



ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ ॥



GLIMPSES OF SIKHISM



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ੴ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ॥



ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਬੇਨਤੀ

ਦਾਨ ਦੀਉ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਭਲੋ... ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵਿਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ

ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਯੋਗ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀਉ.

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ ।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ ਦੀ ਪੰਜਵੀਂ ਜਨਮ ਸ਼ਤਾਬਦੀ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ, ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀ ਯੂ ਕੇ., ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਪਰਚਾਰ ਹਿਤ, ਮੁਫਤ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਵੰਡਕੇ, ਆਪਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਚਲੀ ਆ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਕਿਸੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਮੁਥਾਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ-ਚਰਿਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਤਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣਾ ਹਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਾ ਧਰਮ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਖਾਤਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਤਨ, ਮਨ ਅਤੇ ਧਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਨਾ ਕੇਵਲ ਅਸਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਚਨ ਹੀ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਰ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦਖਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਧਨ ਤੇ ਮਨ ਤਾਂ ਇਕ ਪਾਸੇ ਰਹੇ, ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਪਣਾ ਸਿਰ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਅਰਪਣ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਕਦੀ ਸੰਕੋਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ।

ਸਤਿਗੁਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਅਸੂਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਚਾਰਨ ਦੀ ਜਿੰਨੀ ਲੋੜ ਅੱਜ ਪੱਛਮੀ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ, ਉਤਨੀ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ। “ਬਾਬਾਣੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਪੁੱਤ ਸਪੁਤ ਕਰੋਨਿ ॥” ਦੇ ਮਹਾਂਵਾਕ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, ਸਾਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਜ਼ੁਰਗਾਂ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਅਸੂਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਹਰਾਉਂਦੇ ਤੇ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਸਦੇ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਧਰਮ ਪਰਚਾਰ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾ ਹੁਣ ਤੱਕ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਦਾਨ ਤੇ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਸਕੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਸੁਸਾਇਟੀ (ਯੂ ਕੇ.) ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸਿਉਂ ਕੋਈ ਪੱਕੀ ਆਮਦਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਖਾਸ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਵਦੇਸੀ ਵਸਦੇ ਵੀਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਦਾਨੀ ਸੰਜਣਾ ਦਾ ਘਾਟਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੋ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਵਜੋਂ ਇਕ ਇਕ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਦਾ ਖਰਚ ਸਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਰਾ, ਇਕੱਲੇ ਇਕੱਲੇ ਹੀ ਦੇ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਸੀਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਧਰਮ ਅਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਪਾਸ ਪੁਰਜ਼ੋਰ ਅਪੀਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵੀ ਵੱਧ ਮਾਇਕ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੇ ਕੇ ‘ਹਉ ਮੂਰਖ ਕਾਰੇ ਲਾਇਆ’ ਦੇ ਮਹਾਂਵਾਕ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸੇਵਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ ਲਾਈ ਰੱਖਣ ਤੇ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਸੇਵਾ ਲੈਣ।

ਬਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਰੋਵਾਲ (ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰ)

Hon. General Secretary,
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FOREWORD

This collection of short essays is being presented to our readers with a view to enhance their knowledge of Sikh culture and traditions. Sikhism is a practical religion based on the philosophy and sermons of Guru Nanak. I am grateful to Mr. Sidhu for permission to print his article on Guru Nanak depicting his life and broad outlines of philosophy. My thanks are due to Mr. B. S. Pabla of Manila for securing for us the permission to print the articles of Mr. J. S. Bawa and Sadhu T. L. Vaswani, which sum up the teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh respectively. I am indebted to Mr. Dalabari of Paris, Mr. Ranbir Singh and the Manager "Sikh Courier" for allowing us to use their articles for the collection. I must also thank Mr. J. Marcus for contributing a useful dialogue for school children and also Guru Nanak Sat Sang Sabha, Malaya, for permitting us to reproduce their articles. I hope this collection will prove to be a useful source of information for all and especially the school children whose enquiries have prompted us to edit this volume.

At the end of this booklet we are printing a list of books on Sikhism for the more inquisitive reader. The list is by no means exhaustive but this short list has been compiled to provide the reader with the reading material on different aspects of Sikh religion.

In the end I thank the Sangat who have as usual enabled us to bear the cost involved in the printing of the said volume.

B. S. GREWAL,
Hon. Secretary.

GLIMPSES OF SIKHISM

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Guru Nanak

G. S. Sidhu

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was born on 15th April, 1469, in a family that claimed its descent from the great rulers Raghu and Aj, who were profound scholars and exponents of the Vedas. The Guru's ancestors were known for their bravery, learning, integrity and scholarship and were known as Vedis (writers of Vedas). Through the vicissitudes of war and peace, plenty and poverty, their kingdom dwindled down into a petty Zamindari and at the birth of the Guru, his father Kalu Chand was only a Kardar (administrator) at Talwandi, 48 miles from Lahore (now in Pakistan).

As a boy Guru Nanak was not only the cynosure of his parents' eyes but also the centre of attraction for the whole town. His radiant face, impressive behaviour, wonderful memory and love for God surprised and impressed everyone. He took a lot of interest in his studies and very soon learnt Punjabi, Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian. All his teachers, especially Maulvi Kutb-ud-din, were immensely impressed at his intellectual brilliance and spiritual maturity even at this tender age. The Village Chief Rao Bular always made obeisance to him and called him "The Blessed One."

According to the centuries old dictates of the Shastras, a Kshatrya is required to wear the Hindu sacrificial thread around his neck. When Pandit Hardyal came to perform the ceremony the Guru flatly refused to wear the perishable and useless thread and said that for spiritual advancement there was no need of threads. He even went to the extent of calling it the outcome of ignorance, superstition and fanaticism and advised the priest as follows.

Make mercy thy Cotton, Contentment thy thread,
Continence its knot, truth its twist,
That would make a true thread for the soul."

Persuasion and threats had no effect on him and he strictly held on to his ideas. This was his first revolt against tradition and ritualism. It showed complete emotional maturity, internal harmony and freedom from fears and obsessions. To add insult to injury the Guru now formed a friendship with a low caste Muslim minstrel, Mardana, who had a great proficiency in music. The Guru freely mixed with the poor minstrel on the basis of friendship, equality and fraternity, and always called him Bhai (Brother). His father, a high caste Kashatrya felt cut to the heart, and be-

came furious, but the Guru did not care much about this, and liked Mardana all the more for his keen interest in music and for setting to tune the Guru's hymns which he had started writing then. The Guru also became very sympathetic towards the down trodden, and was always yearning to alleviate the miseries of the destitutes, so much so that he began sharing everything with the Fakirs, the Yogis and the needy. He distributed his fortunes to the needy people and even gave away his cooking utensils, clothes, food and pocket money in charity. Kalu Chand objected to his so called 'wasteful habits' and frequently admonished him for his lavish spending of money, but to no purpose.

Worried about his son's future, Kalu Chand tried to engage him in grazing the cattle in the fields. The surrounding forest with its grandeur and beauty held for Nanak an added attraction towards God, and he would sit down and attune himself with the Creator while the cattle trespassed into the fields full of crops. Complaints mounted up and Kalu Chand abandoned the idea in favour of trade and sent Nanak with a great sum of money to try his luck in trade. But Nanak spent all the money in feeding the hungry mendicants and came back as poor as a church mouse. Later he was made to join the service of the Nawab of Sultanpore as a storekeeper but as usual he kept busy in meditation and the Stores were misused by unscrupulous and dishonest people, resulting in his dismissal from service. His father now lost all hope of making him a worldly-wise businessman and gave up all efforts at reforming him.

Guru Nanak now left his home and set off on four long journeys to far distant places in the East, the West, the North and the South. In the west he went as far as Mecca, the centre of Islam and in the east he reached as far as Jagan Nath Puri, the centre of Hinduism. He reached Tibet in the north and visited Ceylon in the south. He was perhaps the greatest traveller of his times.

The Guru visited all the religious places not only to study the different religions but also to expound his own ideas. His approach was always direct, scientific and convincing. At Mecca he is supposed to have slept with his feet towards the holy shrine, which gave rise to a lot of anger and resentment. Asked to explain why he slept with his feet towards 'the house of God' he only said "Drag my feet away in the direction in which God has no house." At Hardwar he found millions of Hindu Pilgrims offering water to their dead ancestors by throwing water towards the Sun. The Guru began to throw water in the opposite direction. When asked to explain his strange behaviour, he said, "I am watering my fields in the Punjab."

"But the Punjab is hundreds of miles away; how can your water reach there?" asked the pilgrims.

"As easily as your water reaches the Sun at a distance of millions of miles" replied the Guru softly.

Guru Nanak was blessed with extraordinary talents and had a remarkable and courageous aptitude for debate. He was blessed with a sharp intellect and had the acumen to weigh up those he met. During his journeys he met people of different faiths and beliefs and expounded his views on almost every topic, political, social, religious and metaphysical. The pivot of his teachings was DEUS UNI ADORATUS (adoration of one God). He rejected the agency of any intermediary and never claimed any kinship with God, much less claiming any God-ship for himself. With all the humility at his command he only said,

"I am composed of five elements
And my name is Nanak."

According to him the only relation that a man or woman can claim with God is that He is the father of all. Unlike the Christian trinity or the Hindu concept of Sat, Chit, Anand (Being, Consciousness, Bliss) or the Bodhi idea of Nirmankaya, Sombhogkaya and Dharmakaya, he simply believed in the fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of man and the miracle of divine love. "Religion," he said, "is a personal relation between the Man and the Maker. Let it not be organised and reduced to statements. Let no one dictate to you regarding what you should or should not believe or do in your spiritual life. Let the ultimate authority be the authority of your own spirit within you, not that of any man alive or dead. The summit of reality can be found only within yourself because

"Man, thou are made of Divine essence;
Recognise thyself."

His emphasis was on the worship of One God and the realisation of self

"Conquer your mind and you conquer the world," he said.
The Mool Mantra (Basic Concept) of God was given by him
as under

"There is One God
His name is Truth
The all pervading Creator
Without fear, without hatred
Immortal, Unborn, Self-existent
The Enlightener, accessible through Grace.

God can be realised within by expanding one's consciousness with the freshness of His ever vital spirit. He is the One whom everybody prays and must pray.

"The mighty sing of His might
And the blessed of His light
Some sing, He maketh, giveth the sack
He taketh life and giveth it back,"

In the teachings of Guru Nanak, morality holds a very high place. Few of the world religions have laid down a more exalted moral code than that laid down by Guru Nanak. He thinks purity of life as the highest object of human endeavour.

“Truth surpasses all
But higher still is true living.”

He asked everybody to abolish the errors of evil thought, hatred, greed, lust, selfwill, hypocrisy, cant, personal ambition, pride, arrogance, envy, jealousy and spite and yield to the spirit of gentleness, loving kindness, compassion and peace. “Selflessness,” he said, “must replace self assertion and pursuit of self interest.” The heart must be purified of all egoistic and selfish tendencies and surrendered completely to the Will Divine. Love, truth, contentment, humility, mercy and purity of mind have to be cultivated to make life meaningful. Economic security attained through honest labour is the best way for the maintenance of happy life.

“Work hard and share with others,
Nanak, thou shalt find the way.”

“Actionless religion,” he said, “is a contradiction and it is through actions that we go near or fall apart from God.

“It is through individual actions
That some are attracted to Him and some go astray.”

“Regard not that which benefits yourself but hold to that which benefits mankind,” he said, “for what is good for the hive is good for the bee.” Greed for possessions, focus on material gains and lack of sharing with others keep you off the true path.

“What was with thee when you entered the world?
Like a greedy moth thou art attached to the pleasures;
Thy heart should remain devoted to the Lord;
Nanak, thou shalt go back to thy eternal home with honour.”

He considered asceticism as a disconsolate, unsocial, barren and deceptive creed and said

“As hands or feet besmirched with slime, water washes white
As garments dark with grime, rinsed with soap are made light
So when sin soils the soul, prayer alone shall make it whole

Words do not a saint or a sinner make;
Action alone is written in the book of fate,
What we sow, that alone we take;
O, Nanak, be saved or forever transmigrate.”

“Pilgrimage, austerity, mercy, almsgiving and charity,
Bring merit, be it as little as the mustard seed,
But he who hears, believes and cherishes the word,
An inner pilgrimage and cleansing is his meed.”

He never reserved his judgment, while talking about other religions and creeds. He exposed the hypocrisy and cant of the Yogi by saying,

“Look he goes out and renounces the world
But then he comes for alms at our gates.”

He gave his own idea of a Yogi as follows:

“Make contentment and mercy thy earrings,
Self respect thy wallet, meditation thy ashes to smear on your
body,
Make thy perishable body thy garb and faith thy rule of life
and thy staff.”

To a Muslim he said,

“Five prayers at five times, five are their names,
Truth is first, honest labour second, charity the third place
claims,
The fourth asks you for honesty and the fifth the praise of
God,
Support thy prayers with thy actions, then call yourself the
Muslim of the Lord.”

To a silent ascetic, claiming fellowship with God through silence, he said:

“Silent you cannot be, though you sit down and shut your
mouth.”

To a Brahman he said,

“Brahman is he, who knows the Braham (God) ”

India up to the time of Guru Nanak had witnessed repeated invasions starting from the 11th Century. He had not only heard the woeful tales of misery caused by the foreign invasions but also seen with his own eyes the invasion of Baber (1526). Seeing the arson, loot and plunder his heart bled and in anguish he sang laments for murder, and was even moved to appeal to God thus:

“O God did'st thou not feel pain
When there was such slaughter and groaning?”

He called the invading army ‘a party of sinners’ and was pained to find them destroying art and culture when the people of India had become cowards.

“Look, the dogs are destroying their art
And they (Indians) are deep in slumber.”

He denounced the Kashatryas of India as ‘merely cows’ and he said:

“Kashatryas suffer from dereliction of duty
And have even accepted the invader's language
They call their fathers ‘Mecan,’ each and all,
And have started speaking a different language.”

He appealed to the national spirit of the people and exhorted them to rise for the defence of the motherland. He was imprisoned and sentenced to hard labour and one of his followers Bhai Tara was even burnt alive. Very boldly he raised his voice against the Kings and rulers. This could have cost him his life. He criticised them for their mal-administration, irrational taxation, religious intolerance, greed, lust, luxury and laxity of morals.

“Sin is the king, greed the minister,
Falsehood the mintmaster, and lust the deputy to take council
with,

They sit and confer together”

“Kings are fierce lions and their assistants are bloodthirsty
dogs”

“Kings are butchers, cruelty is their knife

Righteousness has taken wings and disappeared.

The darkest night prevails and the moon of truth is visible
nowhere.”

Political oppression led to social and moral degradation and the whole structure of the times seemed crumbling to Guru Nanak. “The Qazi (the Muslim judge)” he said “has become greedy, accepts bribery and misuses his powers.” The Brahman charges an exorbitant rate from those who go to him for a marriage ceremony.” “The followers dance to the tune of their false religious leaders.” “People are blind, they don’t get knowledge and are nothing short of dead cattle.” “The so-called Gurus care more for their own loaves and fishes than for religion.”

Guru Nanak detested formalism, ritualism, idol worship, dogma and the superstitions of the religious leaders and said that “the purpose and meaning of true human life is to worship God and God alone.”

“There is One God and One way;

Adopt one and reject all others,

Why should one worship a second who is born and dieth?”

Guru Nanak was dead set against the centuries old caste system which was as old as 3,000 years and could be traced back to the Rig Veda (Prusha Sukta). “It is nonsense to observe caste and be proud of a good name” he said. When the priests of Hardwar asked him about his caste he said:

“My caste and lineage is the same as that of the True One.”

He denounced the caste system very strongly and was hard upon those who practised it.

"God created light,
 His Omnipotence gave birth to all,
 All beings are born from the same light,
 How can some be good and some bad?
 Your caste and rank depend on your own actions
 Do not be proud of your caste,
 O, ignorant fool, this pride is the root of all evils.
 Many now accept your division into four castes
 But the whole creation germinated out of one God.
 Out of the same clay the whole creation is moulded,
 The potter makes them in various ways,
 Five elements unite to make the whole body.
 Try if you can, to prove them less in some and more in others,
 Nanak, the human beings are bound by their actions,
 Without God's grace there's no salvation."

He lashed out at the unnecessary ceremonies of the times and the totems and taboos attached to them. He spoke against those who were against marriage and he lived a married life. He criticised the Hindu forms of Anuloma and Pratiloma marriages and stood boldly against those who considered a wife as inferior to her husband. He upheld the dignity and equality of women as follows:

"It is by women that we are conceived
 And from them that we are born;
 It is with them that we are betrothed and married,
 It is the women we befriend and it is they who keep the race
 going;
 When one woman dies we seek another,
 It is with her we become established in society.
 Why should she be called inferior when she gives birth to great
 men?

He also gave his views about the origin of this world and his ideas seem to be very close to the modern scientific views. He rejected altogether the Hindu view that the earth is supported on the horns of Dhaval (Bull).

"The earth is supported by a bull and the bull by another earth
 and on and on and on
 How much weight does the last one carry and where does it
 stand?"

He said that the time and the season when the world came into existence is known only to the Creator. Man can know all about God and His creation only if man is as great as God. In Rag Maru

he speculated the origin of the world as follows:

“There was a misty state and darkness all around,
There were no earth or skies, only His will prevailed,
The days, the nights, the moon and the Sun did not exist,
Only He sat with Himself.”

Then he goes on to explain that by and by air came into existence and water began to flow on the hard crust formed out of primordial matter and the water brought forth life.

“The Lord created air,
Air gave birth to water,
Water brought forth life,
And the Creator is omnipresent in the creation.”

He rejected the Muslim idea of Seven skies and said,

“There are numberless Indras, Moons and Suns
And countless such worlds as ours.”

It is only recently that the truth of Guru Nanak's contentions has been vindicated by science. We now know about Sirius, which is a Sun 26 times as luminous as our Sun, that Jupiter is attended by no less than twelve moons and that the heavens are constantly changing. Guru Nanak knew about flux when he said:

“Things are made and unmade;
The wheel of creation whirls round this change.”
“The second, the minute, the hour, the solar and lunar days
The changing seasons are all created by the sun.”
“The sun lights up the moon which then dispels darkness.”

Nowadays when antipodes have become neighbours and the human race yearns for peace on earth and is starving for lack of love, Guru Nanak's message has a special value; it would seem most suited to our modern times. He does not represent any special religion but represents humanity; not separate people but the brothers and sisters of a world citizenship under one leadership—that of God. To bring concord, unity and harmony in the strife-torn world and to make our lives richer, fuller and more meaningful, we have to depend on a code of conduct like the one propounded by Guru Nanak. It is time we comprehend his philosophy and demonstrate its practicality.

Alphabet of Guru Nanak's Teachings

J. S. Bawa, M.A.

- A.** Abide pure amidst the impurities of the world.
All things we eat and drink are pure, for the Lord hath blest these.
- B.** Beauty and dominions last but a few days, but if one is blest with the gift of 'Name', one's (inner) darkness is illumined.
By mere talk none goeth to Heaven. Emancipation cometh by living Truth.
Beauteous is God's temple within thee. He, the creator, hath raised it.
Blessed is the body in which abide the five great virtues — truth, compassion, contentment, discrimination, righteousness.
- C.** Conquest of the Self is the conquest of the universe.
- D.** Dedicate thyself to service in the world and thou gettest a seat of honour in the Lord's court.
Drink not the vicious wine at all.
- E.** Evil are the ears that hear slander, evil are the hands that grab what is another's, evil are the eyes that feed on the beauty of another's woman, and evil is the tongue that tasteth other than God.
- F.** Faith and contentment are the food of Angelic-Beings.
- G.** Good or bad that man doeth, he receiveth the due reward there-of.
God resides in the soul, the soul is contained in God.
God is one; He is omnipresent and omni-potent.
- H.** Humility is the essence of all virtues.
- I.** If thou art keen to play the game of love, come to my path with thy head on thy palm.
It is through the True Name that one sheddeth all one's maladies and is emancipated.
If the mind is impure, impure also are body and tongue.
- J.** Jantras*, mantras† and telling the beads of a rosary, cannot lead to salvation; it is one's deeds that matter in the court of the Lord.
- K.** Krishna may be the god of gods but higher still is the man's self — his soul.

* Amulets.

† Incantations.

- L.** Love is the pass-word that takes one to the door of the Lord.
(The) Lord is above one's grasp. He is self created and self
existent, the Creator of the universe.
- M.** Man cometh and goeth as He ordaineth.
Meeting with the True Guru, one's darkness is dispelled;
And then one's ego is stilled and into God one mergeth.
- N.** 'Name' is the medicine for all ailments.
'Name' washeth off the dirt of ages.
Nanak says; that alone happens what God willeth, for nothing
is in the hands of man.
- O.** O' mind, the world is a passing unity, enshrine thou this Truth.
O' friend, that food is in vain that paineth the body and
bringeth thought of sin to the mind.
- P.** Pain is the cure, pleasure the malady, for where there is
pleasure, there, thou, O God, art not.
Precious is the human birth, only those turned God-wards
attain unto it.
Pure is the body wherein abides the True Name of God.
- Q.** (The) Qazis the Quran, nor the religious books of the Hindus
or the Christians know when and how the world came into
being. Only He knoweth Himself, who created it.
- R.** Riches and beauty are like the shade of the swallow-wart tree.
Real Guru is one who uniteth one with all.
- S.** See thou of each the light within and ask not the caste for
thereafter the caste is of no avail.
So doth a man gathereth the fruit as is his destiny; what he
soweth he also reapeth.
- T.** Truth is High. But Higher still is Truthful living.
Truth never becomes old.
- U.** Unless One's mind is really in communion with the Lord,
even as many as five prayers a day availeth not.
- V.** Vain are the pilgrimages, prayers and other ways of man if
one accepteth not His Will.
- W.** Woman gives us birth, in the woman's womb are we conceived.
To the woman are we engaged, to the woman are we wedded.
The woman is our Friend, from the woman is the family, Yea,
through the woman are our bonds with the world. Then why
call women evil who giveth birth to kings and all? From the
woman is the woman, without the woman there is none save
the one God.
Wandering through the pilgrim-stations, one is rid not of one's
maladies.
When ego goes, the way to the Lord opens.

- X.** 'X' is the sign of God's presence in all the four corners of the world.
'X' mas is ever for him who meditates on thy Name.
- Y.** Yoga is neither in the patched coat, nor in Yogi's staff, nor in besmearing one self with ashes, nor in wearing earrings, nor in close cropping the head. One becometh a Yogi by not mere talk; if one remaineth detached in the midst of attachments then one attaineth the true state of 'Yoga'.
Yea, he alone is emancipated in life, who is rid of his ego.
- Z.** Zenith high stand those, who please the Lord.
Zenith high Thou stand, beyond the grasp of man.

To the next generation

B. S. Dalabari

(A parent makes an appeal to the youth)

I have no pretensions to be a teacher. Nor have I the strength of character to match in practice the instructions of Guru Nanak. But I humbly claim to address you, in your own interest, on the way of life that could be fruitful for all of us, the young and the old. Our life has become so complex that we appear to have drawn ourselves along the battle-lines for a long confrontation. I realise that for you, the younger generation and for us the older hogs, this confrontation is not only wrong but also positively harmful. The youth is a powerful and inspiring wealth of the nation and the older generation, I confess, sometimes refuses to accept the aspirations and initiatives of the young people because we like to be drowned in the vanity accumulated on our past laurels and so-called ripened experience. In fact, much to the chagrin of the people of my age, I would confess that we take the first step to alienate you. May I, therefore, take the liberty of presenting to you what, in my humble opinion, the message of Guru Nanak is. I do not come to say that "religion" is very important and we must be "religious". I know how foolishly, and with hypocrisy as our guideline, we have deceived you in the name of "religion". This hypocrisy has put you on guard against even the mention of religion. Fault is not principally and wholly ours. **AND NOT YOURS.**

I have referred to the word "religion" only to agree with you that despite its external display, we have amassed wealth illegally, we have sucked the blood of the poor people, we have been intolerant towards the beliefs of others, we have spread hatred and disharmony, we have nurtured illwill, we have imprisoned ourselves behind personal vanity, we have committed disgraceful acts in the places of worship, we have deprived other people of their legitimate dues, we have sacrificed others' interests to serve our personal ends. And we disowned Guru Nanak's instructions and performed only a lip-service to his greatness. You are rightly annoyed with us and you have rightly concluded that the way we have paraded religion, has led you to believe that the message of religion is false.

But, my children, I would like to talk to you not about the "religion" we have falsely paraded, but **THE RELIGION** which is needed by all of us, religious or irreligious, Sikhs or Hindus,

Muslims or Christians, old or young, rich or poor. That religion is, in fact, JUSTICE which exudes universal love, universal goodwill and absolute fearlessness. This is the only interpretation of religion that is valid. I believe what Guru Nanak said in his time about falsehood in religion or show of spirituality, applies equally to our practices of today. But do not be disappointed. Beware of false religion. You have every right to suspect our hypocritical practices but, — and I say more in earnestness than in terms of imposition — for your own sake, and for the sake of the good of the society, listen to me, I talk of the religion, which is free from dogmas which does not create divisions and which does not get bogged down only in external rites.

One aspect of writing about Guru Nanak is of religious devotion. But I am confining myself to his views about our daily life which can bring to our youth mental peace and stability and create an urge in you for purposeful living. Because of our hypocritical behaviour you have rightly decided that you will find your own path. The present-day religious leaders are worried about their own position and self-interest. They are in no position to guide you but you certainly need some dependable moorings, while you search your own path. Otherwise it may be a case of "Out of the frying pan into the fire". You are passing through a transition. You are well aware of the conditions in the world. If you are able to shoulder responsibility and lead the country on the basis of true religion, i.e. justice which Guru Nanak preached, you will be able to do good to yourselves and to the society as a whole. But if you blindly copy the western youth and get involved in drugs, sex permissibility and other senseless activities, with which people in the west are themselves beginning to be fed up, you will remain as rudderless as the western youth is. As you know the young people of the west are discontented and dissatisfied and look for a Yogi, a Guru, a spiritual teacher of the east who could give them peace. Reality however is that you have to find peace within yourselves, and it can be found in one's own religion—any religion.

Before I discuss some of the personal experiences in the west, let me share with you some of Guru Nanak's sayings about every day life.

1. If we seek our own good, we must do good to others and remain humble.
2. We give charity but in our minds there is a yearning for hundred-fold return, as also for the world's praise.
3. I would like to wear a 'Janeau' (sacred thread of the Hindus) which has: Cotton of KINDNESS, yarn of CONTENTMENT, knots of RESTRAINT, and intertwining of TRUTH.

4. If we offer stolen goods in a temple in the name of our fore-fathers (at the Shradha Ceremony), the fact is bound to be known in the court of God and our fore-fathers would also be declared as thieves.
5. There is a talk of pollution. The fact is: **Greed pollutes the mind, untruth pollutes the tongue, a vicious look at others' wealth and a lustful look at other women pollutes the eyes and ill talk about others pollutes the ears.**

You will see that these sayings from the "ASA-DI-VAR" are universally acceptable. Guru Nanak's aim is that we should get rid of the life of EGO, cut the fetters of falsehood, annihilate ourselves below the wave of love and humility and pray for the GOOD OF ALL.

THE RELIGION which Guru Nanak preached had, as its loftiest ideal INCESSANT COMMUNION with God while living the life of truth as a worldly man. If we cannot understand God, — and, so can't the so-called religious leaders who preach but do not practise truth — my only suggestion is that Guru Nanak's message for these religious leaders as also for all of us, ordinary people, is simple. Our daily life should be based on justice for all of us individually and for the society as a whole.

I have intermittently lived abroad for 20 years and am in Europe for the second time. With utmost humility and affection I bring to you two interesting experiences. Once when I was travelling by train, five Dutch girls with their camping equipment entered my compartment. They had too much luggage and in helping them I treated them affectionately as if they were my own children. Their ages ranged from 16 to 18. After two hours of journey together during which we talked about God, about society, about home and environments, about sex and marriage, and finally about religion, I realised that these children were looking for exactly the same thing in life as we older people look for, but our practical life had convinced them that under the hoax of "Religion" we had set different standards for different people. "Religion" as such did not appeal to them. As a matter of fact many young people here proudly say "I am a non-believer" or "I am not a non-believer but I do not practise religion". The result is that life has lost its equilibrium. When I used to live here ten years ago people were more serious about marriage and while divorces were there, a happy lasting marriage was still the acceptable goal. Now many girls casually say, "My God! To live with one man for so many years!" I was surprised about their admission that although they had forsaken the older generation's hypocrisy and its values, they had not been able to find something stable for themselves. This is the condition of the youth in our country as well. It is a pity,

however, that what the European youth has already experienced and found of no value as a stable factor in life, we, the Indians, are anxious to imitate.

A French girl who came to see me for some work was interested in an exchange of views. She told me about the conditions here and then we talked of practical religion. We agreed that —

1. The most painful factor in our lives and the most abominable source of our disappointments is our VANITY.
2. Religion does not mean only the pursuit of external rites and dogmas.
Religion means moulding of our daily lives according to the spirit of religious instruction.
3. Religion means equality of all human beings, i.e. Do unto others as you would like to be done by.
4. We should lead our lives in an open manner and not do things secretly which, when discovered, would put us to shame.
5. In the field of sex and marriage, it is necessary to practise restraint, understanding and sacrifice.

When I told her that this was the religion which humanity needed, she was astonished. She had, of course, disowned religion as it was practised in hypocrisy but she was heartily ready to belong to the religion that we had just discussed. In fact she looked at me with astonishment and said, "You call this religion?" Of course, my child! This is the religion that Guru Nanak preached or, for that matter, Christ preached." Unfortunately the consumer society and love of possessions has forced religion into the position of its subservient arm. Religious leaders are interested in their own importance. They want to save Institutions, even if truth and spirituality, are eliminated. She reiterated that she fully subscribed to the RELIGION as we had discussed and she would like to be a religious person in these terms.

I happen to be a member of a society which looks after the aged people and the experiences I go through in meeting the volunteers who help and the doctors and other social workers who address this society on general questions convince me that the problems of drugs, venereal diseases, and other problems arising from broken homes are simply frightening. However the youth does not want to listen to the old hypocrites. Another factor is that the parents themselves are even now busy in their own enjoyments. The food for the soul is just not there. In fact there is a mad race for material comfort which is incapable of producing equilibrium.

The only thing for you to decide for yourself is how to get out of this darkness. May I beg of you to question yourselves

deeply whether mere dissatisfaction with the society of the older generation is enough or do you really need a sound base for yourselves to spring to your own happiness? I place before you a few home truths based on Guru Nanak's message, which you may reject if you do not agree with them. But if you agree, accept them and practise them while living an ordinary householder's life. If we parents have not practised them, it means we are bad, not that religion is bad.

1. TRUTH is the greatest religion, and truthful conduct is its manifestation.
2. Do not be hypocrites.
3. Do not fall for illegitimate wealth.
4. See God in all—rich or poor, high or low, Hindus or Muslims, Sikhs or Christians.
5. Love everyone and eradicate hatred.
6. Do not look at other women with lust.
7. Practise humility in all circumstances; eradicate ego.
8. Do not criticise others. Do not talk ill of others. Rather find out your own faults and improve yourself.
9. Learn to forgive and do not breed ill-will.
10. Learn to serve others without personal interest.

This is the message of Guru Nanak and whether you like religion or not, this can be your helpful guide. Learn to benefit from it. The practice is of course difficult but when you realise that you do not want others to be untrue to you, to cheat you, to discriminate against you and to hate you, and that you want others to respect your sisters and mothers, it is important that you yourself show it by example. We CAN get out of the confrontation. You will not only guide yourselves but also those of us who are on the wrong path.

One last thing. We are all weak and fallible. When people do not treat us kindly we forsake our own principles. We hate them and create illwill. Real religion is that we should love even those who hate us. But this can happen only if we get rid of our own vanity. **THIS IS TRUTH** in practice and this is **REALISATION OF GOD**.

Unto the Beloved five

Sadhu T. L. Vaswani

There is in my mind a picture which is an adaptation of a picture by a well known artist.

In it I see a figure of beauty and strength riding a glorious white horse and marching on. Below are (1) a learned scholar, (2) a rich merchant and (3) a simple peasant. The scholar is absorbed in books. The merchant is absorbed in wares and gains. Only the simple peasant looks up, welcoming the Vision that cometh from the Rider on the White Horse.

Do I exaggerate if I say that the creation of the Khalsa was the crowning achievement of Guru Gobind Singh? The Khalsa was a call to the Sikh Community and the Indian people. Not many hear the call of the Beloved. The Rider (in the picture) on the glorious white horse I love to think of as Guru Gobind Singh. Scholars did not hear his call; they were absorbed in reading dead leaves of dead past. Nor did rich merchants hear the Master's call. He was anxious, indeed, to press many in the service of India, anxious to transform many a mammon worshipper into Guru Ka Lals, "rubies of the Master." But these merchants were absorbed in thought of goods and gains, absorbed in gathering the pearls and rubies of the earth.

But simple peasant heard the call of the Guru. Their privilege it was to look up. The vision of the Beloved—the "Rider on the glorious white horse," passed in the hearts of some of these simple peasants. They heard the call: they answered it. They were among the builders of the destiny of the great Sikh Community.

The true Khalsa was essentially a man of renunciation and devotion, a man of Tyag and Bhakti. When these two meet together, life flowers into dedication. The true Khalsa was a man of dedicated life. His dedication was not in a spirit of asceticism, but of rich joy springing from the heart.

There's a story told us of how, one day, a group of sanyasins met the great Guru at Anandpur, the centre of his activities and his service to the poor and broken ones. The sanyasin complained to the Guru "Your disciples are not men of renunciation."

And the Guru's reply to the sanyasins is significant. He says "The Khalsa are men of renunciation: but they renounce in joy. (1) They are free, (2) They are pure. They are not dominated by maya. (3) They give from day to day, they ever give their time,

their strength ,their service to the Community. But they give in joy." "Every day," the Guru says, "here, in our centre of work and worship at Anandpur, every day is to us a New Year's Day."

And when the Guru's call went forth at Anandpur:—"Is there one in your midst who would come and say, 'I am ready to die?'" the Sikh, who boldly stood up to answer the call, did it in joy. The "Five Beloveds" of the Guru—they who with the Guru became the first builders of the Khalsa — revealed the spirit of joy in their service and sacrifice. Rightly were they named the "Chosen Ones," the Disciples of Songs. Rightly did the Guru salute the "Five Beloveds" in a spirit of joy as true sons of Nanak. Yes — and "Ye are my sons too"—he added. "In each one of you may the world see incarnated the whole Brotherhood of the Sikhs, indeed, of India."

I have read again and again the words the Guru spoke unto his Beloved Five, as he was laying the foundation of the Khalsa Community, the Khalsa Brotherhood. In the Guru's words, as I have read them, there is a thrill of true spiritual emotion. In his words is inspiration and something more. I see in them the ascending flames of a new life, which I regard as a descent of the Holy Spirit. Looking deep into their faces, the Guru says to them:—

Ye are the sons of Nanak:
Ye are the Akala Purukha's¹ own:
Verily ye are the Chosen Ones'.
I name you the Khalsa.
Disciples of Song are ye.
And your destiny it is
To be the saviours of man.
Ye shall own no property.
Ye shall hold all
As trust for the Master's work.
And ye shall love man as man:
For ye shall be servant of Humanity
And ye shall know no caste, no creed:
And ye shall keep alive this Flame of New life.
And the Flame shall not flicker.
And ye shall worship in deep meditation.
The One imperishable Spirit
And ever purified shall you be in the dhyanam² of your
Master.
And in the days even of your greatest danger or difficulty
Ye shall not forget the Holy Names of your History,
Nanak and Angad, Amardas and Ramdas,

Footnote: 1 The Timeless God.

2 Picture in the mind.

Arjun Dev and Har Gobind Sahib
Har Rai Sahib, Har Kishen and Tegh Bahadur,
Immortal all, destined to live from age to age
In these Holy Names is the Rosary I give you!
And forget not this
That ye shall not pray each for himself,
But all for all,
All for the whole Khalsa!
And in each one of you shall live the whole Brotherhood.
For know ye this,
That ye, the sons of Nanak, are my sons too,
In flesh and spirit!

In the Guru's words I hear voice of him who called us "Sons of God."

On a Baisakhi Day, I walked to a garden. What loveliness filled the rose and the lily. Every tree longed to loose itself in the sunrise. And every bird announced in songs, the new love of life. Around me I saw renewed in nature the eternal miracle of life and I sang the Guru's words:—

Keep alive this Flame of New Life
And let not the Flame flicker!

When in answer to the Beloved's Call the Khalsa was born, there was methinks, the re-birth of the Hindu race, in the darkness of that New Dawn in our history.

In this message of the Guru was born the Khalsa—the new order of wandering knights, the order of bhaktas and servants of India, going forth saluting God in the poor and lowly and reciting the mantram of "Wahguru"!

The Khalsa felt he existed for no other purpose than this one of serving the Guru and as instrument of his work. "I am thine, O Guru," he said: "death is naught." The Khalsa never regards himself alone. He lived for the Guru and, therefore, for the Community and the Country, for the poor and lowly, for the weak and trodden. "I ask for no kingdom of power," the Khalsa said, "I seek no shining gold. I rejoice to die for others. I rejoice to die, singing His name."

How many among my dear brethren, the Sikhs of today, have we — the Khalsas of the great Guru's days? Today, alas! I see the temples and places of worship hoarding wealth, when millions are unable to buy daily bread. Today, alas! I see descendants of simple, strong men stand as beggars at alien doors, clinging to creeds of comfort, quenching the Flame of Sacrifice.

In those heroic days of our history, the Khalsa vowed the vows in which were the seeds of a new society and a new order of

sons and daughters who went forth singing to serve and suffer, singing to die. Again and again have I meditated on the Khalsa vows and aspirations. I wished these were inscribed on tables and passed on from school to school, from college to college, from group to group of students and young folk, eager to serve India in these difficult days, The Khalsa vows and aspirations, I sum up in the following words:—

I am thine Guru!
And death to me is naught!
For all to me is He—
The Eternal One!
I seek not the Kingdom of power
And I have turned my face away
From the glitter of gold.
I lust not for the beauty of woman.
Nothing, nothing on earth do I own:
Nothing do I claim for myself:
For all belongeth to the Lord.

I give, I serve, I suffer in joy:
I rejoice as I take this body of flesh
To the sacrificial altar
For the sake of my Guru,
My Community and my Country.

In joy I go forward:
In joy I die for others:
In joy I expire
Singing the Nama, the Name of the Lord:
In joy I suffer for others;
And I long to see them saved from misery
In this world of sordid money making.

And this be my prayer
That I may die
For the glory of the Guru's Song
The Song that never dies
But even grows in Light and Beauty
Of the Blessed One!

Blessed indeed, was the Baisakhi Day, when the Khalsa sprang into life out of the vision of him who "rode the white horse" of truth and Service. A few poor, simple Sikhs answered his Call. They became silent servants or wandering knights of India's new destiny. In them was incarnated again the Eternal in our history. And to every such disciple, to every true Khalsa, to every humble servant of India, I say:—"Thou too art my brother!"

The Great Archer

Legend has it that every arrow of Guru Gobind Singh was mounted with half-an-ounce of gold. Its object was to alleviate the suffering of his quarry. Should the person aimed at be wounded, he could sell the gold and get medicine to cure his wound. Should the mark prove fatal, this gold could be used as an aid to the family of the deceased. Two specimen of these arrows are preserved and are on display at AKAL TAKHAT SAHIB, AMRITSAR and are shown to the congregation daily after evening prayers.

Once it so happened that the army of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor had laid seige to ANANDPUR Fortress and two generals of the Mughal army, Zabardast Khan and Wazir Khan, were playing chess under the shade of a huge tree, while other officers in the army were watching and enjoying the challenging game. Guru Gobind Singh saw all this through his telescope from the top of the fortress. He took an arrow out of his quiver, strung it hard on his bow and shot it across the field towards the assembly. Down came the whizzing arrow striking hard in the wooden leg of the charpoy* they were sitting on.

Zabardast Khan and Wazir Khan who were engrossed in the game, became panicky when they saw the arrow pinned in the leg of the wooden bed and began to wonder whose audacity and boldness this could be. Wazir Khan pulled the arrow out with a trembling hand. Raja Ajmerchand of a hilly state in the neighbourhood who had turned an ally of the Mughals, saw the arrow and recognised it forthwith. He shouted, "Oh! it is Gobind Singh's. Look at the gold mounted on it. It belongs to no one except the Guru. But it is hard to conjecture, from where the Guru had aimed this arrow."

Raja of Mandi at this point interjected, "Guruji is very brave. He must have shot it from the top of the fortress." Zabardast Khan doubted if an arrow could be shot from a distance of 2½ miles. The Raja of Mandi replied "it is nothing. Guruji's arrows are known to have traversed as far as 4 miles." Upon this, Wazir Khan stretched out both hands, offering his grateful thanks to Heaven that his life had been spared.

All the military generals and officers present there began to admire and speak highly of Guruji's chivalry and valiant conduct. They had hardly recovered from the shock, when the second arrow came hissing and hit the same exact spot. The very sight of the

* An Indian bed with four wooden legs.

second arrow put all the military top-ranking officers to flight. One of them hid behind a huge tree while another crept under charpoy. Everyone's face turned pale. A piece of paper was found tied to the arrow. Zabardast Khan opened the letter with his trembling hand. The letter was written in Persian script and its contents read as follows:

"It is no miracle. It is a single art of marksmanship. I am not in favour of performing miracles nor do I intend to take the lives of Wazir Khan or Zambardast Khan. You are labouring under a wrong notion that the first arrow was shot to kill either of you."

Thus the omnipotent Guru while in a distant place, could read the minds of the Mughals. Anyhow, they began to ponder over the whole situation and reached the conclusion that their chances of a victory over Guru Gobind Singh were thin and they could not succeed. Then out spoke Raja Ajmer Chand, "Nawab Sahib, we cannot pursue this war to a successful end against Guru Gobind Singh. Every Sikh warrior under his command can combat heavy odds and what stuff these are made of nobody knows."

Another anecdote showing skill of Guru Gobind Singh in marksmanship is there. Hari Chand, ruler of a hilly state, in his proud moments once thought that if Gobind Singh should come face to face in the battle-field, his one arrow would be enough to kill him. Gobind Singh who could read the minds, became aware of his thought and soon appeared before Raja Hari Chand in the battlefield.

The Guru shouted in the raging battle, "Hari Chand, Here I am. Kill me if you can. You may feel sorry afterwards that Gobind Singh did not give you a chance to show your proudness in Archery." Upon this, Hari Chand drew the arrow hard and shot at the Guru with all his might. But the arrow missed the target. A second chance was also given to Hari Chand and this time it just missed hitting the ear of Gobind Singh. Gobind Singh again shouted, "Hari Chand, you consider yourself an expert and a very good marksman. I give you one more try."

These words of Guru Gobind Singh infuriated his opponent and he shot the third arrow with his full might. The head of this arrow pricked the belt of the Guru but did not hurt him. Now it was Guruji's turn. He asked Hari Chand to get ready.

Guruji shot the arrow and it pierced the forehead of Raja Hari Chand. Hari Chand fell off his horse. The enemy thereupon took to their heels.

This scene is described in **Bachiter Natak**:

"Victory kissed my feet. Lord, it all happened with THY GRACE."

Such anecdotes of the Guru's marksmanship are numerous and his biography is full of them. It is said that no arrow of the Guru ever missed its target.

Faith, Love and Devotion Vindicated

Ranbir Singh

It was in the year 1726 A.D., during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Muhammed Shah, that Zakariya Khan was appointed the Governor of Lahore. He was determined to exterminate the whole Sikh nation. He ordered a general massacre of the Sikhs—men, women and children, and reward was offered for the head of every Sikh brought to Lahore dead or alive.

Syyed Mohd. Latif, a Muslim writer, in his History of the Punjab, writes:

“The Governor of the Punjab now issued proclamation for a general massacre of all Sikhs, wherever they could be found. Death was the punishment of all persons, who invoked the name of Guru Gobind Singh, and a reward was offered for the head of a Sikh. Thousands were put to death daily and their heads brought before the Subedar of Lahore for reward.”

The Sikh history of the period is a record of their struggle against the Mughal tyranny and oppression. The Sikhs not only fought for their very existence, but they all along carried on a revolution for the emancipation of their motherland. A will was created in the Sikh masses to shake this empire of loot, larceny and lie. So they lived and died for the national cause.

Being outlawed, the Sikhs had to leave their homes and hearth in the plains and had to take shelter in the hills. They now resorted to guerrilla war-fare and made it impossible for revenue from villages to reach the government treasury and still more impossible for the forces of the government to catch the outlaws, as they ran away to their hiding places in forest or other places difficult of access.

Zakariya Khan sent out moving columns in all directions to hunt them out. In hundreds and thousands the Sikhs were daily brought in chains to Lahore and were offered the choice of Islam or the sword. They were put to death with unspeakable tortures. The more daring and desperate among them being not easy in the reach of the Government, the wrath fell on peaceful, innocent Sikhs living in towns and villages. There was no exception made. Soldiers, scholars, peasants and petty shopkeepers; men, women and children all who wore long hair and followed the path of Sikhism were condemned to the same fate. Nakhas, the horse-market of Lahore became the site of execution of Sikh

captives. Its earth turned red with their blood*.

Amongst the many thousands of Sikhs, who laid down their lives for their faith and ideal, the name of Bhai Taru Singh is one of the most revered. He was resident of village Poolha, Tehsil Kasur in the District of Lahore (now in Pakistan), where he had a small farm. The corn he produced, he joyously shared with all those who called at his abode under his roof for a night's repose.

Taru Singh was a pious and devoted Sikh. He lived by "Gurbani." "Nam Simran" had wholly transformed him. The people of his village loved him for his very goodness. So, for sometime he continued to live in his village unmolested—a unique privilege.

But being a Sikh, he could not live long un-noticed by the authorities. One, Niranjania of Jandiala, a traitor betrayed him and reported to the authorities at Lahore that a Sikh farmer was still living in his village Poolha. The informer got a reward for it. Bhai Taru Singh was captured and was taken in chains to Lahore.

The Nawab, when he saw this strikingly handsome youth of 23, was over-whelmed with his presence. There was a spiritual charm around him which made the Nawab exclaim: "Ya Allah! what a glory on his face! Oh, if he were a Musalman!" Addressing Taru Singh, the Nawab said: "Youngman! I take pity on you and wish I could spare your life."

Taru Singh retorted: "'Spare my life! Why dishonour me, while my brethren are being martyred here before my eyes?"

The Nawab said: "You are bravest of the braves! Somehow my mind does not wish to wreak my anger on you, but you must cut and present me your Tress-knot (Jura)."

Taru Singh replied: "The Sikh and his hair are inseparable. I can give you my head with my tress-knot, more than what you ask for."

It is religious sacrilege for a Sikh to have his hair cut. It amounts to discarding his faith.

The Nawab then said: "Taru Singh! You are too young. You have not seen the world yet and the joys of life. Come, I will get you married with the most beautiful girl you had ever seen. You will get a high office in the Mughal army. You will get a Jagir (fife) and you will be handsomely rewarded and I promise you all sorts of comforts you can imagine, but you must give up your faith and accept Islam."

* This place is in Landa Bazar Lahore (Pakistan) and is known as Shaheed Ganj (Palace of martyrs).

But Bhai Taru Singh refused to abjure his faith and disdainfully rebuffed all offers and all temptations made to him.

The Nawab was then enraged and changed his looks. He sent for a cobbler and ordered him to scrape the scalp off Bhai Taru Singh's head and with it hair and all that. Taru Singh was thus executed in a most cruel and barbaric manner. The people were taken aghast at the suffering and the severity of punishment for sticking to one's faith.

Glory, Glory to Bhai Taru Singh! We still remember him and other martyrs in our daily prayers.

Kesh (hair) is our first emblem of Sikh faith. Guru Gobind Singh touched our hair at the time of administering Amrit and blessed us. So every hair of the Sikh is sacred for all time. We are enjoined by the Guru to observe the 5-Ks*. They come to us as wedding gifts from the Divine Bridegroom—the Guru Glorious, who is dearer to us than our dear and near ones. We are to keep his gifts lovingly with us, as signs of his remembrance, as souvenir.

Woe upon us, if we today argue and discuss the usefulness of 5-Ks or their justification. Dazzled by the glamour of fashion, worldliness and sex, some young men become oblivious of the spiritual values and fall prey to carnal urges. They ask for justification for discarding them.

Those who understand the Law of Love and Devotion must wear them as token of their craving to be accepted at the feet of the Master. For this is Guru Gobind Singh's command. These very ties of faith, love and devotion, binding the Sikh to the Guru, stood by the martyr Bhai Taru Singh through his ordeal. Devoid of these essentials, the relation between the Sikh and the Guru is snapped.

It may be observed that behind these 5-Ks, now lie our noble tradition and inspiring history that carried us triumphantly through many a crisis. They gave us a sense of unity, moral prestige and religious zeal that resulted in many shining deeds of heroism and sacrifice. They have enabled us to up-hold and keep aloft the Guru's ideals and the Way of Life. Sikhism, is indeed, a Way of Life shown to the world by the God-illuminated mind of the Guru. Assuredly, without the hair-idea of Guru Gobind Singh, there would have been no Sikh song, no life and no inspiration today. But for them we would lose the path, would be extinguished, absorbed and lost in the mass-herd.

* 1 Kesh (uncut hair); 2 Kara (a steel bangle); 3 Kangha (a comb); 4 Kirpan (a sword); 5 Kachha (a pair of shorts).

Distinctive Features of Sikh Culture

Sri Guru Nanak Sat Sang Sabha

Message of Sikhism

- He who is proud shall be destroyed (4th Guru)
- Without the True Guru, pride is not removed (First Guru)
- Lust, Anger, Greed, Pride and Passion, by following these one cannot get peace (5th Guru)
- By remembering God, All your sins shall be washed away (5th Guru)
- None is my enemy and none a stranger, everyone is my friend (Raag Kanra)
- Nanak, he is the bravest of the brave, Who hath overcome his inner ego (3rd Guru)
- Where the virtue of forgiveness prevails, there the Lord Himself resides (Kabir)
- The Lord honours His poor and lowly worshippers (4th Guru)
- We should speak truth, and tell no lies (Farid)
- When the life is extinguished, nobody likes to keep even the most beloved one at home (Baini)
- You can be saved in this world, only if you would not be absorbed in MAYA (attraction) (Namdev)

THE COMPANY OF TRUE SAINTS AND TRUE SIKHS
is heaven on earth

“Right from the times of our tenth Guru down to the dissolution of the Sikh empire in 1847, a major part in our community was engaged in fighting.” I said “These twenty decades were also a time of anarchy and insecurity.” Not withstanding these setbacks, we evolved a proud cultural tradition, which we retain up to today.”

What are the distinct features of your culture Captain Singh? Enquired the young M. Emila Beartie; the tone of his question made me uncomfortably conscious of some sort of irony, of which I had some experience during our past meetings.

“It is rather hard for a soldier to become a sociologist,” I apologised. “And I don’t suppose I could tell you all about our culture. But there are certain aspects that stand out so prominently that even a lay observer like myself cannot fail to notice

them. Before, however, I proceed with my analysis, I must say that it is as much a culture of peaceful, law-abiding citizens as of soldiers.

"In the Sikh social system, a strong emphasis is laid on basic morality and this in our case includes the progressive ideals of modern times."

I was rather perplexed to find all my hearers listening so quietly. Was this silence indicative of appreciation, or was it indicative of sufference inspired by courtesy? I looked around to take stock of the situation then looked to my right, curiously manipulating the arm of the chair and then cast a furtive glance at Yvonne sitting next to me. I was reassured. Her face was soft and relaxed. Irony, I thought expresses itself in a grin. I was encouraged to resume the monologue.

"Guru Nanak, preached the dignity of labour." "Eat thou the bread earned by ten fingers, he declared. He preferred the oatmeal of a poor carpenter, Lalo, to the dainty delicacies of Malik Bhago, the owner of a big estate. Asked to account for his preference, he declared that there was the blood of the poor in Bhago's dainties, but only milk in Lalo's bread of oats."

"Guru Nanak was born in the fifteenth century, you said Captain Singh, didn't you?" Yvonne looked inquiringly at me and then seemed to say to herself, "it is rather remarkable that a man should have preached as early as that values which came to be so richly prized in the twentieth century."

"Yes," I replied. "It is very remarkable, Guru Nanak may be called the prophet of the future. He tried to rid human life of all its ugly features. He believed in the equality of man and denounced distinctions of caste. He conceded to a woman a position of equality with man: 'Why do we regard her inferior who gives birth to kings,' he said. We in India had often than not heard our preachers preach the gospel of renunciation. Even in Guru Nanak's own times the ideal of religious life of complete renunciation far from one's home and relations. Guru Nanak upheld secular ideals: a chaste family life regulated by restraint, honest work and co-operative communal living, the individual's greatest ambition being the service of the community.

Guru Gobind Singh laid special emphasis on chastity. In a beautiful verse he has said, "Love your wife evermore but never approach another's wife even in dream."

'Certainly a very embarrassing restriction,' commented Emile Yvonne's brother.

"Certainly so, as young soldiers like Captain Singh must know

to their cost," said M. Beartie. "And I wonder if the Sikh soldiers abide by these taboos. One would wish the Guru had not been so strict in that respect. If your Guru had imagined what contingencies would face his future disciples and that thousands of them would have to go thousands of miles away from their homes with doubtful prospects of returning, he would probably have modified his conjunctions." M. Beartie chuckled.

I was silent for a minute and then M. Beartie said "Don't be offended Captain Singh, I was just joking."

"Oh no, not in the least, sir," I said. But assuming the Guru had connived at laxity or lasciviousness even in times of emergency, the history of the Sikhs would have been deprived of many of its glorious pages. The Khalsa became the protector of defenceless women. They rescued women abducted by the hordes that invaded India from the North West. If the Khalsa had not been observing strict sexual restraint, they would have become accomplices of the marauders and would not have continued their mission.

"I see," said M. Beartie, "you must have some very instructive stories to tell about the chivalry of the Sikhs. We have not seen Sikh soldiers roaming about in the streets of Cairo and Alexandria. And though their behaviour has not been ideal, they carry themselves well. They are gentle to children and often chivalrous to women. But that I attribute to the army discipline or are they indigenous Sikh characteristics?"

"Yes, they are typical Sikh characteristics." I said with emphasis. The bulk of us here are uneducated farmers whose religious teachings consist mainly of lectures by semi-educated preachers who visit our villages on feast days. But even in the countryside, our life is usually chaste and responsible. We have always shown a great regard for women.

"The foundations of these traditions were laid in the days of the early Gurus and they were strengthened in the times that followed. During one of his invasions of India, Ahmad Shah Durrani abducted several hundred young Indian girls. When he was on his way back, a Sikh guerilla force surprised him, rescued all the girls and restored each one to her guardian. Some of them were unmarried and offered to marry their rescuers, but, it will surprise you, the rescuers declined, not because they were married already, but because it would be improper to receive compensation for their chivalry. This is one of the hundreds of incidents that illuminate our history."

"Do most of you live up to these traditions?" inquired M. Beartie.

"All social organisations tend to become corrupt. And unfortu-

nately, Sikhs are no exception to that rule. But up to this day, we have tried to uphold the ideals that were preached by the Sikh Gurus. In India, there is a large population of beggars, but none of them is a Sikh. We believe in winning our bread by our own efforts.

“The other traits that we still retain are: an optimistic outlook, a sense of humour, feeling of responsibility towards other people, and sexual purity. We do not betray anybody’s confidence. We tolerate the views of others. Pushed to an extreme, we can also fight for our rights. We have been in the van of independence campaign, because political freedom is India’s birthright.

“These qualities make an ideal compound. Captain Singh,” remarked Emile. “It must be a happy community that inhabits the stretches of the Punjab. I should think there is very little in the Punjab to make life difficult.”

“I don’t think I could make so categorical a statement as that,” I said. “There are men who stray from the straight and narrow path and Sikh society has an abundance of black sheep. But we always make an effort to live up to these ideals and these ideals with most of us are now a matter of habit, a culture as they say.”

“If you are a typical Sikh, Captain Singh, Sikhism has much to commend it,” said M. Beartie.

“I don’t know, sir, whether you are paying a compliment to me or to Sikhism,” I replied. “It is exceedingly flattering though.”

“It must be a really unique experience, Captain Singh, to see the Sikhs in their homes and fields and to watch how they conduct themselves in their normal everyday life,” interjected Yvonne.

It was a great spring evening. A gentle breeze set in before I concluded my discourse. As I looked out of the window, I caught sight of a rose bush tossing its floral ornaments about in the breeze. I looked at my watch.

“It is already 5.30” I exclaimed. “I think I should be getting along.”

A Dialogue For School Assembly

J. Marcus

Guide: Good morning. Each time we have an Assembly, we have, sitting here with us, friends from a different country. They were brought up to speak a language different from ours, and to belong to a different religion. Most of them belong to the Sikh religion and this morning, we should like you to imagine that you are coming with us on a visit to the Gravesend Sikh Temple in Clarence Place.

(The Guide withdraws and sits at the side. Props include a carpet on the floor, and a book on a desk, behind which a man is sitting.)

The School Party arrives from the side.

Guide: Good morning and welcome. Will you come this way please. Would you mind taking off your shoes here, please, and covering your heads. I shall explain why in a moment.

(The group do as they are asked and go and sit down on the carpet with the girls on one side and the boys on the other.)

A: You said that you would explain why we took off our shoes and covered our heads.

Guide: Yes. I hope you will not think us rude. For the Sikhs it is a mark of respect. It is a sign that we have come here to think about the deepest and holiest things in life. But I expect you have many other questions.

B: The building seems very empty. Apart from that platform with the book on it, there is no furniture. Why is that?

Guide: That is because we believe that all men are equal and all men are brothers. There are no special seats because we do not want anyone to say: "I have a posh seat here. I am more important than you." We do not even have clergymen, everyone is quite equal.

C: I noticed some strange pictures on the walls. They looked rather like bloodthirsty-people torturing the Sikhs.

Guide: Yes. They are pictures of Sikhs and our leaders whom we call Gurus, who in the past suffered many terrible tortures. At times we have been persecuted like the Jews. Before you go, I will tell you the story of Guru Arjan.

D: I hope you will not mind my asking. Why do the men all wear turbans, and why are they called Singh?

Guide: Not at all. Many people are puzzled by this. It is a custom that goes back to the days when the Sikhs were an army, and beards and turbans were our uniform. The word Singh means Lion. It comes from the time when one of our Gurus wanted his followers to feel brave, so he called them his Lions. All our women are called Kaur; that means Princess. The Guru called them that because the first Sikhs were ordinary working people, and he didn't want them to look down on themselves.

B: Several times you have mentioned the Gurus. Who are they?

Guide: The Gurus were our ten great leaders and teachers. The first, and the founder of our religion was Guru Nanak. He died over 500 years ago. The last Guru was Guru Gobind Singh who died in 1708. After his death, there were no more Gurus, but their teaching was kept in our Holy Book which we call the Guru Granth Sahib.

A: Do you worship the Gurus or pray to them?

Guide: Certainly not. We pray to God and meditate, but we would never pray to a man or, for that matter, to a statue. Guru Nanak taught us: "There is only one God. Worship and pray to the one God and to none other."

D: What is in the Holy Book?

Guide: The hymns and teachings of the Great Gurus. For example Guru Arjan said: "Join and unite together my brothers. Lay aside differences, love one another."

C: Apart from all the meditating and that sort of thing, do the Sikhs actually do anything to help other people?

Guide: Yes, certainly. Ours is a very practical religion. Guru Nanak said: "Work hard and share your earnings with the needy." The Sikhs always try to help others and have set up many dispensaries and hospitals among other things.

B: What language do you speak in the Temple?

Guide: Punjabi. In the old days, in India, only the Sanskrit language was taught and the ordinary people couldn't understand it. Our second Guru, Guru Angad wanted everybody to be able to read, write and understand what was written in the books, so he used Punjabi the ordinary language of the people. It is an easy language, and you can get to be quite a good reader in a few weeks.

A: I noticed the gold coloured picture of a Temple. What is that?

Guide: That is the Golden Temple at Amritsar, in India. Anyone can go in, whatever colour or religion they belong to and listen to the praises of God being sung there.

D: You mention people of other religions being allowed in. What do you Sikhs think of us? Are we all going to hell?

Guide: Of course not! We believe that God is in every man's heart, yours as much as mine. If you are a Christian or a Buddhist, we say, be a good Christian, be a good Buddhist. We don't agree with Christians about everything. We don't believe that God came down to the world as a man. But we get along very well with people of all religions. We think words do not make a religion. It is good actions that matter.

C: This Temple is a large building. What happens in the other parts of it?

Guide: Downstairs we have a Langar. That means a free kitchen. There we offer food, free of charge, to anyone in need. Men, women and children, of no matter what colour or religion are welcome to come. Here are some Indian sweets from the Langar. Perhaps you would like to try them. While you do so, I will tell you the story of Guru Arjan, as I promised.

Guru Arjan was the Guru who built the great city of Amritsar, and had the teachings of the Gurus written down in the Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Arjan was known far and near. He had about a million followers and was known as "The man of the people." The Officer of the King of Delhi was called Chandu, and Chandu offered the hand of his daughter to the son of Guru Arjan. However, Chandu did not do this without being very insulting about it, and saying that Guru Arjan was only a beggar. So, not surprisingly, Guru Arjan turned down Chandu's offer. The Guru did not want to have such a snobby family as his relations, because he believed that all men are equal.

Chandu was extremely angry. He went to the King of Delhi and poisoned his mind about Guru Arjan. He said that the Guru was getting people to rebel against the King. He also told the King another lie about the Guru. He said that the Guru had written a book, which contained rude remarks about Mohammed, the prophet of the Muslims, of whom the King was one. The King was furious and ordered Guru Arjan to stop preaching his religion at once. He ordered him to pay a fine of 200,000 rupees, an enormous sum of money. He told the Guru to write hymns in praise of Mohammed and to include them in his Holy Book.

Guru Arjan wrote back to the King: "I am a servant of God. I love everybody and ask the people to be good and to remember God. I write hymns in praise of God and not in praise of any man. I do no harm to anybody. All my money is for the poor and the needy. You can share it if you are poor and needy, but if you ask for money by way of a fine, I shall refuse to pay even a single penny."

When this letter reached the King he was very angry. He at once ordered that the Guru be arrested and put to death. A few days later, the Guru was taken and put in prison at Lahore. He was kept hungry and thirsty in the blazing heat. On the fourth day he was made to sit in boiling water, but he did not complain or beg for mercy. During all this torture, the Guru kept remembering God and did not utter even a word of complaint. At last, he was made to sit on a red hot iron plate. His followers came from far and near to see him but they were not allowed to do so.

The Guru's body was now badly burnt and there was the smell of burning skin, but he was unmoved. With eyes closed, he only prayed to God. The order came from the king that the Guru should now be bathed in cold water to make him feel the pain all the more. The soldiers carried the Guru to the river. A number of Sikhs with tears in their eyes, and singing hymns followed them. When they reached the river bank, the Guru recited the Sikh morning prayer and said: "When they throw me into the river, don't try to take my body out. Let it go down to the bottom of the river. Don't weep. Go back singing the Lord's praises."

Then the soldiers mercilessly pushed the Guru into the river and a strong current of water washed him away. Thus died the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, the beloved friend of the people, the man who had written:

"Lay aside differences, love one another.
Join and unite together my brothers."

Adapted with permission from the works of Mr. G. S. Sidhu. Published by the Sikh Missionary Society (U.K.)

Concluding Hymns of the Sikh Service

(Sikh Courier)

The Sikh religious service generally has no prearranged form, but it usually begins with the singing of hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib, while any respected member of the congregation may give an address on the history or meaning of Sikhism or some other topical subject. The service is always concluded with the prescribed hymns printed herein, the Anand Sahib being chanted by the whole congregation, followed by the Granthi alone saying the Ardas. After the final verse, which the sangat repeats in unison, the Guru Granth Sahib is opened, and a verse chosen at random, is read from it. Finally, the sacred sweet, karah prashad, is distributed to everyone present.

ANAND, Guru Amar Das, Anand bhia meri mai Satguru mai paia
O JOY, my Mother, I have found the True Guru.

Without penance I have found the True Guru and songs of rejoicing fill my heart.

Beautiful songs and heavenly singers come to sing hymns to my Lord.

Those who keep the Lord in the hearts, forever sing His praises.

Nanak says, my heart is full of joy, for I have found the True Guru.

2. O my Soul, forever abide with God.

Abide with God, O my Soul, and all your sorrows will vanish.
You will be acceptable to God and He will conduct all your affairs.
The Perfect Lord is omnipotent, why should you forget Him?
Says Nanak, O my Soul, forever abide with God.

3. O my True Lord, is there anything that your house does not contain?

Everything is in your house, and to whomsoever you wish do you give.

Whoever receives will praise your bounty and treasure your Name in his heart.

Strains of heavenly music resound for him in whose heart your Name resides.

Says Nanak, O True Lord, is there anything that your house does not contain?

4. The True Name forever sustains me.
The True Name satisfies my hunger and sustains me.
God's Name has entered my heart, it has given me peace and joy
and fulfilled all my desires.
I shall forever sacrifice myself to the Guru who displays such
kindness.
Says Nanak, listen O Saints, love the Word.
The True Name forever sustains me.

5. Celestial music rings through the house:
That happy house into which God has infused His might; there
music resounds.
There, the Lord has conquered the five evil passions and destroyed
the fear of death.
Those favoured by destiny are attached to the Name of God.
Says Nanak, they have found happiness and they hear celestial
music in their hearts.

40. Listen to my joy, my very fortunate friends; all my desires
have been fulfilled.
I have reached God, the Supreme Spirit, and all my sorrows have
vanished.
My sorrows, afflictions and sufferings have departed by hearing
the true Word.
The saints and holy men are glad on hearing it from the perfect
Guru.
Pure are they who hear it; stainless those who utter it, the true
Guru will fill their hearts.
Nanak proclaims: for those who bow at the Guru's feet, heavenly
trumpets sound.

SHLOK, JAPJI, Pavan Guru pani Pita, Mata dharat mahat

Air, water and earth, of these are we made.
Air like the Guru's word gives the breath of life
To the baby born to the great mother earth
Sired of the waters.
The day and night our nurses be
That watch us in our infancy;
In their laps we play, the world is our playground.
Our acts right and wrong at Thy court shall come to judgment,
Some be seated near Thy seat, some ever kept distant.
The toils have ended of those that have worshipped Thee,
O Nanak, their faces are lit with a joyful radiance,
Many others they set free.

SUKHMANI, IV 8. Guru Arjan, Too Thakur tum pah ardas.

Thou art the Master; to Thee I pray.
My body and soul are Thy gifts to start with.
Thou art the Father, Thou the Mother, and we Thy children!
We draw manifold blessings from Thy grace.
None knows Thy extent:
Thou are the highest of the high,
All creation is strung on Thy will:
It has to accept all that comes from Thee.
Thou alone knowest what informs Thy purposes.
I am ever and ever a sacrifice unto Thee.

ARDAS

Having first remembered God Almighty, think of Guru Nanak;
Then of Angad Guru and Amar Das and Ram Das; may they help
us!

Remember holy Arjun, Hargovind and the holy Har Rai.

Let us think of the holy Har Krishan, whose sight dispels all
sorrow.

Let us remember Teg Bahadur, and the nine treasures shall come
hastening to our homes.

May they all assist us everywhere.

May the Tenth Master, the holy Guru Gobind Singh, the lord of
hosts and protector of the faith, assist us everywhere.

Turn your thoughts, O Khalsa, to the teachings of Guru Granth
Sahib and call on God. Waheguru.

The Five Loved Ones, the Master's four sons, the forty Saved
Ones, and other righteous, steadfast and long-suffering souls:
think of their deeds and call on God. Waheguru.

Those men and women who, keeping the name in their hearts,
shared their earnings with others; who plied the sword and
practised charity; who saw others' faults but overlooked them,
think of their deeds and call on God. Waheguru.

Those who for their religion allowed themselves to be cut up limb
by limb, had their scalps scraped off, were broken on the
wheel, were sawn or flayed alive, think of their sweet resig-
nation and call on God. Waheguru.

Those who, to purge the temples of long standing evils, suffered
themselves to be ruthlessly beaten or imprisoned, to be shot,
cut up or burnt alive with kerosene oil, but did not make any
resistance or utter even a sigh of complaint; think of their
patient faith and call on God. Waheguru.

Think of all the different temples, thrones of religious authority
and other places hallowed by the touch of the Guru's feet, and
call on God. Waheguru.

Now the whole Khalsa offers his prayer.

Let the whole Khalsa bring to his mind the Name of the wonderful Lord;

And as he thinks of Him, may he feel completely blessed.

May God's protection and grace extend to all the bodies of the Khalsa wherever they are.

May the Lord's glory be fulfilled and His dispensation prevail.

May victory attend our Charity and our Arms.

May God's sword help us.

May the Khalsa always triumph.

May the Sikh choirs banners, mansions abide for ever and ever.

The kingdom of justice come.

May the Sikhs be united in love.

May the hearts of the Sikhs be humble, but their wisdom exalted,
their wisdom in the keeping of the Lord, O Khalsa, say the Lord is wonderful.

Waheguru.

O true King, O loved Father, we have sung Thy sweet hymns, heard Thy life-giving Word, and have discoursed on Thy manifold blessings. May these things find a loving place in our hearts and serve to draw our souls towards Thee.

Save us, O Father, from lust, wrath, greed, undue attachment and pride; and keep us always attached to Thy feet.

Grant to Thy Sikhs the gift of Sikhism, the gift of Thy Name, the gift of faith, the gift of confidence in Thee, and the gift of reading and understanding Thy holy Word.

O kind Father, loving Father, through Thy mercy we have spent our day in peace and happiness; grant that we may, according to Thy will, do what is right.

Give us light, give us understanding, so that we may know what pleases Thee.

We offer this prayer in Thy presence O wonderful Lord:

Forgive us our sins. Help us in keeping ourselves pure.

Bring us into the fellowship of only those men of love, in whose company we may remember Thy name.

Through Nanak may Thy Name forever be on the increase.

And may all men prosper by Thy grace.

Hail Khalsa of the Wonderful Lord who is always victorious.

Then all Sing:

AGYA BHAI AKAL KI

By the grace of God Almighty
The body of the Khalsa was created;
All the Sikhs are hereby commanded
To look upon the Granth Sahib as the Guru;
Let him who desires to behold the Guru
Cast his eyes upon the Guru Granth.
Those who are pure in heart
Can find their guidance in its hymns.
The Khalsa shall reign supreme
And none shall be kept in subjection;
Those who seek the Lord's protection shall be saved.
The name, Waheguru is like a ship
Whose passengers safely cross the ocean.
Those who give selfless service
Will be assisted by the Guru himself.
Our protector is he who is crowned with the plume
And whose hand bears the double-edged sword.

THE SIKH ANTHEM

DEH SHIVA BAR MOHE IHAY
SHUBH KARMAN TE KABHOUN
NA TARAUN

NA DARAUN ARR SION JAB
JAI LARON
NISCHAY KAR APNI JIT KARAUN

AR SIKH HAUN APNAY HEE
MAN KAUN
IHO LALACH HAI GUN TAU
UCHRAUN

JAB AAV KEE AUDH NIDHAN
BANAY,
UT HI RAN MAI TAB JOOJH
MARAUN.

O' Lord grant me the wish that I
may never flinch from performing
the righteous deeds

That I may never be afraid of the
enemy,
and I have the supreme confidence
to win

Let one directive guide my mind
exclusively that I may ever be
singing thy praises

And when the time comes, I
should die fighting heroically
on the battle field

This hymn was the favourite prayer of Guru Gobind Singh.

The Guru uses the word SHIVA for God and not the Hindu deity.

Heroic death on the battlefields, singing the praise of the Lord is the goal
of Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa.

A list of recommended books

Recommended for further reading

- 1 Guru Gobind Singh (English) Dr. Trilochan Singh
The Sikh Cultural Centre (S.C.C.) Calcutta-12
- 2 The Jap (English) Dr. Trilochan Singh
The Sikh Cultural Centre (S.C.C.) Calcutta-12
- 3 The Message of Sikhism (English) S. Harbans Singh
G.P.C., Delhi State
- 4 True Humanism of Guru Nanak (English) Dr. Trilochan Singh
G.P.C., Delhi State
- 5 The Indian Mutiny of 1857 (English) Dr. Ganda Singh
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 6 A Brief Account of the Sikh People Dr. Ganda Singh
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 7 The Gospel of the Guru Granth Sahib Duncan Greenlees
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 8 Guru Nanak and Origins of Sikh Faith Harbans Singh
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 9 The Sikh Religion (Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors)
Max Arthur Macauliffe Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 10 Philosophy of Sikhism Dr. Sher Singh
Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 11 Spirit born people Prof. Puran Singh
Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 12 Evolution of the Khalsa (2 Vols.) I. B. Banerjee
Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 13 The heritage of the Sikhs
Harbans Singh (Asia) Pub Bombay Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 14 Guru Nanak (His personality and vision)
Gurbachan Singh Talib Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 15 The Quintessence of Sikhism Gobind Singh Mansukhani
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 16 A History of the Sikhs (2 Vols.) Kushwant Singh
Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 17 Ethics of the Sikhs Dr. Avtar Singh
Singh Bros., Amritsar
- 18 Guru Nanak (Founder of Sikhism)
Dr. Trilochan Singh S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 19 Islam & Sikhism Gurmjit Singh S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 20 Hymns of Guru Nanak Khushwant Singh
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 21 The Sikh Way of Life Ranbir Singh
S.C.C., Calcutta-12
- 22 Japji Sahib S. Khushwant Singh
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24	Guru Nanak Raja Daljit Singh	S.C.C., Calcutta-12	Rs. 20.00
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27	Guru Nanak, His Life, Time and Teachings Gurmukh Nihal Singh	S.C.C., Calcutta-12	Rs. 4.00
28	The History of the Sikhs (Vol 1, 1970) W. L. M. Gregor	Singh Bros., Amritsar	Rs. 4.30
29	The History of the Sikhs (Vol. II, 1970) W. L. M. Gregor	Singh Bros., Amritsar	Rs. 4.45
30	Shri Guru Granth Sahib (English) Dr. Manmohan Singh	S.G.P.C., Amritsar	Rs.250.00

N.B.:—

S.C.C.

The Sikh Cultural Centre,
113/1A C R. Avenue, Calcutta-12, India.

G.P.C.

Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee,
Delhi State, Sis Ganj, Chandni Chowk, Delhi-6, India.

Singh Bros

Singh Brothers (Booksellers and Publishers),
Mai Sewan, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

S.G.P.C.

Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee,
Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, Punjab, India.

THE SIKH SYMBOLS

When Guru Gobind Singh initiated 'THE BELOVED FIVE' to become the Khalsa he ordained that as a symbol of being Khalsa the following five articles will be worn on the body of each Khalsa:

KESH

1. **LONG (UNCUT) HAIR** – In accordance with the Sikh philosophy human body is sacred because in it dwells the Spirit of God and what makes it the living image of God is the Mind and Spirit of Man. A complete human being must preserve all the hair on his body as essential and inseparable part of the body. The complete Man who is physically and spiritually the image of God is conceived in Sikh Scriptures as a man with hair and turban on his head. (**SABAT-SURAT DASTAR SIRA**)
2. **COMB (KANGHA)** – The comb is inseparable from the hair. Hair is a living tissue. But the dead hair which are uprooted on combing must be removed daily.
3. **IRON BANGLE (KARRA)** – This is symbolic of perfection, a reminder to the wearer to be mindful of his role of a spiritual aspirant and a useful citizen.
4. **SHORTS (KACHHEHRA)** – A Sikh with his 'KACHH' (underwear) could actively go to the battle fields work on any active secular or religious duty. This is a symbol of Continence and restraint of passion.
5. **KIRPAN (SWORD)** – Prof. Puran Singh Writes: "Every Sikh is to wear His Sword not his own. Kirpan is a gift from the guru. It is not an instrument of offence or defence. It is mind made intense by the love of Guru ... symbols of myriad personality of Guru's Sikh, that knows no defeat, no disappointment the personality that is unconquerable in its hope, in its spiritual radiance".

NIT-NEM

DAILY RECITATIONS

The hymns composed by our Gurus are called GURBANI. These are the sacred Scriptures of the Sikhs.

Some Bani is in the form of long verses. We are instructed to recite some Gurbani daily as a matter of course. Various Banees are specified for different times of the day.

MORNING RECITATIONS. These are the five Banees recited when 'AMRIT' is prepared for the initiation ceremony.

1. JAPJI (GURU NANAK)
2. JAAP (GURU GOBIND SINGH)
3. SWAYAY (GURU GOBIND SINGH)
4. BAINTEE CHOUPAI (GURU GOBIND SINGH)
5. ANAND SAHIB (GURU AMAR DASS)

MANY DEVOTEES LOVE TO RECITE SUKHMANI DAILY.

EVENING PRAYER

6. REHRAS SAHIB. This consists of selected shabads, Baintee-choupai and six stanzas of Anad Sahib.

BED TIME PRAYER

7. KIRTAN SOHILS. This consists of five selected Shabds.

GURBANI should be read correctly. It is therefore necessary to learn Punjabi. Also we must try to understand the meaning of Gurbani and act upon Guru's Words as far as possible.

MOOL MANTRA

THE ESSENCE OF GURU NANAK'S MESSAGE

EK-ONKAR	There is but one God
SAT NAAM	Eternal Truth is His Name
KARTA PURKH	He is the Creator
NIRBHAU	He is without fear
NIRVAIR	He is without Enmity
AKAAL-MURAT	Timeless is His Image
AJUNI	He is beyond Birth and Death
SAIBHANG	He is Self-Illuminated
GURPRASAD	He is realised by the Grace of the True Guru

GUR-MANTAR

'WAHEGURU' is 'GUR-MANTAR'

Praise the Lord by chanting His Name

WAHEGURU

The Wonderful Lord.