

I am proud to be a **SIKH**



Gurbachan Singh 'Makin'

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S. DARSHAN SINGH (A French Sikh)

A french man, born in a Roman Catholic family who was religious minded and believed that Christians should keep long hair and beard as Jesus did, and he stopped cutting his hair and refused to eat meat, believing "Thou shall not kill". He had those ideas at the age of 10. He enjoyed being close to Nature, often working on his father's farm. He kept regarding himself as a Christian until he left school at 16. He became hostile to organised religion. His interest in various world faiths never diminished during his first journey to India, but his encounter with sikhism had the greatest impact on him. He was 19 when he came to India during Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He met some spiritual minded Sikhs, and got impressed by their personality and kindness. Before leaving India, he visited Amritsar and stayed in Guru RamDas Guest house near Golden Temple, which impressed him with its beauty, serenity and its universal spirit. The Guru ka langar was a marvellous way of sharing with less fortunate and a radical way to eradicate barriers of caste and creed. Listening to kirtan was a unique experience with a soothing effect on him. He took some literature on sikhism with a promise to return as soon as possible. He revisited Punjab in 1983. He met European and American sikhs and Harbhajan Singh Yogi. Then he went to New Zealand, Australia, visited Sikh community settled there. In 1987 he returned to south hall and stayed with sikhs. He joined British Red Cross as a voluntary member. Then at Anandpur Sahib he received Amrit and was baptised as a sikh.

realising one of his dearest wishes. He was finally allowed to return to India and Punjab. Before receiving amrit he visited many historical Gurdwaras, which gave him inspiration and knowledge. Then he spent 3 weeks at Gurmat College Patiala.

(With comparative study of all religions). He took amrit on 10 July, 1991. Then he was named Darshan Singh, Rudel to facilitate french identification.

Relations with his parents have improved now. He says,

“Whatever adversity I have faced as a sikh is insignificant compared to what sikhs have suffered to defend their faith throughout their history. It has had the effect of testing and reinforcing my faith.”

Then he got married to a sikh girl Malvinder Kaur at Chandigarh in 1992 and started farming (near Anandpur Sahib) in a village near Nurpur Bedi, following Sikh tenets religiously.



S. DARSHAN SINGH RUDELL

PREFACE

It gives me great pleasure, satisfaction and pride in writing about a topic, which should have been thought of long ago. But Lord's Will (hukam) prevails and when the time comes, the Lord gives us enough thought and ordains about carrying out a certain task.

The birth of 'Khalsa Panth' in 1699 (Baisakhi) is an unparalleled operation in History, carried out so multicultously by the tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh, that till to day nobody knows exactly how it took place, but the result was there before everyone. Without going into those details, it stands to reason to mention as to the present position of the Sikhs in the modern world community today. The topic has been dealt with under the following headings :—

- (i) My Origin—Birth.
- (ii) My foundation
- (iii) My Guru—Sabad Guru
- (iv) My heritage
- (v) My Guru's philosophy
- (vi) Guru Granth Sahib—My Guide
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- (viii) My Ideal of Life—(Jivan Mukat)
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- (xi) My (The Sikh) Art of living
- (xii) My Prayer (Ardas)
- (xiii) Conclusion.

The main function of a Sikh was detailed by the Guru to lead a pious, honest and life of dedication towards the common good of the mankind, as the Tenth Master has said,

“Manas ki jaat sabhai ekai pechanbo.”

The human race should be taken as one only, (without any race, caste or religious considerations). Firstly the Guru has given the sikh an identity of his own, so that he could be spotted easily among millions, then the philosophy of life was made very simple with the help of the Guru's word (sabad) which could be recited by singing and enjoying the inner bliss. The various concepts were made very simple, with no dogmas, rituals or futile formal practices prevalent those days (or even today). My foundation stands like a rock, with a rich heritage and the vast treasure of knowledge given by the Guru Granth Sahib. The ideal of life was clearly laid down alongwith the mission in life, while enjoying the fun of life and festivals as well.

I hope this treatise on Sikh values will exhort the youngsters to realize the importance of their Sikh Identity and not try to merge with the main stream, just for little convenience, as religion is not a matter of convenience.

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—*G.S. Makin*

CHAPTER—I

MY ORIGIN-BIRTH

Having been born in a Sikh family, my sojourn in life starts from Guru Nanak's Japji viz.

“ik Onkar Satnam karta purkh nirbhou

Nirvair Akal moorat ajooni saibhang Gur prasad.”

and my life ends with the exhortation of Guru Gobind Singh viz.

“Jab áv ki audh nidhan banai

át hi rann mein tab joojh maron.”

They say life is a struggle and one must struggle to lead an honourable life, seeking an answer to certain fundamental questions as to the purpose of this human life and its main achievement, including the secret of this life.

Guru Nanak's mission started roughly in 1499 (at the age of thirty) and continued till 1699, for exactly 200 years (spiritually). That shows a sikh is born in a family, having been taught for almost two centuries, the basics of spiritualism. Guru Nanak's teachings included about 20 years of travels throughout India, extending in the west upto Mecca, Iraq (Baghdad), in the south to Sri Lanka, Rameshvaram, in the North to Tibet and in the East to Bangladesh and Burma, meeting various people of different faiths like Yogis, Muslims, Hindus and some others. Thus religious discourses were held by him at various places.

Then the last 20 years or so of his life were spent at Kartarpur (now in Pakistan) tilling his lands as a farmer, to earn a living, (Kirtá karni, Vand chhákná and Naam japna), then sharing his meals with others in a community kitchen and having morning and evening discourses alongwith recitation of Kirtan (Guru's Word) or Singing praises of the Lord through Gurbani.

Guru Nanak was followed by nine other masters in turn from 1539 to 1708, while (in 1539) Guru Nanak gave up his mortal life. All the Gurus in succession, guided the path of Sikh

Religion, stressing various aspects of character building leading towards an Ideal human being, like recitation of Lord's True Name, service of the needy and community at large, (humanism), leading a life of a normal house holder doing farming, business or following other vocations like carpentry, masonry etc. Thus 200 years were spent by Guru Nanak and (the successive) Gurus in spiritual teachings till 1699. Then the call for final touches was given by the Tenth Master in 1699, to raise an order of the Khalsa, a saint-soldier (Sant Sapahi) without any distinction of caste or creed, high or low, a complete human being. An Indian Nation was born out of the five beloved ones chosen from various parts of India like Lahore, Delhi, Dwarka, Bidar (in South-Karnatka) and Puri in the East. A complete conglomeration was founded by giving them Amrit (nectar) and a system of initiation into the Sikh faith was brought into vogue. So a sikh became a Khalsa in 1699 (Baisakhi) and a certain code of conduct was laid down apart from his spiritual background.

So I am proud of being a Sikh, a follower of the Guru, having been given training in spiritual upliftment and a special bearing (identity) for meeting my social obligations towards the country and nation as a whole.

So my origin or birth as a sikh brought me into the focus of the whole world as a unique personality with a solid spiritual background and training in all other activities of social, moral or marshal needs of building a self-reliant human being.

Guru Nanak gave me lessons in Japji while Guru Gobind Singh gave me Jaap Sahib, alongwith lessons in horse-riding, swordsmanship, using armour or other weapons to safeguard the interests of the followers of the Khalsa faith while helping other oppressed people, needing my help, at any time, even at the cost of my own life.

The Guru made my life-style very simple, without wasting any effort in formal rituals, prevalent at that time like visiting holy places, keeping fasts, visiting tombs and such other activities with the motto of 'Simple living and high thinking'. The Hindus,

Muslims and Yogis, the three main religious denominations, were used to the practise of many rituals and futile exercises for attaining salvation or moral upliftment.

(i) Guru Amar Das has ordained us vide canto 13 of 'Anand Sahib (P-918) as follows :—

**“Sur nar munjan amrit khojdai so Amrit Gur te páya,
páya Amrit Gur kirpa kini sacha mán vasaya.
jia jant sabh tudh uapié ik vekh parsan aya.
labh lobh ahankar chuka Satguru Bhalla bháya
Kehai Nanak jis nu aap tutha tin amrit Gur te paya.”**

**“ਸੁਰ ਨਰ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਖੋਜਦੇ ਸੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਪਾਇਆ॥
ਪਾਇਆ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਗੁਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੀਨੀ ਸਚਾ ਮਨ ਵਸਾਇਆ॥
ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭ ਤੁਧ ਉਪਾਏ ਇਕ ਵੇਖ ਪਰਸਣਿ ਆਇਆ॥
ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭ ਅਹੰਕਾਰ ਚੁਕਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਭਲਾ ਭਾਇਆ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਆਪਿ ਤੁਠਾ ਤਿਨਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਪਾਇਆ॥”**

Which means :

We have realized and attained the nectar of True Name, which the gods, men, saints and others like Sanyasis have been looking for ages, through the Guru's guidance. Once the grace of the Guru was bestowed on us, we attained the nectar of True Name automatically and with its help we have inculcated the Lord's love in our hearts, thus enjoying real bliss.

O Lord! All the creation including human beings, animals birds, big and small, have been created by 'you'. Some Guru-minded persons have had a glimpse of your vision while some are still trying to get a glance of your grandeur. Such persons have to get rid of their greed, worldly attachments, ego and anger, to win the pleasure of the Guru.

O Nanak! The person, who is bestowed with the Lord's Grace, through the Guru's guidance, is blessed with the nectar of True Name! (13)

So from the very birth in a Sikh family. I have been blessed with the backbone of Guru's word, always forming an important part of my life, and playing an important role in moulding my life.

(ii) At another place, Guru Arjan Dev has remarked as follows :—

Gujri Ki Vaar M. 5 (Page 522)

M-5 : “Nanak Satgur bhaitiai poori hovai jugat. Hasandian khelandian painandián khavandian vichai hovai mukat.”(2)

ਗੁਜਰੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਮ: ੫॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੨)

ਮ: ੫॥ “ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭੋਟਿਐ ਪੂਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੁਗਤਿ॥

ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੈ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ॥੨॥”

Which means :

O Nanak! By meeting the True Guru all our efforts are successful, and one attains salvation while leading a normal life by laughing, playing, wearing (rich) clothes or even taking food. (i.e. There are no restrictions in enjoying normal life to attain salvation.)

(iii) Then again Guru Arjan Dev has remarked in Gujri Vaar (Page 522) as follows :—

Gujri Vaar Slok M. 5 (Page 522)

“Udam karendian jiu tu kamavandian sukh bhunch. Dhiáiendian tu prabhu mil Nanak utri chint.”(1)

(ਗੁਜਰੀ ਵਾਰ) ਸਲੋਕ ਮ: ੫॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੨੨)

“ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇਂਦਿਆ ਜੀਉ ਤੂੰ ਕਮਾਵਦਿਆ ਸੁਖ ਭੁੰਚੁ॥

ਧਿਆਇਦਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮਿਲੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਉਤਰੀ ਚਿੰਤ॥੧॥”

Which means :

O Brother ! Let us lead an active life (worthwhile life) by making all efforts at reciting True Name. O Nanak! One could merge with the Lord by reciting True Name, thus ridding oneself of all the worldly worries.(1)

(iv) Furthermore Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has exhorted us as follows vide Rag Gouri Goareri (Page 186).

Rag Gauri Guareri M. 5 (Page 186)

**“Piou dadai ka khol dithá khazana.
tá(n) merai mán bhiá nidhana.(1)**

.....

Koh Nanak jis mastak lekh likhaié.
so ét khazanai liá ralaié.”(4-31-100)

ਗਉੜੀ ਗੁਆਰੇਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੮੬)

“ਹਮ ਧਨਵੰਤ ਭਾਗਠ ਸਚ ਨਾਇ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਪੀਉ ਦਾਦੇ ਕਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਡਿਠਾ ਖਜਾਨਾ ॥

ਤਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਭਇਆ ਨਿਧਾਨਾ ॥੧॥

.....

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਲੇਖੁ ਲਿਖਾਇਆ ॥

ਸੁ ਏਤ ਖਜਾਨੈ ਲਇਆ ਰਲਾਇ ॥੪॥੩੧॥੧੦੦॥”

Which means :

We, having the possession of the treasure of True Name, are really fortunate, who sing the Lord's praises effortlessly. (in the normal course of life). (Pause-1)

When we deliberated on the Guru's word, the wealth of our fore-fathers, the True Name, my mind became the treasure of this wealth and virtues.(1)

.....

O Nanak! The person, who is pre-destined by the Lord's Will, with good and fortunate action, also joins the holy congregations, the company of saints, the lovers of Gurbani, Guru's word). (4-31-100)

CHAPTER—II

MY FOUNDATION

Any building structure stands on its strong foundation and the building of 'Sikh Nation' was laid on a very strong foundation.

This building was planned by Guru Nanak and nurtured by his successors, the nine Gurus, in various ways, so that a firm citadel could come into existence. The foundation was laid between 1499 to 1699, almost 200 years so that the structure, built on this foundation could be made everlasting, and a Khalsa legion was raised on this spiritual foundation. Let us examine the laying of this foundation, which took so long (200 years). Guru Nanak started laying down this foundation in 1499 (approx). (after about 30 years of age, having got married and having served at Sultanpur Lodhi (Punjab) as a store keeper (Punjab) and getting enlightenment, when he disappeared for 3 days in Bein rivulet.) His contribution in foundation laying was mainly digging a deep foundation, with recitation of Lord's True Name by singing His praises, earning one's living, and then sharing one's earnings with others, in the form of a community kitchen at Kartarpur, by serving (seva) all the visitors with all possible means, having discourses in the mornings and evenings. Guru Nanak brought all his experiences at visiting various religious centres of various countries and faiths so that all the shallow formal rituals, followed by various organisations, sects like Yogis, (Islamic) Muslim centres or Hindu centres of worship like Hardwar, Benaras and Kurukshetra, were not repeated.

Then Guru Nanak was followed by Guru Angad who taught us lessons in following Lord's Will (Hukam), service (by community kitchen) and training in wrestling (body building) or keeping good physique (Sound Mind in a sound body). and initiating Gurumukhi script for writing Guru's Word.

Then Guru Amar Das followed with twelve years of experience at serving Guru Angad (at the age of 62 to 74), laying 'Service' in the foundation of Sikhism as a main contribution, followed by a well-organised community kitchen where all were made to dine before meeting the Guru, irrespective of caste, creed or status; where even 'Akbar' had to dine once before meeting Guru Amar Das. Guru Amar Das established 22 dioceses for propagating Sikh faith, and condemned Sati and Purdah systems, prevalent in India at that time.

Guru Ram Das then continued the foundation laying of Sikh religion with a sound footing by founding the city of Amritsar, encouraging his followers to take up horse trading, taking the sikhs to Afghanistan, and other vocations resulting in the city of Amritsar becoming a centre of trade in embroidery, textiles etc., Then the reins of Sikh religion were passed on to Guru Arjan Dev, who made the foundation very strong by laying down his life for the sake of making this foundation as stable and ever-existing by pouring his blood (of martyrdom) into the foundation, as he was the first martyr in the sikh history. Then he compiled Sri Guru Granth Sahib in 1604. Thus making the Sikh foundation spiritually ever-shining with the light of knowledge, pervading all over the universe, with a universal message about the Lord's greatness, grandeur and vastness alongwith His omni-presence.

Lala Hardyal, a great genius and revolutionary has stated in his book on "Hints for self culture", (in the Chapter on Religion) as follows :—

"All the Sikh Gurus, who followed Guru Nanak, were really teachers, each one of them, giving new directions to the sikh movement, thus solidifying the foundations laid by Guru Nanak, inspiring a sense of purpose, sacrifice, humility, godliness and bravery, thus making this movement a grand success."

Infact, the foundation of Sikh pedestal has been made very strong and everlasting by pouring in blood of the martyrs in place of crushed stones and cement. Then it has been nurtured

and moistened with the Guru's Word (Gurbáni) all through, with the recitation of True Name, during the period of Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Harkrishan, to Guru Tegh Bahadur, when Guru Tegh Bahadur had to lay down his life in 1675 at Chandni chowk, Delhi to give an ultimatum to Aurangzeb's oppressive overtures including the wholesale conversion of Hindus.

Guru Gobind Singh has remarked about Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom in his words as

"Tegh Bahadur Si Kirya, Kari na Kin hu aan".

"ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੀ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨ ਹੁ ਆਨ॥"

Which means :

"That the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur had no comparison in History, when someone had given his life for the protection of another's religion to uphold religious freedom."

Then followed the transformation of Sikhism into 'Khalsa Panth', so that alongwith the rosary, a sword was to be kept handy to meet any oppression against anyone.

In the fight against oppression, Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa Panth in 1699 and fought against Mughal Oppression till the end of his mortal life in 1708. The sacrifices made by the Khalsa forces during this period against heavy odds stand out in the world History as a remarkable and unparalleled event. The Khalsa motto was guided by the slogan, given by Guru Gobind Singh as "Nisché kar apni jeet karon." following Guru Nanak's slogan of "Mán jeetai jag jeet "

That shows the Sikhs who had been trained by 'Guru Nanak' to control and subdue the mind (having worldly desires or vicious thoughts) so as to win the battle of life in the world (through recitation of True Name), were hence forth to make sure and have faith in their victory in the actual battle, while fighting against odds. This was later proved by Khalsa Army, during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh by occupying the fortress of Jamrod (North West Frontier) and taking the fight into the enemy camp itself and defeating the enemy, where even British never ventured (even) afterwards.

It had taken 200 years (approx) to lay down the spiritual foundation (1499 to 1699) followed by about (9) nine years of further specialised training in sacrifice, use of arms and a will to fight for a noble cause with faith in one's victory, in fighting odds against oppression. During Guru Gobind Singh's life time, certain battles were fought at Bhangani, Anandpur Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib and then at Khadrana near Mukatsar. This was followed by the onslaughts of Banda Bahadur at Sirhind which had shaken the foundations of Mughal empire, till he was overpowered and executed at Delhi in 1712. But this brought about a certain change in the fight against oppression with armed strength. Then the Khalsa forces were organised and united by Maharaja Ranjit Singh so that a very powerful sikh state was founded between 1798 to 1839. Though this Sikh empire could not survive after the death of the Maharaja, and Punjab was annexed by the Britishers in 1849 to the British Empire. However, the British were quick to realize the importance of sikh soldiers and encouraged their recruitment in large numbers in the British Army. During British regime the sikhs formed a major portion of the Indian Army, which fought on the side of Britishers during the two great world wars and proved their mettle.

Now the freedom struggle against the Britishers had started with full swing under the leadership of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Gandhiji. The part played by the sikhs during the freedom struggle of the country against Britishers stands out and the sikh martyrs in this freedom struggle outnumber their numerical strength, though it has not been appreciated by the countrymen or the nation as a whole. Now in democracy the numerical strength only counts. But notwithstanding all these setbacks, the sikhs have always been in the vanguard of India's development as a free nation.

Today a sikh Prime Minister, Dr. ManMohan Singh is leading the Nation (towards a developed Nation.) fighting against poverty, corruption, unemployment and making India a technically advanced Nation.

CHAPTER—III

MY GURU—“SABAD GURU”

I am proud of being a sikh, as I have the distinction of having an ever-existing, ever-lasting and immortal Guru whereas no other person (except a sikh) has the privilege of having a permanent guide. This was made possible by the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh when he declared :

“Sabh sikhān ko hukam hai Guru manio Granth.”

“ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ॥”

While laying down his mortal life, Guru Gobind Singh was requested to name his successor, by his followers. That time the Tenth Master bowed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, alongwith a cocoanut and five paise (as was customary during the time of the first Guru—Guru Nanak, to proclaim his successor) and proclaimed that henceforth—“Sri Guru Granth Sahib” would be the living Guru of the sikhs, and this was his command.

(i) Guru Nanak Dev had declared to the Yogis in Sidh Gost.

“Sabad Guru, Surat dhun chela”

“ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥”

and further.

**“Sabad Gur pira, gehar gambhirā
Bin sabdai jag bouranang.” (P-635)**

“ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ॥

ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗੁ ਬਉਰਾਨੰਗ ॥” (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੨੫)

Which means :

The Guru's Word is my Guru and mentor, which makes me realize the depth of the Lord's Nature and His secrets, but without the guidance of the Guru's Word, the whole world is lost in fruitless wanderings like a mad person.

(ii) Then again, the Guru had remarked

“Bani Guru, Guru hai bani vitch bani amrit sarai.

Gurbani kehai sevak jan mánai partakh Guru nistarai.”

(P-982)

“ਬਾਨੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਾਰੇ ॥

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕ ਜਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਪ੍ਰਤਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥” (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੨)

(iii) Then again Guru Amar Das has proclaimed vide Anand Sahib (canto 25) (Page 920)

“Gur ka sabad rattan hai hirai jit jarao.

Sabad ratan jit man laga eh hoá samaou.

Sabad seti mán miliá sachai láya bháou.

Aapai hira ratan aapai jisno dei bujhaié.

Kehai Nanak sabad ratan hai hira jit jaráou.” (25)

“ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਰਤੰਨੁ ਹੈ ਹੀਰੇ ਜਿਤ ਜੜਾਉ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੦)

ਸਬਦੁ ਰਤੰਨੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਮੰਨੁ ਲਾਗਾ ਏਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਮਾਉ ॥

ਸਬਦ ਸੇਤੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸਚੈ ਲਾਇਆ ਭਾਉ ॥

ਆਪੇ ਹੀਰਾ ਰਤੰਨੁ ਆਪੇ ਜਿਸਨੋ ਦੇਇ ਬੁਝਾਇ ॥

ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਰਤੰਨੁ ਹੈ ਹੀਰਾ ਜਿਤ ਜੜਾਉ ॥੨੫ ॥”

Which means :

The Guru's Words (teachings) are like invaluable gems, studded with the jewels of true knowledge. The Guru minded persons, who are truly impressed by the gems of the Guru's word, are immersed in the Lord's True Name by inculcating the Lord's True Name in their hearts all the time. They have thus developed love and devotion for the Lord by completely imbibing True Name in their hearts through the Guru's guidance. O Nanak! The Guru's teachings are the gems of complete detachment from worldly pleasures, bedecked with the jewels of True knowledge and the gems of real detachment but this point is appreciated and understood by the person, whom the Lord bestows with His Grace. So the clear understanding and meaning of the Guru's teachings and jewels of Gurbani (hymns) is attained by the persons whom the Lord is pleased with and whom the

Lord bestows with His Grace.”(25)

Thus I feel elated that being a sikh. I belong to the category of persons, blessed with the Lord’s Grace and through the Guru’s word. I could attain the bliss of life which is not available to others.

I am rather fortunate to have such a close relationship with my Guru, through the Guru’s Sabad (word) that at every moment and stage of my life, I am being guided by the Guru through his enlightenment and true knowledge of the Lord’s secrets.

(iv) Guru Ram Das (the 4th Nanak) has given us a lead as how to start the daily routine in my life. The Guru has proclaimed vide M-4 (Gour’i ki Vaar) (P-305) as follows :—

**“Gur Satgur ka jo sikh akhaié,
So bhalkai uth har Naam dhiaé.
Udam karai bhalkai parbhati,
Ishnan karai amritsar navé.**

.....
**Phir char'ai divas gurbani gavai,
Behdian uthdian har Naam dhiavai.”**

.....
**Jan Nanak dhoor' mangai tis Gursikh ki,
Jo aap japai avrai Naam japavai.” (2)**

**“ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਏ,
ਸੋ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ॥
ਉਦਮ ਕਰੇ ਭਲਕੇ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ,
ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਕਰੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰਿ ਨਾਵੈ॥**

.....
**ਫਿਰਿ ਚੜੈ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵੈ,
ਬਹਦਿਆ ਉਠਦਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ॥**

.....
**ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਧੂੜ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਕੀ,
ਜੋ ਆਪ ਜਪੈ ਅਵਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਾਵੈ॥ ੨॥**

Which guides the sikh to get up early in the morning (pre-

dawn) and recite Lord's True Name, thus getting in tune with the Prime-soul. For this purpose he should make an effort in the pre-dawn hours of the morning and then take a bath in the nectar of Amrit (Lord's True Name) During the daytime he should recite Gurbani (Guru's Word) and remember the Lord's True Name all the time whether in sitting or standing postures. O Nanak! I would seek the dust of such a Gur Sikh, who remembers the Lord himself (by reciting True Name) and then goads others as well towards recitation of True Name.

(v) Then Guru Amar Das (the 3rd Nanak) has declared that

“Satgur nu sabh ko dekhda jeta jagat sansar.

Dithai mukat na hovree jichar shabad na karai vichar.”

(P-594)

“ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨੋ ਸਭਿ ਕੋ ਦੇਖਦਾ ਜੇਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥

ਡਿਠੈ ਮੁਕਤ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜਿਚਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੪)

Which means :

The whole world perceives the Guru but the physical glimpse would not be of any avail unless an individual goes into the depth of the Guru's Word and ponders over it, leading to its practical usage in one's daily life.

So I am proud of my Guru who has given me an insight into the practical aspect of this human life, so as to lead this life with a sense of purpose, sincerity and meaningfulness.

(vi) Guru Arjan Dev has remarked vide Rag Asa Mahala 5 Ghar 13 (Page 406) as follows :—

“Satgur bachan tumarai. Nirgunn nistarai. (Pause-1)

maha bikhadi dust apvadi te punit sangarai. (1)

Janam bhavantai narak parantai tin ké kul udharai.(2)

Koiai na janai koiai na manai se pargat har duarai.(3)

Kavan upma deou kavan vadaiee, Nanak khin khin varai.”

(4-1-141)

“ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਚਨ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ ॥ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਮਹਾ ਬਿਖਾਦੀ ਦੁਸਟ ਅਪਵਾਦੀ ਤੇ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਸੰਗਾਰੇ ॥੧॥

ਜਨਮ ਭਵੰਤੋ ਨਰਕਿ ਪੜੰਤੋ, ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਕੁਲ ਉਧਾਰੇ ॥੨॥

ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਸੇ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਆਰੇ ॥੩॥

ਕਵਨ ਉਪਮਾ ਦੇਉ ਕਵਨ ਵਡਾਈ, ਨਾਨਕ ਖਿਨੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਵਾਰੇ ॥੪॥੧॥੧੪੧॥

Which means :

O Guru, Truth personified! Your words are really wonderful, which have helped many virtueless persons to cross this ocean of life successfully by taking refuge at your lotus-feet. (Pause-1)

O True (perfect) Guru! Such persons, being in your company, became virtuous and pious through your guidance, though they were basically very crude, quarrelsome, with a low moral character having a bad tongue.(1)

O Perfect Guru! You have saved many of the people from falling victims to sinful actions who were wandering through many ages in various baser lives (with the curse of rebirths) and thrown in the abyss of hell.(2)

O Guru! Such persons, who were totally neglected and unknown earlier, became worthy of an honourable place at your court, though without having any worldly respect (regard) earlier.(3)

O Nanak! How could I evaluate your greatness and sing your praises as there is none equal to you. I offer myself as a sacrifice to you every moment of my existence. (4-1-141)

(vii) Then Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has remarked that the Guru's word is like a shining lamp which spreads light throughout the world and illumines the whole world, which casts away the darkness of ignorance and lack of knowledge and brings out the valuable gems, hidden within this human body and mind. This has been explained in Rag Bilawal M-5 (Page 821) as follows :—

“Satgur sabad ujaro deepa.

Binsiou andhkar teh mandir,

ratan kothri khuli anupa. (Pause-1)

ਰਾਗੁ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ ਮ: ੫ ਚਉਪਦੇ ਦੁਪਦੇ ਘਰੁ ੭ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੨੧)

“ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਉਜਾਰੇ ਦੀਪਾ॥

ਬਿਨਸਿਓ ਅੰਧਕਾਰ ਤਿਹ ਮੰਦਰਿ,

ਰਤਨ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਖੁਲੀ ਅਨੂਪਾ॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

(viii) Then again Guru Arjan Dev has proclaimed vide Majh Mahala 5 (Page 103) as follows :—

“Amrit bani har har teri

Sunn sunn hoiai paramgat meri.

Jalan bujhi sital hoiai manua,

Satgur ka darsan paié jiu. (1)

ਰਾਗ ਮਾਝ ਮ: ੫॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੩)

“ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ॥

ਸੁਣਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਹੋਇ ਪਰਮਗਤਿ ਮੇਰੀ॥

ਜਲਨਿ ਬੁਝੀ ਸੀਤਲੁ ਹੋਇ ਮਨੂਆ॥

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਾਏ ਜੀਉ॥੧॥”

“O Lord-Guru! Your nectar of Guru’s Word (bani) sings the praises of the Lord, on hearing which I have attained the highest state of salvation, being united with the Lord, having broken the worldly bondage. My worldly desires have been curbed (the fire of worldly desires has been quenched) and the mind has attained peace and tranquillity, having got a glimpse of the perfect Guru.”(1)

(ix) Further Guru Nanak Dev has remarked vide the following hymn (canto 31) that I have offered myself as a sacrifice to the Guru, with complete self-surrender.

Ramkali Mahala 1 Dakhni Onkar (P-934)

ik Onkar Satgur Prasad

“Mán deea Gur apnai paya nirmal naou.

Jin naam dia tis sevsā tis balharai jaou.

Jo usarai so dhahsi tis bin avar na koiai.

Gur prasadi tis samla ta tán dookh na hoiai.”(31)

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੩੪)

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“ਮਨੁ ਦੀਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਆਪਣੈ ਪਾਇਆ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਨਾਉ ॥

ਜਿਨਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੀਆ ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਵਸਾ ਤਿਸ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੈ ਜਾਉ ॥

ਜੋ ਉਸਾਰੈ ਸੋ ਢਾਹਸੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਤਿਸ ਸੰਮਲਾ ਤਾ ਤਨਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥੩੧॥”

Which means :—“By self-surrender to the Guru, we have attained the pure nectar of True name and I would offer myself as a sacrifice to the Guru, who has bestowed this True Name and remain in His service. The Lord, who has created this body also causes destruction, as there is none else except Him. By the Guru's grace let us recite the True name, so that we do not undergo any sufferings.”(31)

(x) Furthermore Guru Nanak has stated vide (Rag) Ramkali Mahala 1 (Page 876) as follows :—

“Koiee par'ta sehsha kirta koiee par'eh purana.

Koiee Naam japai jap mali lagai tisai dhiana.

Abhi kab hi kicchu na jana, tera eko Naam pachhana.(1)

Na jana harai meri kavan gatai.

Hum moorakh agyan sarán prabh teri

kar kirpa rakhoh meri laj patai.” (Pause-1)

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ ਘਰੁ ੧ ਚਉਪਦੇ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੬)

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰਗੁ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“ਕੋਈ ਪੜਤਾ ਸਹਸਾ ਕਿਰਤਾ ਕੋਈ ਪੜੈ ਪੁਰਾਨਾ ॥

ਕੋਈ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪੈ ਜਪ ਮਾਲੀ ਲਾਹੈ ਤਿਸੈ ਧਿਆਨਾ ॥

ਅਬ ਹੀ ਕਬ ਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਨ ਜਾਨਾ ॥ ਤੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮ ਪਛਾਨਾ ॥੧॥

ਨਾ ਜਾਣਾ ਹਰੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਕਵਨ ਗਤੇ ॥

ਹਮ ਮੂਰਖ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਸਰਨਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤੇਰੀ ॥

ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਮੇਰੀ ਲਾਜ ਪਤੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥”

Which means : “Some persons study Bodh and jain Granths whereas some others study Puranas, while some others have

recited Lord's True Name with a rosary by inculcating the love of the Lord in their hearts. O Lord! I have realised only True Name as the harbinger of salvation, without appreciating anything else as worthwhile now or later.(1)

O True Master! I do not know what will be my fate (in the future). We have sought your support only, being ignorant fools, without having any knowledge. May you protect our honour through your grace, both here and hereafter ! (in this world and the next) (Pause-1).

Mostly Yogis were engrossed in penance of various types, alongwith observing rituals and formal practices by Hindus and Muslims both, which were denounced by the Guru in very strong terms.

Moreover, Guru Nanak had given us the essence of all the great Granths of Yore, as declared by Guru Arjan Dev in Sukhmani. (Canto 3)

Slok

**“Boh shastra boh smriti pekhai sarab dhandol.
pujas nahi har harai Nanak naam amol.”(1)**

ਸਲੋਕ ॥

**“ਬਹੁ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਬਹੁ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਪੇਖੇ ਸਰਬ ਢੰਦੋਲਿ ॥
ਪੂਜਸਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਹਰੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਅਮੋਲ ॥੧॥”**

Which means : “I have pondered over all the Vedas and Shastras (including Smritis) but none of these books of learning could attain the True Name, as these books do not reveal the importance of True Name. O Nanak ! True Name is an invaluable acquisition in life, so we should only try for attaining this True Name.”(1)

Infact, Guru Nanak had studied all the practices of various religions prevalent during his time and found very little importance being given to recitation of True Name, rather there was greater stress on rituals of all types, leading to false and

futile practices. So he stressed on the recitation of True Name alongwith singing of Lord's praises, which was the essence of all great thinkers.

Today almost everyone is running after having (physical) living Gurus, who have developed all over the country like mushrooms and are trying to follow them blindly. It is much easier to be impressed by the lovely jargon of these so called Saints or Babas. But the Guru has always warned us against being fleeced by these living religious heads, because the knowledge of 'Sabad Guru' needs a little effort on one's part to get clarified about certain doubts or misgivings and requires certain amount of reading habit, which is non-existent. Moreover, these sycofant Gurus have kept certain followers to impress others about their spiritual powers of casting away certain afflictions or giving certain blessings. So we must be aware of these religious leaders, who are very popular specially in the country side. Then they have no restrictions to be observed by the followers, which makes it more attractive to follow them.

CHAPTER—IV

MY HERITAGE

First of all my history spans over only five centuries (about 537 years) but it reflects the wisdom and events of five thousand years as it is full of events of equal importance in various aspects of human growth or existence.

My great great grand god-father (Guru) was Guru Nanak Dev, who had planned a flawless structure of a sikh Nation, with the help of ten mentors in all, so that before finalising the final shape of this building by the tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh, each one of the masters, had contributed and stressed on a particular aspect of nation building by practically, living it himself, proving the point that example is better than precept", and secondly proving the point that anyone could reach upto the same height by following the Guru's guidance, just as Guru Angad Dev and Guru Amar Das, who were staunch followers of Vaishnav cult or worshippers of goddess, after following the Guru's guidance, ended up in being anointed as the Gurus themselves in turn, bringing all their life's experiences to guide the followers in leading a practical life as their religion was not a theocratic version but a living religion, full of vitality and vigour to live a purposeful life, while being a normal householder. The final touches were provided by Guru Gobind Singh in naming the new structure as 'Khalsa Panth'.

Guru Nanak Dev had laid the foundation of this building on a strong footing, with recitation of Lord's True Name and singing Lord's praises as two strong elements in the foundation, which would make the structure ever-lasting in the face of all upheavals of time. Then the blood of martyrs was poured in as the cementing element in its structure at various stages, starting with the martyrdoms of Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Tegh Bahadur and then the whole family of Guru Gobind Singh including his

four sons, mother and finally himself in making a lofty 'Khalsa' building for all times to come, appointing 'Guru Granth Sahib' as the everlasting Guru, with Khalsa Panth as the supporting pillars with his 3-pronged edict : "Pooja Akal ki, Parcha shabad ka and didar khalsai ka."

(Worship of the one Lord-sublime, Guru's word as its guide, and the person of the Guru was to be seen in the formation of 'Khalsa Panth', as a whole.)

The martyrs of the Khalsa army starting with Banda Singh Bahadur and 700 of his followers, followed by many others including those at Nankana Sahib, Guru ka Bagh and Jaito Morcha plus the latest martyrs in partition of 1947 (creation of Pakistan) or 1984 anti-sikh riots gives us a brief idea of the history behind my very existence or survival.

Then came the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who founded a sikh empire to meet the challenge of oppression against all odds. A British historian had remarked once that the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was 80,000 strong, and had no parallel in the Indian history, being trained in the latest techniques of warfare during those times. Infact, the Britishers had always avoided confrontation with the Maharaja, leading to the treaty of Amritsar. They were waiting till the demise of the Maharaja to engage themselves against the Khalsa army, through treachery only, where the British faced an army of indomitable courage and had hatched an intrigue with the army generals, so that having won in all the battles fought in the Anglo-sikh wars, sikhs were let down by the intriguing generals, joining hands with the British. The poet Shah Mohamad had lamented :—

"Shah Muhamada ik sarkar bajon.

Faujan jit ké ant nu harian nai."

"ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਇਕ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਬਾਜੋਂ ॥

ਫੌਜਾਂ ਜਿਤ ਕੇ ਅੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੇਂ ॥"

Which means : Shah Mohamad says that in the absence of the Maharaja (Ranjit Singh) the Khalsa army, having won all the battles, lost the war against Britishers because of intrigues within.

During Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time, Gurdwaras were constructed at all the historical places of sikh interest, which was the greatest contribution of the Maharaja towards building the sikh heritage. Lot of effort and time was spent in locating the places linked with sikh history and movement, which had been destroyed during the tyrannical rule of the Mughals etc. Infact, sikh history has to be rewritten, giving the correct version, as opposed to the recordings in history by members of ruling community.

Then the mass movements of 'Singh Sabha' and Chief Khalsa Diwan' have to be put back on the rails to avoid any corruption or mis-representation of sikh heritage.

We are celebrating 300 and 400 years of religious nature every time, but no effort has been made to present the Khalsa heritage of the past centuries correctly.

One main factor of my heritage is the sikh character of lore, where a sikh would sacrifice his life even to meet the needs of a person in some sort of situation where he is beset with hurdles, poverty, some sort of coercion or oppression. Just as during foreign invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, Hindu women were being taken away to Ghazni for sale, thus playing with their honour. Then suddenly sikh guerillas would attack the rear of the attacking armies and bring back the loot alongwith women in their custody at a great peril to their own safety. Even in a court of the Muslim Kazi he would impart justice to the parties, based on the version of the sikh witness as opposed to the narration of any Muslim or Hindu witness as the sikh alone would be giving the truthful version. The muslim clergy had more faith in the version of the sikh witness.

(We have to look upto our heritage and build our character afresh.)

The sacrifices made by the sikh Gurus, and their followers are always reminding me of my great heritage, which would goad me also towards leading a selfless life by devoting my time towards rendering assistance to anyone in need, even at some

personal loss in money or material. All the historical Gurdwaras built during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time are a great heritage reminding me of my elders' sacrifices, lofty ideals and the challenge offered by them to the oppressors.

Then again the selfless services rendered by the great sikh leaders of the past have to be kept in mind in building the sikh Nation on those lines.

My main heritage comprises :

- (a) Light of knowledge—though Guru Granth Sahib.
- (b) Humility of the highest order as Guru Nanak says :—
“Neechan ander neech jaat neechi hoon at neech,
Nanak tin kai sung sath vadian siun kia rees.” (P-15)
- (c) Service of the poor, community and the nation having served the Guru.
“Satgur ki seva saphal hai je kou karai chit laié.”
- (d) Sacrifice - Selfless for the sake of the community, nation and country.
- (e) Self-esteem.
- (f) Faith in God and the Guru to the extent of complete self-surrender.
- (g) Having faith and pride in my victory against odds.
- (h) To be in high spirits (Char'di kala) always, even in adversity.
- (i) To obey Lord's Will at all costs.
- (j) To attain unison with the Lord through congregational prayers (Sadh Sangat) and recitation of True Name.

CHAPTER—V

MY GURU'S PHILOSOPHY

I am proud of the Guru's philosophy, which has been explained by my Guru in a simple straight forward manner, easily understood and as an essence of the great world philosophies, like churning of milk to get butter from it. Now ready-made answers have been given to the various needs and requirements of mankind, so that the individual does not have to wander in the wilderness (of jungles) for seeking the secret of life or Nature as a whole.

(i) The basic human requirement has been explained as the opportunity given to human being for attaining unison with the Lord-sublime, by recitation of True Name.

(a) Guru Nanak Dev has remarked in the first instance, as :
 “ik Onkar Satgur prasad”

“ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥”

Which means : Our search for the One Lord-Sublime and Creator could be followed up with the Guru's Grace and benevolence only.

(b) Then the first stanza in “Jap ji”, the master-piece of Guru Nanak Dev says :—

“Kiv sachiaran hoiaiai, kiv koor'ai tute paal.

Hukam rajaiee chalna Nanak likhiá naal.”

“ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲ।

ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਨਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲ॥”

Which means that the best means of becoming truthful, (Knowing truth) and splitting apart the curtain (wall) of falsehood, between the “Soul and prime-soul” is to follow the Lord's Will (His Dictates or Ordains) which has been pre-destined for us.

(c) Then again the stanza 2 (Pour'i 2) of Japji says :

“Nanak hukamai jé bujhai ta(n) homain kehahi na koiai.”

“ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤਾਂ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥”

Which means :

“O Nanak! If one were to follow the Lord's Will and act according to His Ordains, then the question of egoism (egoistic tendencies) is solved and one gets rid of his. I-am-ness or ego.”

(d) Then in canto 4 of 'Jap ji (Pour'i 4) The Guru says :

“Pher ké agai rakhiai jit disai darbar.

Mohaan ké bolan boliai jit sunn dharé pyar.

Amrit vela sach nao vadiaiee vichar.

Karmi avai kapr'a nadri mokh duar.

Nanak evai janiai sabh apai sachiar.”

“ਫੇਰ ਕਿ ਅਗੈ ਰਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਦਰਬਾਰ॥

ਮੋਹੋਂ ਕਿ ਬੋਲਨ ਬੋਲੀਐ ਜਿਤ ਸੁਣ ਧਰੇ ਪਿਆਰ॥

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲਾ ਸਚਿ ਨਾਉ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਵਿਚਾਰ॥

ਕਰਮੀ ਆਵੈ ਕਪੜਾ ਨਦਰੀ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਏਵੈ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਸਭਿ ਆਪੇ ਸਚਿਆਰ॥”

Which means :

“What should we offer so as to have a glimpse of the Lord's Court for which the best course would be to sing the praises of the Lord in the early hours (pre-dawn) of the morning, and recite Lord's True Name. It is through one's actions that this human life is given to us, while the salvation could be attained through Lord's Grace. O Nanak! It would be understood that the Lord was controlling everything happening in the universe.” (and was omni-present).

(ii) Then the 20th stanza of Jap ji says :

“Bhariai māt papá(n) kai sung.

Oh dhopai navai kai rung.”

“ਭਰੀਐ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਪਾਂ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ॥

ਓਹ ਧੋਪੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ॥”

The mind gets polluted with the performance of sinful actions, and this could be purified with the help of recitation of True Name.

(iii) The 5th stanza says :

**“Gura ik deh bujhaiee sabhna jian
ka ik daata, so main visar na jaiee.”**

**“ਗੁਰਾ ਇਕ ਦੇਹ ਬੁਝਾਈ ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਅਾਂ
ਕਾ ਇਕ ਦਾਤਾ ਸੋ ਮੈਂ ਵਿਸਰ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥”**

i.e. “May the Guru make me realize (or The Guru has made me realize) one thing that there was only one Lord Supreme responsible for sustaining the whole lot of beings in the Universe, whom I should never forget.”

(iv) The holy congregations or Sat Sangat was held both in the mornings and the evenings by Guru Nanak Dev, which formed a very important phase of sikh worship or congregational prayers.

(v) Thus these constituted the four main pillars of sikh faith or sikh way of life where Guru's guidance, Lord's Will, Sadh Sangat and Recitation of True Name were supposed to be the main elements or principles.

(vi) Then Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) arranged to compile the holy Granth Sahib by collecting all the hymns of the predecessor Gurus and included his own hymns, alongwith the hymns of some fifteen saints, both Hindu and Muslim. This was completed in 1604 and a holy book called 'Pothi Sahib' was thus compiled and installed which formed the authentic work of the five Gurus (1st to 5th) plus some saints and hymns were being sung from these collections, forming the sikh prayers.

(iii) After the execution of Guru Arjan Dev in 1606 by the Mughal King 'Jahangir', the sixth Guru, Guru HarGobind started training his followers in military warfare by encouraging them to bring offerings in the form of horses or arms and weapons and himself wearing the swords of Miri and Piri. He also got Akal Takht erected opposite to the Darbar Sahib (later called Golden

Temple) for taking political decisions and holding his Darbar (court)

Infact, he waged four battles against king Shah Jahan's forces and gained victories in all of them. Then Guru Har Rai (7th Nanak) was asked to maintain a cavalry of 2200 horsemen, which was fully trained, but did not take part in any activity of political nature followed by Guru Harkrishan.

(viii) Then Guru Tegh Bahadur (9th Nanak) was executed by the Mughal King Aurangzeb at Chandni Chowk Delhi in 1675; and Guru Gobind Singh took charge of the sikh faith at the age of 9 only. He started organising his followers in various activities of marshal nature, after completing his education in the study of Sanskrit, and Persian languages apart from horse riding, hunting and some literary activities. This continued till 1699, when he was 33 years of age. He was planning all this while for creating a certain force of Sikh warriors, who could meet the challenge of Mughal oppression against the Indian (Hindu) population. Finally his plans crystallized in the formation of Khalsa Panth on Baisakhi of 1699. (Details given in another Chapter).

Thus 200 years approximately were spent by the ten Masters (1499 to 1699) in giving spiritual training to the followers of the sikh faith, which resulted in a foundation, which cannot be shaken up by any upheavels. Then Guru Gobind Singh diverted his attention to train his spiritual followers in military warfare, so as to meet the challenge of oppression from the Mughal rulers and it took him only nine years of his last lapse of mortal life (1699 to 1708) to train his men, fight the battles against all odds at Anandpur Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib and Mukatsar and finally he laid down his life at Nander' (Hazoor Sahib) in 1708.

Guru Nanak Dev had given 'Jap ji' and Guru Gobind Singh gave 'Jaap Sahib' to the sikhs for recitation of True Name and singing praises of the Lord. Guru Gobind Singh's philosophy does not vary in any manner from Guru Nanak Dev, as will be

clear from some hymns of Guru Gobind Singh in Akal Ustat except in giving a sword in the hands of his followers along with the rosary of True Name, given by Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak had said,

“Je jivai pát lathi jaié sabh haram jeta kichh khaié.”

“ਜੇ ਜੀਵੈ ਪਤਿ ਲਥੀ ਜਾਏ ਸਭ ਹਰਾਮ ਜੇਤਾ ਕਿਛ ਖਾਏ॥”

Which means : “Without having protected one’s honour and self-respect, this life would end up in a sheer wasteful effort, and this life would have no meaning.”

Whereas Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed

“Deh shiva bar mohai ehai Shubh karman té kabhun na taru(n).

.....
Jab av ki audh nidhan banai át hi ran mein tab joojh marun.”

“ਦੇਹ ਸ਼ਿਵਾ ਬਰ ਮੋਹੇ ਇਹੈ ਸੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਟਰੋਂ॥

ਨ ਡਰੋਂ ਅਰ ਸੋਂ ਜਬ ਜਾਇ ਲਰੋਂ ਨਿਸਚੇ ਕਰਿ ਅਪਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕਰੋਂ॥

ਅਰ ਸਿਕ ਹਉਂ ਅਪਨੇ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਕਉ ਇਹ ਲਾਲਚ ਹੋ ਗੁਣ ਤਉਂ ਉਚਰੋਂ॥

ਜਬ ਆਵ ਕੀ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਧਾਨ ਬਨੇ ਅਤਿ ਹੀ ਰਣ ਮੈਂ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੋਂ॥”

Which means :

“O Lord ! Give me the moral strength that I would never falter from executing virtuous deeds. Not only I will be determined to fight against such odds fearlessly, but make sure to gain victory over the forces of evil. Then I would train my mind in such a manner that I always would be craving to seize such an opportunity to perform virtuous deeds, and when my end of life comes near, then I will die fighting in the battle of life.”

Then Guru Nanak Dev had been very critical of Hindu and Muslim dogmas, like visiting of holy places of pilgrimage for taking bath (by Hindus); similarly Kabir had denounced such practices earlier.

Kabir had stated :

“Tirath vada ke har ka das.”

“ਤੀਰਥ ਵਡਾ ਕਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਦਾਸ॥”

i.e. whether the holy place was greater or the Lord's worshipper (Lord's follower).

So Guru Nanak Dev has remarked vide Rag Dhansari as follows :—

Dhanasari Mahala 1 Chhant (Page 687)

ik Onkar Satgur prasad

“Tirath navan jaou tirath Naam hai.

Tirath sabad bichar antar gyan hai.

Gur gyan sach a thaan tirath das purab sada dasahara.

Hoan Naam harka sada jachou deho prabh dharnidhara.

.....
Gur vaak nirmal sada chanan nit saach tirath majna.(1)

.....
Nanak saach kehahi benanti man maijai sach soiee.” (4-1)

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਛੰਤ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮੭)

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਣ ਜਾਉ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ॥

ਤੀਰਥ ਸਬਦ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਹੈ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਥਾਨੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਦਸ ਪੁਰਬ ਸਦਾ ਦਸਾਹਰਾ ॥

ਹਉ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸਦਾ ਜਾਚਉ ਦੇਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਧਰਣੀਹਾਰਾ ॥

ਸੰਸਾਰ ਰੋਗੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਰੂ ਮੈਲ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਚ ਬਿਨਾ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਵਾਕ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਨਿਤ ਸਾਚੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਮਜਨਾ ॥੧॥

.....
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਚੁ ਕਹੈ ਬੇਨੰਤੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਜੈ ਸਚੁ ਸੋਈ ॥੪॥ ੧ ॥

Which means :

“O Brother ! When I have got the greatest holy place of pilgrimage in the form of True Name, where else could I go for a bath at a holy place ? Infact, the knowledge of the Lord and its meditation through the Guru's Word is the holy place within our heart, as such the Guru's teachings and its meditation by reciting True Name is the true holy place of pilgrimage. This True Name is equivalent to the ten holy visits to places of pilgrimage (or ten holy days like full moon New moon etc.) or even Ganga. (the holy river) and gives us the eternal bliss which casts away all the ten sins (like theft, slander etc.) O Lord

benefactor, and sustainer of the world ! May you bless me with the boon of True Name, as I am always seeking your True Name only ! This world is like the suffering humanity, while true name is the panacea for all ills. So being bereft of True Name, this man is suffering from the filth of his sins. So the Guru-minded persons, who have purified the mind by following the Guru's Word are always enlightened with the light of Guru's knowledge and always bathe in the True Name, which is like a holy place for them.(1)

.....
O Nanak! The persons, who pray to the True Lord with love, devotion and faith, and purify their mind (heart) through True name have won the love and acceptance of the Lord". (4-1) I am proud of being a sikh, who does not believe in any rituals or formal religious practices of any type as was being done both by the Hindus and Muslims or Yogis, the three main religions of those days.

Infact, the Guru had made his philosophy of life very simple and practical and was based on the essence of the great books of lore, like Vedas, Shahstras and some semetic books. Instead of wasting this precious human life in running after the shadow, or futile exercises, the Guru had made it very simple and appealing as it stands to reason that nothing could be gained by following or practising dogmas.

Then Guru Arjan Dev has proclaimed in the first astpadi of Sukhmani Sahib (P 262) :

**"Prabh ka simran sabh te ucha.
Prabh ka simran udhrai moocha.
Prabh kai simran trisna bujhai.
Prabh kai simran sabh kichh sujhai.**

.....
**Prabh kai simran mán ki mal jaié.
Amrit Naam ridh mahai smaié.
Prabh ji basai sadh ki rasna.
Nanak jan ka dasan dasna.(4)**

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਾ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਉਚਾ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਉਧਰੇ ਮੂਚਾ॥
ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਬੁਝੈ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਸਭ ਕਿਛ ਸੁਝੈ॥

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਨਹੀ ਜਮ ਕ੍ਰਾਸਾ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਪੂਰਨ ਆਸਾ॥
 ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਲੁ ਜਾਇ॥ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਿਦ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਇ॥
 ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜੀ ਬਸਹਿ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਰਸਨਾ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਕਾ ਦਾਸਨ ਦਸਨਾ॥੪॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੨)

This astpadi means :—

“Meditation of True Name is higher than any other mode of worship; Meditation helps many a person to lead a successful life; meditation of True Name helps us to curtail the urge for more and more of worldly possessions; and with meditation man perceives the secrets of Nature; with meditation of True Name one gets over the fear complex (of the god of death). Meditation helps one to fulfil his desires and hopes; with meditation of Lord’s True Name one rids oneself of the filth of the mind and the nectar of True Name gets inculcated in one’s heart. Infact, the Lord resides (abides) on the tongue of the holy saints (due to recitation of True Name). O Nanak ! I am the slave of the slaves of the Lord’s saints.(4)

The Guru has stressed on certain very important factors, while condemning the rituals, which would help us in attaining unison with the Lord.

(i) One is to inculcate true love of the Lord in the heart, as Guru Gobind Singh has proclaimed in Swaiyyas : Patshahi 10 as follows :—

“Kaha bhiou jo dou lochan moond kai
 Baith reho bak dhian lagaiau.
 Naht phirio liai saat samandrin
 Lok giou parlok gaviou.

.....
 Saach kehon sunn leho sabhai
 Jin prem kiou tin hi prabh payou.”

“ਕਹਾ ਭਯੋ ਜੋ ਦੋਊ ਲੋਚਨ ਮੂੰਦ ਕੈ
 ਬੈਠਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਬਕ ਧਿਆਨ ਲਗਾਇਓ॥

ਨਾਤ ਫਿਰਿਓ ਲੀਏ ਸਾਤ ਸਮੁਦ੍ਰਿਨਿ
ਲੋਕ ਗਯੋ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਗਵਾਇਓ ॥

.....
ਸਾਚ ਕਹੋ ਸੁਨ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਭੈ
ਜਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਓ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਇਓ ॥੯॥

Which means :—

“If someone were to close his eyes, like that of a crane and would show to be busy with the love of the Lord, then it is of no use or value. Even if one were to bathe in all the seven seas of the world or the holy places involved therein, one would be wasting this life as well as the next since without meditation of Lord’s True Name, it is all a wasteful effort.

.....
The person, who has developed love for the Lord through the company of the Lord, has won over the Lord through love; Rest all other efforts at meditation, bathing at holy places or penance etc. are sheer waste and fruitless, without gaining anything.”(9)

Then Guru Ram Das (the 4th Nanak) has stated as follows :—

Suhi Mahala 4 Ghar 5 (Page 776)

ik Onkar Satgur prasad

“Gur sant jano piara mein miliá meri trisna bujh gaieeásai.
hoan mán tán deva(n) satgurai mein melai prabh gunntasai.

.....
Gur sunder mohan paie karai har prem bani mán mariá.
merai hirdai sudh budh visar gaiee mán asa chint visariá.
mein antar vedan prem ki Gur dekhat mán sadhariá.

Vadhbági prabh aie mil jan Nanak khin khin variá.”(4-1-5)

ਸੁਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ਘਰੁ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੭੬)

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“ਗੁਰ ਸੰਤ ਜਨੋ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਮੈਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਬੁਝਿ ਗਈਆਸੇ ॥
ਹਉ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਵਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੈ ਮੈ ਮੇਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਗੁਣਤਾਸੇ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਸੁੰਦਰੁ ਮੋਹਨੁ ਪਾਇ ਕਰੈ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਬਾਣੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਰਿਆ॥
 ਮੇਰੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸੁਧਿ ਬੁਧਿ ਵਿਸਰਿ ਗਈ ਮਨ ਆਸਾ ਚਿੰਤ ਵਿਸਾਰਿਆ॥
 ਮੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਵੇਦਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀ ਗੁਰ ਦੇਖਤ ਮਨੁ ਸਾਧਾਰਿਆ॥
 ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਆਇ ਮਿਲੁ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਵਾਰਿਆ॥੪॥੧॥੫॥

Which means :—

O Saints! I have got united with the True Guru now, so that I have cast away all my hopes and worldly desires for more possessions. I would offer my body and soul to the Guru who has enabled me to unite with the Lord, the ocean of all virtues.

.....
 O Brother! I have controlled my mind by reciting the sweet Guru's word in the company of my beloved guru. (The arrows of Lord's love have pierced my heart.) I have got over my own cleverness or intelligence, thus getting rid of all my worldly hopes and worries. (I have lost all sense of my own being).

O Nanak! Now a ray of hope has enlightened my mind in developing love for the Lord's attachment, while all my sufferings due to His separation have disappeared on having a glimpse of the Guru. Now I have left everything to the Guru's support and offer myself as a sacrifice to the Lord. O Lord! May you unite all the fortunate Guru-minded persons with yourself! (4-1-5).

Then Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has ordained as follows :—

Asa Mahala 5 (Page 370)

“Sunho loka mein prem ras pāya

durjan marai vairi sangharai

Satgur mo kou har Naam divāya.” (Pause-1)

ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੭੦)

“ਸੁਣੁ ਤੇ ਪਿਰਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਵਾਖਿ॥ ਦੇਰ ਜਿਨਾਣੀ ਮੁਈ ਦੁਖਿ ਸੰਤਾਪਿ॥

.....
 ਸੁਨਹੁ ਲੋਕਾ ਮੈ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਰਸੁ ਪਾਇਆ॥ ਦੁਰਜਨ ਮਾਰੇ ਵੈਰੀ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ॥

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਿਵਾਇਆ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

Which means :—

“The Lord has kept me away from the mother-in-law of ignorance, whereas the (sister-in-law) of worldly hopes and

desires, which cause all the sufferings, have been cast away.

.....
O People of the World! Listen to me ! I have attained the love of the Lord. All the vicious enemies like the sexual desires, have been done away with, as soon as the Lord bestowed on me the treasure of True Name through the True and perfect Guru's guidance (teachings).” (Pause-1)

Then Guru Amar Das has remarked vide the following hymn :

Maru Mahala 3 (Page 1054)

SatGur sevan sé vadbhagi ándin sách Naam liv lági.
Sada sukhdáta Ravia ghat antar sabad sachai umáha hai.(1)

.....
Kirpa karé tá mael miláíé. homai mamta sabad jalaié.
Sada mukat rehai ik rangi nahi kisé naal kaha hai. (3)

.....
Se manmukh jo sabad na pachhanai. Gur ké bhai ki saar na janeh.
Bhai bin kiun nirbhau sach paieei jam kádhi laéga saha hai.(6)

.....
Gurmukh játa karam bidháta. Jug charé Gur sabad pachháta.
Gurmukh marai na janmái. Gurmukh sabad samaha hai. (10)
Gunn ka daata sacha soiee. Gurmukh virla boojhai koiee.
Nanak jan Naam saláhai Bigsai so Naam beparvaha hai.

(16-2-11)

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੫੪)

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਨਿ ਸੇ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ॥ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਸਾਚਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ॥
ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਰਵਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਚੈ ਓਮਾਹਾ ਹੇ॥੧॥

.....
ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਤਾ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ॥ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਮਤਾ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਲਾਏ॥
ਸਦਾ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਰਹੈ ਇਕ ਰੰਗੀ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਕਾਹਾ ਹੇ॥੩॥

.....
ਸੇ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਜੋ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਭੈ ਕੀ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ॥
ਭੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਕਿਉ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥ ਜਮ ਕਾਢਿ ਲਏਗਾ ਸਾਹਾ ਹੇ॥੬॥

.....
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਾਤਾ ਕਰਮ ਬਿਧਾਤਾ॥ ਜੁਗ ਚਾਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਪਛਾਤਾ॥

exponent of Religious studies and a former president of India has said,

"We find in Guru Granth Sahib a wide range of mystical emotions, intimate expressions of personal realisation of God, and rapturous hymns of divine love."

(iv) Prof. Puran Singh a great sikh scholar and poet has remarked,

"It is the scripture of all nations, for it is the lyric of Divine love and all the people of earth submit on such glowing lyrical prayer that Guru Granth is one song, one idea and one life, humanity is the substance of the sublime."

This holy scripture deals with only one aspect as the Guru has remarked :

"Nanak ké ghar kewal Naam."

"ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ॥"

That in the house of Nanak only Lord's True Name is to be worshipped (recited).

There are no mythological, historical or personal details as is the case with most other scriptures. However, use of mythological references has been made at various places to explain or stress the points in favour of singing Lord's praises or recitation of True Name.

The hymns of various Sikh Gurus and other bhaktas (saints) included in Guru Granth Sahib are as follows :

Guru Nanak Dev	—	974 hymns
Guru Angad Dev	—	62 hymns
Guru Amar Das	—	907 hymns
Guru Ram Das	—	679 hymns
Guru Arjan Dev	—	2218 hymns
Guru Tegh Bahadur	—	115 hymns
Saints		
Kabirji	—	541 hymns
NamDeo ji	—	61 hymns

Ravidas ji	—	40 hymns
Faridji	—	134 hymns

Others—Trilochan (4) Surdas (1) Beni (3) Dhanna (4) Jaidev (4) Parmanand (2) Sain and Pipa (1 each), Bhikhan ji—(3).

Some of the hymns from various authors are mentioned in the ensuing pages, to bring out their complimentary or supplementary role.

(a) Then the various hymns of different Gurus are indicated by using the word Mahala 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 9 at the top of the hymn, but at the end of each hymn, the author is shown as Guru “Nanak” only, as the same light of Nanak percolates throughout the holybook, and moreover the Guru’s Word is directed by the Lord Himself as the Guru says :—

“Hoau aapou bol na janda mein keha sabh hukmaou jiou.”
(P-763)

“ਹਉ ਆਪਉ ਬੋਲ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਸਭ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ॥” (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬੩)

Meaning : “I do not say anything from my own side (on my own), but whatever is directed by the Lord Himself through His ‘Will’.

(b) Then all the hymns have been arranged according to various Ragas or Metres, and in all, 31 Ragas have been incorporated in the holy Granth, as the same are to be sung according to the various Ragas. The Ragas included are :—

Sri Rag, Majh, Gour’i, Asa, Gujri, Dev Gandhari, Bihagr’a, Vadhas, Sorath, Dhanasari, Jaitsri, Todi, Bhairari, Tilang, Suhi, Bilawal, Gond, Ramkali, Nat Narayan, Mali gour’a Maru, Tukhari, Kedara, Bhariou, Basant, Sarang, Malar, Kanr’a, Kalyan, Parbhati and Rag jaijavanti. (31 No.)

(c) Then a certain order has been maintained under various Ragas by stating the various hymns of the Gurus in the first instance under different categories like Choupadas, Dupadas etc. followed by Astpadis, Chhants etc. of the Gurus, followed by any vaars in that Raga, and then the hymns of the saints in the order of Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas and others are included. The same sequence is followed under various Ragas.

(c) Each new Raga or type of hymns are mentioned with the “mool mantra”, in full or ‘ik Onkar Satgur prasad’ preceding the hymn; which simply means that the blessings of the One Lord—sublime is invoked, who could be attained through the Guru’s benevolence and guidance alone.

(d) The first edition of Sri Guru Granth Sahib was initially compiled in 1604 by Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) which included the hymns of the first five Gurus, beginning with Guru Nanak upto Guru Arjan Dev himself. In 1706, Guru Gobind Singh edited the second edition of the holy Granth by including the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur (the 9th Nanak) as well, by dictating to Bhai Mani Singh at DamDama Sahib (Talwandi Sabo) near Bathinda.

Finally in 1708, when Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Master, was laying down his mortal life, he annointed Guru Granth Sahib as the Guru for all times to come, thus appointing ‘Sabad Guru’ as the everlasting Guru of the Sikhs as initially stated by Guru Nanak himself. Thus proving the fundamental point that there was no variation in the philosophies of the first Guru or tenth Master, and the same message of Universal love of the Lord through recitation of True Name was again confirmed by him. This is being followed throughout, by the sikhs of the world, (though some misguided sections or individuals try to follow some physical Gurus.)

(e) All the sikh temples (Gurdwaras) are keeping the Guru Granth Sahib in the highest esteem by installing the holy Granth Sahib at a higher pedestal (Palki Sahib), while the congregations are held in the presence of the holy Guru Granth Sahib, where the discourses are held including singing of Kirtan and lectures, where the congregation (Sangat) is seated on the floor (where sheets or carpets are spread out) and all occupy same level of status.

The seating arrangement for the congregation is such that there is no distinction of caste, creed or status in society, as all are considered equal in the presence of the Guru.

(f) Five seats of Sikh authority or Takhats have been installed as follows :—

- (i) Akal Takhat opposite (Darbar Sahib) at Amritsar.
- (ii) Takhat Keshgarh Sahib at Anandpur.
- (iii) Takhat Patna Sahib at Patna.
- (iv) Takhat Hazoor Sahib at Nander. (Maharashtra)
- (v) Takhat Damdama Sahib at Talwandi Sabo.

Akal Takhat is supposed to be the supreme authority of the sikhs, which conducts the functioning of the sikh panth (community) as a whole, all over the world, issuing edicts as and when required.

Now a few hymns of various Gurus and bhaktas (saints) are included here so as to show the complete concurrence of all in the pursuit of Lord's love through True Name and Guru's guidance. So it is a matter of great pride for me that my spiritual background has been guided by all of them with the same spirit of knowledge and enlightenment, which has made me very strong in my beliefs.

(i) Guru Nanak Dev's hymns :

(a) "Thapiá na jaie kitá na hoié.

aapai aap niranjan soiai." (Jap-5)

“ਥਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਸੋਇ ॥” (ਜਪੁਜੀ-੫)

i.e. The Lord cannot be installed like an idol, nor man could shape his likeness. The Lord had created Himself and maintains Himself, unaffected by the worldly falsehood (Maya), on His heights or unstained status. Whosoever have served Him and meditated on Him (with recitation of True Name) get honoured in His presence. (Jap-5)

(b) "Gyan khand mai gyan parchand

tithé naad binod kod anand

saran khand ki bani jore

Tithé hore na hoiee hore." (Jap-36)

“ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮੈ ਗਿਆਨ ਪਰਚੰਡ ॥

ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੋਡ ਅਨੰਦ ॥

ਸਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੋਰ ॥

ਤਿਥੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ॥” (ਜਪੁਜੀ-੩੬)

i.e. In the realm of knowledge, wisdom is shining and music is heard which produces myriads of joy; similarly in the realm of spiritual bliss the beauty is the presiding deity and all things are shaped there, which have no comparison, while the beauty of the place is beyond description.

(c) Asa Mahala 1 (Page 10)

“Akhán jivan visrai mar jaun.

Akhan aukha sachā nao.

Sachai naam ki laagai bhookh.

Ut bhookhei khaie chaliea dookh.”

ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦)

“ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੇ ਮਰ ਜਾਉ ॥

ਆਖਣ ਔਖਾ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥

ਸਾਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਭੁਖ ॥

ਉਤ ਭੁਖੇ ਖਾਇ ਚਲੀਏ ਦੂਖ ॥”

i.e. I feel alive only when I remember the Lord and I face death when I forget Him. But it is rather very hard or difficult to contemplate on His Name. If a man is pining and hungry after His Name, then all his pains get consumed in that holy hunger. The Lord is True and True is His Name, so how can he be forgotten, O Mother ?

(d) Sri Rag Mahala 1 Ghar 1 (Page 14)

“Moti ta mandir usrai ratni ta hoié jadao.

Kastur kungu agar chandan leep avai chaou.

Mát dekhh bhoola visrai, tera chit na avai Naou.(1)

.....
Hukam hasal kari baitha Nanaka sabh vaou.

Mát dekhh bhoola visrai tera chit na avai Naou.”(4-1)

ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਘਰ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪)

“ਮੋਤੀ ਤ ਮੰਦਰ ਉਸਰਹਿ ਰਤਨੀ ਨ ਹੋਹਿ ਜੜਾਉ ॥

ਕਸਤੂਰਿ ਕੁੰਗੁ ਅਗਰਿ ਚੰਦਨਿ ਲੀਪਿ ਆਵੈ ਚਾਉ ॥

ਮਤੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਭੂਲਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨਾਉ ॥੧॥

.....
ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹਾਸਲੁ ਕਰੀ ਬੈਠਾ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਸਭ ਵਾਉ ॥

ਮਤ ਦੇਖਿ ਭੂਲਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਤੇਰਾ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨਾਉ ॥੪॥ ੧ ॥

Which means :—

Even if your house were built of precious stones, in the most elegant manner, studded with gems and pearls, and the fragrance of most pleasing nature is enjoyed by you. Beware O Man! Lest you forget the True Lord, being enchanted and enamoured by these things and caring not for the True Name of the Lord. (1)

.....
O Nanak! Even if you were to become an Emperor and your orders were being acknowledged the world over, consider it like the blowing wind. O Man! Lest your forget the Lord's True Name.

(e) Sri Rag Mahala 1 (Page 59)

“re mán aisi har siun preet kar jaisi jal kamleh.

Lehri naal pachhar'iai bhi vigsai asneh.

Jal mein jia upaiké bin jal maran tineh.(1)

.....
Nanak dar ghar ek hai avar na duji jaié.” (10-11)

ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪)

“ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ ਜਲ ਕਮਲੇਹਿ ॥

ਲਹਰੀ ਨਾਲਿ ਪਛਾੜੀਐ ਭੀ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਅਸਨੇਹਿ ॥

ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਜੀਅ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਜਲ ਮਰਣੁ ਤਿਨੇਹਿ ॥੧॥

.....
ਨਾਨਕ ਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਏਕੁ ਹੈ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜੀ ਜਾਇ ॥੧੦॥੧੧॥”

Which means :—

i.e. O my mind (heart)! Let your love be so pure (strong) as that of the lotus for the pool, or the love of the fish for the water, without which they perish. God alone knows the suffering of the fish, separated from the waters, as she gives up her life on being (separated) out of water.

.....
O Nanak! The real abode lies in the heart, as there is no second outlet. (10-11)

(f) Then Guru Nanak has remarked vide Rag Majh ki vaar (Page 140) as follows :—

Slok Mahala 1 (Page 140)

**“Mehar masit sidak musala hak halal koran.
Saram sunat seel roza hoho musalmán.
karni kaba sach peer kalma karam nivaaj.
Tasbi sa tis bhavsi Nanak rakhai laaj.”(1)**

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦)

**“ਮਿਹਰ ਮਸੀਤਿ ਸਿਦਕੁ ਮੁਸਲਾ ਹਕੁ ਹਲਾਲੁ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ ॥
ਸਰਮ ਸੁੰਨਤਿ ਸੀਲੁ ਰੋਜਾ ਹੋਹੁ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ॥
ਕਰਣੀ ਕਾਬਾ ਸਚੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਕਲਮਾ ਕਰਮ ਨਿਵਾਜ ॥
ਤਸਬੀ ਸਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਸੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਖੈ ਲਾਜ ॥੧॥”**

Which means :—

One should practise benevolence (to others) which is the mosque, the carpet of faith and one's honest day's labour as equal to reading of Koran. Alongwith this, a disciplined and restrained life should be considered your incision, good nature should be your fast, then you could become a true muslim. Consider good actions as your Haj, truthfulness as your Master, good behaviour as your short prayer and helping the poor as your main prayer. O Nanak! Whatever pleases the Lord, should make the beads of your rosary, then the Lord will protect you under His care. (1)

This would equally apply to followers of other religions, but in their own way to suit their mode of worship.

(ii) Then Guru Angad Dev (the second Nanak) has stated :

Asa ki Vaar Slok Mahala 2 (Page 140)

**“Je sou chanda ugvai suraj char'ai hazar.
aité chanan hondian Gur bin ghore andhar.”(2)**

ਆਸਾ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੨ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦)

“ਜੇ ਸਉ ਚੰਦਾ ਉਗਵਹਿ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜਹਿ ਹਜਾਰ ॥

ਏਤੇ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਦਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਘੋਰ ਅੰਧਾਰ ॥੨॥

Which means, if hundreds of moons were to shine, with thousands of suns illuminating the skies then notwithstanding all this illumination, it will be total darkness without the guidance of the Guru.

(iii) Then Guru Amar Das has stated vide Gour'i Mahala 3 Chhant (Page 244) as follows :—

Rag Gour'i Mahala 3 Chhant (Page 244)

“Mil merai preetama jiu tudh bin khari nimani.
Mein naini neend na avai jiu bhavai án na pani.

.....
Nanak kaman sada suhagan na pir marai na jaié.”(4-2)

ਰਾਗ ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੩ ॥ ਛੰਤ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪੪)

“ਮਿਲੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮਾ ਜੀਉ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਖਰੀ ਨਿਮਾਣੀ॥

ਮੈ ਨੈਣੀ ਨੀਦ ਨਾ ਆਵੈ ਜੀਉ ਭਾਵੈ ਅੰਨੁ ਨ ਪਾਣੀ॥

.....
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾਮਣਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਹਾਗਣਿ ਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਮਰੈ ਨਾ ਜਾਏ॥੪॥੨॥

Which means :—

O My beloved Lord! Pray meet me as I am feeling completely lost and miserable without your company O My Master! Without you I cannot get sleep neither I like to take any food or drink nor I enjoy eating or drinking.

.....
O Nanak! This human being is never without the (presence of) the Lord spouse as neither He dies nor He goes anywhere else. (Since the Lord is ever-lasting; and man is never without the Lord-spouse) (like the wedded woman alongwith her spouse).
(4-2)

(iv) Then Guru Ram Das (the 4th Nanak) has stated vide Gour'i Poorbi Mahala 4 (Page 170) as follows :

Gour'i Poorbi Mahala 4 (Page 170)

“Hamrai pran vas gat prabh tumrai mera jiu pind sabh teri.
Daya karoh har daras dikhavoh merai mán tán loch ghaneri.(1)

.....
Jan Nanak sarnagat aié har rakhoh paij jan kerí.” (4-6-20-58)

ਗਉੜੀ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੭੦)

“ਹਮਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਵਸ ਗਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭ ਤੇਰੀ॥
ਦਇਆ ਕਰਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸੁ ਦਿਖਾਵਹੁ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਲੋਚ ਘਨੇਰੀ॥੧॥

.....
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਰਣਾਗਤਿ ਆਏ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਪੈਜ ਜਨ ਕੇਰੀ॥੪॥੬॥੨੦॥੫੮॥

Which means :

O Lord! Our life is controlled by you and my body and mind are all your blessings. Pray be kind to give us a glimpse of your presence (vision). My heart is yearning for meeting you, with my body and mind hoping for your unison.(1)

.....
O Nanak! We have sought refuge at the Lord's lotus feet for His support and now our honour is in His hands. He will help save our honour, if it pleases Him. (4-6-20-58)

(v) Then Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has remarked vide Suhi Mahala 5 (Page 738) as follows :—

Suhi Mahala 5 (Page 738)

“Kia gunn terai saar smali mohai nirgun ké daata re.
Baikharid kia karai chaturáíee eh jiu pind sabh tharai.(1)
Lal rangilai pritam manmohan terai darsan kou hum barai.
(Pause-1)

.....
Jan Nanak kou tum kirpa dhari prabh haath dei nistarai.
(4-6)

ਸੂਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੮)

“ਕਿਆ ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਸਾਰਿ ਸਮਾਲੀ ਮੋਹਿ ਨਿਰਗੁਨ ਕੇ ਦਾਤਾਰੇ॥
ਬੈਖਰੀਦੁ ਕਿਆ ਕਰੇ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਇਹੁ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਥਾਰੇ॥੧॥
ਲਾਲ ਰੰਗੀਲੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਤੇਰੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਕਉ ਹਮ ਬਾਰੇ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

.....
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਗੁਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਹਾਥ ਦੇਇ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ॥੪॥੬॥

Which means :

O Lord benefactor (of the helpless and unvirtuous persons)!

With which benediction of yours should I remember you as this slave of yours, having been paid for, could not show any of his cleverness (wisdom) when all the worldly possessions including this body and soul have been bestowed by you alone.(1)

O beloved Lord! The master of worldly bliss! You have enamoured us so much that we could offer ourselves as a sacrifice to you, having perceived your glimpse only (Pause-1).

.....
O Nanak ! I am seeking the dust of the lotus-feet of holy saints without any reservations, so that I could apply it on my forehead. The Lord has enabled me to cross this ocean of life successfully with a helping hand through His grace.(4-6)

(i) Further we give below one hymn each from Bhaktas Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas and Baba Farid and Bhikhan to show their conformity to the sikh philosophy, as such these have been given equal importance and status in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

Asa Sri Kabir jiu (Page 478)

“Sanak sanand ant nahi paya.

Beid par'e par' Brahmai janam gaváya.(1)

Har ka bilovna bilovoh merai bhaiee.

Sahej bilovoh jaisai tat ná jaiee. (Pause-1)

.....
Koh Kabir nadar karé je Meera.

Ram Naam lag utrai teera. (4-1-10)

ਆਸਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀਉ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੮)

ਸਨਕ ਸਨੰਦ ਅੰਤੁ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

ਬੇਦ ਪੜੇ ਪੜਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੇ ਜਨਮੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਬਿਲੋਵਨਾ ਬਿਲੋਵਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ॥

ਸਹਜਿ ਬਿਲੋਵਹੁ ਜੈਸੇ ਤਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

.....
ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਜੇ ਮੀਰਾ ॥

ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਲਗਿ ਉਤਰੇ ਤੀਰਾ ॥੪॥ ੧ ॥ ੧੦ ॥

Which means :—Neither Brahma (god) nor his sons Sanak Sanadan etc. have found the limits of the Lord's greatness, even though Brahma and his sons have studied Vedas, rather than

laying hands on the secrets of Nature.(1)

O Brother! In case you want to churn anything, it is True Name, which should be churned slowly so that the essence of curd, the butter is not lost in a hasty process. So we should meditate on True Name gradually (with concentration) so as to gain unity with the Lord, else the effort would be wasted. (Pause-1)

O Kabir! We could cross the ocean of life successfully, by making use of True Name as the ship of safety. (4-1-10)

(ii) Then Bhakat Namdev has stated as follows :—

Rag Gond Bani Namdev ji ki Ghar 1 (Page 813)

“Asmed jagnai. Tula purkh danai. Prág isnanai.(1)

Tou na pujeh harkirat Nama.

Apnai Rameh bhaj ré mán alasiá. (Pause-1)

.....
Simar Simar Gobindung.

Bhaj Náma tarás bhav sindung.(4-1)

ਰਾਗੁ ਗੋਂਡ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਮ ਦੇਉ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਘਰੁ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੧੩)

ਮਸ਼ਮੇਧ ਜਗਨੇ ॥ ਤੁਲਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾਨੇ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਾਗ ਇਸਨਾਨੇ ॥੧॥

ਤਉ ਨ ਪੁਜਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਨਾਮਾ ॥

ਅਪਨੇ ਰਾਮਹਿ ਭਜੁ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਆਲਸੀਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

.....
ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੇ ॥ ਭਜੁ ਨਾਮਾ ਤਰਸਿ ਭਵ ਸਿੰਧੇ ॥੪॥ ੧ ॥

Which means :—Even if someone were to perform Asmed Yagna or give an equal amount of gold in alms as one's own weight or visit the holy places of (Prág) Allahabad for a bath. (it will be of no use) (1)

O Namdev! Notwithstanding all the rituals mentioned above, nothing is as fruitful as the recitation of Lord's True Name. O my mind! Do not be lazy and try to worship the Lord. (Pause-1)

.....
O Namdev! You could cross this ocean of life successfully only by reciting Lord's True Name. (4-1)

(iii) Then Bhakat Ravidas has stated as follows :—

Rag Gond Bani Ravidas jiu ki Chhant Ghar 2 (Page 875)

ik Onkar Satgur prasad

“Mukand mukand japai sansar.

Bin mukand tán hoiou auhar.

Soiee mukand mukat ka daata.

Soiee mukand hamra pit mata.(1)

.....

Koh Ravidas ab trisna chuki

Jap mukand seva tahu ki. (4-1)

ਰਾਗੁ ਗੋਂਡ ਬਾਣੀ ਰਵੀਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ ਛੰਤ ਘਰੁ ੨ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੫)

ਮੁਕੰਦ ਮੁਕੰਦ ਜਪਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਮੁਕੰਦ ਤਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਅਉਹਾਰ ॥

ਸੋਈ ਮੁਕੰਦ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਾ ਦਾਤਾ ॥ ਸੋਈ ਮੁਕੰਦ ਹਮਰਾ ਪਿਤ ਮਾਤਾ ॥੧॥

.....

ਕਹੁ ਰਵੀਦਾਸ ਅਬ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਚੁਕੀ ॥ ਜਪਿ ਮੁਕੰਦ ਸੇਵਾ ਤਾਹੁ ਕੀ ॥੪॥੧॥

Which means : O worldly people! Let us always recite the True Name of the Lord (Mukand) as without recitation of True Name, the body will perish soon. The Lord-benefactor is the bestower of salvation to us and the Lord is sustaining us like our father and mother. (1)

.....
O Ravidas! Now we have curbed (overcome) our worldly desires, and always serve the Lord by reciting His True Name. (4-1)

(iv) Then, Sheikh Farid ji has remarked as follows :—

Rag Suhi Bani Seikh Farid ji ki (Page 794)

ik Onkar Satgur prasad

“Táp táp lohé lohé hath marorou. Bával hoiee so soh lorou.

Tai seh mán meh kiá ros. Mujh avgan seh nahi dos.”(1)

.....

Us uper hai marag mera. Sheikh Faridá panth smár sevará.

1

(4-1)

ਰਾਗੁ ਸੂਹੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸ਼ੇਖ ਫਰੀਦ ਜੀ ਕੀ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੯੪)

ਤਪਿ ਤਪਿ ਲਹਿ ਲਹਿ ਹਾਥ ਮਰੋਰਉ ॥ ਬਾਵਲਿ ਹੋਈ ਸੋ ਸਹੁ ਲੋਰਉ ॥

ਤੈ ਸਹਿ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਕੀਆ ਰੋਸੁ ॥ ਮੁਝ ਅਵਗਨ ਸਹੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਦੋਸੁ ॥੧॥

.....
ਉਸ ਉਪਰਿ ਹੈ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ ਸੇਖ ਫਰੀਦਾ ਪੰਥੁ ਸਮਾਰਿ ਸਵੇਰਾ ॥੪॥੧॥

Which means :

O dear friend! I am madly in search of my Lord-spouse and am in great suffering, completely disappointed and restless with clasped hands, but I fail to understand the true position. I cannot blame my Lord-spouse as I must be having more flaws and short-comings and that is why the Lord-spouse was annoyed with me and got enraged.(1)

.....
O Sheikh Farid! My route (path) is very arduous and difficult and is just like treading on the razor-blade with a sharp edge. It is most difficult for me to proceed on this path which is very rough with difficult terrain. O Farid! Let us (be careful to) think of that horrible path and mend ourselves. (4-1)

(v) Then bhakat Bhikhan has stated as follows :—

**Rag Sorath Bani Bhagat Bhikhan ki (Page 659)
ik Onkar Satgur prasad**

**“Nainoh neer behai tán khina bhaié kés dudhvani.
Roodha kanth sabad nahi uchrai ab kia kareh prani.(1)**

.....
Gur prasad kehai jan bhikhan pavou mokh duára.”(3-1)

ਰਾਗੁ ਸੋਰਠਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਭੀਖਨ ਕੀ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੫੯)

ਨੈਨਹੁ ਨੀਰੁ ਬਹੈ ਤਨੁ ਖੀਨਾ ਭਏ ਕੇਸ ਦੁਧਵਾਨੀ ॥

ਰੂਧਾ ਕੰਠੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਚਰੈ ਅਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਰਾਨੀ ॥ ੧ ॥

.....
ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਕਹੈ ਜਨੁ ਭੀਖਨੁ ਪਾਵਉ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰਾ ॥੩॥੧॥

Which means :

O Lord! The eyes have started oozing water, and the body has weakened (with age) while the hairs have grown snow white and the throat is also choked (due to ill health) and the speech is completely impaired (hardly I can speak).(1)

.....
O Bhikhan ! This human being could attain salvation only through the Guru's Grace. (3-1)

CHAPTER—VII

MY IDENTITY

I am proud of being a sikh, as I possess a unique personality of my own, as enjoined by the Tenth Master, while transforming the sikhs into Khalsa on Baisakhi of 1699. While creating Khalsa Panth in 1699 it was nurtured by Guru Gobind Singh himself till 1708, the end of his mortal life. He had declared that

‘Khalsa upjio Parmatam ki mauj’.

i.e. (Khalsa was created by the Lord Himself in his wonderful pose.)

and ‘Khalsa mero roop hai khas’

(Khalsa is an embodiment of my ownself.)

Creation of Khalsa

A wonderous drama was enacted on Baisakhi (March 30) of 1699 at Anandpur Sahib, called Takht Keshgarh Sahib by Guru Gobind Singh.

After the Sikhs had been trained in spiritualism by leading the sikh way of life for 200 years, it was felt necessary by the Tenth Master that now the time was ripe for creating an Indian Nation, which could live with dignity and honour in its own land and be willing to oppose any type of oppression or aggression and live the life of an independent nation, rather than being the stooges of outside (foreign) rulers or oppressors like the Mughal kings of ‘Aurangzeb type’, as the Indians had lost all their valour, self respect or dignity, having been enslaved for centuries by the oppressors like Mohamad Ghori, and Mahmud Ghazni, and now the Mughal kings.

This needed a psychological change with a change in mental outlook and physical valour with a new appearance even, so that the individual could feel the change immediately, having a

spiritual foundation based on 200 years of Guru's guidance. So Guru Gobind Singh had invited to this function of great significance all his followers on the Baisakhi of 1699, which numbered about 80,000 according to the historical records.

The Guru had organised a grand function of spiritual kirtan and discourses, followed by his curious demand, with a naked sword in hand, for the head of a sikh, willing to offer it (in the service of the Guru) to the Guru and the demand was repeated five times. Each time the individual was taken inside a small enclosed tent, and a thud was heard and the Guru, holding the blood-dripping sword in hand, would ask for another head. Then the five beloved ones, who came from various parts of India like Lahore, Delhi, JaganNath Puri, Dwarka and bidar and belonged to various castes like khatri, jat and some lower castes even. They were dressed in blue, with saffron turbans, holding swords (Kirpans) and were presented to the same congregation, who got amazed at their rejuvenated form. They were baptized by the Guru with a double edged sword, being stirred in a bowl of water, where some sweet patashas (sugar cane balls) were added by the Mata ji, to make it sweet and alongwith recitation of Gurbani (Guru's word), which constituted the ceremony of baptism to the "Khalsa Panth", or Khalsa Organisation. About 20,000 Sikhs took part in that function that day of taking amrit (baptism) to confirm to be the members of the Khalsa Brotherhood. Thus from that day onwards an ordinary individual, calling himself a sikh, got transformed to be a 'Khalsa' with a new bearing, a new uniform, a fresh courage and valour of conviction, calling himself a 'Khalsa' with rejuvenated personality. Thus an ordinary person, called Ram Lal became Ram Singh after baptism and a person called Sant Ram became Sant Singh, with a new look, having the courage to challenge any Mughal oppressor as he was being trained in horse riding, wielding of the sword or usage of other arms. Thus a Marshal race of Khalsa nation had sprung up from the ordinary sikhs, having a

spiritual background based on 200 years of grinding and guidance in moral and spiritual training. So a whole nation was modernised over night. Thus I feel proud of belonging to this band of "Singhs" of the Guru, who have a new approach to life, leading a warrior's life, who were to challenge death even, having been completely transformed. This transformation has to be appreciated by all the followers, who were ordained by Guru Gobind Singh to follow a certain code of conduct henceforth.

The main features included, apart from the spiritual path being followed earlier, keeping unshorn hair, adhering to the five symbols of an iron bangle (Kar'a), an underwear, a comb, a kirpan (small sword) and long hair. (unshorn hair). Keeping the hair, intact in the original form, was made compulsory and inseparable part of the new uniform and code so that an individual would appear distinct from a crowd of other people.

(i) Thus a distinct Identity as a Sikh was created from that day onwards, (March 1699) known as belonging to the Khalsa Panth; A poet has said,

**"Nishane sikhi een panj harfe kalf
Hargiz na bashad een panj maaf.
Kar'a kardo kachh kanga bidhan
Bila kesh hetch ast jumla nishaan."**

"ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੇ ਸਿਖੀ ਈਂ ਪੰਜ ਹਰਫੇ ਕਾਛ ॥

ਹਰਗਿਜ਼ ਨ ਬਾਸ਼ਦ ਈਂ ਪੰਜ ਮਾਛ ॥

ਕੜਾ ਕਾਰਦੋ ਕਾਛ ਕੰਗਾ ਬਿਦਾਨ ॥

ਬਿਲਾ ਕੇਸ਼ ਹੇਚ-ਅਸਟ ਜੁਮਲਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ॥"

Which means :—The symbols of Sikhism comprise five Ks., which the Guru will not pardon (excuse) anytime; these consist of the iron bangle (Kar'a) kirpan, underwear and a comb, alongwith growing unshorn hair (long hair—uncut).

This couplet means that these five components of sikhism, starting with letter 'K' are—

Kar'a (bangle), Kardo (kirpan), Underwear (kachh), a comb

and keeping of long keshas (Unshorn hair) without which the other symbols have no value or meaning. The hair were to be covered with a turban and this turban gave a new identity to the individual. This symbol of wearing a turban with unshorn hair and beard would give me a different personality as compared to the individual having clean shaven personality. This was the order of the Guru and is being obeyed by most of the followers. However, some people taking it as a matter of convenience, have again started shaving their heads, thus losing the identity given by the Guru, after offering their heads in lieu. So this identity of a Sikh has become the main criterion of belongingness to the Khalsa Panth.

Infact, wearing of headgear (Turban) and a kirpan (small sword) has raised many questions in the whole world, as some of the employers have objected to this identity, so sikhs are fighting this battle in the courts of law of various countries with lot of success. This has brought focus to the Sikh Identity, in inviting some struggle to establish their Identity against odds and certain objections by the law of the land. But in due course, all these problems will be settled successfully, provided we stick to our Guru's ordains. It must be clearly understood that the Khalsa Identity given to the Sikh by Guru Gobind Singh was meant to create a certain awareness in him, of being different from others in all walks of life. Religion is not a matter of convenience, which is the present trend of the world. Once the Sikh loses his headgear (with Unshorn hair) he has no value for himself or the community. The Britishers were keen to observe that the sikhs should maintain their separate Identity in the armed forces. Because they felt that a person, who was true to his religion, would be true (faithful) to them also in their hour of need.

The present trend of wearing caps etc., by sikh youths is not a healthy sign, because they are becoming slaves of convenience, whereas religion can be followed only when we

rise above our own convenience. Guru Gobind Singh had declared clearly.

“Jab lag khalsa rehai niara. Tab lag tej diou mein sara.
Jab eh karai bipran ki reet. Mein na karou in ki parteet.”

“ਜਬ ਲਗ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਰਹੇ ਨਿਆਰਾ ॥ ਤਬ ਲਗ ਤੇਜ ਦੀਓ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਰਾ ॥
ਜਬ ਇਹ ਕਰੇ ਬਿਪਰਨ ਕੀ ਰੀਤ ॥ ਮੈਂ ਨ ਕਰੋਂ ਇਨ ਕੀ ਪਰਤੀਤ ॥”

i.e. “So long Khalsa was to maintain its distinct identity, I will see that full honour is bestowed on him; but once they start copying the others, following their traditions, then I shall have no love lost for them.”

Then again Guru Gobind Singh had declared.

(From Sarab loh Granth)

“Khalsa mero roop hai khas.
Khalsai mein hoan karou nivas.
Khalsa mero mukh hai anga.
Khalsai ke hoan sád sád sunga.”

.....
Atam ras jeh janhi so hai khaldas dev.
Prabh meh, mo meh, taas meh ranchak nahan bhev.

(ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ 'ਚੋਂ)

ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ ॥ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਹੋਂ ਕਰੋਂ ਨਿਵਾਸ ॥
ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੁਖ ਹੈ ਅੰਗਾ ॥ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਕੇ ਹੋਂ ਸਦ ਸਦ ਸੰਗਾ ॥

.....
ਆਤਮ ਰਸ ਜਿਹ ਜਾਨਹੀ, ਸੋ ਹੈ ਖਾਲਸ ਦੇਵ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਹਿ, ਮੋ ਮਹਿ, ਤਾਸ ਮਹਿ, ਰੰਚਕ ਨਾਹਨ ਭੇਵ ॥

Which means : Khalsa is a personification of mine, and I shall always abide within the Khalsa. Khalsa is my speech, organ and is a part of mine, as such I am always in the company of the Khalsa.

.....
But the true Khalsa is one, who has tasted the spiritual bliss; and there is no distinction between the Lord-sublime, myself

and him, and there should be no doubt about it at all.

“Triumph of the Turban”

(i) I want to bring back the Ashes. Just like you,” screamed the headline of an advertisement in all major English dailies of Australia during the last commonwealth Games, which concluded in Melbourne on March 26, 2006.

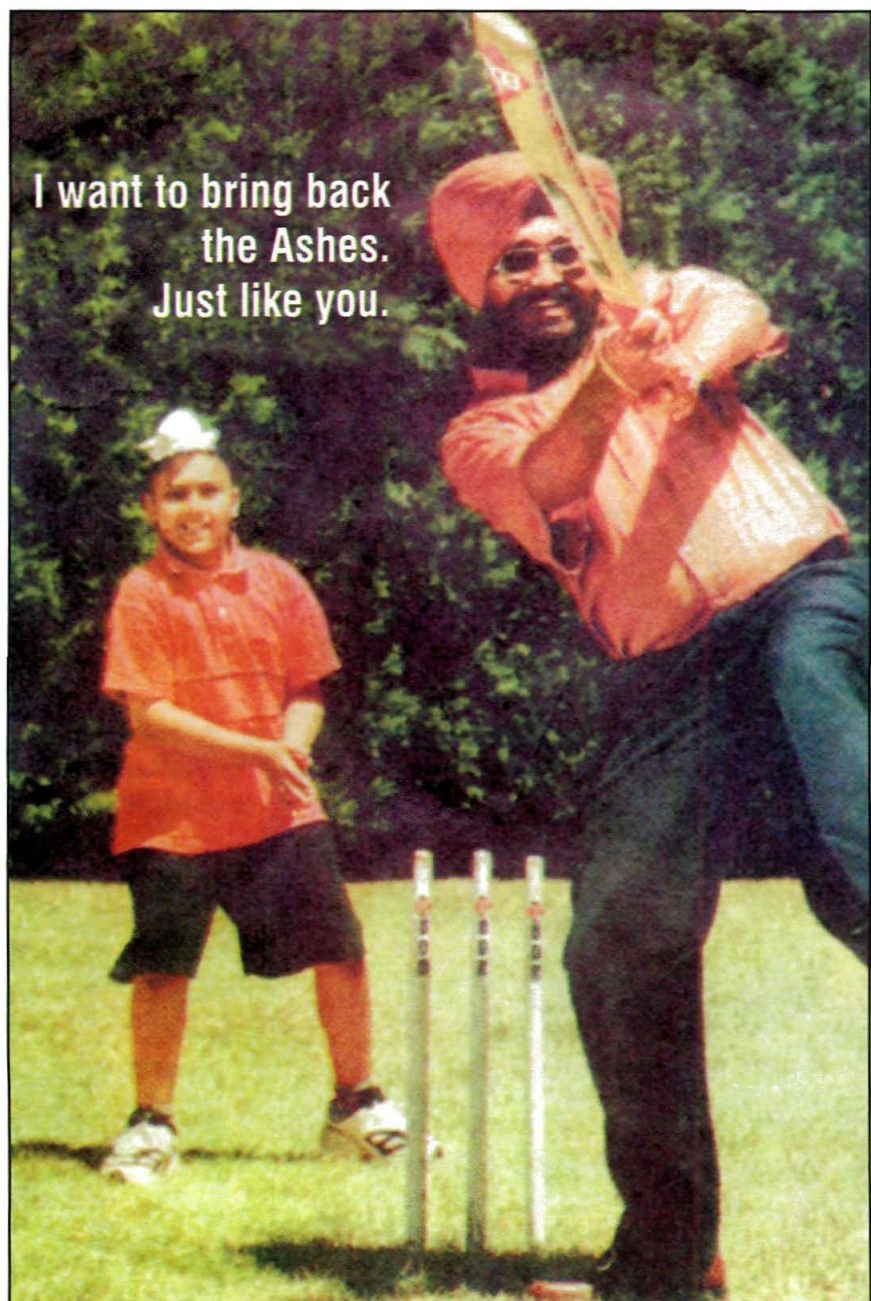
The advertisement, issued by the Government of Victoria—a province of Australia—depicts a turbaned Sikh batting and his minor son, with a handkerchief neatly tied to cover the *jurra* (knot) of hair on his head, keeping the wickets.

The advertisement, which indicates a turnaround in the policy of the developed or western world towards immigrants, especially those from developing nations like India, is basically designed to attract investors from all over the globe to Victoria.

“Victorians come from all over the world. Some of us have been here for generations. Others have just arrived. We work. We celebrate. We want a future for our kids. And we never forget our friends. We want to feel safe in our own homes. This is our home. This is where we live. Just like you,” read the advertisement.

And a couple of days later, when North Queensland, another province of Australia, was devastated by cyclone Harry, *The Australian*, another major English daily of Melbourne, splashed an eight-column picture of a Sikh couple standing besides their wrecked home.

Until a few years ago, not many Sikhs, especially with turbans, figured in mainstream media of the western world. One, however, remembers a full page advertisement inserted by a major Swiss Bank not only in *International Herald Tribune* but also in *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines of Jogeshwar Singh, a 1976-batch IAS officer of Himachal Pradesh, who had joined the bank as head of the Human Resource Development section. Jogeshwar Singh has since moved to another bank in Switzerland.



I want to bring back
the Ashes.
Just like you.

**GO GLOBAL : An advertisement issued by the
Government of Victoria to attract investors to Australia**



In fact, the increasing acceptability of turban worldwide is also reflected in the overwhelming response to Sikh Turban Day, which has been celebrated on Baisakhi day for the last three years.

"We start by first reaching out to neighbourhoods through the door-to-door turban distribution campaign, followed by 'turban clinics' organised worldwide a few weeks before Baisakhi with the help of international, regional and local Sikh organisations. And now Sikh Turban Day is the largest single-day turban awareness campaign in the world.

"Sikhs of all ages greet friends at home and work, pray at gurdwaras and, more importantly, youngsters have their colourful turbans, helping them to open a dialogue and express their feelings. Our campaign reaches all across the world and this is a good start for a long-term mission. The need for such an exercise is paramount to achieving an increased level of turban adoption amongst Sikhs, especially the younger generation besides creating awareness and education amongst their neighbouring communities in the western world", says Hardeep Singh Aulakh of the Sikh Children Forum (SCF) in Fremont, USA. The SCF is one of main organisers of the event.

The SCF started holding this function in 2002 to open a dialogue with non-Sikh communities about the significance of the turban for the Sikh identity and its value in their culture and religion. It was important as many Sikhs became targets of hate crime as they were mistaken for Muslims.

In Canada, now two turbaned Sikhs—Gurbax Singh Malhi and Navdeep Singh Bains—sit in the House of Commons.

"It is unusual to find pictures of turbaned Sikhs splashed so prominently in Australian newspapers," remarked Amrit Grewal, a former Indian basketball player now settled in Australia.

"Things have changed dramatically, more so after Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister of India. Now the western world has started recognising Sikhs and, hence, this prominence.

For many overseas Sikhs, especially those wearing turbans, a shift in the attitude of the people as well as the western media is a positive development after the French government persisted with the implementation of its controversial ban on headgear, including turban or *patka*, in its schools.

"A supportive media was of great help in persuading the French government not to extend the legislation any further," says Devinder Singh Benepal, another Australian Sikh now settled in Sydney.

Many others pointed out that it was perhaps for the first time that a turbaned Sikh, Ram Nayar, was a part of the Canadian contingent in the last Commonwealth Games. Besides India, Kenya and Malaysia were the other countries in Melbourne which included turbaned Sikhs in their contingents.

Though many Sikhs have represented Canada and the UK in Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games, but none wore a turban before.

(ii) Early this year, Monty Panesar (England) became the first Sikh sporting a turban to play for any cricket Test playing nation other than India.

The increased acceptability of Sikhs in all walks of life was also apparent as the Organising Committee of the Melbourne Commonwealth Games invited the Dhol Foundation of Punjab and Daya Singh, a Malaysian Sikh now settled in Melbourne, to perform at the cultural festival held during the Games.

Daya Singh, who invariably sports a white turban, and his troupe were invited for concerts both in Melbourne and Sydney. Members of his troupe include a Nepalese and a few white Australians besides his two daughters.

"We are supportive of the demands of Sikhs that the ban on turban should go from schools of France," said Neena Gill, a Ludhiana-born Member of European Parliament.

Gill, who led a delegation of European Parliamentarians to India last month, suggested that "pressure has to be applied



DR. INDER SINGH MAKIN & FAMILY



Winning Campaign : Sikh Turban Day has drawn a marked response in the US for the last three years

from all sides to revoke this ban”.

A few other members of the European Parliament delegation argued that Sikhs in France were a minute minority and could not be and should not be compared with the strong Muslim community of that country.

“For the Sikhs”, we agree, “turban is not only a religious symbol but also a cultural and identity issue,” added Gill.

Of late, even in the US, where many cases of hate crime against Sikhs were reported immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, now several States have accepted turban as a part of the religious wear of the Sikhs.

(iii) Winning Campaign—Photo (to be reproduced).

(iv) Than My nephew, Dr. Inder S. Makin,
Settled in U.S.A. says :—

“I want to maintain my Identity, though I may not be very familiar with Sikh philosophy.”

(Photo of Dr. Inter Makin with his German Wife Ann Elise and daughter Priyanka)

CHAPTER—VIII

MY IDEAL OF LIFE

The Guru has ordained the sikh to lead a house-holder's life and being little detached from the humdrum of worldly life, the sikh should attain a spiritual level, leading to his emancipation from the worldly bondage, thus gaining 'Salvation' or unison with the Lord-sublime and becoming 'Jivan-Mukat' (ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤ) or enjoying the spiritual bliss of life during this life itself. We do not wish to achieve salvation after death, but gain unison with the Lord during this sojourn in the world.

(i) The Guru has remarked vide Rag Asa M-5 (Page-12).

Rag Asa Mahala 5 (Page 12)

**“Bhaiee prapat manukh dehuria.
Gobind milan ki eh teri baria.”**

**ਰਾਗੁ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨)
“ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥
ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥”**

That means “this life of a human being is given to us to attain unison with the Lord-Gobind or becoming one with the Prime-soul”.

Now there are various paths to attain this objective in life, which led to the formation of many religions in the world. They are all good in their own way, but mine, the path shown by the Guru, is a novel one and very simple, without getting involved in great penance, meditation, keeping fasts, visiting holy places and some other rituals or formal practices. Guru Gobind Singh has remarked in a very simple manner in Swaijyas Patshahi-10.

(i) **“Sach kahou sunn leho sabhai
Jin prem kiou tin hi prabh páyo.”(9)**

“ਸਾਚ ਕਹੈ ਸੁਨ ਲਿਹੋ ਸਭੇ ॥

ਜਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਓ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਯੋ ॥” (੯)

“O people of the world! Listen to me! The only mode of attaining unison with the Lord is by developing true love for Him.”

(ii) Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has remarked vide Rag Ramkali Mahala 5 (P-886).

Rag Ramkali Mahala 5 (Page 886)

“Char pukareh na tu maneh. Khat be eka baat vakhanai.
Das asti mil eko keha ta bhi jogi bhed na leha.
Eun kinkri Anup vajai jogia matvaro ré.”

ਰਾਗੁ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੬)

“ਚਾਰ ਪੁਕਾਰਹਿ ਨ ਤੂ ਮਾਨਹਿ ॥ ਖਟ ਭੀ ਏਕਾ ਬਾਤ ਵਖਾਨਹਿ ॥
ਦਸ ਅਸਟੀ ਮਿਲ ਏਕੋ ਕਿਹਾ ਤਾ ਭੀ ਜੋਗੀ ਭੇਦ ਨ ਲੇਹਾ ॥
ਇਉਂ ਕਿੰਕਰੀ ਆਨੁਪ ਵਾਜੇ ॥ ਜੋਗੀਆ ਮਤਵਾਰੋ ਰੇ ॥”

Which means, “O human being! You do not listen to the path shown by four Vedas, or the six Shastras, which give the same advice, while eighteen Puranas also talk of the same path towards spiritual bliss, but alas! The yogi has not understood the secret of the Lord’s Unison or attainment.

O enchanted yogi! Your musical note (on Kinkri) also leads to the same path.”

But Guru Nanak’s path of attaining the Lord is to recite True Name of the Lord by singing His praises through the Guru’s hymns (sabad) with love and devotion, following the Guru’s guidance and gaining the Guru’s benevolence.

(iii) Guru Nanak has ordained vide :

Rag Gouri Mahala 5 (Page 282)

“Sehaj-subhaié hovai so hoiai.
Karnai haar pachhanai soiai.”

ਰਾਗੁ ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੨)

“ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਹੋਵੇ ਸੋ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਕਰਣੈ ਹਾਰ ਪਛਾਣੇ ਸੋਇ ॥”

Which means : “The person, who follows the Lord’s Will, acting according to the natural surroundings and conditions prevailing without a murmur, finally realizes the Lord-sublime, the greatest cause and effect of everything happening around.”

(iv) Then again Guru Nanak has ordained in Rag Sorath Vaar Mahala-4 ki (P-642) vide Slok M-1 as follows :

Rag Sorath Vaar 4 Slok Mahala 1 (Page 642)

ik Onkar Satgur prasad

“Sorath sada suhavani je sacha mán hoiai.

Dandi mael na kat mán jibhai sacha soiai.

.....

Je pir bhavai Nanaka karam mani sabh sach.”(1)

ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ ਰਾਗੁ ਸੋਰਠਿ ਵਾਰ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੪੨)

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“ਸੋਰਠਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੀ ਜੇ ਸਚਾ ਮਨਿ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਦੰਦੀ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਕਤੁ ਮਨਿ ਜੀਭੈ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

.....

ਜੇ ਪਿਰ ਭਾਵੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਕਰਮ ਮਣੀ ਸਭੁ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

Which means :—O Nanak! If a wedded woman wins the love of her spouse, then her fortune shines forth with the jewel on her forehead and looks most beautiful and truthful. Similarly if someone inculcates the love of the Lord in his heart, then the Sorath Rag looks beautiful like the woman, and he neither feels any filth in the teeth, or the tongue, as he recites True Name with his tongue and such a person enjoys the bliss of life in unison with the Lord-spouse, like the woman enjoying conjugal bliss of her spouse.

.....

O Nanak! Such a person then enjoys the eternal bliss both in this world and the next by reciting True Name (like the wedded woman in the company of her spouse).(1)

(v) Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has remarked vide Devgandhari 5 (P-534) as follows :—

Devgandhaari Mahala 5 (Page 534)

“Amrita pria bachan tuharai.
āt sunder manmohan piarai sabh hun madh nirarai. (Pause-1)
Raj na chahou, mukat na chahou,
mán preet charan kamlarai.
Brahm mahes sidh mun Indra,
mohai Thakur hi darsarai.(1)
Deen duarai aiyo Thakur, saran pariou sant harai.
Koh Nanak prabh milai manohar mán sital bigsarai.” (2-3-29)

ਦੇਵਗੰਧਾਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੪)

“ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਅ ਬਚਨ ਤੁਹਾਰੇ ॥
ਅਤਿ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਸਭ ਹੂੰ ਮਧਿ ਨਿਰਾਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲਾਰੇ ॥
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮਹੇਸ ਸਿਧ ਮੁਨਿ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਾ ਮੋਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਹੀ ਦਰਸਾਰੇ ॥੧॥
ਦੀਨ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਆਇਓ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਸਰਨਿ ਪਰਿਓ ਸੰਤ ਹਾਰੇ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਿਲੇ ਮਨੋਹਰ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਤਲ ਬਿਗਸਾਰੇ ॥੨॥੩॥੨੯॥

Which means : “O beloved Lord! Your speech and words are as sweet as the nectar (of True Name). O Lord, the beautiful, bewitching and charming Lord! You are pervading every being and are completely distinct (aloof) at the same time. (Pause-1)

O Lord! Neither am I interested in any kingdom or control of any country nor am I keen on attaining salvation even. I only seek the dust of the lotus feet of the Lord, which shall be everlasting.

O True Master! I only perceive you in gods like Brahma, Shiva, Indra and all the Sidhas or Munis (religious orders) and all their actions are reflecting your greatness.(1)

O Nanak! My heart blossoms forth with joy and peace when I get unison with the Lord. O True Master! I have sought your support only, and have taken refuge at the lotus feet of the

holy saints as a last resort and pray for unification with the Lord.” (2-3-29)

The main point at issue is that various (religious) philosophers offer paradise after death, but the Guru has exhorted us not to run after such achievements, as the present tenure of life in the world is most important and we are not bothered, what happens afterwards. It is to be understood that it is the present time when we are required to attain a high status, not in the worldly sense of material gains but getting to know the Lord Himself by getting very close to His lotus-feet. Salvation after death is not my ideal, but my mind should develop true love for the Lord here itself, as the Lord's presence is to be realized everywhere, while leading this human life.

(vi) Guru Nanak has remarked vide Sorath Mahala 1 Ghar 1 Choupadé (Page-594) as follows :—

Sorath Mahala 1 Ghar 1 (Page 594)

“Sabhna marna áiya vichhor'a sabnah
 Puchhoh jaié siániá ágai milan kinah
 Jin méra sahib visarai vadr'i vedan tinah.(1)
 Bhi saláiho sácha soiai.
 Ja ki nadir sada sukh hoiai. (Pause)

ਸੋਰਠਿ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ ਘਰੁ ੧ ਚਉਪਦੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੪)

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“ਸਭਨਾ ਮਰਣਾ ਆਇਆ ਵੇਛੋੜਾ ਸਭਨਾ ॥

ਪੁਛਹੁ ਜਾਇ ਸਿਆਣਿਆ ਆਗੈ ਮਿਲਣੁ ਕਿਨਾਰ ॥

ਜਿਨ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਵਡੜੀ ਵੇਦਨ ਤਿਨਾਰ ॥੧॥

ਭੀ ਸਾਲਾਹਿਗੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਜਾ ਕੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Which means : All the beings, who are born in this world, have to face death surely, (one day) being separated from their dear ones. You may ask some wise men whether there will be

any chance of meeting those separated ones in the next world or not. In any case, all those persons, who have forsaken the Lord, face lot of sufferings and tribulations.(1)

Let us recite the True Name of the True Master and worship the Lord-benefactor who blesses us with all the benedictions through His Grace. (Pause)

(vii) Then Guru Ram Das (the 4th Nanak) has remarked vide Rag Asa (P-449) :

Rag Asa Mahala 4 (Page 449)

**“Jivan mukat so akhiai jo mar jivai maria.
Jan Nanak Satgur mail har jamdutar taria.”**

ਰਾਗ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੪੯)

“ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਸੁ ਆਖੀਐ ਜੋ ਮਰਿ ਜੀਵੈ ਮਰੀਆ॥

ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੇਲਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਮੁ ਦੁਤਰੁ ਤਰੀਆ॥”

Which means : The person, who has become so humble with the Guru's guidance that he behaves like a dead person (while living this life) i.e. without any egoism or I-am-ness, and attains salvation in this life itself.

O Nanak! We pray to the Guru to enable us unite with the Lord, and through the company of holy saints enable us to cross this ocean of life successfully.(2)

Bhakat Kabir has also stated that salvation after death, would be of no avail to me, unless it is attained during this life itself.

“We look before and after and pine for what is not.”

It is the human nature to always go on cribbing for something or the other, as such without looking to the opportunities offered to us in the present life we go on feeling morose for what is missing or has been lost, which would not bring us peace of mind. Just as Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has remarked in Sukhmani Sahib. (P-268)

Sukhmani Sahib (Page 268)

**“Das bastu le pachhai pavai. Ek basat karan bikhhot gavavai.
Ek bhi na dei das bhi hir lei. Tou moor'a kaho kia karai.”**

ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ (ਪੰਨਾ)

“ਦਸ ਬਸਤੂ ਲੇ ਪਾਛੈ ਪਾਵੈ॥ ਏਕ ਬਸਤ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਿਖੋਟ ਗਵਾਵੈ॥
ਇਕ ਭੀ ਨ ਦੇਇ ਦਸ ਭੀ ਹਰ ਲੇ॥ ਤਉ ਮੂੜਾ ਕਹੋ ਕਿਆ ਕਰੈ॥”

If the Lord had already given us ten material goods, we do not care to thank Him for that but crib for the one item, which is missing. O fool! What shall you do, if He were to take away all those ten goods even (material things) instead of giving you the one missing item, then what will you do ?

CHAPTER—IX

MY MISSION IN LIFE

The Guru had created the khalsa fraternity with a special mission in life. With a unique personality of its own, the khalsa was to behave differently from the ordinary human beings, belonging to other great religions of the world like Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. The daily prayer of the Sikhs (Ardas) ends up, after enumerating all their sacrifices for the sake of the panth or the country (nation), with these words :

“Nanak naamī char'dī kālā terai bhānai sarbat dā bhala.”

“O Nanak! May I ever remain in the highest spirits with recitation of Lord's True Name and acting according to the Lord's Will, may I seek the welfare of the whole humanity.”

This shows a very high ideal and mission in life, which needs a high character, a sense of responsibility for the welfare of humanity (as a whole), making sacrifices, service of the humanity at large, and rendering all sorts of help physical, financial or moral as required under the circumstances. But above all, a strong moral character is needed for performing such functions and taking all risks for the upliftment of the other people. We are reminded of the sikh character of the olden days, when at the risk of their lives, the sikhs would protect the honour of the women folk of (various) other communities, when they landed themselves into some difficulty or hazards. The women were rescued from the control of their oppressors and then united with their families by keeping their honour intact. Even today such incidents are to be seen happening all around, and it becomes incumbent on a sikh to render all help to other people in any danger of life or property, which gives me pride of my Guru's faith or pride of being a sikh, who could render any help to others at the risk of his life.

Secondly, service to the humanity during certain natural calamities like floods, earthquakes or disasters is the prime need.

Recently such calamities like sunami were witnessed in Tamil Nadu, Andamans and some other areas of Andhra or Orissa. It was left to the small community (in numbers) of sikhs to render all assistance by way of providing food and shelter. Even in America recently certain natural calamities like tornadoes had hit the coastal areas and sikhs had organised certain camps for rendering help. In Tamil Nadu, during floods in certain areas, relief camps for providing food were started and the sikhs provided (after certain training) langar in the form of idly, dosha and rice preparations instead of chapatis and dal (pulses) as is customary. Truck loads of relief material were sent from Punjab to Pakistan occupied Kashmir recently during the Earthquakes there. This gives me a certain amount of satisfaction and pride that we have rendered some help to the needy in the time of their adverse circumstances in physical, material or monetary form, as was necessitated. The service of humanity in some form or the other has always been the role of the sikh community.

Guru HarGobind had got a mosque constructed for the Muslims in the olden days, whereas recently late Sant Waryam Singh had got a mosque constructed for the Muslims of Ratwara (near Chandigarh). During Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign all help to build mosques or temples (mandirs) was given by him apart from building all the historical Gurdwaras in the country.

So my mission in life, as a sikh, is not limited to selfish ends but rendering all help to the needy, wherever it was required. This gives me a sense of pride and satisfaction.

I am reminded of an incident when a Britisher hailed a sikh youth in Australia once with "Sat Sri Akal" and then introduced himself as a former Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar for sometime and how he used to visit the Golden Temple every morning for about half an hour, listening to the spiritual kirtan. Though he did not understand its meaning, but it would give him lot of peace of mind and he used to enjoy the devotional music, which stirred and appealed to his soul.

Now in the modern world music plays a major role in our daily life, while this singing of Gurbani (Guru's Word) forms an integral part of sikh prayers. So from that angle, we are lucky to

have music of the soul as a routine part of our daily prayers. Thus I feel proud of myself while listening to the celestial music or singing of kirtan at all our functions, that my religion provides the basic human need as a part of our prayers even.

The kirtan from Darbar Sahib, Amritsar is being relayed for two hours in the morning and one hour in the evening on All India Radio Jalandhar. Then certain T.V channels also relay alive this programme in the mornings and evenings daily. Sikhs all over the world are keen to hear this kirtan from the T.V channels, and this has been made possible by the latest technology in communication.

Infact, the Golden Temple continuously carries out the kirtan sessions from early morning to late in the evening, with a break of few hours in the night. This means the Lord's True Name is being recited from the Golden Temple almost all the twenty-four hours (except for the night break of few hours) and this is the only place in the world, from where one could hear the devotional kirtan (music) for all the day through incessantly, where Ragis perform this duty regularly.

(i) Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) had proclaimed vide Rag Ramkali (P-893) as follows :—

Ramkali Mahala 5 (Page 893)

“Kirtan nirmolak hira, anand gunni gaheera.”

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੯੩)

“ਕੀਰਤਨ ਨਿਰਮੋਲਕ ਹੀਰਾ ॥ ਆਨੰਦ ਗੁਣੀ ਗਾਹੀਰਾ ॥”

Which means :—The songs sung (kirtan) in the praise of the Lord are like the invaluable nectar and jewels (blessed by the Lord) which impart the eternal bliss through the ocean of virtues bestowed by the Lord.

Various Sikh Gurus had stressed on a particular aspect of human life, and practically demonstrated that point by following it themselves in toto, and thus these ten mantras (slogans) form the basis of a sikh's life in the world. It also entails certain social obligations towards the nation as a whole, which will be taken up shortly. Let us first discuss the ten commandments.

(i) Guru Nanak Dev gave us the basic spiritual need of the individual by stressing on "Singing Lord's praises and reciting Lord's True Name", alongwith some other requirements to lead a normal life.

But this aspect was very vital to any human being, and the Guru propagated this message throughout the world by undertaking long and arduous trips, to all the known lands in the world. During these trips long discourses were held with contemporaries, following other religious practices. Special stress was laid on avoiding formal rituals.

(ii) The second Nanak gave us the commandment of obeying the Lord's Will. (Thy Will be done—as they say). He demonstrated this skill himself throughout his life, while carrying out the ordains of his Master, Guru Nanak, at any time of the day or night without any murmur or any doubts.

(a) Just as Guru Arjan Dev has remarked in Sukhmani Sahib, (P-287) vide Rag Gouri.

Rag Gouri Sukhmani Sahib (Page-287)

"Bees bisvai Gur ka mán manai.

So sewak pamesar ki gát janiai"

ਰਾਗ ਗਉੜੀ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੭)

"ਬੀਸ ਬਿਸਵੈ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਮਨ ਮਾਨੈ ॥

ਸੋ ਸੇਵਕ ਪ੍ਰਮੇਸਰ ਕੀ ਗਤ ਜਾਨੈ ॥"

"A follower or devotee, who follows and carries out the ordains of the Guru in toto (hundred percent), shall be able to realize the Lord's secrets." (Secrets of life).

Thus this formed a major criterion for judging a True Sikh who would not falter in obeying the Lord's Will.

—(b) Guru Nanak has said in Jap ji.(2)

~ "Nanak hukmai je bujhé ta homain kehái na koiai." (P-2)

~ "ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਜੋ ਬੁਝੈ ਤਾ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੇ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥"

(iii) The third commandment referred to ingraining the idea of service (sewa) to the devotee. To quote an example, Guru Amar Das (the 3rd Nanak) continued to serve the Master for 12 years, day in and day out. He would arrange to fetch water

from the river Beas for the bath of his master, Guru Angad Dev from a distance (of about two miles), then during the day, also he would continue to serve in the langar (community kitchen) or some other jobs. Thus the sikhs were to practise the service of fellow beings, which was stressed and shown practically by Guru Amar Das. The bhats (bards) have sung thus,

**“Bhallai Amar Das, gunn terai
teri upma tohai bán avai.”**

i.e. O Guru Amar Das! The praises regarding your great qualities, can be only sung by us, as you alone knew your greatness and your virtues.”

Apart from this, the custom of Sati or Purdah (covering) system among women was discarded and opposed by the Guru.

(iv) Then Guru Ram Das (the 4th Nanak) had taught us the lessons in Vairag (detachment) from worldly pleasures or desires. Leading a householder's life, one must keep oneself detached from worldly bondage.

Guru Ram Das, being the son-in-law of Guru Amar Das never showed any disregard for the service of the Guru, infact he got himself fully involved in any service going on at the Guru's place. For example, while the Baoli (a deep well) was being dug up at Goindwal, he would carry a basket full of mud on his head, without any reservation and continue this service for hours. His humility can be revealed from his hymns—

“Hum rulté phirtai koiee baat na poochhta, Gur sung kiai keéré hum thapai.”

Meaning, I was wandering like an unknown and unheard of person, but coming in the Guru's (contact) company. I, a small insignificant worm, was established as an important functionary. “His hymns are full of Vairag, detachment from Maya (worldly falsehood) and while reading those hymns, tears flow down the reader's cheeks automatically; as these are full of detachment from worldly pleasures or aspirations. He also exhorted the Sikhs to take part in horse (trading) business or other business at the new town of Amritsar established by him.

(v) Then the 5th Nanak gave us lessons in knowledge and enlightenment by compiling Sri Guru Granth Sahib in 1604 by collecting all the hymns of his predecessors including the bhaktas (saints) in India, even those gone by.

This was his main contribution, apart from exhorting his followers to sing the hymns themselves by way of kirtan. (Which was being done by Muslim rababies like Mardana and others before).

Finally he gave up his life as the first martyr in sikh history, while not surrendering to the Imperial orders. Infact, the story of sikh martyrs was then repeated and continues till to-date to put an end to oppression of any type or form.

The treasure of Guru Granth Sahib handed over to posterity by the Guru will remain a shining star in the galaxy of worldly attainments. This is being realized now by people all over the world.

(vi) Then the sixth Guru, Guru HarGobind, after the martyrdom of his father, arranged to arm his followers so as to meet the challenge of Mughal oppression. He wore two swords of Miri and Piri, indicating worldly and spiritual powers. He exhorted his followers to bring presents in the form of horses or weapons. So the followers were trained in the use of arms henceforth. He was engaged in four battles against the forces of Shah Jahan wherein his forces were victorious.

(vii) Then Guru Har Rai, the 7th Nanak, maintained a cavalry of 2200 armed horsemen, but did not engage himself in any political activity, thus giving us practical lessons in non-violence, which has been a religious theme of the Gandhian era.

(viii) Then after his mortal life, the reins of the geat sikh movement were passed on to a five year old child, his younger son (Hari Krishan). During his tenure of guru'ship, an epidemic of small pox had overtaken the areas of Delhi and he worked ceaselessly for the help and cure of suffering humanity, thus contracting the disease himself, which resulted in the end of his mortal life at 8 years of age.

Thus Guru Har Krishan, at that young age gave us lessons in the service of suffering humanity even at the cost of one's

own life. The sikh prayer says : “Sri HarKrishan dhiayeai jis dithai sabh dukh jaié.”

(ix) Then the reins of sikh movement were passed on to Guru Tegh Bahadur, who was engaged in the meditation of the Lord-sublime for about 24 years at Bakala leading a secluded life. On assuming ‘the Guruship, he was busy in the Eastern India side (Assam) giving the message of Guru Nanak to the humanity and settling some political disputes of the assam ruler with the Mughals.

Then suddenly, on his return to Anandpur, where his family had settled down in the base of Shivalik hills, the Kashmiri brahmins had approached him for help against the tyranny of Aurangzeb, who was madly following the policy of mass conversions of Hindus to Islam. In the pursuit of rendering some help to the Hindu community, he offered his life itself to meet the challenge of Mughal tyranny against religious conversions. Finally he was ordered by Aurangzeb to be executed publicly in 1675, after lot of physical torture in the prison.

The Gurdwaras ‘Sis Ganj’ and ‘Rakab Ganj’ stand in Delhi till to-day in the memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur’s martyrdom, when his son Gobind Rai was only 9 years old. Later Guru Gobind Singh had remarked about his father’s sacrifice that no one in the world had carried out such an act of sacrifice by laying down his life for the sake of protection of another’s religion (meaning the Hindu conversions).

(x) Then the reins of sikh movement passed on to young Gobind Rai, who had decided from his younger age itself to organise the Indian community in such a manner as to stand against the oppression of Mughal tyranny. So after finishing his studies at Anandpur under the care of his maternal uncle Kirpal, he engaged himself in organising his followers in military combats. Finally in 1699 he organised the sikhs towards the fulfilment of his life’s mission and created the ‘Khalsa Panth’ to stand against all sorts of oppression.

Thus the passive movement of Guru Nanak started in 1499, became ready for meeting the challenge of Mughal tyranny, in 1699 (after 200 years of religious training) in the form of “Khalsa

Army”, who were both saints and soldiers. So the divided Indian community was united into an Indian Nation for the first time in Indian history. It goes to the credit of Guru Gobind Singh alone to unite the Indians into a Nation, and a national movement was started in India to oust the Mughal rulers from India.

Thus the final shape to the sikh edifice was given by Guru Gobind Singh, after forming an army of saint-soldiers. (Sant sipahi) in 1699.

Hence forth the sikhs were transformed into ‘Khalsa Panth’ whose mission in life was two-fold viz. Upliftment of the soul through recitation of True Name, and secondly to organize itself politically into a ‘National movement’ to meet the challenge of oppression in any form. Thus making it incumbent for his followers not to succumb to oppression in any form, even at the cost of one’s life. Thus my mission becomes two fold to lead a spiritual life combined with moral courage to meet the challenge of oppression, even at the cost of life.

(b) My religious social, political and aesthetical Obligations.

A perfect human being was created on the formation of ‘Khalsa Panth’ by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699, which entailed the following responsibilities (duties).

(i) To lead a life of religious activities being a householder, including recitation of Lord’s True Name and singing His praises by way of Kirtan, discourses and goading others on to the same path, as the Guru has stated,

**“Jan Nanak dhoor’ mangai tis Gursikh ki
Jo aap japai avra naam japaié.”(P-306)**

“ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਧੂੜ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸ ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖ ਕੀ॥

ਜੋ ਆਪ ਜਪੈ ਅਵਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਾਵੈ॥” (ਪੰਨਾ 306)

i.e. “O Nanak! I seek the dust of the lotus-feet of that Gursikh (Guru’s follower) who himself recites Lord’s True Name and then goads and helps others as well towards the same goal.”

(ii) To serve the ailing humanity, irrespective of any caste, creed or status considerations and serve without any selfish motives.

(iii) There is so much of exploitation in the world of the

weaker sections of society, so it would be my endeavour to spend a part of my income towards the upliftment of weaker sections of society, irrespective of religious denominations.

(iv) Service of the humanity at large by all means, specially at the time of natural calamities in any part of the world.

Thus the system of langars (community kitchen) providing accommodation to visitors (outsiders) or other help to the common man in times of need e.g. epidemics, natural calamities like floods or earthquakes.

(v) To propagate the message of the Guru, in terms of following Lord's Will (Hukam) recitation of True Name, joining in religious congregations (Sadh Sangat) by setting up Gurdwaras everywhere. But we are now over-spending in decorating Gurdwaras with marble and gold rather than the Guru's message of Universal love and brotherhood of mankind.

(vi) Politically, we should lead an honest, truthful corruption-free life and helping in running Democratic institutions without any selfish motives. But practically all the political organisations are working for their own aggrandisement.

(vii) Love of art and culture should be another field of activity.

(viii) Sports activities of all types should be encouraged for maintaining national health.

(ii) Guru Ram Das has proclaimed as follows :—

Dhanasari Chhant Mahala 4 Ghar 1 (P-690)

ik Onkar Satgur prasad

“Har jiu kirpa karai, ta Naam dhiaieeai jiu.

SatGur milai subhaié sahej gunn gaieeai jiu.

Gunn gaié vigsai sada andin ja aap sachai bhavai.

Ahankar homain tajai maya sahej Naam samavai.

Aap karta karé soiee aap dei ta paieeai.

Har jiu kirpa karai ta naam dhiaieeai. jiu.(1)

.....

Naamo naam mili vadiaiee Nanak Naam mán bhavai.

Kar kirpa leho milayáíá mahal har pavai jiu.(5-1)

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਛੰਤ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ਘਰੁ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੦)

“ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਤਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਿਲੈ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਸਹਜਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਈਐ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਸਦਾ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਜਾ ਆਪਿ ਸਾਚੇ ਭਾਵਏ ॥
ਅਹੰਕਾਰ ਹਉਮੈ ਤਜੈ ਮਾਇਆ ਸਹਜਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਵਏ ॥
ਆਪਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੈ ਸੇਈ ਆਪਿ ਦੇਇ ਤ ਪਾਈਐ ॥
ਹਰ ਜੀਉ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਤਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਜੀਉ ॥੧॥

.....
ਨਾਮੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵਏ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਲੇਹੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਮਹਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਵਏ ਜੀਉ ॥੫॥੧॥

Which means :—We could recite the Lord's True Name only when the Lord bestows His Grace on us. We also sing the praises of the Lord, the ocean of virtues and peace-loving nature in a state of equipoise in the company of the True Guru. Moreover, we sing the praises of the Lord through the Guru's Grace, when we win the pleasure and acceptance of the Lord and such persons always remain thrilled with joy by singing the Lord's praises. Such truthful persons get united with the Lord, having discarded the worldly falsehood (Maya); in the form of egoism and worldly attachments. The Lord-creator has created all the beings Himself and we attain True Name through the Guru's Grace, when it pleases the Lord. Thus we could recite True Name only when we are blessed with His Grace.(1)

.....
O Nanak! Such a person attains greatness by recitation of True Name which is loved by the Lord. O Lord! May you unite us with yourself through your grace, thus finding (giving us) a place in the Lord's presence. (5-1)

(iii) Then Guru Arjan Dev (the 5th Nanak) has ordained as follows :

Ramkali Ki Vaar Mahala 5 (P-959)

“Kahai mán tu dolta har mansa pooran haar.
SatGur purkh dhiaí tu sabh dukh visaran haar.

.....
Jan Nanak mangai daan ik deho daras mán piar. (2)

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਕੀ ਵਾਰ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੯)

“ਕਾਹੇ ਮਨ ਤੂ ਡੋਲਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਮਨਸਾ ਪੂਰਣਹਾਰੁ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਧਿਆਇ ਤੂ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖ ਵਿਸਾਰਣ ਹਾਰੁ ॥

.....
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਮੰਗੈ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਕੁ ਦੇਹੁ ਦਰਸੁ ਮਨਿ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥੨॥

Which means : O my mind! Why are you wavering in disappointment when the Lord is ever willing to fulfil all your desires ? O human being! You should recite the Lord's True Name through the Guru's guidance, who is capable of ridding you of all your ills and afflictions.

.....
O Nanak! Such fortunate persons follow the Lord's Will, by imbibing the love of the Lord-spouse all the twenty-four hours (eight pehars) I would also seek the boon of True Name alone, so as to get a glimpse of the Lord-spouse, having inculcated His love in my heart.(2)

CHAPTER—X

MY FESTIVALS

Apart from the festivals related to the ten Gurus like birthdays of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh and Martyrdom days of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur, the festivals of Baisakhi, Diwali and Hola Mohala are prominent among the other sikh festivals.

Apart from religious congregations where kirtan and discourses on sikh religion, history and such other matters are held, enough food is distributed to the poor in the langars (community food centres) and Tea with snacks are served to all the people around, whosoever joins up, irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

During olden days of Muslim oppression even, Diwali was being celebrated at Darbar Sahib Amritsar, where sikhs would gather in large numbers. This had resulted earlier in ghalugharas (massacre of sikhs) during Ahmad Shah Abdali's times. Even today Diwali at Darbar Sahib Amritsar is a big festival, where thousand of people gather to pay their homage to the Guru.

Then Baisakhi is another great festival for the sikhs all over, specially as it is related to the birth of Khalsa. Since Baisakhi of 1699, this day apart from harvesting of wheat etc. it has an added attraction for celebrating the birth of Khalsa.

There is no other religion or community in the world celebrating its own birthday except the sikhs.

Some friends have informed that even in Canada, Baisakhi is celebrated by the Canadian Parliament, starting with an Akhand Path in the Parliament house itself.

Hola Mohala has been going on at Anandpur Sahib since the time of Guru Gobind Singh, when Marshal games and

activities of horsemanship or swordsmanship etc. are being enacted at Anandpur. This started with the training of the sikhs in warfare during the tenure of the Tenth Master so as to prepare the Khalsa for meeting the Mughal challenge of oppression. The basic idea of all these festivals is to remind us about the sikh values in religion or other social or political needs of the country.

Kirtan Darbars—Kirtan (Devotional Singing of Guru's Word) forms an integral part of all sikh religious functions or festivals. Initially Mardana, a muslim rebeck player, was accompanying Guru Nanak during his travels and then some others continued to follow and sing at sikh congregations. But during Guru Arjan Dev's time, the sikhs were exhorted to sing kirtan themselves and now there is no dearth of Ragis or others, who sing themselves at various congregations or kirtan Darbars, (organised singing sessions). This forms a major meditational technique, as Guru's bani (Guru's Word) in different Ragas, is being sung at all congregational prayers. The morning and evening sessions of religious nature comprise partly of singing hymns by the Ragis (or Individual singers) followed by discourses or discussions of the Gurbani, explaining the philosophy of sikh Gurus relating to singing the praises of the Lord or Recitation of Lord's True Name.

Kirtan, or singing of Gurbani (Guru's Word) or hymns from Guru Granth Sahib forms a major part of all the festivals. The Guru has said,

“Kirtan nirmolak heerá.

Anand gunni gaheera.”

i.e. “Singing of devotional music is an invaluable jewel, which gives the eternal bliss, full of virtuous qualities. This kirtan is meant to help one attain meditation and concentration, so as to recite Lord's True Name.

Then “Bhangra” (Male Dance) forms an important part of all festivals, specially the baisakhi festival. Infact, the Bhangra

rhythm has shaken the whole world with its musical beats. The Panjabi Pop Music, which has taken birth from Bhangra's music only, has become famous and popular throughout the world.

Apart from Bhangra, *gidha*, folk dance by the girls is equally popular in Panjab.

The beats of Bhangra and Panjabi Pop music are so vivid and impulsive that one is forced to join the crowd in such chores without any coercion.

The festival of Diwali is also celebrated at the Golden Temple. Infact, it dates back to the olden days, when during the time of Mughal rulers, sikhs used to gather at Amritsar (Golden Temple) for collective celebrations there. However, during Ahmad Shah Abdali's time, two ghalugharas, mass massacre of sikhs (30,000 and 20,000), took place, which gave a hard blow. Notwithstanding all these hurdles, the sikh movement continued unabated in the past.

Then during *Hola Mohala* at Anandpur Sahib, lot of Marshal games including tentpegging, *Gatka* or wielding of swords, became very popular among the sikhs.

The procession, with Nihangs in their traditional dresses, is a remarkable event of *Hola Mahala* celebrations. Now-a-days political meetings of various parties or groups (like the Akalis and Congress), are being held at Anandpur Sahib, so a political tinge is being given to them.

All the sikh festivals are linked with visit to Gurdwara, singing of Gurbani kirtan followed by discourses on the life and achievements of the great Gurus are the main attractions.

Moreover, all these celebrations are followed by langars (Community kitchen) where apart from food, tea and snacks are being served, which has become quite popular. The main attraction of these langars is that people from all other communities and walks of life join their sikh friends to partake in langar. Poor people are equally served with full regard at all

these outings, irrespective of any caste or creed considerations.

(ii) Interest in sports and other activities. The story of the 'Flying Sikh', Milkha Singh is known throughout the world about his dashing activity in athletics. (100 m or 400 m race)

Similarly the part played by Sikhs in Indian hockey or other events has been very prominent.

Sikhs in Foreign lands : Because of their enterprising nature, the sikhs have been migrating to various foreign lands in large numbers. Infact, the number of sikhs in India and Abroad has become almost equal. They have played a very important role in various countries like America, Canada, Australia and some other lands. In recent times, some Americans have embraced Sikhism and are keenly interested in devotional singing of kirtan in a befitting manner.

CHAPTER—XI

MY ART OF LIVING (FOR A SIKH)

The sikh is exhorted to :—

(i) Lead a simple life, earning one's livelihood through hard and honest labour, while reciting Lord's True Name, and then share one's earnings with the needy. So that one enjoys the pleasure of leading an independent life, enjoying the bliss of life and helping others as well towards the same goal.

(ii) Try to serve the Guru, by following His ordains hundred percent, by complete self-surrender.

“ਬੀਸ ਬਿਸਵੇ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਮਨ ਮਾਨੈ ॥
ਸੋ ਸੇਵਕ ਪ੍ਰਸੇਸਰ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਜਾਨੈ ॥”

By following the Guru's Word with complete self-surrender, one could attain the secret of Nature and the Lord's drama.

(iii) Lead a householders' life, attending to one's family requirements and responsibilities, with faith in Guru's guidance and help at all times.

(iv) Keep ten percent of one's income (Daswandh) apart to meet the requirements of the needy.

(v) Lead the life according to a certain disciplined manner, by getting up early in the morning, reciting Nit Name (daily prayers) after taking bath and then reciting Lord's True Name by reciting Guru's Word (Gurbani) during the day. e.g. :

“ਵਿਸਰ ਨਾਹੀ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਅਪਣਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਹੁ ॥
ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਾ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਚਾਹਉ ਏਹੁ ॥”

(vi) Follow the life's struggles with courage, honesty, sincerity and some sense of purpose and with integrity.

(vii) The motto of life should be :

“Nisché kar apni jeet karon.”

One should always be sure of one's victory in the battle of

life, comprising various struggles.

(viii) One should attend to the social and political or other obligations towards society, country, nation and the world community with the motto :—

“Nanak Naam char'dhi kala.

Terai bhané sarbat da bhalla.”

Having faith in Lord's True Name, with (Guru Nanak's guidance, I always remain in the highest spirits, and wish for the welfare of all as per Lord's Will.

(ix) I long for Lord's Grace and benevolence only, in preference to salvation even, and want to attain salvation also within this life itself and not after death.

(x) Thus lead a life of humility in the service of humanity.

(xi) Then lead a life full of vigour and optimism, without giving any thought to despair even in the face of difficulties or calamities. The question of high spirits is always uppermost in the mind.

(xii) Whether marriage ceremonies or functions at death are preceded by Kirtan (recital of devotional singing) and prayers at the end, followed by langar.

(xiii) The only drawback at these functions is one's getting more ostentacious and indulging in extravagance for the sake of showing off of one's opulence, which must be avoided. All such functions must be made very simple and inexpensive.

CHAPTER—XII

MY PRAYER (ARDAS)

The Sikh prays to the Lord is as follows :—

“Victory to the Lord-sublime, the one and only Lord Almighty.”

“May the Lord, embodiment of Sword, be our protector!
(Vaar Sri Bhagauti ji ki—By the Tenth Master)”

Let us worship the sword-wielding Lord of Steel first and then meditate on Guru Nanak (the founder). Then let us seek the protection of Angad, Guru Amar Das and Ram Das, further let us concentrate on Arjan, HarGobind and Sri Har Rai. Then let us meditate on Sri Har Krishan, whose one glimpse would dispel all our sufferings, finally by meditating on Tegh Bahadur, we could attain all the nine treasures of the world. Let the Lord be our protector at all places!”

“Let the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh ji, protect our honour at all places. By concentrating on Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the spiritual light of the Ten Gurus (Sabad Guru), let us recite Lord’s True Name, VaheGuru. (O wonderful Lord!) by keeping in mind the Guru’s Word and a glimpse of the vision of the holy Guru Granth Sahib.

O Khalsa ji! Recite the name of Vahe-Guru by recalling the sacrifices of the Five beloved ones, four sons of the Tenth Guru, forty (Muktas) devoted ones, who gave up their lives, alongwith all those Gursikhs, who have concentrated on the True Lord, underwent penance or worship or have inculcated True Name (in their hearts), have shared their earnings (with others) and have served the kettle (community kitchen) or wielded the sword (against oppression) and have considered the seen as unseen havoc, all these beloved ones and Truthful ones, let us remember them all and recite True Name, Vahe Guru (Wonderous Lord).

Let us then concentrate on those Singhs (brave ones) and brave Sikh ladies, who had sacrificed themselves, got dismembered, got their heads chopped off, were killed between two moving wheels or sawed alive in order to maintain their faith in sikhism, while maintaining the sanctity of sikh shrines. (Gurdwaras). Keeping all of them in mind, let us remember the Name of the Lord, Vahe Guru; O Khalsa Ji! Let us repeat the name of (the Lord) Vahe Guru in the memory of five seats of sikh authority (Takhats), all the Gurdwaras (historical); let the whole Khalsa Brotherhood pray with the recitation of Vahe Guru, Vahe Guru and in the name of the Lord, let there be peace all around. Let there be full protection to the Khalsa Brotherhood, wherever they be, let there be victory for the Khalsa both in war and the management of the community kitchen. Let there be victory for the Khalsa Panth through the Lord's protection and let the sword-arm of the Lord be hailed as the saviour and let us recite the Name of the Lord, Vahe Guru, for the victory and aggrandisement of the Khalsa Panth. Let us pray for the blessings of the Lord for a good Sikh character, with Keshas (long hair) intact, alongwith all the sikh customs and traditions, attainment of the knowledge, faith, conviction and above all, Lord's True Name, alongwith a visit to Amritsar and a dip in the holy sarovar (tank); let us recite the Name of the Lord, Vahe Guru, with the permanence of the Khalsa Flag, victory of the Panth and all other symbols of Sikh character for all times to come. Let there be free visits to the holy shrines of Shri Nankana Sahib and all other Gurdwaras separated from the Sikhs! (during partition) Let the Sikhs have a humble mind (humility) with a high moral spirit, with True Lord as the Protector!

O True Lord! The holy father and pride of the weak and helpless (poor)! We pray to Thee for a successful completion of all the projects in hand. May we meet such Guru-minded persons alone, who would imbibe Thy True Name in our hearts!

O Lord! Pray pardon our shortcomings, and acts of omission and commission; Let there be growth of True Name

with ever-increasing power, peace and tranquillity. A preparation of Sweet Pudding (Karah Prasad) as an offering to Thee, worthy of distribution to the congregation is ready with your blessings. With our congregational prayers of the Sangat, O Nanak! With True Name in our hearts, let us always be in high spirits and let there be good of all humanity with Lord's Grace and as per His Will." (Vahe Guru ji ka Khalsa Vahe Guru ji ki Fateh). (Khalsa Belongs to the Lord, let victory belong to the Lord)!

“Waak” (Hukam Naama) (Guru's Ordains) :

(When a hymn is read out from the holy Guru Granth Sahib) E.G.

Ramkali Mahala 4 Ghar 1 (P-880)

ik Onkar SatGur prasad

“Jé vadbhag hovai vadbhagi ta(n) har har Naam dhiávai.
Naam japat Namai sukh pavai har Naamai Naam samavai.(1)
Gurmukh bhagat karoh sád prani.
Hirdai pragas hovai liv lagai Gurmat har har Naam samáni.
(Pause-1)

.....
Mastak bhág hovai dhur likhiá ta(n) SatGur seva laié.
Nanak rattan jawahar pávai dhan dhan Gurmat har paié.”
(4-1)

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ਘਰੁ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੮੦)

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਜੇ ਵਡਭਾਗ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਤ ਨਾਮੇ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੇ ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਸਦ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ॥
ਹਿਰਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੈ ॥
ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਸਮਾਣੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਹੀਰਾ ਰਤਨ ਜਵੇਹਰ ਮਾਣਕ ਬਹੁ ਸਾਗਰ ਭਰਪੂਰੁ ਕੀਆ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਵਡਭਾਗੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਵਡ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਤਿਨਿ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਕਢਿ ਕਢਿ ਲੀਆ ॥੨॥
ਰਤਨੁ ਜਵੇਹਰੁ ਲਾਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮਾ ਗੁਰਿ ਕਾਢਿ ਤਲੀ ਦਿਖਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਭਾਗਹੀਣ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਨਹੀ ਲੀਆ ਤ੍ਰਿਣ ਓਲੈ ਲਾਖੁ ਛਪਾਇਆ ॥੩॥

ਮਸਤਕਿ ਭਾਗੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਧੁਰਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਰਤਨ ਜਵੇਹਰ ਪਾਵੈ ਧਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਏ ॥੪॥੧॥

Which means :—

“By the Grace of the Lord-sublime, Truth Personified and attainable through the Guru’s guidance.”

If someone were fortunate enough, and predestined by the Lord’s Will, then he would recite the Lord’s True Name in the company of holy saints, and then he would enjoy the eternal bliss in reciting True Name of the Lord and then unite with the Lord’s True Name. (1)

O Brother ! Let us worship the Lord by following the Guru’s guidance (teachings). Then we would get united with the love of the Lord’s True Name and get enlightened by the Lord-sublime and attain unison with the Lord by reciting True Name through the Guru’s guidance. (Pause-1)

The ocean of the Guru’s Personality is (replete with) full of the jewels, pearls and rubies of the Lord’s True Name as enlightened by the Lord but these virtues like diamonds could be (extricated) taken out of the mine of Guru’s teachings, provided one is fortunate enough and pre-destined by the Lord’s Will to be illumined accordingly.(2)

The Guru has enlightened us with the real jewel of True Name with detachment and love of True Name (as diamonds) being inculcated in the heart, whereas the unfortunate self-willed (faithless) person has not realized this invaluable jewel (wealth) of True Name, being hidden from him in the straw of the soul.(3)

If one is fortunate enough, being pre-destined by Lord’s Will, then he is enabled to serve the True Guru. O Nanak! Such a fortunate person attains the jewel of (wealth of) True Name and he is considered praise-worthy by following the Guru’s guidance.” (4-1)

Then the Guru says

“Nanak hukam na chaliee naal khasam chalai ardas.”

“ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਚਲਈ ਨਾਲਿ ਖਸਮ ਚਲੈ ਅਰਦਾਸ॥”

Which means : We have to beseech the Lord for His Grace to achieve anything in life, more so the attainment of Lord's unison through recitation of True Name. And this could be gained only through the Grace of the Lord by joining the company of the Guru through holy congregations. There is no question of seeking the benedictions of the Lord through force but we could always approach Him with humility at heart.

A prayer with love and devotion, and with full concentration and faith in Him is always heard and accepted by the Lord.

The last point in our daily prayer (Ardas) is very significant. viz.

“Nanak Naam Char'dhi kala terai bhanai sarbat da bhalā.”

Which means the Sikh is always in the highest spirit, whether in victory or loss as he follows the Lord's Will with full faith in Him, and he is always reciting the Lord's True Name.”

Secondly the sikh prays for the good of the whole humanity and not only for his personal benefit, which is unique in the history of mankind.

This aspect was practically demonstrated by Bhai Kanaiya, who was supplying water to the wounded soldiers, irrespective of their caste, creed or religion as for him the humanity was one, and he was serving the whole humanity during the battles of the Guru against Mughal oppression.

When complaints were lodged against him with Guru Gobind Singh, he hugged him and gave him a tin of ointment to be applied to the wounded soldiers (belonging to any community).

(Which was akin to the Red Cross Movement.)

CHAPTER—XIII

CONCLUSION

There are some pertinent questions being asked by the younger generation regarding professing 5 Ks. specially the Kesh and Kirpan. These questions have been answered beautifully and logically by S. Harcharan Singh, while writing to his son Jaskirat Singh, who had lot of doubts about their 'efficacy in the modern times'. This was first published by Sri Guru Nanak SatSangh Sabha, 17 Wilkinson Road Singapore 1543 and condensed by Baldeesh Singh of Vancouver from the bulletin "We are not Symbols". Reprinted by Canadian Sikh Study and Teaching Society, 1083 East Kent Street Vancouver BC V5X4V9.

On receiving his father's reply Jaskirat became fully convinced about the significance and need of 5 Ks.

"Later Jaskirat Singh served with the Indian Diplomatic Corps in Germany. He sponsored several study circles on the Sikh way of life in London, Geneva, Berlin and Delhi. With his inspiration twenty-five Sikh boys in Germany, who had under pressure cut their hair, very lovingly took the Amrit." (baptism)

Letter of the Son :

My dear dad,

Sat Sri Akal.

I am writing to you about my inability to accept the 5 Ks.

Q. 1. These symbols (5 Ks) justification, meaning or convincing explanation in the present times as :—

- (a) There is no coherent connection between a Kirpan and the human effort for communion with God.

- (b) The belief in God, the harm in smoking, the ill effects of drinking, the daily reading of Japji for all these there is no objection to accept, but the 5 symbols do not fit into any logical framework. A happy life and the 5 symbols seem to be absurd and illogical equation.
- (c) The older generation does not want us to inquire, they do not have the courage to face our questions.

Why can't I free myself from this structure of imitation ? It is constantly building up fear in me and this fear is strengthening this structure. I must break these imposed symbols to be my ownself.

Q. 2. My belief in God is not bound to my hair—These symbols are not religion, they are only the result of being forced to conform to war conditions. We must learn to live without these symbols and face reality.

Q. 3. If Kirpan is for self, defence, can I discard it if I have twenty body-guards with all the latest equipment for protection ?

Similarly, the necessity of other Ks. can be questioned.

Your loving son,

Jaskirat.

Answers from the father S. Harcharan Singh, who writes to his son Jaskirat Singh.

Dearest Jaskirat,

Sat Sri Akal.

It is a pleasure to hear it all, so plainly stated and hope to calm your mental anguish.

- (i) The search for significance in everything is a curse of the present century. It is a form of self-willing and

therefore it breeds the fear of living. The whole world, all your friends, your relations, everyone is struggling for significant and useful things. But what might be significant for you, might not be so for your friends.

If you go to a man with ill health, he will undoubtedly say, what is significant is good health. If you go to a mother she will say the significant thing is to have a son. This is the reason you find an intricate web of explanations for the significance of 5 Ks.

- (ii) The first step in your questioning of 5 Ks. should be to get free from this joke of significance. It is this illusionary search for significance which has made many youth and their seniors to discard their articles of faith. They see no value in them.

[A Briton was asked, "Why do you wear a turban ? Is it not enough for you to practice the philosophy of Guru Gobind Singh in your social and personal life ?" He replied, "The people accept me as the son of Guru Gobind Singh. Is it not enough reason to wear the turban ?" This can be understood when we see many people particularly the youth, having clothes and shoes bearing brand names. The Sikhs are similarly proud to wear the brand name of Guru Gobind Singh].

It is a pity that we want to reduce Sahib Guru Gobind Singh ji, to our own mundane level of thinking and view all his actions in the light of practical utility. If he was in search of merely objects of practical utility, he could have made a truce with Aurangzeb, when the latter made the offer.

If the Guru wanted 5 Ks to the reflections of practical use values, he could have very well added not only

more weapons but instead of a sword, he would have given us a gun, as guns did exist then. But he was not inspired out of a bront for weapons of self-defence or practical value, as we would make it out, reflecting our own thinking backwards in history. The sword, anyway, would have been useless without a shield.

The Kanga, the Kesh, the Kirpan, the Kara, the Kachha, were all delicate gifts of love and beauty to the Khalsa from a man who desired nothing for himself, but everything for the Khalsa. These gifts were from a Guru who totally surrendered everything for the cause and unique love of the Khalsa. "If thou art zealous of playing the game of love, then enter upon my path with thy head on thy palm." It was out of such love that these gifts were presented to the Khalsa and not for any attempts to carve out soldiers.

It is only we who want to be one-sided in our love and make claims of loving the Guru in our ideals. Consequently we reason out that we don't have to express our love for Him in action, in the Kesh. But can there be action without, total, commitment and action ? No. In 'Sarbloh', He becomes one with the Khalsa and portrays the Khalsa as his highest love.

"Khalsa is the breath of my body,

Khalsa is the very soul of my life".

"Khalsa gives me intellect and wisdom,

Khalsa is my object of meditation".

The 5 ornaments that we wear are the gifts, from the Guru whose whole family was sacrificed for the total love of the Khalsa. Could such a Guru be looking for practical utilities of an animal existence ? He was not

endowing us with gifts of mere practical value but gifts of love, which knew no questioning, no bartering, no deals, and no betraying. He was a total sacrifice, and a total love, in both thought and action; for the happiness of the Khalsa.

“It was not out of any practical benefit that the evil genius of the Mughal government announced awards for the hair of the Sikhs. It was because they knew that the Khalsa, without these, gifts of the Guru, (Guru’s love) would disintegrate.

2. (a) The Kirpan is a gift from Guru Gobind Singh Ji to the Khalsa. It is not to be judged and measured as a weapon of war or peace, it is a gift activated by the love of the Guru. Even a whole army of bodyguards or the best police in the world cannot make it redundant. It shall always remain attached to me. The sword is the love wherein the Guru resides.
- (b) You say, it is inconvenient, frustrating and unpractical to grow our hair long. But more frustrating is an existence of no inspiration and no effort. Our superficial hollow life is no way less discouraging. The day to day fragmentary living, the every day struggle for food, the daily pain, suffering, distress, torments and headaches are in no way less discomforting. But in spite of all this, do we cease to exist ?
- (c) The Kara has to be received as a present with the message. “Guru loves me. He made me his own.” You want to question the utility of the iron bangle of the Guru, but not of the gold bangle which is so

much in vogue at Sikh engagement ceremonies today. Kara comes to us as a manifestation of His love and benediction. From the day we put it on our wrists, the Kar'a was forever ours, and no one could separate it from a Sikh. And still we want to find reasons for wearing it.

Jaskirat, do not make our presents into dead symbols, they are the gorgeous ornaments of the living. We are the 'wedded devotees' of God. They are the wedding gifts from our Bridegroom. He gave all of them to us and they are God—sent, unperishable, indispensable and indestructible. You may object all this as irrational, unacceptable, superstitious and fatalistic. But the waves of pure love always have their own logic, irrationality and fatalism. I love the Guru's irrationality, and don't have the courage to reject such devotion. Does a would be wife question the intrinsic value of the engagement ring, gifted by her husband ? The choice is yours, the consequences yours. The bliss of love is yours, the solitude of separation is yours.

3. The head of a Sikh (the Kesh of a Singh) having been once offered to and accepted by the Guru is in unceasing trust with Him. It is, therefore, imperative for a Sikh to carry his head high and not to bow it before a mortal barber. It shall only bend and bow before the Guru.

Every day we recite in our prayer, "Nanak das sada kurbani". Nanak, thy servant (devotee) is ever a sacrifice to Thee. "But instead we sacrifice our 5 K's. Shocking is our spirit of sacrifice. Are we the worthy inheritors of this heritage ? After drawing on his blood, now by

discarding our 5 K's we want to stab him in the back".

Jaskirat, one kilometer from 'Lahore railway station' stands a gurdwara, sacred to the Sikhs in the loving memory of Bhai Taru Singh Ji. It bears the name of Shaheed Ganj, the Abode of Martyrs, Taru Singh had replied to the governor of Lahore, (when asked to present his tress-knot). "The Sikh and his hair are one. I will be pleased to give you more than you ask me, my head with my tress-knot. These hairs are the eternal gift of love, they cannot be separated from a Singh's head without separating his head".

The value and beauty of our hair cannot be measured in terms of luxuries and jagirs.

Jaskirat, we find not only Bhai Taru Singh, but a whole galaxy of martyrs in our history, all playing with their loves, which appears to us so irrational and fatalistic.

4. Knowledge is essential to everyday existence, as money is to buy your food, but it cannot grasp the reality of love, of God, of living. Love is not to be hooked in the net of intelligence, if you use knowledge to grasp love, it will die as a fish out of water.

After the battle of Bhangani, Guru Gobind Singh Ji blessed Pir Budhu Shah (who lost his two sons and some men in the battle) with no treasures or elephants for his services, as was the custom then, but the Guru gave him the gift of a Kirpan, and a comb with some broken hair of his".

Jaskirat, ask not from me, the significance and value of our tress-knots, for I am incapable of describing it. In our mystical tress-knots, insipid mankind is inspired.

“People build monuments for the dead, you want to uproot the living monument the Guru gave to you”.

What will be your mother's love for you, if you want to know her by analysis ? In the end, let me conclude that the 5 K's are the gifts, chiseled out for the Khalsa by the Divine Artist. These are the gifts endowed to us forever, by the divine Bridegroom on the day of our marriage to him on Baisakhi in 1699. We will carry His gifts of love, in honour, purity, and splendor. Our love will blossom in all climes, in all times and in all continents.

Your loving father,
Harcharan Singh.
