਰੂ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਅਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਰੁਚੀਆਂ ਰੱਖਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹ ਸੀ... ਆਦਿ”।

ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਸਾਨੂੰ ‘ਤੌਜ਼ਿਕ-ਏ- ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ, ਜਿਲਦ ਪਹਿਲੀ, ਸਫਾ 72’ ਤੇ ਦਰਜ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਹਿਸਟੋਰੀਅਨ ਡਾ. ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ 1945-46 ਵਿਚ ਤਹਿਰਾਨ (ਈਰਾਨ) ਵਿਚ ਰੀਸਰਚ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਲੱਭ ਕੇ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜੇ ਇੰਝ ਹੈ: “ ਬੜੇ ਚਿਰ ਤੋਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਬਿਆਸਾ ਦੇ ਕੰਢੇ, ਇਸ ਝੂਠ ਦੀ ਦੁਕਾਨ (ਸਿੱਖ ਮੱਤ) ਨੂੰ ਢਾ ਢੇਰੀ ਕਰਾਂ ਜੇ ਪਿਛਲੀਆਂ ਤਿੰਨ-ਚਾਰ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ, ਯਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸਲਾਮੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਟੋਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਕਰ ਲਵਾਂ ....”। ਜਹਾਂਗੀਰ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਲ ਯਾਸਾ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ, ਮੁਜ਼ਰਮ ਦਾ ਖੁੰਨ ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਡੁੱਲਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ, ਦੇ ਤਹਿਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਪਿਤਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਰਾਵੀ ਦਰਿਆ ਦੇ ਕੰਢੇ ਹੱਥ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਤੱਤੀ ਬਰੇਤੀ ਤੇ ਸੁੱਟ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਤਿੰਨ ਕੁ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਅਸਿਹ ਕਸ਼ਟ ਸਹਾਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਿਤਾ ਜੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਪਾ ਗਏ ਪਰ ਈਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨੀ। ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਕਰਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਵਜ਼ਨ ਬੰਨ ਕੇ ਰਾਵੀ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਰੋੜ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੌਤ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਲਾਸ਼ ਦਰਿਆ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਨਾ ਆਵੇ।



ਦਿੱਲੀ ਤੋਂ ਇਕ ਰੇਲ ਜੰਮੂ ਨੂੰ ਚੱਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਸਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ 'ਜੰਮੂ ਤਵੀ'। ਜੰਮੂ ਨਗਰ ਪਾਸ ਵਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਇਕ ਨਦੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ 'ਤਵੀ' ਹੈ, 'ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪੰਨਾ 581'। ਜਲੰਧਰ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ 'ਚੋਂ ਜਿਥੋਂ ਜੰਮੂ ਨੂੰ ਸੜਕ ਨਿਕਲਦੀ ਹੈ ਉਸਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਵੀ 'ਤਵੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਮੋੜ' ਬਹੁਤ ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰ ਹੈ। ਜਲੰਧਰ ਵਿਚ ਜੰਮੂ ਵਾਲੇ ਮੋੜ/ਤਵੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਮੋੜ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਰੇਤਾ ਪਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜੰਮੂ ਰੇਲਵੇ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਤੇ ਵੀ। ਇਸੇ ਹੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਰਾਵੀ ਦੇ ਕੰਢੇ ਵੀ ਰੇਤਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਰਿਆਈ ਬਰੇਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਤਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਤੱਤੀ ਰੇਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਤੱਤੀ ਤਵੀ ਕਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹੋ ਤੱਤੀ ਰੇਤਾ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸ਼ਰੀਰ ਤੇ ਪਾਈ ਗਈ ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਜਿਸਮ ਤੇ ਛਾਲੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਤੱਤੀ ਤਵੀ ਤੇ ਬਠਾਉਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਦੇਗ ਵਿਚ ਉਬਾਲਣ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਵੀ ਝੂਠੀ ਹੈ। ਚੰਦੂ ਜੋ ਕਲਾਨੌਰ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਕੋਲੋਂ ਹਵੇਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਤਸੀਹੇ ਦੁਆਉਣੇ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਰ ਮਕਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਵੀ ਝੂਠੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ ਐਸੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਆਗੂ ਨੂੰ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਤਸੀਹੇ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਮਾਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਜਨਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਸਹਿਮ ਦਾ ਮਹੌਲ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਰੜੇ ਮੈਦਾਨ, ਰਾਵੀ ਦੇ ਕੰਢੇ, ਅਸਹਿ ਤਸੀਹੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਸ਼ਟ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਗਿਆ।

ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਦਾ ਜ਼ੁਰਮ ਆਪਣੇ ਗਲੋਂ ਲਾਹ ਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਮੜਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਘੜੀ ਜਾਪਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਐਸੀਆਂ ਘਾੜਤਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰਾਂ ਅਕਸਰ ਘੜਦੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਤੱਥ "ਗੁਰ ਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਛੇਵੀਂ" ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਤਾਂ ਚੰਦੂ ਲਹੌਰ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਦਾ ਕਰਿੰਦਾ ਨਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਅਹਿਲਕਾਰ ਹੈ। ਚੰਦੂ ਦੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਦੇ ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇ ਦੀ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ, ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਦਿੱਲੀਓ ਆਉਣੀ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਸਾਬਤ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਚੰਦੂ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਦਾ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀ ਹੈ। ਚੰਦੂ ਨੂੰ ਛੇਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਨੌਕ ਵਿਚ ਨਕੇਲ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਲਹੌਰ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਿਚ ਘੁਮਾਉਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਰ ਮਕਾਉਣਾ ਵੀ ਸਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਪਦਾ। ਕੋਈ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਰਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਦੀ ਵੀ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਤਲਬ ਲਈ ਵਰਤਦੀ ਹੈ।

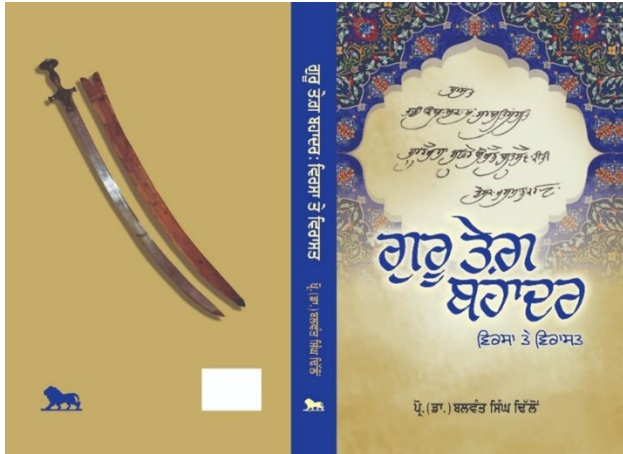
ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਇਤਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਐਸੀ ਮਿਸਾਲ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਕਿ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਸਵਿਧਾਨ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਕੌਮ ਹਾਲੇ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਘੜੀ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਗਈ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਹ ਸਿਰਫ ਤੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਦੇ ਘਾੜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਹੀ ਬੱਝਦਾ ਹੈ। 1604 ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। 1605 ਵਿਚ ਜਗਾਂਗੀਰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਦੇ ਤਖਤ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ 30 ਮਈ 1606 ਨੂੰ ਪੰਚਮ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦਾ ਜਾਮ ਪੀ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਕੁੱਝ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਹਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਦੇ ਕਵੀ, ਕਾਹਨਾ, ਛੱਜੂ, ਪੀਹਲੂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਹੁਸੈਨ ਆਦਿ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਨਾ ਦਰਜ ਕਰਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਦਾ ਜਾਮ ਪੀਣਾ ਪਿਆ। ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਦਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਖਾਲੀ ਮੋੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਿਲਕੁੱਲ ਚੁੱਪ ਚਪੀਤੇ ਤੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਹਲੇ ਹਿ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋਣ ਤਕ ਭਾਫ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਕੰਮ ਹੋਣ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਦੇਣਾ। ਕੁੱਝ ਵੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਨਵੀਂ ਉੱਠ ਰਹੀ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋਣਾ, ਜੋ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਟੈਣ ਵਾਂਗਰ ਰੜਕਦਾ ਸੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਕਾਰਣ ਹੈ।

ਐਸੀ ਅਦੁੱਤੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਏਸ਼ੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਈ। ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਤਾਜ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਸੇ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਨੇ ਸੱਚ ਹੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਜੰਗੇ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਚਲਾਇਆ ਉਸ ਲਈ ਫੌਲਾਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਹੀ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਇਸੇ ਹੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਸ ਤਰਤੀਬ ਨਾਲ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਢ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਜੀ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਬੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। "ਫੇਰਿ ਅੰਗਦ ਸਿਖ ਨੋ ਆਗਿਆ ਕੀਤੀਓਨੁ ॥ ਜਿ ਪੁਰਖਾ ਜਿ ਤੂੰ ਹੈ ਸਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਹਾਂ ॥ ਜਿਥੇ ਜਿਥੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਖਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਪਉੜੀਆਂ ਸਲੋਕ ਹੈਨਿ ਤੂੰ ਓਹ ਸਲੋਕ ਸਬਦ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਸੇਦਰਹੁ ਸਭਿ ਏਸ ਜਪੁ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਣ ਆਇਣ ਬਣਾਇ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਸੁਣਾਇਦਾ ਜਾਇ.....। ਤਾਂ ਬਾਬੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਣਾ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਅੰਗਦ ਸਿਖ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਕੀਤਾ"। ਇਹ ਗਵਾਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪੋਤਰੇ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨ (1581-1640 ਈ.) ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧਤ 'ਜਪੁ' ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਰਥ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹਨ, ਸਿੱਕੇਬੰਦ ਗਵਾਹੀ ਹੈ, ਭਰੋਸੇਯੋਗ ਹੈ: ਇਸ ਮਨੌਤ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੋੜਤਾ 'ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ' ਵੀ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ: ਤਿਤ ਮਹਿਲ ਜੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੇ ਪੇਥੀ ਜੁਬਾਨਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਗਦ ਜੋਗ ਮਿਲੀ"

ਆਖਰ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਵਾਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਘੁੱਗ ਵੱਸਦਾ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਲਿੱਪੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦਾ ਸੰਪਾਦਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ 'ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ' ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਆਪ ਪੜ੍ਹੋ, ਅਮਲ ਕਰੋ, ਆਪ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝੋ ਅਤੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਓ। ਫਿਰ ਦੇਖਣਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਰੰਗ ਜੋ 'ਵੱਸਦਾ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਤੇ'।



**BOOK REVIEW.**

**Title:** Guru Tegh Bahadur: Virsa Ate Virasat (Heritage & Legacy) (in Punjabi)

**Author:** Dr Balwant Singh Dhillon, Ex-Director, Centre for Studies on Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

**Publisher:** Singh Brothers, Amritsar. First Edition 2022; pages: 293; Price: Rs. 550

**Reviewed by:** Prof. Hardev Singh Virk, #14017, 30 Ave, Surrey, BC, Canada

During 2021-22, the 400 Birth Anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, nearly half a dozen books have been published by various authors. Earlier, I have reviewed two books: one written by Gurmukh Singh OBE of UK and published by the Sikh Missionary Society of UK and the other by SIKHRI Group with Harinder Singh as the lead author. Both books were written in English. The book under review is written in Punjabi by Balwant Singh Dhillon, a well - established Sikh Scholar and former Director of Centre for Studies on Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

The book has 15 Chapters followed by an exhaustive Bibliography. The author has devoted first six Chapters to develop the background for his volume on the ninth Guru. In my view, only one Chapter was sufficient for this purpose. In the Introduction, the author has narrated the purpose of writing this book. Guru Tegh Bahadur was born on 1st April, 1621 and became the 9th Guru of the Sikhs during 1664. It was a most critical juncture of Sikh History when antagonists like Har Jee, Ram Rai and Dhir Mal were conspiring against the 9th Guru to displace him from the Guruship. On the other side, Aurangzeb was a fanatic ruler who was bent upon creating hurdles for the preaching and promotion of Sikhi by 9th Guru. It was a herculean task for Guru Tegh Bahadur to counter his adversaries both from within the Sikhi fold and from outside amidst a Mughal ruler with an anti-Sikh stance.

The author has done justice to establish the background for martyrdom of the Guru, reasons for his harassment, and after-effects of his martyrdom on the history, culture and politics of India. Balwant Dhillon claims that most of the historians of Guru Tegh Bahadur failed to do full justice to his deeds of bravery and martyrdom as they based their conclusions on highly biased Persian sources or their translations done by the English without verifying the original sources. He also points out discrepancies of Sikh sources due to lack of scholarship or use of secondary sources.

In Chapter 1, the author tries to establish the originality of the Sikh Faith as founded by Guru Nanak. According to him, Sikhi is not an offshoot or derivative of Sant Mat tradition or a syncretisation of Hinduism and Islam; it is original in its belief system, social relevance, and spiritual tradition. Guru Nanak established a Sikh commune at Kartarpur to demonstrate the working of his Sikhi principles where there is no dichotomy between the worldly and spiritual realms of life. Guru Nanak created history by bringing in revolutionary changes in the social structure of society.

Chapter 2 gives a bird's-eye view of the contributions of the four Gurus, Angad Dev, Amar Das, Ram Das and Guru Arjun, who follow in the house of Guru Nanak. Guru Arjun compiled the Sikh scripture, a monumental work in the religious history of the world, and established it as Aad Guru Granth Sahib in Darbar Sahib. The martyrdom of Guru Arjun at Lahore proved to be a turning point in Sikh history. The peaceful movement of Sikhi was transformed by Guru Hargobind into a militant movement under Miri-Piri system for defense of Sikhi. Guru Hargobind was imprisoned at Gwalior for 12 years as a political prisoner. There is no agreement on the time of

imprisonment and release of Guru Jee from Gwalior fort prison. This Chapter sets the tone for coming events and a paradigm shift in Sikhi movement.

Chapter 4 describes the contemporary situation of Mughal India at the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur assuming the responsibilities of Guruship. Aurangzeb imposed harsh conditions upon Hindus by stopping their puja in temples, reading of sacred texts, and destroying their places of worship. People in general were suffering from atrocities of Aurangzeb and joined the 9th Guru's camp during his preaching tours of Malwa. Chapter 5 gives the reasons for establishment of Sikhi centre at Kiratpur, near Siwalik hills, by Guru Hargobind and occupation of Darbar Sahib by Meenas, who did not allow Guru Tegh Bahadur to enter its holy precincts. Dhir Mal got an endowment from Shah Jahan in the form of a jagir which included town of Kartarpur as his property. Chapter 6 narrates the history of antagonism between Sikh Gurus and the Mughal rulers.

Chapters 7-15 constitute the bulk of this volume and are devoted to the main theme under discussion. Chapter 6 describes the early life of Guru Tegh Bahadur and his assuming the mantle of ninth Guru of the Sikhs. His Guruship period of eleven years was full of high voltage events leading to his arrest by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb three times based on flimsy grounds. Aurangzeb was bent upon converting all Hindus into Islam. He wanted to keep Sikh Gurus under his tutelage, patronage, and subservient to his throne. However, the Sikh Gurus had remained alert, independent, and opposed to the injustice meted out to the public by the Mughal rulers since the times of Guru Nanak. Guru Tegh Bahadur was fully prepared for the eventualities of his life. He was trained under the tutelage of Baba Buddha, Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Bidhi Chand in basic principles of Sikh way of life and in warfare using all types of tactics for offence and defense. At the age of thirteen, Tegh Bahadur fought the battle of Kartarpur along with his father, Guru Hargobind, to defeat Painde Khan and his cohorts.

According to the author, Guru Tegh Bahadur made a wise decision to shift his headquarter from Kiratpur to Makhawal in the state of Kahlur (present day Himachal Pradesh) to avoid confrontation with other claimants from his family, like Dhir Mal and Ram Rai, to Guruship. He rechristened this township as Chak Nanki, which became a flourishing city of Anandpur Sahib after the creation of Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

Guru Tegh Bahadur adorned his mantle of Guruship in end of 1664 at village Bakala. In 1665, he started his preaching tour of Malwa in Punjab. At Dhamtan in the Bangar area, Guru Jee set up a centre of Sikhi Sewa and appointed Bhai Mihan as its Sewadar assigning him insignia of Sikhi flag and a nagara (drum). His preaching tours were so successful that the Mughal emperor got annoyed after receiving secret reports and imprisoned the ninth Guru. The author quotes contemporary Assamese sources called the "Ahom Boranze" in support of this episode. The Guru was sentenced to death but Raja Ram Singh of Jaipur, a General of Mughal army, saved him under the plea that he will keep the Guru under his custody. The Guru was kept under strict vigilance of the Mughal court just as earlier Gurus, Har Rai and Har Krishan were kept. In a manner of speaking, Guru Tegh Bahadur was a political prisoner under the custody of Raja Ram Singh.

Guru Tegh Bahadur proceeded to preach Sikhi in eastern India in the company of Raja Ram Singh. He moved from Delhi to Patna in Bihar. There is no concordance of views on the route undertaken based on evidence available from historical sources. The author has used evidence recorded in some "Hukamnamas" to establish that the ninth Guru visited Mirzapur and Benares on way to Patna. Patna became a centre of Sikhi after the Guru established his family and sangat. From Patna, he proceeded to Assam via Dhaka, now capital of Bangladesh. The author claims that Guru Tegh Bahadur went alone with his Sikh followers on his preaching mission of East India in 1666, while Raja Ram Singh was deputed by Aurangzeb to lead a military campaign to Assam in December 1667. Before reaching Dhaka, Guru Tegh Bahadur addressed Sikh Sangats at Munger, Rajmahal and Malda. The Guru created a Sikh Centre (Dharamsal) in Dhaka on the bidding of Bhai Bulaki Das, a masand. The Dhaka centre became a hub of Sikhi preaching in Bengal and Assam. Shaista Khan, the Governor of Bengal, provided a land jagir in the name of Gurdwara Sangat Tola in Dhaka.

Guru Tegh Bahadur went from Dhaka to Chittagong, breaking his journey at Sylhet. He set up Sikh sangats at Sylhet and the surrounding areas of Jaintia Hills, who remained attached to the Sikh centre at Anandpur Sahib later on and offered valuable gifts to Guru Gobind Singh. It is a considered opinion of the author that the ninth Guru returned to Patna to meet his family and Sikh sangat. He went to Assam in the company of Raja Ram Singh. JN Sarkar writes that the Guru fought against the Ahom army of Raja of Assam along with the Mughal army led by Raja Ram Singh but this assumption is rejected by the author. But he is in accord with the view that the Guru played the role of an intermediary between two opposing armies. The peace was restored in Assam and the Mughal army failed to capture Gauhati. The Guru set up a Sikh centre at Dhubri before his return to Punjab. It is unfortunate that most of the remnants of Sikh heritage of Guru Nanak and Guru Tegh Bahadur in East India have disappeared.

In Chapter 10, the author narrates the journey of the ninth Guru from Patna to Punjab. There is no agreement on the route within different sources. But there is evidence that Guru Tegh Bahadur was captured near Agra and imprisoned there on the orders of Aurangzeb. How he got released remains a question. There is circumstantial evidence that Saif Khan, an old friend of the Guru, pleaded for his release. After his stay in Delhi, he reached Lakhnaur on 13 September, 1670 via Rohtak, Kurukshetra and Pehowa.

The author examines the context and content of the Bani of ninth Guru in 11th Chapter. Guru Tegh Bahadur wrote 59 *shabds* and 57 *sloks* to preach his message of hope for the Indian masses suffering from injustice and cruelty of Mughal rulers. Judging casually at superficial level, one falls into a delusion that the message of the Guru is not one of hope in life but one that projects worldly life as full of despair and illusion. It describes the world as a mirage and transitory. This is not true. As a matter of fact, the Guru used the metaphors of water bubbles, walls of sand, mountains of smoke, mirages, shadows of cloud and dream like realities to explain human life in this world, which have been mis-interpreted.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur: Chapter 12 examines in great detail for the first time the various sources to determine the causes of martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. According to Sikh sources, the Guru was quite successful in his mission of consolidating the Sikh sangats in Punjab and elsewhere in India. The reports of his success were conveyed by news writers of Mughal Durbar to Aurangzeb. So, he had been kept under surveillance since the time of his preaching Sikhi in Punjab. The author has quoted Persian sources which are self-contradictory. Siyar-ul-Mutakhkherin is a historical work by Sayyid Ghulam Husain in which he records: "Guru Tegh Bahadur and Hafiz Adam, a follower of Sheikh Ahmad Sarhandi, have joined hands in Punjab. Both are collecting money forcibly from their followers. Alamgir Aurangzeb ordered the Governor of Lahore to capture and punish them". The English historians (like Raymond, JD Cunnigham and Ernest Trumpp) based their findings on Sayyid Ghulam Husain and created mis-information that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a looter and a dacoit who kept an army of 2200 for this purpose. The same account has been used by Indian historians, including Fauza Singh of Punjab University at Patiala, in their books about ninth Guru. All these sources justify that Guru Tegh Bahadur was martyred by Aurangzeb due to his rebellious activities in Punjab.

The author refers to Persian sources of Punjab (Khushwaqat Rai, Sohan Lal Suri and Bute Shah) which give a somewhat different account. Sikh sources, like the Bachittar Natak, Parchian Sewa Das, Mehma Parkash and Bansavlinama by Kesar Singh Chhibber, also give contradictory accounts of martyrdom. The author also refers to the most popular version of martyrdom of ninth Guru that he laid down his life for the protection of Hindu dharma. This account is based on Gur Bilas Patshahi 10 by Sukha Singh written in 1798. Ratan Singh Bhangu repeats the same story in his Panth Parkash. We can sum up this story as follows: "A delegation of Kashmiri Pundits led by Kirpa Ram reached Anandpur and pleaded with Guru Tegh Bahadur to save them from the extreme cruelty of Aurangzeb to convert them to Islam. The Guru was persuaded by his young son Gobind Rai to confront Aurangzeb for the religious freedom of Hindus".

The author refers to the account given by Chhibber for the arrest of Guru Tegh Bahadur which almost resembles with one given by Gurmukh Singh OBE in his book: "Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675): The True Story". I quote from the book of Gurmukh Singh: "Guru Tegh Bahadur was arrested, on orders of Aurungzeb, at village Mallikpur Rangran on 12 July 1675 with his three companions, Dewan Mati Das, Sati Das and Dyal Das. They were persuaded to convert to Islam during their four-month imprisonment at Sirhind. When they refused to accept this proposal, they were taken to Delhi in iron cages and produced before Aurungzeb who failed to persuade the Guru to convert to Islam. According to Guru Kian Sakhian, three choices were put to the Guru by the Emperor through the Royal Qazi. These choices were: 1. Perform a miracle to show his divinity, 2. Accept Islam, and 3. Be prepared to die. Unhesitatingly, the Guru replied that if those were the only choices before him, then he willingly accepted the third choice".

Conclusions:

1. It was for the first time in the history of religions that the Guru Tegh Bahadur was going to fight a battle on behalf of those of a belief system which he himself did not subscribe to, a belief system the basics of which Guru Nanak had rejected.
2. The impact of this unique martyrdom was profound. It changed the course of the history of the Indian sub-continent, while it became the most prominent landmark in the landscape of martyrdoms for human rights and just causes in human history.
3. Aurungzeb's brutality and fanaticism had no bounds and increased as he faced more revolts in the country. In desperation, he looked for the ultimate solution in an extreme form of Islam. His tormented soul sought refuge in religious fervor and in a vision of one-religion Islamic state.
4. The logic of converting Kashmiri Pundits was to convert the upper-class Brahmins, who were at the apex of the Hindu caste system, so that others would follow suit.
5. Creation of Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 was a culmination of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom in 1675.

### Rocks, Pebbles, and Sand

A philosophy professor once stood up before his class with a large empty mayonnaise jar. He filled the jar to the top with large rocks and asked his students if the jar was full.

His students all agreed **the jar was full**.

He then added small pebbles to the jar, and gave the jar a bit of a shake so the pebbles could disperse themselves among the larger rocks. Then he asked again, "Is the jar full now?"

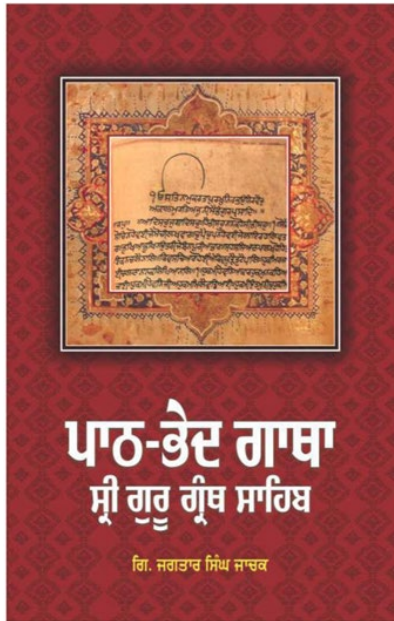
The students agreed that **the jar was still full**.

The professor then poured sand into the jar to fill up all the remaining empty space.

The students then agreed again that **the jar was full**.

**The Metaphor:** In this story, the jar represents your life and the rocks, pebbles, and sand are the things that fill up your life. The rocks represent the most important projects and things you have going on, such as spending time with your family and maintaining proper health. This means that if the pebbles and the sand were lost, the jar would still be full and your life would still have meaning.

*Continued on page 46*



## BOOK REVIEW

**Title:** Paath-Bhed Gaatha Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Punjabi)

**Author:** Giani Jagtar Singh Jachak, Former Granthi Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

**Publisher:** Sri Guru Granth Sahib Vichar Manch, Toronto, Canada, 2023, 256 page, Price: Rs. 495. Can \$20.

**Reviewed by:** Dr. Devinder Pal Singh, Director, Center for Understanding Sikhism, Mississauga, ON, Canada

*Paath-Bhed Gatha Sri Guru Granth Sahib* by Giani Jagtar Singh Jachak is an exceptional work that delves into the intricate and profound historical and textual aspects of the Sikh holy scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Authored by a distinguished figure with extensive credentials in the Sikh community, this book offers a comprehensive and insightful exploration of the textual variations in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Giani Jagtar Singh Jachak brings a wealth of experience and reverence to his work. As a former Granthi at the Sri Darbar Sahib in Amritsar, he has a deep-rooted understanding of the spiritual practices and liturgical traditions associated with the Sikh faith. His role as an Honorary International Sikh Missionary for the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), an Ambassador for Peace with the Universal Peace Federation in New York, and the Director of the Guru Granth Institute of Melbourne further enhanced his credibility and the depth of insight presented in this book.

*Paath-Bhed Gaatha Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is an in-depth exploration of the textual variations in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. This scholarly work aims to address and elucidate the historical, textual, and practical aspects of these variations, offering a comprehensive resource for Sikhs and scholars alike. Here is a detailed review of the book, chapter by chapter.

The *Bhumika* (Introduction) to the book by Dr. Parminder Singh Shaunki, Chairman, Nanak Shahi Trust, sets the stage for the book, providing context and emphasizing the importance of understanding the textual integrity of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. It highlights the scholarly efforts to preserve and correct the text, ensuring its purity and accessibility. The acknowledgment section by Sardar Gagandeep Singh Toronto gives credit to the individuals and institutions that supported and contributed to the research and compilation of this book. It reflects the collaborative effort involved in this significant work.

Chapter 1, 'The Unique Position of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in the Writing Tradition of Religious Scriptures,' discusses the Sri Guru Granth Sahib's (SGGS) unparalleled status among world religious texts. It emphasizes how the GGS stands apart due to its compilation without myths or irrationalities, focusing solely on spiritual and moral guidance.

Chapter 2, "Writing and Printing of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji," delves into the history of the SGGS's writing and printing processes. It examines how the text was transcribed and printed over the centuries, highlighting the challenges and solutions faced during these processes.

Chapter 3, "Research on Handwritten Ancient Manuscripts of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji," focuses on the discovery and study of ancient handwritten manuscripts of the SGGS. It provides insights into the methodologies used to verify their authenticity and accuracy.

Chapter 4: "The Origin and Correction of Textual Variations in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji" addresses the origin of textual variations in the SGGS and the efforts made to correct these discrepancies. It underscores the significance of maintaining textual consistency and the historical efforts to rectify variations.

Chapter 5, "Research Initiatives by the Shiromani Committee for Accurate Printing of the Sacred Text," details the research initiatives undertaken by the Shiromani Committee to ensure the accurate printing of the SGGS and discusses the measures taken to preserve the text's sanctity and authenticity during printing.

Chapter 6, "Textual Variations in Shabdarth of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji," explores the glossaries and interpretations of the SGGS, addressing variations in text and meaning. It provides a scholarly analysis of different interpretations and their impact on scripture understanding.

Chapter 7, "Analysis of Gurbani Paath Darshan Book on Textual Variations," critically examines the textual variations discussed in the Gurbani Path Darshan Book and offers a detailed analysis of how these variations are perceived and addressed in the educational and scholarly context. Appendix 1: Interim Report of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Study Group (1996) includes an interim report from the 1996 study group on the SGGS, summarizing their findings and recommendations. It provides a snapshot of the ongoing efforts to study and preserve the text.

This book aims to address the misconceptions and provide clarity on the textual integrity of the SGGS. The author, Gyani Jagtar Singh Ji, has dedicated decades to ensuring that a version of the SGGS, which is true to its original form and easily accessible to the public, is available. This effort aligns with the initial intent of the Gurus, who ensured that the language of the scriptures was understandable to the common people. Addressing these textual discrepancies is not just about maintaining accuracy but also about preserving the faith and understanding of the Sikh community.

*Paath-Bhed Gaatha* is a meticulously researched work that addresses a crucial aspect of Sikh religious scholarship. By examining the textual variations in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the book not only highlights the challenges faced in preserving the text but also offers solutions and insights for future generations. This book is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in studying Sikh scriptures and the efforts to maintain their textual integrity. The Sikh community is encouraged to embrace this book and the efforts to correct and preserve Guru Granth Sahib Ji's textual integrity. By doing so, we can ensure that Scripture remains a reliable and accurate source of spiritual guidance for future generations.

*From page 44*

The pebbles represent the things in your life that matter, but that you could live without.

The pebbles are certainly things that give your life meaning (such as your job, house, hobbies, and friendships), but they are not critical for you to have a meaningful life.

These things often come and go, and are not permanent or essential to your overall well-being.

Finally, the sand represents the remaining filler things in your life, and material possessions. This could be small things such as watching television, browsing through your favorite social media site, or running errands.

These things don't mean much to your life as a whole, and are likely only done to waste time or get small tasks accomplished.

**The Moral:** The metaphor here is that if you start with putting sand into the jar, you will not have room for rocks or pebbles. This holds true with the things you let into your life. If you spend all of your time on the small and insignificant things, you will run out of room for the things that are actually important.

*Adapted with courtesy of Devlop Good Habits*



**Malaysia’s Inaugural Seminar on Sikhi and Sikh Youth.**

Harsimren Kaur Gill



The seminar titled “Sikhi & Sikh Youth in the 21st Century: Prospects and Challenges” held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on the 30th of June, 2024, provided a profound and multifaceted exploration of the challenges and opportunities faced by Sikh youth today. The event underscored the importance of evolving our spiritual practices, engaging with cultural heritage, and fostering a sense of community among the younger generation.

For me, the main takeaway from this event was gaining insight into the myriad challenges Sikh youth face in the 21st century. Events like this are essential as they provide opportunities for young people to connect and interact, allowing us to address these issues together. This experience has truly illuminated the importance of



balancing tradition with modernity to ensure Sikh youth remain actively involved in our community. It has highlighted the need to adapt our approaches to make our cultural and religious practices more relevant and appealing to younger generations.

My immediate impression of the seminar was overwhelmingly positive. The event was impeccably organized, with a smooth flow from start to finish, ensuring an engaging experience for all attendees. As soon as I was handed the booklet, I was impressed by the diverse and esteemed panel of speakers, each bringing unique perspectives to contribute their insights

to support and inspire the youth. The presentations were not only insightful but also deeply knowledgeable, offering fresh and relevant viewpoints on the challenges facing Sikh youth today.

The interactive Q & A sessions allowed for meaningful exchanges between the speakers and attendees, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. Additionally, the networking opportunities provided a platform for like-minded individuals to connect and collaborate. Overall, the seminar left me feeling motivated and optimistic about the future of our youths.

**THE SPEAKERS**

The event started off with the opening address by Parmjit Singh, the founder and CEO of APU University of Technology & Innovation. He emphasized that obtaining a degree and pursuing further qualifications is merely the beginning of one’s professional journey, not the end goal. While academic qualifications are important, they are not the sole determinants of professional success. The key to thriving in the professional world lies in continuous self-improvement, developing soft skills, and transforming oneself during the formative years of higher education.



*Datuk Parmjit Singh, CEO of Asia Pacific University delivering his opening address.*

As years progress, Parmjit observed, the emphasis on qualifications diminishes, with employers placing greater value on practical experience, personality traits, and soft skills. “Employers are increasingly interested in how you present yourself, your level of confidence, and your ability to communicate effectively,” he said. He further emphasized the transformative role of university or college, which serves as a bridge between school and the professional world. “This period is crucial for personal transformation,” Parmjit advised. Parmjit urged students to make the most of their university years. “Your progress in life is heavily influenced by what you do during these years,” he stressed. “The effort you invest in your personal and professional development will determine how much you gain.”

Moving on to Dr. Karminder Singh Dhillon’s presentation, “Sikhi in the 21st Century: Relevant?”, offered thought-provoking, critical, and stimulating ideas that challenged conventional beliefs. By distinguishing between religion and spirituality, he prompted the audience to reconsider long-held notions and re-examine their understanding of Sikhi.

In his discourse, Dr. Karminder drew a clear line between Sikhi as a spirituality and Sikhism as a religion, presenting them as distinct and sometimes contrasting concepts. This distinction forced many attendees to reassess their perspectives, recognizing that a profound shift in thinking might be necessary. For those willing to undertake this journey, it involves a significant process of unlearning and relearning.

He emphasized that the illiteracy of our time is no longer defined by the inability to read or write but by the inability to unlearn falsehoods that have been ingrained over time. He underscored that unlearning is a powerful and transformative process. His insights were a call to action, urging individuals to challenge the status quo and embrace the often-difficult process of unlearning to reach a deeper, more authentic understanding of Sikhi.

Dr. Karminder’s presentation was a profound and enlightening exploration of Sikhi in the modern age. His challenge to differentiate between spirituality and religion, and his emphasis on the necessity of unlearning, provided a fresh perspective that will undoubtedly inspire many to embark on a journey of personal and spiritual growth.

Up next, Jasswant Singh delivered an enlightening presentation on “Living as a Sikh in the 21st Century,” offering profound insights into how Sikhi and spirituality should evolve in our modern lives. He emphasized that our spiritual practices must grow and adapt with us, rather than remaining static and literal.

Mr. Jasswant stressed the importance of personally reading and understanding of the Gurbani, underscoring that this is a responsibility that cannot be outsourced to others. He reminded us that Sikhi transcends mere physical form; it encompasses our intellect and spirit. True Sikhs, he noted, are those who continuously learn and embody the virtues outlined in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

These divine virtues, he highlighted, are essential for guiding us to become better human beings, make wiser decisions, and lead more fulfilling lives. The essence of Sikhi, he asserted, lies in bettering ourselves through the application of these virtues, which constitutes the true practice of Simran, or remembrance of the Satguru.



*Karminder Singh Dhillon  
PhD.*

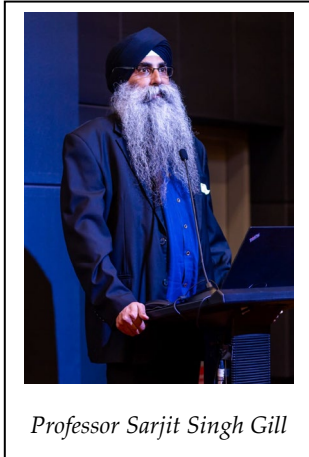


*Jasswant Singh, PhD, LLB.*



Drawing parallels to professional life, he explained the concept of open-mindedness as being akin to Gurmukh (one oriented towards the Guru) and closed-mindedness to Manmukh (one oriented towards the self). He advocated for an open, inquisitive mindset that continuously seeks knowledge and growth.

Jasswant Singh's presentation provided a compelling framework for living as a Sikh in the 21st century. By emphasizing the evolution of our spiritual practices, the personal responsibility of understanding Gurbani, and the importance of embodying divine virtues, he offered a roadmap for integrating Sikhi into our modern lives in a meaningful and dynamic way.



*Professor Sarjit Singh Gill*

Prof Sarjit Singh Gill, PhD presented the topic of “Promoting Positive Value Development: The Role of Gurdwaras and NGOs,” emphasizing that Gurdwaras and NGOs must work collectively to address social issues among Sikh youth. This collaboration is crucial in fostering a supportive environment where young Sikhs can thrive and develop positive values.

In today's fast-paced and often challenging world, Sikh youth face numerous social issues, including identity struggles, cultural disconnection, and peer pressure. These challenges can lead to a sense of alienation and detachment from their cultural and religious roots. Gurdwaras, being the spiritual and cultural hubs of the Sikh community, play a pivotal role in providing guidance, support, and a sense of belonging.

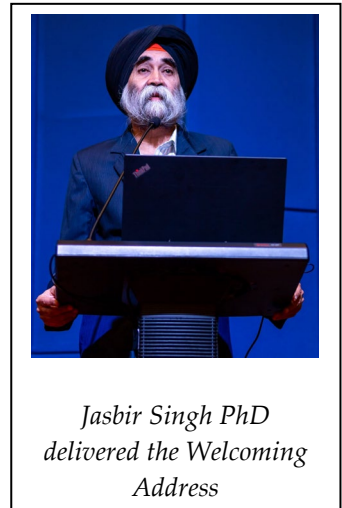
By working together, Gurdwaras and NGOs can create a robust support system that addresses the multifaceted needs of Sikh youth. This is essential for nurturing a generation that is not only proud of its heritage but also well-equipped to face the challenges of the modern world. It is a call to action for all community leaders and members to unite in their efforts to promote positive value development and ensure a bright future for the Sikh youth.

Personally, one thing I picked up at the seminar was the evolving roles of gurdwaras and NGOs in supporting youth. While I had always viewed gurdwaras primarily as places of spirituality, I learned that they also play a significant role in addressing the challenges faced by the youth. Gurdwaras are constantly organizing programs and events aimed at encouraging and empowering young people. For instance, annual events like the Holla Mahala have been staples for years, but now there is a shift towards more comprehensive initiatives that cater to the diverse needs of the youth.

It was enlightening to discover that gurdwaras are not just maintaining these traditions but are also proactively developing new programs to engage young people in meaningful ways. These initiatives include educational workshops, career counselling, and community service opportunities, all designed to equip the youth with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive.

The seminar also highlighted the importance of youth involvement in various organizations. These organizations provide a platform for young people to contribute their ideas and insights, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the community. By participating in these organizations, youth can influence the development of programs that directly benefit them and address their specific needs.

I believe it is now our responsibility to step forward, support, and actively participate in these wide-ranging initiatives. Embracing these opportunities not only enriches our personal growth but also strengthens our



*Jasbir Singh PhD  
delivered the Welcoming  
Address*

community. I'm inspired to see how gurdwaras and other organizations are evolving to meet the needs of today's youth and am eager to contribute to these efforts.

Moving forward, Associate Professor Hardev Kaur discussed on "Dealing with Anxiety and Stress in 21st Century Living: My Life in the University and How I Coped" was both inspiring and profoundly relatable. Her candid sharing of personal experiences resonated deeply with many in the audience, as she navigated through the universal challenges faced by students today.

In her talk, she emphasized the ubiquitous nature of anxiety and stress in modern academic settings. The pressures of academic performance, social expectations, and the uncertainties about the future can often create a tumultuous environment for students. However, what made her narrative compelling was her openness about her struggles and the strategies she employed to overcome them.

One of the key aspects of her journey was her perseverance. Despite the daunting challenges, she remained steadfast in her efforts. Her dedication to her academic responsibilities was evident, and she shared that consistent hard work played a crucial role in her success.

Beyond academics, Hardev also touched upon the significance of a balanced lifestyle. She stressed the importance of taking breaks and finding hobbies that provide joy and relaxation. These activities helped her manage stress and maintain a positive outlook.

A pivotal part of her coping strategy was her faith. She spoke eloquently about the comfort and strength she derived from her belief in the Guru. She shared how, during moments of intense stress and uncertainty, she would turn to prayer and meditation. This spiritual practice provided her with a sense of peace and reassurance, allowing her to leave her worries to the Guru, trusting that He knows what is best for her.

In essence, Hardev's story is a testament to the power of resilience, faith, and hard work. Her ability to balance the rigors of university life while maintaining her mental and emotional well-being is truly commendable. Her narrative serves as an inspiration to students, reminding them that while challenges are inevitable, they can be overcome with determination, support, and a strong belief in oneself and the guidance of the Guru.

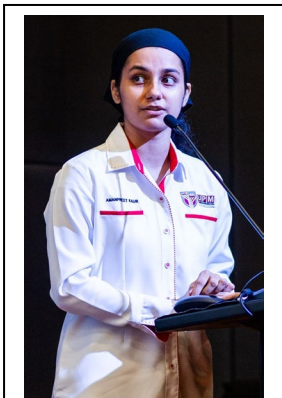
It was inspiring to witness young speakers from various universities come up and share their perspectives on Sikh youth. The session began with a thesis presentation by my friend Amanpreet Kaur, founder and two-term president of the UPM Sikh Society. Her topic, 'Exploring Sikh Youth Opinion on Gurdwara Sahib Petaling Jaya's Role in Resolving Social Problems,' offered eye-opening insights from youth with diverse backgrounds. Her presentation prompted critical thinking on addressing Sikh youth issues effectively.

Amanpreet's comprehensive research highlighted the importance of Gurdwaras in addressing social issues and how they can adapt to better serve the younger generation. By gathering diverse opinions, she emphasized the need for Gurdwaras to become more inclusive and proactive in engaging with the youth.

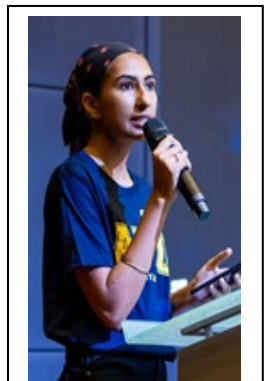
Following Amanpreet, Sharveen Kaur, President of APU's Punjabi Cultural Society, shared her views and experiences along with the challenges she faced. Sharveen's discussion highlighted the pressures faced by Sikh youth in adhering to traditional values



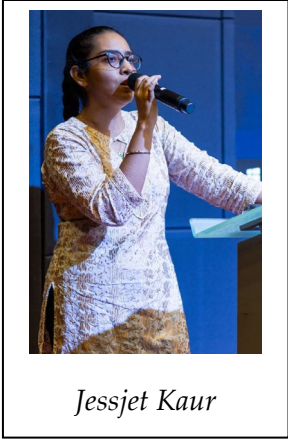
*Associate Professor Hardev Kaur*



*Amanpreet Kaur*



*Sharveen Kaur*



Jessjet Kaur

while also striving to succeed in a competitive and often culturally diverse academic environment. Sharveen’s personal anecdotes about overcoming cultural stigmas and finding her voice as a leader in the Punjabi community were particularly inspiring.

Next was the presentation by Jessjeet Kaur, the new president of the Sikh Association of UPM. She enlighteningly emphasized the importance of language in the daily lives of Sikh youth. Jessjeet highlighted that most of us tend to speak in English rather than our mother tongue, Punjabi. She related this issue to three main factors: our parents, our environment, and ourselves. She pointed out that while we often blame our parents or the environment for the decline in Punjabi language use, it is ultimately up to us to take the initiative to speak Punjabi. This proactive approach is essential for ensuring that the language does not fade away and can be promoted for future generations.

Her emphasis on actively using Punjabi in daily life served as a poignant reminder of how language contributes to cultural preservation. I strongly believe that it is not sufficient to merely understand Punjabi; it is imperative to speak and integrate it into our everyday interactions. Therefore, it is essential to actively promote and practice our language within our communities. This includes encouraging conversations in Punjabi among peers.

**PANEL DISCUSSION**

It was truly gratifying to witness the bottled-up questions that the participants had for the speakers, which significantly contributed to the purpose and success of the event. The interactive Q&A session showcased the curiosity and eagerness of the attendees to delve deeper into the topics discussed. I am pleased to note that all the speakers managed to address most of the questions posed to them with great clarity and insight, ensuring that the audience’s concerns and curiosities were thoroughly addressed. This dynamic exchange of ideas not only enriched the discussions but also fostered a sense of community and mutual understanding among the participants.



Discussion Panelists



The questions covered a wide range of topics, from cultural identity to practical strategies for increasing youth engagement in community activities. The speakers’ responses were both informative and inspiring, providing actionable advice and thoughtful reflections. This level of engagement highlighted the importance of creating platforms where the youth feel heard and valued.

Looking ahead, I am eagerly anticipating future events of this nature. It would be incredibly





Encouraging more youth to participate as speakers will not only empower them but also inspire their peers to take an active role in community. It can create a ripple effect, motivating others to voice their opinions, share their experiences, and contribute to the collective growth and development of our community. In conclusion, the event was a resounding success. The speakers’ adept handling of these queries further enriched the experience, making it a truly enlightening and engaging event. I am looking forward to more such seminars in the future, with even greater youth involvement and diverse perspectives that can drive meaningful change and foster a deeper connection within our community.

beneficial to have even more youth speakers come forward and share their perspectives. Hearing from a diverse range of voices within the community can enhance our understanding and approach to the challenges faced by Sikh youth. These young leaders can offer fresh insights and innovative solutions, helping to bridge the gap between generations and fostering a stronger, more cohesive community.



*Masters of Ceremony Aman Singh Dhillon and Simerpreet Kaur*



*Seminar Organizer Pritam Singh gifting a set of books to Datuk Parmjit Singh CEO*

AUTHOR: Harsimren Kaur Gill, a first-year law student at the University Malaya, attended the recent Kuala Lumpur seminar. She was also chosen to become a youth representative to the state assembly. This article is adapted with courtesy from Asia Samachar. It can be accessed here where it first appeared: <https://asiasamachar.com/2024/07/13/what-a-law-student-picked-up-from-kuala-lumpur-sikhi-and-sikh-youth-seminar/>



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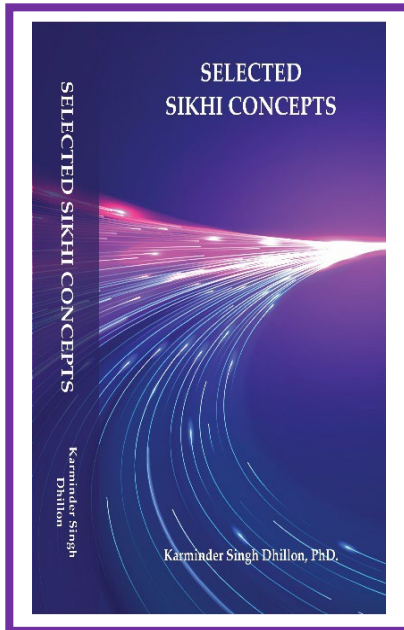
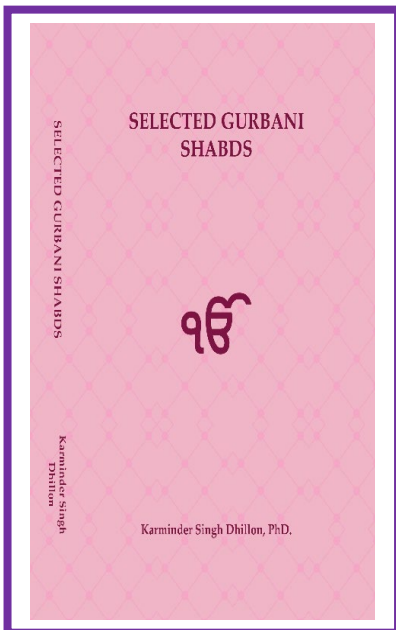
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### Note to Contributors

*The Sikh Bulletin* invites articles on matters relating to Sikhs and *Sikhi*. Essays that adopt CRITICAL approaches towards Sikh matters and issues are given priority for publication. Articles devoted towards exploring the messages of Gurbani as contained within the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) are particularly welcome.

Manuscripts must be in English or Gurmukhi and must begin with a title page that includes the names, e-mail addresses, and affiliations of all authors. References must be properly cited.

Manuscripts need to be submitted online to [editor@sikhbulletin.com](mailto:editor@sikhbulletin.com) or [dhillon99@gmail.com](mailto:dhillon99@gmail.com) and must be in Microsoft Word (.doc). The preferred font for English characters is Calibri font size 11. Gurbani and Gurmukhi characters must be in Unicode (Nirmala UI).

The maximum length for each article in a regular issue is 5,000 words.

### Note on Use of Gurbani Verses and Translations by Authors

When quoting Gurbani in their articles, authors are required to provide the Gurmukhi version of the full verse and a romanised version. Mention must be made of the page where it is to be found in the AGGS. In line with the aspirations of *The Sikh Bulletin*, authors must provide translations of Gurbani verses that break from the mould of vedantic, yogic and literal slants prevalent in orthodox translations. Articles relying solely on Gurbani translations as provided by Sant Singh Khalsa MD's English Translation will NOT be published.

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The views expressed by authors are their own. Please send feedback at [editor@sikhbulletin.com](mailto:editor@sikhbulletin.com)

**Thank you for your continued support of The Sikh Bulletin. Editor.**

*You have three choices in life. You can watch things happen, make things happen or wonder what the hell happened.*

Dale Carnegie, American Writer (1888 – 1955)