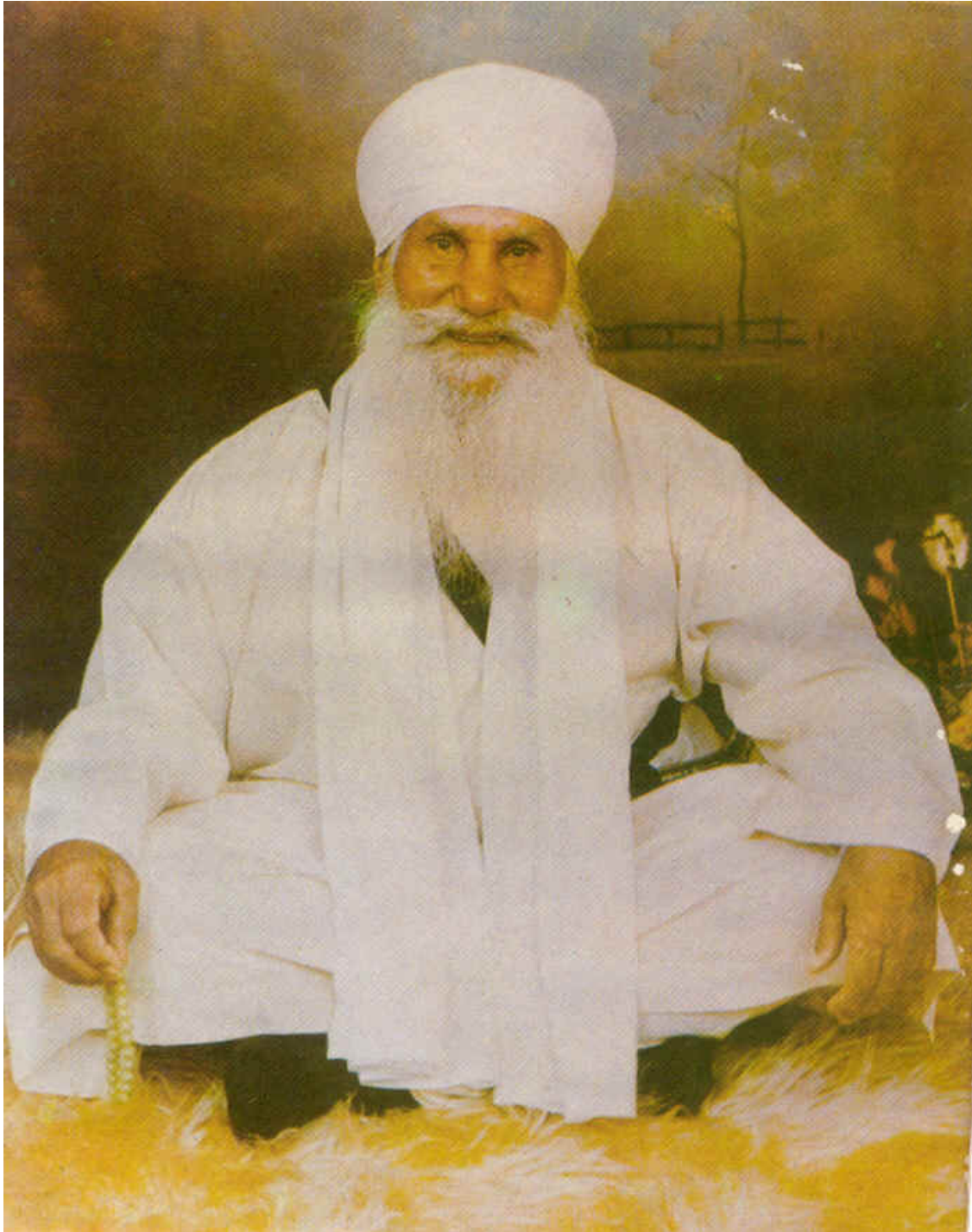


ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ
Ik Onkar Satgur Prasaad

**SAY KINEHIYA?
BIOGRAPHY OF SANT BABA HARNAM SINGH JI (GURDWARA RAMPUR
KHERA)**



BY: SEWA SINGH (SANT)
English Version by: BHULLA SINGH MALHI

DEDICATED

To

**That great soul who came to this mortal world,
In the will of the Divine Lord who is infinite bliss.
Living himself in transcendental bliss,
Distributed amongst so many, the gift of bliss.
Merged with the Lord, in everlasting bliss,
Eternal memories of his visit, leaving behind only..... bliss**

ਸੇ ਕਿਨੇਹਿਆ ?

**ਜਿਨਾ ਨ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੇ ਕਿਨੇਹਿਆ ॥
ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਮੂਲਿ ਸਾਂਈ ਜੇਹਿਆ ॥੧॥
(ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੫, ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੭)**

SE KINEHIYA?

***jinHaa na visrai naam say kinayhi-aa.
bhayd na jaanhu mool saaN-ee jayhi-aa. ||1||***

***Whom are they like, who forget not the Lord's name?
They are like the Lord himself.
Know this, there is absolutely
No difference between the two
(Asa Fifth Guru, Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Page 397)***

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PRELIMINARY REQUEST

God is Infinite. It is very difficult for mortals of this limited realm to comprehend the true extent of our infinite Lord. Trying to understand Him is impossible, as the shallow depth of our limited intellect cannot fathom the boundless Lord. Trapped in this realm of materialism, man falls into a lazy slumber, becoming oblivious and indifferent to the existence of the infinite Being. So, from time to time, the omnipotent Almighty Lord appears on this world stage in the form of a Saint, to rekindle the innermost desire to unite with him and remind lost souls the message...

***This is your once in a lifetime chance,
To meet the Lord of the Universe
gobind milan kee ih tayree baree-aa.***
(Asa, 5th Guru, page 12)

To write the biography of such a blessed and Saintly personality, who came to this world with the Lord's divine blessing, is extremely difficult. For what is said of holy Saints...

***They give the gift of spiritual life
Apply men to devotion of the Lord
And make men meet with God.
jee-a daan day bhagtee laa-in har si-o lain milaa-ay. ||2||***
(Suhi, 5th Guru, page 749)

Fulfilling the true mission of spreading the gospel of **Waheguru**, this true Saint mingled with the Almighty. Our fifth Guru says of the true Saint...

***What glories of the Saints can I describe?
Unfathomable is their knowledge and
I know not their worth
santan kee mahimaa kavan vakhaana-o.
agaaDh boDh kichh mit nahee jaan-o.***
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 181)

For almost 7-8 years the Sikh sangat had asked on several occasions, for a biography to be written about the life of Baba Ji. Many a time, the thought repeatedly arose within me, that, whatever I had seen personally of Baba Ji's life, what he told me directly or the spiritual guidance I gained from Baba Ji's time on earth should somehow be put to paper. Again, I would lose heart, thinking that only a highly spiritual, blessed soul, possessing the most sublime imagination can write about the teachings of such a reverent soul. To write about the feats of a spiritually complete and highly developed soul cannot be done justice by those who are not as spiritually evolved as Baba Ji was. Much time passed in this state of confusion and I was thus, unable to write the life teachings of this truly great Saint. Again, with the inspiration and blessing of the sangat, taking shelter of the true Guru and abiding by the urge of obtaining blessings from Baba Ji, I ventured to write the biography of this perfect Saint, a divine soul, a Saint-Soldier, a complete Gursikh - Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji.

The basis of this biography of the great Saint is the audio cassette, which he recorded in 1970, and contains the main spiritual experiences of his life. Secondly, with the Grace of the True Guru, this humble servant had the good fortune of having continuous company of the great Saint for 35

years, up to the time Baba Ji breathed his last breath. Thirdly, I enquired and collated as much information as I could from the many Gursikhs who met Baba Ji and received numerous spiritual instructions from him during his lifetime. Throughout the book, only those life changing incidents are recounted that will give the reader inspiration and spiritual teachings on the life of a true Gursikh. This book endeavours to inspire the reader to follow the way of the Khalsa Saint, thus I have avoided the need to include non-essential details of his life. In this age of materialism, time is an expensive commodity. Little spare time is available to read about spirituality, so only the essential details of Baba Ji's life that will give the reader guidance are included here. This humble servant will consider this endeavour a success, if even one soul is inspired by the pious guidance of this biography and attains unity with the great Guru. The life of the great Saint was purely a Gursikh life and it contained not an iota of his personal intellect. Whatever the Guru has written, the principles of the true Gursikh to be, Baba Ji was the living embodiment of that vision.

Need for an English translation

In 1994-95, this humble servant had an opportunity to visit countries like the USA, Canada and England. The sangat of the said countries and especially their children had heard about the biography of Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji but could not read the Punjabi version. Taking note of their request I was inspired to have the book translated and accepted their desire to have an English version released. I came to Yuba City from Houston and stayed with S. Sukhbir Singh Rai for a month. He also stressed the need for a translation of "Say Kinehiya" in English. All the devotees related their obligation that, "we are citizens of this country. Though we can speak and understand Punjabi, we can't read it. We have immense faith and love for the Guru's teachings but want that faith to arise from the bottom of our being." S. Sukhbir Singh Rai did not just give the mere suggestion, but was also forthcoming with a donation of Rs 50,000 for this noble translation.

After meeting the sangat in Canada, I reached UK and stayed there with my younger brother S. Harbinder Singh Dhillon. I shared my thoughts about the translation with him. He too, warmly encouraged me and offered to help with the remaining expenditure of this project. He was in favour of speedy action for this cause and with God's Grace and blessings donated Rs. 50,000 for this translation.

Arriving back in India, I tried different ways to get the translation of the biography "Say Kinehiya" accomplished. Unable to find a suitable person to take on the task, I was disappointed. Then I prayed to the great Guru to devise or evolve some means so that this translation could be accomplished with His blessings. The Great Guru heard my prayer.

One day S. Bhulla Singh Malhi M.A (Eng Poll Sci) B.sc, B.ed and his wife Bibi Nirmal Kaur, principal (SHGN girls Sr. Sec. School Gardhiwala), came to the Gurdwara Sahib to pay their respects. After having something to eat, I shared with them my thoughts of translating Baba Ji's biography "Say Kinehiya." They consulted each other for a few minutes and then graciously accepted the task, I advised them, "It is a difficult job, but if the great Guru showers his blessings only then can this pious work be accomplished." I felt greatly relieved when S. Bhulla Singh Malhi accepted the task to translate the book. After a few days, the fortunate couple (Mr. And Mrs. Malhi) returned to the Gurdwara Sahib to seek permission and the blessings of Guru Ji to start this great task. An *Ardas* was done at the feet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the translation started in earnest. With the Guru's blessing, the translation was completed within 4-5 months.

The hard work, firm belief and pious devotion with which Mr and Mrs. Bhulla Singh Malhi served are praiseworthy. I pray that the great Guru bless them with higher spirit, better intellect and love for other Gursikhs so that in the future they are better able to serve the sangat. S.Chetan Singh (Asst. Director Language dept. Punjab) belongs to village Gondpur (Gardhiwala). Since childhood, he has remained in the close company of Baba Ji. He is leading a very pious Gursikh life. This young man has gone through the difficult task of repeatedly proof reading the text and has given a new shape and style to the book. Our Ardas is for God to bless him accordingly for his service.

I am deeply thankful to S.Lehmber Singh Bhullar, owner of Amrit Preet computer systems for typesetting the book in such a short period. He also helped a great deal, in getting the book printed in its present attractive form. Our Ardas is for the great Guru to bless him. Even though this book has been translated into English, some of our youngsters from the UK, Canada, and America have found it difficult to understand the full meaning of the contents of the previous editions to this book; this is due to the difference in the nature of their spoken and written English. The meanings of Gurbani were given in this book but some of the actual quotes from Gurbani were not there, hence this made it hard to grasp which sentence from Gurbani had been stated.

Doctor Gurinderpaul Singh Daler, (UK), willingly took the responsibility to simplify and adjust the translation according to the needs of the youngsters, in the stated foreign countries and also to reinstate the missing quotations from Gurbani in Roman English which he has done with full conviction and dedication.

Ravinder Kaur from Leicester, (UK), has also assisted **Dr. Daler** and worked hard to complete this noble task to give this book a new form for the intended audience for which I am truly grateful. It is difficult to express my gratitude to all those who's helpful insights and endurance in the face of my unending demands on their time, made this book possible. Their observations and suggestions helped bring coherence and consistency to the more unclear segments of the book. The hard work and firm belief with which Doctor Gurinderpaul Singh Daler and Ravinder Kaur have served is truly a praiseworthy endeavour. I pray from my heart to the great Satguru Ji to bless them with Naam daan, higher spirit, better intellect and love for Gursikhi so that in the future they can serve in a better and nobler way. If anything written, deviates from the Guru's teaching then, please consider this to be my personal error and find it in your heart to pardon me. If any devotee has any suggestions with regard to this book, or has something they feel should be published about Baba Ji's personal and spiritual life, please send the material to us so that it can be included in the next edition.

Thanks

Servant of the Sadh - Sangat
Seva Singh (Sant)
Gurdwara Rampur Khera
P.O. Gardhiwala
Dist. Hoshiarpur (Pb)
26th June, 2007 India

WITH THE RISE OF KNOWLEDGE WICKEDNESS DISAPPEARS

This meritorious holy book, "Say Kinehiya" has been studied and reflected over, in which Sant Baba Seva Singh Ji has recounted the life of highly respected, benevolent and great Saint, Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji, who possessed supreme spiritual knowledge. The conception of this book is for the benefit of all those who have a desire to learn about Sikhi. This book will become a lighthouse to those who are drifting away from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and have no faith in Gurmat. It will put forth guidelines for other seekers of spiritual knowledge. Reading this book will instil deep faith and devotion upon the very word of Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The qualities of amrit, sadh sangat, gurmat, Naam recitation and selfless service will be inculcated. Reading this book will convert and transmute many lives into gems and diamonds. It relates different methods of attaining oneness with the true Guru, firmness in gurmat, the technique of Naam simran and its benefits. Such a praiseworthy holy book is needed in these modern times.

Servant of the Guru Panth

Thakur Singh

Jatha Bhindhran Mehta Damdami Taksaal

THE DESERTED MOUND WAS INHABITED

Great Guru Ram Das Ji has said...

***Amongst men, blessed is that mortal who,
Imparts spiritual instruction for the good of others,
God's name he enjoins and preaches unto others,
Through God's name is the world emancipated***

***o-ay purakh paraanee Dhan jan heh
updays karahi par-upkaari-aa.
har naam darirhaaveh har naam sunaaveh
har naamay jag nistaari-aa.
(Gujri 4th Guru, page 311)***

Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji was just such a man as described above: the man who attained a colossal degree of supremacy in spiritual enlightenment, a true follower of the Guru's teachings, perfect Saint Soldier, follower of the path led by Guru Ji. Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji of Rampur Khera district Hoshiarpur came and settled at the deserted and barren mound (called a *theh*), later known as Rampur Khera. The people of the area feared this barren place and knew it to be haunted and possessed by evil spirits. The great Saint transformed the deserted place into a magnificent place of worship through constant meditation of Almighty God. This place blossomed into the centre for Sikh missionary preaching and meditation. In time, its fragrance spread far and wide around the world, proclaiming naam in every corner of the world. Hundreds of thousands of mortals were baptised into the fold of Sikhism and were securely soldered spiritually, to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Thus, these devotees were able to cross the world ocean in this harsh age of kalyug. There was an acute need to bring forth and publish details of the life of such a gifted soul for the benefit of the people at large. Lives of such rare personalities become the guiding stars for generations of spiritual seekers of the gurmat way of life. Reading the biography inspires one to attain the ultimate true goal of life, union with God.

***This is your chance to meet the Lord of the Universe.
gobind milan kee ih tayree baree-aa.
(Asa 5th Guru, page 378)***

In this tremendous project and with great effort, Baba Seva Singh Ji, the successor of Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji has done an admirable service to humanity in bringing to light, this rare book on gurmukh living. I hope true spiritual seekers will gain guidance in attaining unity with Almighty God.

Humble servant
Baba Sarabjot Singh
17th generation of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
Guru throne of Baba Sahib Singh Ji Bedi
Una Sahib (H.P)

GREAT IS THE GURU AND THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED BY HIM

Bhagat Ravi Das Ji say's in Bilawal raag...

***Amongst the scholars, warriors
Canopied kings and others,
There is no equal to the
Lord's devoted slave.
pandit soor chhatarpat raajaa
bhagat baraabar a-or na ko-ay.
(Bilawal Bhagat Ravi Das, page 858)***

A true devotee, who is in tune with *Waheguru*, in constant praise and admiration of God, is the master of all humanity. Guru Nanak Dev Ji, in Japji Sahib has revealed this truth...

***He to whom the Lord grants
His praising and eulogizing
O Nanak, he is the king of kings
jis no bakhsay sifit saalaah.
naanak paatisaaher paatisaahu. ||25||
(Japu Ji, 1st Guru, page 5)***

Throughout Gurbani, the mortal is given guidance to leave all other means and adopt naam recitation. This fact is emphasized by Gurbani...

***That Saint and devotee becomes acceptable
To the Lord, with whom god is appeased.
Wise are the persons who meditate on their Lord
sant bhagat parvaan jo parabh bhaa-i-aa.
say-ee bichkhan jant jinee har Dhi-aa-i-aa.
(Vaar Sorath 4th Guru, page 652)***

It is not child's play, neither an easy task, to be accepted in the Lord's court. It involves the struggle to vanquish the ego and adopt His sweet will as the way to God. The person who follows His will is termed a Sikh. It is a challenging way of life. By adopting this path, one merges with the Almighty when the Guru showers His grace. The praise of such a gursikh is beyond the realm of language and explanation. Such a gursikh is highly esteemed in Gurbani...

***I ever make obeisance unto that gursikh
Who treads in the Guru's path.
tis gursikh kaN-u haN-u sadaa namaskaaree
jo gur kai bhaanai gursikh chali-aa. ||18||
(Pauri 3rd Guru, page 593)***

True spiritual seekers are the real assets of this universe. They are like the useful trees that provide deeply comforting shade and delicious fruit to the weary traveller. They are like a mobile university of spiritual knowledge, giving useful guidance on and to all walks of life. These Sainly persons have earned the wealth of naam with great effort, so their every word and deed becomes a lighthouse to the curious, spiritual learner. Although the creator is invisible and not seen readily

with these eyes, his presence is felt in those persons who are in tune with that invisible force. Their sight has a soothing effect upon the mind and soul, repairing our faith in God. For this reason our ancestors have prayed to God to bless us with the company of Saints, meeting with such Saints reminds us that, we too, must recite His name.

Se-ye-e piyare mel jinha milya tera naam chit aavai.

Of these attuned, imbued with naam and blessed personalities of the Khalsa panth, Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji of Rampur Khera occupied a unique place. His glowing and spiritually radiant face would exude peace and tranquillity all around. With his constant meditation, this once barren place became a blooming centre for preaching Sikhism called Rampur Khera. Due to his pious gurnat preaching, many mortals were baptised and became worthy of sitting as gursikhs in the lap of our great Guru. Baba Ji loved all gursikhs equally, as one big, common family of our Guru Sahib. It is commonly observed that ordinary Saints and sadhu's are indifferent to the Sikh way of life and code of conduct. Not so with Baba Ji. He was very firm in his belief in Gurbani and the code of living given to us by our Guru.

Even in his old age, Baba Ji would wear a one foot long sword in his belt (gatra). This firm belief in the Sikh way of life attracted many devotees of the area, in large numbers, who eventually become baptised. This humble servant (Joginder Singh) met this holy soul in Talwara town in around 1970. The gurnat camp (Smagam) for recitation and meditation on naam was indescribable in terms of the spiritual gains that one earned by attending. However, the personal gurnat way of life that Baba Ji lead, left a deep and lasting impression upon my mind. Until then, I had seen that the congregation would serve ordinary Saints, but here an aged Sikh Saint was seen serving food to the congregation. My joy knew no bounds and I was overwhelmed. His politeness, humility, affection and sense of unity with all gursikhs left me spellbound. The program of meditation at the naam meditation camps was planned so well, that nobody would feel tired and; no one had time to gossip either. Starting at 2 am, right up until the evening, the current of naam and Gurbani flowed. I became addicted to the meditation camp to such an extent, that I would arrive well before the camp started in order to gain the maximum benefit of Guru-ward company. This continued for four years with the grace of God.

On one hand, Baba Ji had immense faith and love for Gurbani, which he gained through constant spiritual effort and on the other, he was always eager to render service to the panth. He had a burning desire that all followers of Sikhism be baptised one day. Whenever he would organise a program for *kirtan* and *katha*, it would be followed by a baptism ceremony (Amrit Sanchar). He would emphatically say, "No one can have a link to the creator unless he becomes a baptised Sikh and becomes Guru-ward." The Sikhs from the surrounding area would, in their spare time, go to see Baba Ji and be given training in reading and understanding Gurbani (Santhiya). He used to recite one *Benati Chaupai* prayer over and above his personal schedule of prayers (*Nitnem*) for the betterment and upliftment of the Khalsa panth. Baba Ji would encourage others to recite an extra prayer for the panth too. He often told us that the "Immediate future is terrifying and destructive for the panth." On many occasions, he did hard penance over forty days, when he would recite Gurbani constantly, for the protection of the Khalsa panth. During this tenure, he would talk very sparingly and involve himself completely in Gurbani, whilst living in his small hut. With this zeal, he and his followers joined the crusade (dharma yudh morcha) started by the Khalsa panth in 1982.

Wherever we go and sit, let us talk good. Skim and drink only this nectar.

jithai jaa-ay bahee-ai bhalaa kahee-ai jhol amrit peejai.

(Suhi chhant 1st Guru, page 766)

On this crusade, he converted the jail and any situation into a place of worship and meditation of Gurbani. The Chief Minister of the time was one of his followers. He forbid Baba Ji to join the crusade politely, but Baba Ji did not agree. He left all soft options and obligations, to stand on the side of the warriors, to save the religion. He stood by the Khalsa panth, even at the cost to his own health.

***By the order of the Great Guru
They come near the Lord
But disclose not their secret to anyone.
hon najeek khudaa-ay dai bhayt na kisai dayn. ||116||
(Salok Bhagat Farid, page 1384)***

The aforementioned is exactly suited in describing this great Saint. He always concealed himself and tried to enjoin everyone to realise the Almighty. There is no denying that those gursikhs who earn the wealth of naam are followed by miraculous phenomena...

***The nine treasures and eighteen miraculous powers
Go after him who ever keeps ensrined
The Lord within his mind
nav niDhee athaarah siDhee pichhai lagee-aa fireh
jo har hirdai sadaa vasaa-ay.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 649)***

The greatness of such gursikhs lies in the fact that they never bother about these miraculous powers. Instead of being distracted, they follow the path of naam meditation without looking here or there. The allure of miraculous powers cannot distract the true devotee from the path of naam meditation.

Due to the grace of naam meditation, words spoken by such Saints begin to come true. They never use this power for fame, personal gain and greatness. They do not feign personal greatness; on the contrary, they want the greatness of the Lord to be recognised. Yes! The creator blesses such holy souls with greatness...

***God loves his praise and slaves who praise him
Hence causes his slave to be acclaimed.
har aapnee vadi-aa-ee bhaavdee jan kaa jaikaar karaa-ee.
(Salok 4th Guru, page 652)***

Naam is the master key to gain all the heights of material and spiritual progress. Whatever we ask from naam, we get. It is the order of Gurbani that...

***All glories are in the Lord's name
So, remember thou your God's name
If man fixes his mind on his God's name
He obtains all the things he asks for
sabh vadi-aa-ee-aa har naam vich har gurmukh Dhi-aa-ee-ai.
je vasat mangee-ai saa-ee paa-ee-ai jay naam chit laa-ee-ai.
(Pauri 3rd Guru, page 850)***

The simran of naam is food for the soul. With it, the soul becomes strong and healthy.

Remember, remember the name over and over again

Nanak, it is the only support of the soul.

simar simar naam baaraN baar.

naanak jee-a kaa ihai aDhaar. ||2||

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 295)

Baba Ji conducted a unique experiment based on one line of Gurbani from *Sukhmani Sahib*: "His name is the food for the hungry."

He proved in this experiment that naam simran is the complete diet for human life. He spent forty days in high moral spirits without having food or water. An atheist in this materialistic world may think it untrue, but those lucky few who have faith in Gurbani, its true followers, understand this fact completely. Gurbani is eternally true throughout the ages...

God's name is my food of thirty-six Vaarieties

Partaking of which I am satiated.

har naam hamaaraa bhojan chhateeh parkaar

jit khaa-i-ai ham ka-o taripat bha-ee.

(Pauri 3rd Guru, page 593)

Where naam is food for the body and soul, it is also a wonderful medicine, which can bring about miraculous cures. Baba Ji used this miraculous medicine himself and encouraged others to use it too. By use of the medicine of naam, Bhai Avatar Singh and Bhai Sher Singh were cured of chronic illnesses. They too, then immersed themselves in naam. If someone would give Baba Ji credit for curing anyone, he would reply like a true, humble, self-effacing gursikh, that the miraculous power belonged to Gurbani. He would say, "The Great Guru has cured them. I was only entrusted with duty to recite Gurbani for them." In this context, another point is worth mentioning; Bhai Sher Singh's ailment was partly cured when he started sweeping the Gurdwara courtyard everyday. This was his penance, issued by the five beloved ones. After this, the great Guru appeared in a vision, in his dream, to direct him to the physician, who would cure him. Thus, the true Guru used the curative power of Gurbani to provide a remedy to his ailment. From this incident, we learn the lesson that one should not waste the valuable gift of Gurbani on the upkeep of this perishable body.

The medicines are effective, when the Lord Himself stands in their midst.

a-ukhad aa-ay raas vich aap khalo-i-aa.

(page 1363)

There is no doubt that a gurnat-imbibed way of life, in which one meditates on naam constantly, is not touched by physical illnesses. If due to past karmic debt one does fall victim to an illness then, to use Gurbani and taking the shelter of Waheguru does no harm. It must be remembered that naam medicine only becomes effective when it pleases the Lord, when it is His will. Here, I recall an incident when Baba Ji was ill and being treated in a hospital in Amritsar. One day, he was very ill and Dr Harcharan Singh asked, "Baba Ji, you are in tune with the creator, why don't you beseech him to cure you?" Baba Ji laughed and said, "Doctor Sahib! What is the use of begging for a cure for this perishable body? One day it must perish, if not today then tomorrow. Now there is only one demand and that is to recite his name with this last breath and mingle with Him."

Whatever spiritual achievements Baba Ji gained, were due to the grace of the Guru and his complete faith in Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Before starting any work, he would bow, pay homage and ask for the Guru's permission in the form of a hukamnama. If anyone invited him to their house, he would reply that if the Guru wills him to have glimpses of the sangat, then he would come. He would perform an *Ardas* at the feet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and ask permission from the Almighty first. If the Guru gave permission, he would go, otherwise not. Even the dates for the gurnat meditation camp (naam abhyas kammai Smagam) were affixed in this manner. Thus, he had completely surrendered himself to the Lord.

Even though Baba Ji had a firm belief in the gurnat way of life, he always had due regard and respect for the thoughts of others. One example of this, to follow, would help gursikh families immensely. My mother left for the heavenly abode. Sehaj path was recited for her departed soul. All near and dear, kith and kin were invited to attend the last prayers and *Ardas* for her. This humble servant (Bhai Joginder Singh Talwara) sent a message to Baba Ji, through our close friend Dr Pritam Singh, asking Baba Ji to attend the ceremony. It was made clear to Dr Pritam Singh, to tell Baba Ji that the bhog ceremony of the Sehaj path will be completed at "mundawani" only. Dr Pritam Singh gave Baba Ji the letter of invitation and the verbal message too. After receiving the message, Baba Ji fell silent and replied, "We should attend on the basis that we are all linked as gursikhs, into one family of the Guru."

Thus, Baba Ji participated in the final prayer ceremony of my mother and obliged me. This is a shining example of the regard Baba Ji had for all gursikhs. He showed, practically, that we are all gursikhs of the Guru, belonging to one family of the Guru. Despite ideological differences, opinions on issues, he never sacrificed mutual love, respect and co-operation among gursikhs. The great Guru likes the fact that in spite of differences, gursikhs sit together with mutual respect and honour one another.

So, the task of writing this book about the supreme Saint and true follower of the Guru is praiseworthy. The motive behind writing this book is only to describe the boons and blessings showered on gursikhs, who adopt the Guru ward path to salvation. It is to inspire the newcomers to spirituality on their path to salvation. This book shows the greatness of *Waheguru*, of naam meditation, of the Guru and of blessed persons who toiled hard to earn the wealth of naam. In doing so, they were accepted at the door of *Waheguru*. They deserve to be called great...

***Profitable is the birth and advent of the Lord's slave
Who has praised the Lord of such meritorious children?
safal janam har jan kaa upji-aa jin keeno sa-ut biDhaataa.***
(*Devghandhari 5th Guru, page 532*)

Humble servant
Joginder Singh (Talwara)
29.12.1990 Amritsar

THEY BECOME PERFECT PERSONS AND WAVER NOT

“Say Kinehiya” is the biography of that great Saint of the twentieth century Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji, written simplistically and innocently, whose gentle words depict and reflect a natural instinct for devotion. Through constant recitation of naam, love for all mankind, selfless service of humanity and sacred unity with the gurmat way of life, Sant Ji acquired great spiritual heights, achieved only by rare beings. Attaining immovable peace, in an atmosphere of pious and musical Gurbani, Sant Seva Singh, a devoted servant of Baba Harnam Singh Ji has created this unique work, “Say Kinehiya.” The merits of simplicity and spontaneity have entered the text so profoundly, that the truth is a witness unto itself. This humble servant has witnessed the gurmukh way of life led by Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji closely. He conquered his mind in a real sense and shunned egotism, vanity and jealousy at every moment, in his every action until the very end of his life. The scenes and incidents in this book are saturated with the sweet simplicity of spiritual pleasures like the fragrance of a morning breeze. These incidents bring forth a clear picture surrounding the deep mysteries of Gurbani, in front of the Khalsa panth. The Saint author (Sant Seva Singh) has elevated himself above ego, understanding the eternal contribution of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, to human life and then created this unique biography.

In the second decade of the 20th century Sant Attar Singh of Mastuana, district Sangrur, rekindled the divine light of Sikhism in the Malwa region of Punjab, reorienting the disease stricken towards the Sikh faith. Similarly, Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji made Gurdwara Rampur Khera, district Hoshiarpur, Punjab a centre for devotion, knowledge and gurmat way of life in the Doaba region, thus blessing the land with the divine touch of the great Guru. To enlighten the ideals of Sant Baba Attar Singh Ji Mastuana, his true devotee Sant Teja Singh Ji (double M.A.) a renowned, seasoned scholar, jumped into the arena and wrote a beautiful biography of Sant Baba Attar Singh Ji.

It can be considered the good fortune of the Khalsa panth that a true devotee of Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji is with us. A true devotee of such high standards, who is fully absorbed in a practical Sikh way of life, stands a natural testimony to the pious deeds of Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji.

I have read of many selfless miracles, relating to the life of Baba Harnam Singh Ji over the past few days, sitting completely absorbed in the book, “Say Kinehiya.” It is my firm belief, that the tender life of the great Saint and his sincerity towards Sikh ideals will give solace and guidance to our wounded nation passing through its present crisis. Just two months and fifteen days before Baba Ji passed away, I witnessed with my own eyes his high morale and divinely inspired, sublime mood. After seeing Baba Ji, I was fully convinced by what the king of martyrs, Guru Arjun Dev Ji writes in *Sukhmani Sahib*...

They become perfect persons and waver not.

pooran purakh nahee dolaanay

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 289)

Sant Seva Singh Ji has penned this elevated state of being in the chapter called “Arrest in a religious crusade” The Saint did not court arrest under social or political custom. His high-spirited morale was indifferent to political trends and opinions. Despite his old age and physical weakness, he sat fearlessly and in a transcendental mood on his way to court arrest, with a long history of past martyrs and crusaders behind him. He was sitting in perfect peace and immovable calmness.

That particular moment turned his life into a long lyrical poem. His blissful, radiant face was emanating the message, "No evil person will be able to eliminate the entity of the Khalsa panth." His journey was actually a martyrdom, which culminated in its perfect end on 4th January 1983. Sant Seva Singh Ji, whilst portraying the picture of his spiritual guide, has also painted a portrait of the Khalsa and his way of spiritual living. The lucky Singh's reading this biography will be able to follow the path shown by the tenth Guru.

Prof. Harinder Singh Mehboob, Khalsa College Gardhiwala, Distt Hoshiarpur

HOW TO TELL THE GREATNESS OF A SAINT?

***How can one tell the greatness of a Saint?
Who is fathomless, with this limited intellect?
What glories of the Saint can I describe?
Unfathomable is their knowledge, and
I know not their worth.
santan kee mahimaa kavan vakhaana-o.
agaaDh boDh kichh mit nahee jaan-o.
(Gauri Guareri 5th Guru, page 181)***

Only a seeker of spiritual knowledge, a true follower of the divine path, who has spiritual insight, can describe and write about the great spiritual personality and Saint, Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji. Baba Ji who spoke thought and lived the truth, to him, I can only pay this heartfelt tribute in a few lines...

***The man who was in complete unison with the Almighty
There the Lord converses with His devoted Saints
bhagat sang parabh gosat karat. (p. 894)***

He was able to talk with the Almighty in person and a firm believer in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He knew the eternal truth, was a pious human being within and outwardly. He was a manifestation of the complete Khalsa, its traditions and way of life, leading a dedicated life based on the principles laid down by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, up to the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He was the true incarnation of a person who recited naam himself and then, persuaded others to follow this path too. He was an exemplary man of his word, practicing what he preached. Whoever met him was drawn to him and instead of leaving him, was drawn closer and closer to him. His Saintly personality radiated a strange sense of magnetic affection such that everyone who met with him would think that he loved them more than anyone else in the whole world. Drenched in love for the Almighty, he distributed this divine love to others around him.

His way of teaching was simple and effective. Whatever he said in life, he would practice it himself. There is one incident in this book, that while doing prayers of *Sukhmani Sahib* he came across the line, "He gives food to the hungry." He wanted to know if a person could indeed survive on naam alone without food and water. To verify the truth of Gurbani, he experimented over forty days by not eating or drinking anything and taking the nourishment of the Lord's name. Locked in his hut, he only recited the name of God and emerged forty days later without any physical detriment. I remember asking Baba Ji when he stayed with me here in England to clarify and expand on this incident. Baba Ji emphatically told me, "We ate or drank nothing for forty days."

I was inquisitive and replied, "Baba Ji, water is most essential for human survival. Didn't you even drink water?" I fell silent and thought to myself, about how someone could survive forty days without water? Baba Ji read my mind and replied, "Harbinder Singh Ji, I did not drink water or eat anything because I felt no thirst or hunger for water or food." So, to authenticate the words of Gurbani he undertook this experiment...

***God's name is my food of thirty-six Vaarieties
Partaking of which, I am satiated.***

**har naam hamaaraa bhojan chhateeh parkaar
jit khaa-i-ai ham ka-o taripat bha-ee.
(Wadhans 4th Guru, page 593)**

He was a firm believer in Gurbani and often said, "Every word of Gurbani is true and whatever I have obtained, is from the feet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji." If I have seen anyone worshipping Gurbani as the embodiment of God, then it is Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji. Starting early in the morning, after bathing he would do his *Nitnem*, naam meditation and then, with his own hands, wash the altar where Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was to be installed. He would clean the palanquin; decorate the robes and sheets before placing Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji over his head and bringing Guru Ji to enthrone upon the pedestal (Manji Sahib). The robes and sheets would be immaculately straight and ironed. In his old age, he would stand next to Guru Ji's throne to oversee the installation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Before starting any job, he would seek the permission of Guru Ji by taking a hukamnama from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. If permission was granted, only then would he proceed, no matter how big the emergency was. If any devotee sought his advice, he would not just give his opinion. He would seek the blessing of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and not assert his own ego. He would take the devotee to the Gurdwara and ask them to do *Ardas* in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He would offer *Ardas* before eating, drinking and before undertaking any sort of activity...

**May my lust, wrath aVaarice, worldly love
And ego depart
Nanak has sought your protection
O, Lord my divine Guru, have mercy upon me.
kaam kroDh ar lobh moh binas jaa-ay ahaNmayv.
naanak parabh sarnaagatee kar parsaad gurdayv. ||1||
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th, page 269)**

Regarding the woes of the mind, Baba Ji would say, make supplication before the Guru. Every gursikh should communicate with the great Guru through *Ardas*. If any of the five instincts of lust, wrath, greed, attachment, pride and vanity tries to overpower the mortal, then that person should immediately engross himself or herself in prayer. The Guru will provide that soul with shelter from these instincts. A true believer is helped and guided through Gurbani. When he was visiting England I once asked, "Baba Ji, what is the need to read Gurbani when we don't understand its meanings?" Baba Ji replied, "Gurbani is the Guru. It has the power to illuminate the darkness."

I repeated my question differently and said, "If we do not understand Gurbani that we read, how will help us?" He replied, "If, when reading Gurbani, you do not follow it's meaning, even then, try to be attentive to the words spoken. Whatever you utter, listen and read the words affectionately. Then, Gurbani automatically shows its greatness and reveals its meaning clearly in due time. The need is for pure emotion and devotion when reading and listening." Baba Ji gave utmost regard to *sangat*. He would say...

**In the Saints congregation The Lord abides. ||2||
mil satsangat khoj dasaa-ee vich
sangat har parabh vasai jee-o. ||2||
(page 94)**

As such, it was his routine to serve the sangat with his own hands. He would always sit in the rows (pangat) with the rest of sangat when taking langar. Nitnem was recited in groups so that every one benefited. To do *Nitnem* in a group is more beneficial as:

***Like the azadirachta tree, abiding with sandalwood tree
Gains its scent. O Lord, you are the sandalwood
I have acquired your qualities
ji-o chandan sang basai nimm birkhaa
gun chandan kay baskhay. ||2||
(page 976)***

The consciousness rises when sitting in the company of holy persons. Moreover, any errors in your prayers are removed whilst reading Gurbani. If some devotee would question...

***Show me the path O Saints
How can I meet my Lord?
mai dasihu maarag santaho ki-o parabhoo milaa-ee-aa.
(page 1098)***

Baba Ji would ask the devotee to sit with him when he was meditating. The devotee would be told the method of controlling the mind and technique of meditation. Sometimes, to a devotee lacking in spiritual achievement or lapsed on the spiritual path, Baba Ji would say, "Where there is a guide to tell the way, there is no one willing to follow and where there is someone to ask there, is no one to guide! But when the two aspects are united then, there is nothing-incomplete left. Any devotee could meet him without reservations, except when he was engrossed in his personal meditation. There was no barrier to him. His doors were always open to help the poor and the needy. In this world, such persons are rare to find.

Baba Ji was so liberal and broad minded that if someone committed an error and asked for forgiveness, felt remorse and vowed to reform his or her ways, he would forgive them there and then. He would never make him conscious of his mistake in future...

***You are without enmity and
Your Saints are pure
tooN nirvair sant tayray nirmal. (page 108)***

Baba Ji was very punctual and kept his promises. I remember he promised a family that he would attend their bhog ceremony at Rasulpur near Tanda Urmur. The day before and on the appointed day, there was torrential rain. All communications came down and the roads became impassable. In the morning, he began to say that he had promised to be at the bhog in Rasulpur. So, after he had finished his morning *Nitnem*, he set off on foot to the bhog in Rasulpur. The family in Rasulpur had given up hope, thinking that Baba Ji would not come in this weather. They were all wonderstruck when Baba Ji arrived and greeted them with the Guru's Fateh. "*Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji ki Fateh*"

He stuck to one more principle in his life and that was to recite *Benati Chaupai* Sahib at least five times whenever travelling en route to somewhere and then do *Ardas*. He would recite 27 *Benati Chaupai* paths for the upliftment and divine protection of the Khalsa panth. His whole life was

dedicated to this cause. He had the utmost respect for the sword and hair considering them a divine gift from God and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He would keep the loose hair from combing his hair and burn them respectfully.

Many others who followed gurmat and the spiritual path, seeking true naam came into very close contact with Baba Ji and knew him far better than I did. I did not come into the company of Baba Ji to meet the Almighty. Due to some predestined good deed, my parents saw it fit to put me into the company of such a holy person. No doubt, I had the company of Baba Ji but remained indifferent. However, the pious, fragrant soul did not abandon its nature of spreading the fragrance of naam and as such overlooked my demerits and faults. It was a unique blessing over me of that great Saint that, whenever I felt sad, gloomy or lonely due to the lack of sangat in this materialistic world, he came to this country twice to bless me with his company. My mind blossomed with pleasure and was in bliss, recalling his words as he embraced me, "I thought KakaJi (child) is very sad, so I should go and see him."

When he last came to see me in England, I shared with him some incidents of my life, which I couldn't share previously. We sat in a quiet place where the great Saint blessed me with many boons and blessings. These boons have stood with me through thick and thin in the struggle of my life. Whoever came into his affectionate embrace became his throughout life. Even today, countless devotees baptised when Baba Ji was here, are seen in high spirits ever ready and firm in their Gursikh resolve. These devotees truly bear witness to the Guru's words that...

The holy man saves himself

Saves his entire lineage

And reforms his life too

aap tarai kul saglay taaray gurmukh janam savaarni-aa. ||3||

(page 125)

As is the law of nature, this physical body does not last forever. He departed for the heavenly abode, living and dying in the Guru's will...

As water mingles with water

Separates not again

ji-o jal jal meh pais na niksai

(page 692)

And

No doubt the veil of someone has slipped

Out of the hand

But the link of that thought never snaps

The link and shelter of the human body may not remain but the bond of blissful thoughts does not fade. It is strengthened through teachings and spoken words. We can say about the great Saints...

Blest is the lineage, blest the father and

Blest the mother who gave birth to God's slave

They, who with each breath and morsel

Remember the Lord God, those men of God

***Look beauteous in the true court
Dhan so vans Dhan so pitaa Dhan so maataa jin jan janay.
jin saas giraas Dhi-aa-i-aa mayraa har har
say saachee dargeh har jan banay. ||3||
(page 1135)***

In the end, I humbly pray to all gursikhs, who had the company of the great Saint, were inspired and met the Almighty, to bless me with the boon to carry on the gursikh way of life with devotion and humility unto my last breath...

***Give me your blessings, o friends! That
I may attain union with my master.
dayh sajan aseesrhee-aa ji-o hovai saahib si-o mayl. ||3||
(page 12)***

Humble servant

Harbinder Singh Dhillon
43 Park Hall Road, Wolverhampton, U.K

ik-oNkaar sat naam kartaa purakh nirbha-o nirvair akaal
moorat ajoonee saibhaN gur parsaad.

SUHI MAHLLA FIFTH GURU

*bhaagtharhay har sant tasmHaaray jinH ghar Dhan har naamaa.
parvaan ganee say-ee ih aa-ay safal tinaa kay kaamaa. ||1||
mayray raam har jan kai ha-o bal jaa-ee.
kaysaa kaa kar chavar dhulaavaa charan Dhoorh mukh laa-ee. ||1|| rahaa-o||
janam maran duhhoo meh naahee jan par-upkaaree aa-ay.
jee-a daan day bhagtee laa-in har si-o lain milaa-ay. ||2||
sachaa amar sachee paatissaahee sachay saytee raatay.
sachaa sukh sachee vadi-aa-ee jis kay say tin jaatay. ||3||
pakhaa fayree paanee dhovaa har jan kai peesan pees kamaavaa.
naanak kee parabh paas baynantee tayray jan daykhan paavaa. ||4||7||54||*

*Your Saints are very fortunate; their homes are filled with the wealth of the Lord's Name.
Their birth is approved, and their actions are fruitful. ||1||
O my Lord, I am a sacrifice to the humble servants of the Lord.
I make my hair into a fan, and wave it over them; I apply the dust of their feet to my face.
||1||Pause||
Those generous, humble beings are above both birth and death.
They give the gift of the soul, and practice devotional worship; they inspire others to meet the
Lord. ||2||
True are their commands, and true are their empires; they are attuned to the Truth.
True is their happiness, and true is their greatness. They know the Lord, to whom they belong.
||3||
I wave the fan over them, carry water for them, and grind corn for the humble servants of the
Lord.
Nanak offers this prayer to God - please, grant me the sight of Your humble servants.
||4||7||54||
(ang 748-749)*

1 - BIRTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji was born in 1897 during the month of *Asarh* (Name of the lunar month that falls between mid June to mid July) at village Dhugga Kalan, district Hoshiarpur, Punjab. This sacred soul was the third born son of deeply religious and *Gursikh* (True follower of the Guru) parents by the name of Sardar Accher Singh Ji and Bibi Narain Kaur Ji. Baba Ji's father was a farmer and both his parents were of a pious and gentle nature. Baba Ji had three brothers and two sisters. His eldest brother was S. Mehar Singh, second eldest S. Tara Singh and youngest was S. Lachhman Singh. His two sisters were Bibi Jawali Ji and Bibi Rukman Kaur Ji.

Baba Ji's father used to carry out his family duties and responsibilities with great involvement and worked hard with honesty, whilst their mother used to look after the family. Baba Ji's mother used to rise well before dawn and after bathing would go to the village Gurdwara (the place of congregation for Sikhs, literally the residence of the Guru) to pray and receive God's blessings. She would carry out all her household chores and duties whilst reciting *Mool mantar* (The first words of Gurbani from Ik onkar to Nanak Hosi Bhi Sach) all the time.

S. Accher Singh Ji was truly devoted to Waheguru (The wonderful teacher that is God). He would go to the gurdwara everyday on the way to his farm. Such was his devotion to God that every *sangrand* (the first day of every Indian month) he would go to *Kangmai* (historical Gurdwara of Bhai Manjh Ji near Dasuya, Hoshiarpur) gurdwara, taking food and milk for *Langar* (the free food that is distributed at all Gurdwara's) on his cart. He would take other people from the village along with him to listen to *Kirtan* (singing of hymns from Sikh scriptures) and *katha* (discourse, explanation of the scriptures). As a child, Baba Ji would often get the chance to go with his father to Kangmai Gurdwara.

Baba Ji's mother had specifically instructed him to, "Always walk with due care and caution, lest we step on small insects and ants." She would instruct Baba Ji not to disturb bird's nests or break their eggs. He was also told not to steal or quarrel with others. In the evening, without fail, Baba Ji's father would tell them a religious story from our scriptures. In this manner, the righteous teachings and conduct taught by Baba Ji's parents helped to unravel his Sainly disposition. From early childhood, Baba Ji's desire was to become a Saint and imbibe the holy teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Ji. With encouragement from his father, Baba Ji would try to recite the *Mool mantar* continuously. Baba Ji was less interested in playing with children though he would enjoy physical exercise in order to keep fit. He had a strong and solid build, which would allow him to overcome his companions in sport with ease.

At the turn of the century, few resources were available for education and schools were only found in big cities. Consequently, Baba Ji was unable to receive schooling or education due to a lack of schools in his area. However, as was the common practice in those days, the village Gurdwara priest would teach Gurmukhi (The written script of Punjabi) and Gurbani (The word of God spoken or written by the Guru) to the children. Baba Ji's intense desire was to learn gurmukhi script, so that he could read and recite Gurbani as soon as possible. To this end, Baba Ji learnt to read and recite Gurbani from the Gurdwara Granthi (The Sikh priest). Thus, he was able to acquire a good command of Punjabi to read, study and understand our scriptures and historical books.

2 - MARRIAGE

As was the age-old tradition, parents usually betrothed their children at a young age. At the age of about eight, Baba Ji's parents arranged his marriage to Bibi Gian Kaur of a nearby village called Nangal Booray Jattan (Distt. Hoshiarpur). Baba Ji used to say that he pleaded with his mother, "Dear mother! I request not to be married as I do not wish to become a family man." His request notwithstanding, the marriage took place at the insistence of Baba Ji's parents, as if to complete a preordained destiny.

A little over a year had passed, Bibi Gian Kaur had not even visited Baba Ji's house at Dhugga village a second time, when she fell victim to plague and passed away to her heavenly abode. Baba Ji's parents-in-law approached S. Accher Singh Ji with a view to betroth their younger daughter to Baba Ji. When Baba Ji came to know of this new development, he firmly and with great determination declined the offer to his mother, "I don't wish to be a family man at all. If you try to marry me again, this bride too, will not live long. So, please drop the idea of getting me married." Baba Ji's firm and prophetic words melted his mother's sentiments and she duly declined the match proposed by the in-laws. Baba Ji spent all his life as a chaste, celibate, Saint-soldier, attuning his conscious mind to the Guru's lotus feet. Thus, he fulfilled the Guru's words...

*He whose eyes gaze not upon the beauty of others wives,
Who serves the holy and bears love to the Saints,
Who with his ears, hears not slander of anyone,
Who deems himself the worst of all,
Who by Guru's grace renounces wickedness,
Who banishes his minds desires from his soul and
Who conquers his lust and is free from the five sinful instincts,
Nanak, one amongst millions, there is scarcely
Such a person, above these worldly attractions.
par tari-a roop na paykhai naytar.
saaDh kee tahal satsang hayt.
karan na sunai kaahoo kee nindaa.
sabh tay jaanai aapas ka-o mandaa.
gur parsaad bikhi-aa parharai.
man kee baasnaa man tay tarai.
indree jit panch dokh tay rahat.
naanak kot maDhay ko aisaa apras. ||1||
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 274)*

3 - IN SERVICE OF AN UDASI SAINT

Udasi – an order of ascetic Saints, followers of Baba Siri Chand Ji, older son of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. They live without worldly possessions and renounce ownership of all things and meditate.

As described, from an early age, Baba Ji was determined not to follow a conventional married life and wanted to devote his whole life effort to attain God, by becoming a *sadhu* (ascetic, Saint who renounces worldly possessions as a way of life to attain God). During these days, two men from Baba Ji's village left their homes to become *sadhu*'s, but within a year, had returned home, disenchanted. No sooner had one of them come home than he started working back in his fields, farming the land. The second man came home and for about six months thereafter, set about giving holy, consecrated ashes from his camp fire to troubled people, supposedly to bring them good fortune and ward off bad spirits and omens. After a while, he too gave up his ascetic robes, got married and started working. Baba Ji used to say that looking at these so called *sadhu*'s, used to arouse a sense of grievance against "sadhu's" and made him question: that if after a couple of years one is to give into worldly pleasures and material attachment, then what is the use of leaving and renouncing your home in the first place? Surely, it is more worthwhile to remain at home, go about your daily chores remembering God, by engraving his name in your heart. Inside Baba Ji, there was a deep yearning to meet God. To fulfil his longing, his soul needed guidance.

Whenever Baba Ji came to know of any holy Saints visiting his area, he would go to meet them. He would keenly observe their way of living, demeanour and meditation, in order to gain an insight to the path of salvation. During these days, one such Udasi *sadhu* named Santokh Dass came to Baba Ji's village. He set up camp in a deserted old tomb, beside a pond outside the village. At first, Baba Ji did not go to see the *sadhu*. One day it started to rain, but the *sadhu* sat with great poise through the rain and did not get up to go into the village to beg for food or shelter. It rained continuously for three days and Baba Ji observed the *sadhu* from a distance every morning and evening, to check if the *sadhu* had perhaps left the tomb. The *sadhu*, true to his name (Santokh means contented and patient) had remained steadfast for the three days and his fortitude impressed Baba Ji deeply.

Baba Ji immediately gathered some dry wood, food and water from home and brought them to the *sadhu*. Baba Ji made a small fire and served food to the *sadhu*, bringing much joy and satisfaction to Baba Ji's heart. Any grievance Baba Ji had against such ascetic *sadhu*'s vanished from his mind, after witnessing the patient and contented actions of Santokh Dass.

Each day in the morning and evening, Baba Ji would take food and dry firewood for the *sadhu*. Since there was no fresh water at the tomb, Baba Ji would carry as many buckets of water the *sadhu* requested from the village to the tomb. Baba Ji would sit awhile with the *sadhu*, learn about meditation and the rest of the time he would help his father farm the land. He would work harder than his brothers to help his father plough the fields. In this way, the Gurbani of Bhagat Namdev Ji was fulfilled...

With your hands and feet

Perform all your daily work

But let your mind be attuned

With the immaculate Lord.

haath paa-o kar kaam sabh cheet niranjan naal.

(Bhagat Namdev Ji, page 1376)

Baba Ji would fulfil his family obligations and carry out his spiritual duty of meditation.

As Guru Nanak Dev Ji had fed some hungry sadhu's as a child, so this great Saint soldier of Guru Nanak Dev Ji served the Udasi sadhu food and water. Baba Ji served the sadhu out of respect but did not serve him with the intention of becoming an Udasi sadhu. All the while, he remained steadfast in his beliefs and a true follower of Gurmat (The path shown by Great Gurus).

Throughout the day, he would recite the *Gur-mantar* ("WAHE GURU") and *Mool mantrar*.

After a few years of serving sadhu Santokh Das, the sadhu tried to tempt Baba Ji to follow his ways of meditation. Santokh Das tried to convince Baba Ji, "Recite some mystical charms for forty consecutive days and you will be rewarded with miraculous powers such as commanding the spirits of Hindu God's like *Hanuman* and *Bhairon*, who will fulfil your every wish and command." Baba Ji declined this offer saying, "I yearn to meet *Waheguru* Almighty God, the creator and not his creation. I don't want to follow the path of wealth and miracles, because these mystical powers entice you into greed and attachment, thus taking a person away from God." As Bhagat Kabir Ji says...

Kabir has made many disciples and followers,

But, has not made God his friend.

He had set out to meet God

But, his mind, betrayed him halfway.

kabeer sikh saakhaa bahutay kee-ay kayso kee-o na meet.

chaalay thay har milan ka-o beechai atki-o cheet. ||96||

(Bhagat Kabir, page 1369).

4 - DISENCHANTMENT WITH SADHU SANTOKH DASS

For eleven long years, without fail Baba Ji served the Udasi Saint. One day whilst working in the fields, an intense thought overwhelmed him, who am I? Leaving his work aside, he sat down and thought, "I am not just a mere body, some conscious force within, is driving me." With this thought in mind, he decided to ask the sadhu about this question and set off to meet him immediately.

Upon arriving at the tomb, he bowed respectfully to the sadhu and asked him, "Who am I?" The holy sadhu listened intently but remained silent. After a short period he answered, "Harnam Singh! If you wish to know the answer to your question then become my disciple, by putting ash in your hair." (It is noteworthy that as a mark of renouncing worldly possessions and attachments disciples of the Udasi cult rub ashes into their hair and body). Baba Ji, being a Sikh, had immense respect for his unshorn hair (kesh), which is the glorious crown gifted to a Sikh by Almighty God. He was deeply hurt by the sadhu's request and thought, "Surely, this sadhu thinks of me as a Sikh, which I am indeed. I have mistakenly been serving this sadhu, thinking him to be without prejudice for anyone. Surely he discriminates between a Sikh and an Udasi."

Baba Ji replied immediately, "I served you, thinking you to be without prejudice, treating all humanity as one. If you can answer my question without making me a disciple and rubbing ash in my hair, then please do so. Otherwise, I am not ready to be a disciple or rub ash on my God given gift of kesh. It is better that I do not ask you for spiritual guidance in the future."

From that day onwards, any hope that Baba Ji had of getting spiritual guidance from Sadhu Santokh Das was broken. Disillusioned, his mainstay and only hope for spiritual guidance now was *Waheguru...*

Nanak, my mainstay of hope is the creator alone

And I have renounced all other hopes ||2||10||19||

naanak tayk bha-ee kartay kee hor aas bidaanee laahee. ||2||10||19||

(Gujri 5th Guru, page 499)

5 - SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE FROM SIKH SAINTS

Disenchanted with the advice from the Udasi sadhu, Baba Ji began searching for contemporary Sikh Saints to quench his thirst for spiritual knowledge and enlightenment. Baba Ji was hoping to find a Sikh Saint who had attained enlightenment and union with *Waheguru*. Furthermore, he hoped that such a Saint could vouch for the spiritual bliss obtained by meditation on Gurbani.

After a great deal of searching, Baba Ji could find no Sikh Saint who would give such a guarantee, because all the Saints would impart their spiritual knowledge about Sikh dharma only on the condition that one became a disciple of their way of life. It was as if all these Saints used the spiritual knowledge of Guru Granth Sahib Ji to further their own name. Many a time Baba Ji would spend days discussing the importance of Guru Granth Sahib Ji being the word of God – the only true Guru. However, these Saints would not give up their insistence on believing in a living person to be the Guru. Baba Ji was steadfast in his belief that Guru Gobind Singh Ji had enthroned Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the Guru of the Sikhs. He instructed us that the “word of God (shabad) is the spiritual teacher (Guru) and not to place our faith in living Guru’s.” Furthermore, Baba Ji thought to himself that once a living Guru dies, one would need to go looking for another Guru to replace the first one. Baba Ji knew that all Sikhs sing the praise of Guru Granth Sahib Ji at the end of the *Ardas* with love and devotion that...

***By order of the timeless Waheguru started this enlightened path
All Sikhs are ordered that your Guru is the Granth
In Guru Granth Ji believe, it is the manifestation of all ten Guru’s
Whosoever wishes to glimpse God find him enshrined in the word.
Aagya bhaee akaal kee tabhee chalayo punth
Subh sikhun ko hukam hai guru maanyo grunth
(Panth Parkash. Giani Gian Singh)***

This divine order of our 10th spiritual master, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, invokes the ultimate truth that Guru Granth Sahib Ji is indeed the word of God for us to follow and believe. If we Sikhs do not follow the orders of our father, then who else will follow them? Furthermore, our fourth Guru, Guru Ram Das Ji gives us the order of the Almighty *Waheguru* that...

***The word of God, (Gurbani) is the Guru,
The Guru, is the word of God,
Within Gurbani, is embodied the whole nectar of immortality,
If the follower acts upon the message enjoined in Gurbani,
The Guru in person saves the follower of Gurbani
bantee guroo guroo hai bantee vich bantee amrit saaray.
gur bantee kahai sayvak jan maanai partakh guroo nistaaray. ||5||
(Nat, 4th Guru, page 982)***

And

***The word of God, shabad, is his Guru and spiritual guide,
Profound and unfathomable.
Without the shabad, this world has gone insane.
sabad gur peeraa gahir gambheeraa bin sabdai jag ba-uraanaN.
(Sorath 1st Guru, page 635)***

And

***The true Guru is the word
And the word is the true Guru
The holy word shows the way to emancipation.
satgur bachan bachan hai satgur paaDhar mukat janaavaigo. ||5||
(Kanra 5th Guru, p1309)***

And

***The word is my Guru, upon whom
This disciple attunes his consciousness
sabad guroo surat Dhun chaylaa.
(Sidh gosht, 1st Guru, page 943)***

Many divine orders are to be found in Guru Granth Sahib Ji which state Gurbani – the word of God, is the true Guru or spiritual guide. Baba Ji saw all mankind as brethren and disliked the idea of having spiritual masters and disciples. Baba Ji experienced further disappointment through his meetings with Various Saints. Having lost his hope in worldly, spiritual guides, his last and only hope of enlightenment lay in *Waheguru* alone, he felt...

***O my soul grasp the support of the one Lord
Forsake hope of all others
O Nanak meditating on naam, the name of the Lord
Your affairs will be resolved
Dhar jee-aray ik tayk too laahi bidaanee aas.
naanak naam Dhi-aa-ee-ai kaaraj aavai raas. ||1||
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 257)***

***O My mind! Place your hope in God, your beloved
Who shall carry you across and save all your family?
mayray man aas kar har pareetam apunay kee
jo tujh taarai tayraa kutamb sabh chhadaa-ee. ||2||
(Gond 4th Guru, page 859)***

6 - TAKING SHELTER OF GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

When his search for enlightenment proved fruitless, Baba Ji was moved to deep sadness. Two or three days passed with him stricken with grief, unable to answer his question. At last, he went to the Gurdwara in his village. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned and with utmost humility, he bowed and prayed in front of Guru Ji. As Guru Ram Das Ji uttered...

*Now I have come to you my Lord master, weary
Now that I have sought your sanctuary
O my Lord master, it is up to you to save me or slay me. Pause
Clever words and praises of people, I have burnt in a fire,
Whether I am praised as good or called bad
I have surrendered my body and being to you
My Lord master, who-ever seeks your refuge
Mercifully do you preserve him with your grace
Nanak your servant has entered thy sanctuary,
O venerable Lord, Preserve my honour.
Ab ham chalee thaakur peh haar.
jab ham saran parabho kee aa-ee raakh parabho bhaavai maar
lokan kee chaturaa-ee upmaa tay baisantar jaar.
ko-ee bhalaa kaha-o bhaavai buraa
kaha-o ham tan dee-o hai dhaar. ||1||
jo aavat saran thaakur parabh tumree tis raakho kirpaa Dhaar.
jan naanak saran tumaaree har jee-o raakho laaj muraar. ||2||4||
(Dev Gandhari, 4th Guru, page 527-28)*

And as the fifth Guru Arjan Dev Ji says...

*All other havens I have seen
Your shelter is the only one that remains for me.
avar ot mai saglee daykhee ik tayree ot rahaa-ee-ai. ||3||
(Sorath, 5th Guru, page 624-25)*

“O true God, I have abandoned all hope and now present myself in front of you to seek sanctuary. Please bless and grant me refuge by merging me into your form. From now on I will not leave your haven or spread my hands in front of another to ask for spiritual boons,” beseeched Baba Ji. Baba Ji used to tell us that he couldn’t remember how long he spent in loving prayer in front of Guru Ji. In this deep state of supplication, Baba Ji heard a voice say, “Harnam Singh! Take amrit and become one with the Guru. You will acquire the state of bliss you crave and yearn for. Do not be dejected.” This was it! Henceforth, Baba Ji’s question was answered and his yearning desire to meet the true Guru gained direction. A few days later, Baba Ji travelled to Takhat Sri Keshgarh Sahib (Anandpur) taking amrit from the five beloved ones (panj pyara’s). Thus, he set off on his gursikh journey as Guru Ji describes...

*Dear gursikh friend, do as your Guru bids
And follow his righteous steps
gursikh meet chalhu gur chaalee.
(Dhanasari 4th Guru,)*

Now Baba Ji had received true guidance from God. He was excited and eager all the while to see a vision of Almighty Waheguru. Baba Ji would rise well before dawn and after taking a bath, would recite his sacred Nitnem (Recitation of five parts of Gurbani (JAP JI, JAAP SAHIB, CHOPAE, SWAYIAS, ANAND SAHIB) in the morning and REHRAS, KIRTAN SOHLA in the evening).

He then performed all duties and tasks given to him by his brothers. Baba Ji's father passed away when he was aged ten so all the brothers worked and farmed the land together. He would carry on reciting the Mool mantar whilst working. If for some reason he couldn't recite Mool mantar, he would start repeating the Gur-mantar – Waheguru. Thus, his every breath was captured in meditation of the Lord and every breath was tinged with loving remembrance of God. All the time, Baba Ji's yearning to meet with Waheguru grew more intense, like the pangs of separation felt by a wife long separated from her husband. This yearning welled up a deep felt prayer from his soul that ...

***My beloved Lord, I praise you ever,
As long as I have breath in my body,
If I forget you even for a moment,
I deem it equal to fifty years.
har jee-o tuDh no sadaa saalaahee pi-aaray
jichar ghat antar hai saasaa.
ik pal khin visrahi too su-aamee jaana-o baras pachaasaa.
(Sorath, 3rd Guru, page 601)***

Now, the pain of separation from God Almighty was unbearable, "Guru Ji, separation from you is worse than torture with pincers used to pinch flesh. O merciful Lord, union with you alone can turn this unbearable pain into the bliss of your glimpse. So dear God, bless me and shower your grace upon me," prayed Baba Ji, with deep devotion and hope...

***The pincers of separation are hard to bear
If only the master would come to me then,
O Nanak I would then attain all true comforts
vichhohay jamboor khavay na vanjan gaakh-rhay.
jay so Dhanee milann naanak sukh sambooh sach. ||1||
(Mohalla 5th Guru, page 520)***

7 - THE WILLPOWER OF BABA JI

Baba Ji used to mention that during the years he spent serving sadhu Santokh Das in his village, one day he casually told Baba Ji that, "When a youth steps into manhood, he should lower his gaze, as a mark of humility. For those who do not, are often deceived by what they see." The sadhu's words became engraved on Baba Ji's heart. When Baba Ji was returning home that day, a young lady was turning the corner into the street. Upon seeing Baba Ji, this young lady pulled her veil over her face, as was the custom in those days (as a measure of modesty young women would cover themselves in front of men). Baba Ji thought, "This woman covered her face in my presence because she considers me to be grown up. I must therefore behave like an elder and lower my gaze."

The next day, when Baba Ji was going towards the fields to work, a respectable elder from the village saw him passing and called out to Baba Ji. On calling him over he said, "Harnam Singh, I need to advise you on a matter. Do not take it wrongly." Baba Ji replied very politely, "Bapu Ji (A respectable word used for generally old men out of affection; father or fatherly), please say what you must without hesitation, I trust it will be for my benefit only."

The old gentleman said, "Man's youth is like a flooded river of emotions. If one loses their foothold in the water, you are carried with the water and only good fortune of your destiny can save you. You are deeply religious, even in your youth. Be vigilant of the mind and careful of your emotions. Do not look upon anyone with vanity or lust. That's all! This alone is the way to save yourself from misdeeds." This advice from the elder reinforced Baba Ji's earlier conviction. Miraculously, the old man's words sank deeply and firmly into his being. This incident gave Baba Ji such great fortitude and willpower that, for the 34 years he lived amongst his family and the village, he never looked upon another woman with bad intentions. He would go about his daily work, in and around his house with his gaze lowered, in respect and humility. As a result, of this thinking, lustful thoughts would never arise in his mind or cloud his conscience. Except for his mother, Baba Ji would avoid trivial chitchat with other women. Thus, in his behaviour, he fulfilled the words of Bhagat Namdev Ji...

***He who forsakes another's wealth
He who forsakes another's woman
Near him alone does
God (the man lion) abide
par Dhan par daaraa parharee.
taa kai nikat basai narharee
(Bhagat Namdev Ji, page 1163)***

And

***He whose eyes gaze not
Upon the beauty of another's wife
Who serves the holy Saints lovingly
taa kai nikat basai narharee
saaDh kee tahal satsang hayt.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 274)***

These lines of Gurbani became the pillars of Baba Ji's chastity. He did not feel any temptation from desires, in attaining spiritual heights. He believed that the eyes play a major role in making our mind wander outside. Whatever a man sees with his eyes, is received by the mind and under the attraction of materialistic things, the mind then wanders outwardly. The more we try to control this extrovert nature of the mind, the quicker we'll be able to concentrate our mind on meditation. All spiritual achievements are proportional to the concentration of our mind. It is essential that the mind be controlled, by restraining the eyes.

8 - RELOCATING FROM DHUGGA TO SARGODHA

By now Baba Ji was twenty-one years old. At about this time, Baba Ji's eldest brother, Bhai Tara Singh bought some farmland in a village called Chak 119 near Sargodha (this is now in Pakistan). The whole family, including Baba Ji, moved from their ancestral village Dhugga, to district SarGodha. On their new farm, all four brothers (fifth Brother of Baba Ji was Bhai Mehar Singh who died in 1914 in first world war), including Baba Ji would use oxen to plough the fields from dawn until the evening. He would then come home with his brothers and prepare fodder for the cattle by hand, as in those days, there were no machines to prepare and shred the hay.

After the days hard work, he would wash and bathe before his evening meal. Thereafter, Baba Ji would go to a nearby canal a short distance from the village where it was quiet, to recite his evening prayer of Rehras. He would then meditate on the *Gur-mantar* and *Mool mantar* late into the night. If he felt drowsy, due to tiredness from his daytime work, he would splash water in his eyes, to keep awake. Failing this, if he still felt lethargic, he would stand in the cold water of the canal and carry on with his simran (recitation or remembrance). When he felt cold, he would climb out, sit beside the canal, cross-legged on the ground, and carry on with his simran. By about midnight, he would return home and rest. He would sleep for about three hours. Then he would get up, bathe, and recite his morning *Nitnem*. He would then get ready to help his brothers with the tasks of ploughing and farming. Baba Ji used to say that there wasn't a single day that he lagged behind his brothers in getting up for work. Guru Ji's grace was such that in due course, his need to sleep was so little that even a few moments of shuteye during the night was enough sleep for the day. With God's grace, Baba Ji would feel no physical or mental fatigue despite so little sleep.

At about 5 'o'clock, he would pick up the plough and head towards the farm with his brothers. All four brothers would plough the fields in a line and Baba Ji would keep his oxen in between the others. In onehand, he would have his rosary and the other the plough handle. He would speak very little, unless he was spoken to. The oxen would carry on following the oxen in front, whilst Baba Ji would be sowing the seed of God's word through recitation. Thus, Baba Ji fulfilled the words of Gurbani...

***Make your mind the plough,
Good deeds the job of farming
Make your body the field,
Water it with the Virtue of modesty,
Sow the seed of the Lord's name,
Contentment the implement to till the soil,
And the garb of humility the fence. Pause.
man haalee kirsaanee karnee saram paanee tan khayt.
naam beej santokh suhaagaa rakh gareeb vays.
(Sorath 1st Guru, page 595)***

Whilst ploughing, Baba Ji would recite many shabads (hymns) many times. He would recite 32 rosaries a day of one particular hymn. Then after forty days of reciting the shabad, he would pledge this effort through *Ardas* (a supplication) to the Guru and start on another shabad. At all other times, he would meditate on the *Mool mantar* (from Ik onkar to Nanak Hosi Bhi Sach). Among some of the shabads that he would recite were...

*Remain steady in the home of your own self,
O beloved servant of the Lord.
The True Guru shall resolve all your affairs. Pause |
The Transcendent Lord has struck down the wicked and the evil.
The Creator has preserved the honour of His servant.
The kings and emperors are all under his power;
He drinks deeply of the most sublime
Essence of the Ambrosial Naam.
Meditate fearlessly on the Lord God.
Joining the Saadh Sangat, the Company of
The Holy, this gift is given.
Nanak has entered the Sanctuary of God,
The Inner-knower, the Searcher of hearts;
He grasps the Support of God, his Lord and Master.
thir ghar baishu har jan pi-aaray.
satgur tumray kaaj savaaray. ||1|| rahaa-o.
thir ghar baishu har jan pi-aaray.
satgur tumray kaaj savaaray. ||1|| rahaa-o.
dusat doot parmaysar maaray.
jan kee paj rakhee kartaaray. ||1||
baadisaah saah sabh vas kar deenay.
amrit naam mahaa ras peenay. ||2||
nirbha-o ho-ay bhajahu bhagvaan.
saaDhsangat mil keeno daan. ||3||
saran paray parabh antarjaamee.
naanak ot pakree parabh su-aamee. ||4||108||
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 201)*

And

*The Restorer of what was taken away,
The Liberator from captivity;
The Formless Lord, the Destroyer of pain.
I do not know about karma and good deeds;
I do not know about Dharma and righteous living.
I am so greedy, chasing after Maya.
I go by the name of God's devotee;
Please, save this honour of yours.
O Dear Lord, You are the honour of the dishonoured.
You make the unworthy ones worthy,
O my Lord of the Universe;
I am a sacrifice to Your Almighty creative power. Pause
Like the child, innocently making thousands of mistakes
His father teaches and scolds him many times,
But still, he hugs him close in his embrace.
Please forgive my past actions, God,
And place me on your path for the future.
The Lord, the Inner-knower, the Searcher of hearts,
Knows all about my state of mind;*

*So, whom else should I go to and speak to?
The Lord of the Universe, is not pleased
By mere recitation of words;
If it is pleasing to His Will, He preserves our honour.
I have seen all other shelters,
But yours alone remains for me.
Becoming kind and compassionate,
God the Lord and Master Himself listens to my prayer.
He unites me in Union with the Perfect True Guru,
And all the cares and anxieties of my mind are dispelled.
The Lord has placed the medicine of Naam into my mouth;
Servant Nanak abides in peace.
ga-ee bahorh bandee chhorh nirankaar dukh-daaree.
karam na jaanaa Dharam na jaanaa lobhee maa-i-aaDhaaree.
naam pari-o bhagat govind kaa ih raakho pajj tumaaree. ||1||
har jee-o nimaani-aa too maan.
nicheeji-aa cheej karay mayraa govind tayree kudrat ka-o
kurbaan. raha-a-o
jaisaa baalak bhaa-ay subhaa-ee lakh apraaDh kamaavai.
kar updays jhirhkay baho bhaatee bahurh pitaa gal laavai.
pichhlay a-ogun bakhas la-ay parabh aagai maarag paavai. ||2||
har antarjaamee sabh biDh jaanai taa kis peh aakh sunaa-eeai.
kahnai kathan na bheejai gobind har bhaavai pajj rakhaa-eeai.
avar ot mai saglee daykhee ik tayree ot raha-ee-ai. ||3||
ho-ay da-i-aal kirpaal parabh thaakur aapay sunai baynantee.
pooraa satgur mayl milaavai sabh chookai man kee chintee.
har har naam avkhad mukh paa-i-aa jan naanak sukh vasantee.
(Sorath 5th Guru, page 624)*

And

*Very fortunate and modest are the brides
Who meet with their Lord, the king
Through their Guru.
The divine light shines within them
And they merge in the name of the Lord.
vadbhaagee-aa sohaaganeer jinHaa gurmukh mili-aa har raaay.
antar jot pargaasee-aa naanak naam samaa-ay. ||1||
vadbhaagee-aa sohaaganeer jinHaa gurmukh mili-aa har raaay.
antar jot pargaasee-aa naanak naam samaa-ay. ||1||
(Salok 5th Guru, page 1421)*

And

*God, is the nourisher
God gives salvation
God, is benevolent
God, is limitless
God, destroyer of all*

**God, creator of all
God, without name
God, beyond temptations.
Gobinday mukunday udaaray apaaray
Hurryung kurryung nir-naamay akaamay
Chachri chhand (Jaap Sahib)**

And

**Excruciating pain, countless killings, reincarnation,
Poverty and terrible misery are all destroyed
By meditating in remembrance on the Lord's Name,
O Nanak, just as fire reduces piles of hay to ashes.
ghor dukh-yaN anik hat-yaN janam daaridaraN mahaa bikh yaadN.
mitant sagal simrant har naam naanak jaisay paavak kaasat bhasmaN karot. ||18||
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1355)**

And

**The Supreme Lord God has protected my head and forehead;
The Transcendent Lord has protected my hands and body.
God, my Lord and Master, has saved my soul;
The Lord of the Universe has saved my wealth and feet.
The Merciful Guru has protected everything,
And destroyed my fear and suffering.
God is the Lover of His devotee,
The Master of the master-less.
Nanak has entered the Sanctuary
Of the Imperishable Primal Lord God.
sir mastak rakh-yaa paarbrahmaN
hast kaa-yaa rakh-yaa parmaysvareh.
aatam rakh-yaa gopaal su-aamee
Dhan charan rakh-yaa jagdeesvareh.
sarab rakh-yaa gur da-yaaleh bhai dookh binaasneh.
bhagat vachhal anaath naathay saran naanak purakh achuteh. ||52||
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1358)**

These and many other hymns were chanted by Baba Ji in succession, time and again.

Despite being so busy with work and personal meditation, he would take out time to learn how to read and pronounce Gurbani of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji correctly (this training to read and understand Gurbani is called *Santhiya*). Bhai Hardit Singh Ji, who was a learned and scholarly Sikh, lived in a nearby village. Baba Ji would travel to this nearby village in order to get *Santhiya*. Whilst travelling between the two villages, Baba Ji committed to memory, *Sukhmani Sahib* and *Asaa di Vaar*, by reading from a Gutka (a small book of prayer compilation usually containing the *Nitnem* prayers, *Sukhmani Sahib* and *Asaa di Vaar*). He incorporated these two prayers into his schedule of daily prayers to recite. In the evening, it became the daily routine of Baba Ji to listen to stories and tales of our Guru's and Sikhs from various historical texts, usually read to him by his younger brother, Bhai Thakur Singh Ji. In this way, not only was he gaining spiritual insight from Gurbani

and meeting with scholarly Sikhs, but also gained further spiritual wisdom from listening to Holy Scriptures. When one scripture was finished, he would start on another one. He thus continued with fortitude in this routine...

Standing or sitting down, contemplate, the Lord Almighty,

Night and day, indulge in this good labour.

oohat baithat har har Dhi-aa-ee-ai an-din sukarit karee-ai. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Sorath 5th Guru, p622)

Baba Ji, not only studied and learned from Guru Granth Sahib Ji and other Sikh scriptures, he also studied scriptures from other religions. Thus, he deepened his knowledge and understanding of other faiths. The fruit of this study of different religions and their scriptures was an awareness that all holy texts are to be respected as having their own truths to reveal. However, our Guru's in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji have placed the treasure of God's knowledge. The straightforward but simple path to attain God is enlightened upon the seeker of divine truth through Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, which no other holy religious scripture can equal. To this end, we all must follow the path enlightened and revealed by Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with all our faith.

9 - VISITATION BY GURU NANAK DEV JI AND A POISONOUS SNAKE

One evening Baba Ji was sat in deep meditation next to the small canal near his home. Suddenly, Baba Ji's attention was drawn to the rustle of dry leaves, a little distance from where he was sitting. It was a moonlit night. Baba Ji saw the brown and yellow outline of a snake, about 2-3 feet long, slithering towards him. It would raise its hood and lunge forward a few feet at a time. The snake had only moved a few lengths towards him when Baba Ji thought, "The next time the snake lunges forward, it will surely land on me." Baba Ji recounted, "At that very instant, instead of fear and panic, a clear reasoning sprang to my mind, that surely the light of God resides in this poisonous snake too. Maybe the Great Guru has sent this snake to test my resolve and faith. Maybe Guru Ji wishes to test how attached I am to this body. My mind became calm and steady with immovable faith. Indeed, on its next move the snake raised its head and landed on my shoes, next to my feet. The snake then fell still on the shoes." As Baba Ji told us, this was a poisonous snake particular to that region of Pakistan. He looked upon the snake, which now lowered its hood, circled around Baba Ji and wriggled away towards the direction from which it came. "Witnessing this miracle, my mind melted in gratitude to Almighty God. Every pore of my body erupted in joyous gratitude to Almighty *Waheguru*. Blessed and great is God who protects his humblest servants from harm, even from poisonous snakes. Praise be to the Almighty, his will bears upon all his creation."

Baba Ji continued, "My mind was drenched in gratitude and thanksgiving to Almighty God, whilst my inner being was absorbed in deep waves of meditation overcome by a tide of joyous ecstasy. A little while later, still in this deep state, a sensation of intense, resplendent light dawned upon me and this light surrounded and bathed me inside. My soul was relishing such peace, tranquillity and pleasure that cannot be described in words."

Baba Ji was deeply engrossed in this state of being and meditation. The intensity of the light he felt grew further. Lo and behold! The great Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji appeared in person before Baba Ji's very eyes. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji appeared vividly and placed his sacred hand on Baba Ji's head in order to bless him. In the next moment, Baba Ji felt as if Guru Nanak Dev Ji was inside his being and outside, whilst his hand was still resting on his head. "That was it! What else remained to be asked? The great Guru has banished even the slightest shadow of doubt in my being," Baba Ji thought, "All that remained was pure and complete bliss and total tranquillity. Sublime pleasure blossomed inside, with boundless joy at the visitation of blessed Guru Nanak Dev Ji..."

Kabir, how can I describe

The extent of joy, immersed in the Lord's feet?

Its sublime glory cannot be described

It has to be experienced and seen for one self

kabeer charan kamal kee ma-uj ko kahi kaisay unmaan.

kahibay ka-o sobhaa nahee daykhaa hee parvaan. ||121||

(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1370)

That state of pleasure and bliss cannot be described in words, but can only be realized and experienced in person only. The infinite Lord is impossible to describe in words alone...

Kabir seeing my Lord, how can I describe him?

No one can be satisfied or believe my words.

The Lord is just as He is.

***I dwell in delight singing his glorious praises.
kabeer daykh kai kih kaha-o kahay na ko patee-aa-ay.
har jaisaa taisaa uhee raha-o harakh gun gaa-ay. ||122||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1370)***

“In this state of sublime bliss, I do not remember when Guru Ji disappeared. I came to realize the sensation of time only when my attention was drawn outside to the noise of the morning train that used to pass near the village. However, my inner calmness, spiritual bliss and the radiant light, all remained with me. I relished and enjoyed this spiritual bliss with great pleasure until the sun came up. It became very hot and I returned home at about 11 am,” recalled Baba Ji. He had something to eat and returned to the same place to carry on meditating. “No doubt, I felt deep waves of ecstasy and spiritual bliss when I meditated again but it was less intense than the night before, when Guru Ji had blessed me with an audience. Nonetheless, the events of the night previous has left me feeling a great closeness, inside and out, to the great Guru.

Within and around me was this resplendent and radiant aura, which did not recede, even when the night fell. Even in the dark, this light was so intense that it appeared brighter than the light from many suns put together,” Baba Ji told us.

Baba Ji became a little concerned with the glow of the outer light, that people may see this light, drawing attention to him and becoming the focus of idolatry and worship. This would give rise to a sense of vanity in the mind and become an obstacle to meeting the Lord...

***Kabir has made many students and disciples,
But has not made God his friend.
He set out on a journey to meet the Lord,
But his mind deserted him halfway.
kabeer sikh saakhaa bahutay kee-ay kayso kee-o na meet.
chaalay thay har milan ka-o beechai atki-o cheet. ||96||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1369)***

Baba Ji prayed to the Almighty, with all humility, to control this outer light but to keep his consciousness connected inwardly with Him. The Great Guru heard Baba Ji’s plea and controlled the outer appearance of light. However, he kept showering his sublime grace and light inwardly upon him.

10 - TENTH GURU APPEARS IN A DREAM TO ELDER BROTHER

Baba Ji used to mention, that despite his routine of rigorous, spiritual meditation, he would work just as hard as his brothers on their farm. Without specific effort, constant remembrance and meditation continued inside him. After finishing his work, Baba Ji would sit beside the canal near the village and immerse himself in blissful remembrance of Almighty God.

Baba Ji used to tell us that about fifteen days after the vision of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the tenth master Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared in a dream to his elder brother, Bhai Tara Singh Ji instructing him to, "Spare Bhai Harnam Singh from his work routine now. He has been assigned some other duty." At daybreak, the next morning Bhai Tara Singh called all his brothers together. Narrating his dream to them he finally conceded, "Consider it a real vision or a dream, but Guru Ji has instructed me to spare Harnam Singh. My mind is convinced. I have complete belief and should listen to the order of Guru Ji."

All the brothers agreed unanimously that Bhai Harnam Singh had to work hard during the day and meditate all night. The three brothers remarked in a united voice, "You can do whatever you please, you are free from doing all farm work from now on." Baba Ji replied, "The workload is heavy, so we need to seek a farm hand or worker. When you find an appropriate labourer, I will stop work then." In a matter of days, a hardworking, faithful farm worker was hired to take up the work done by Baba Ji.

Now, with the time that was previously spent working on the farm, Baba Ji would diligently spend it in remembrance. He would leave after breakfast, for some hills near the village. There he would continue in meditation and recitation (simran) of naam until the afternoon, when he would return home for some light refreshment. In the afternoon, he would return to these hills, where he would sit in remembrance of Almighty God. He would return home at night to eat and sleep a little until 2 am. Arising at 2am he would bathe, recite his *Nitnem*. He would then visit and pay homage to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at the Gurdwara, obtain blessings, before returning to the idyllic and serene hills to meditate on the one Almighty Lord. He would thus make meditation of God his true vocation...

Meditate on the naam of the one Lord
All other jobs are useless in comparison.
(Suhi 1st Guru p 728)

In his efforts he was fulfilling and realising the words ...

The work of earning the true wealth of loving the true Lord

11 - VISITATION BY THE TENTH GURU

Baba Ji's family had a purpose built room in their fields, where one could lodge for the night and watch over the crops. Any time Baba Ji wanted to meditate in solitude or had any spare time, he would often come and sit in this solitary room on the farm. One summer, during the particularly hot months of May or June, Baba Ji sat indoors out of the sun reciting the *Mool mantar*. Suddenly the door opened, there entered a gursikh with a very radiant and enlightened face and stood before Baba Ji. Baba told us, "We greeted each other by saying *Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji ki Fateh.*"

The Gursikh spoke, "You must get ready! The tenth master, Guru Gobind Singh Ji is about to grace you with an audience." "The prospect of a visit by the tenth Guru left me thrilled and elated," Baba Ji told us. "Eagerly we both stepped outdoors in readiness for the visit of Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj. At a short distance from the west, I saw Guru Ji riding a horse, accompanied by four other gursikhs. Guru Ji's horse came near me and stood still. With utmost reverence, I bowed and touched Guru Ji's feet in the stirrup. Guru Gobind Singh Ji smiled and walked his steed ahead. After a short distance, he disappeared. I was completely enthralled and wonderstruck with this visit."

The gursikh who had come to announce the impending arrival of Guru Ji stayed and stood beside Baba Ji. He asked Baba Ji, "Bhai Harnam Singh Ji, you should be extremely happy and full of bliss, yet you look astonished and gloomy somewhat. What is the reason?" Baba Ji replied, "I am gloomy because Guru Ji blessed me with his vision but he did not say anything to me." The gursikh said, "Guru Ji is very pleased with your meditation, thus he has blessed you with this visit. He did not grant you a conversation, as you do not recite Jaap Sahib in your daily *Nitnem.*" Baba Ji replied,

"Jaap Sahib is very hard to read and recite, so instead of reading Jaap Sahib, I read *Sukhmani Sahib* or *Asaa di Vaar* daily." The gursikh replied, "Guru Ji has ordered us to recite Jaap Sahib as part of our daily *Nitnem*, so we must follow his orders and appease him, thus obtaining his blessings. If a Sikh reads other prayers of his own choosing, so be it. However, he or she is deprived of the blessings of Guru Ji by not fulfilling the edict of Guru Ji. A gursikh, who reads the daily prayers, prescribed to us by the five beloved ones during amrit ceremony and then, in addition, meditates on and recites other prayers, certainly appeases Guru Ji. He who does not obey the Guru Ji's edict is deprived of his blessing."

After that day, no matter how long it took Baba Ji to recite Jaap Sahib, he never completed his *Nitnem* without saying the prayer of Jaap Sahib. In time, he learnt the prayer of *Jaap Sahib* off by heart, so that he could complete his *Nitnem* anywhere without the need for a gutka. Gurbani also enjoins us to obey God's command...

***Obeying his command, man becomes acceptable
And he obtains a place in the Lord's mansion
hukam mani-ai hovai parvaan taa khasmai kaa mahal paaisee.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 471)***

***He who submits to the Lord's order
Is taken into his treasury
hukam rajaa-ee jo chalai so pavai khajaanai.
(Asa 1st Guru, page 421)***

In the matter of appeasing the Guru and obtaining his blessing, there is no relaxation or pretence, in following the commandments of our Guru...

**He alone is the true disciple, friend, and kinsman
And brother, who walks in the Guru's will
He who walks according to his own will,
Brother, he is separated from
The Lord and suffers injury
so sikh sakhaa banDhap hai bhaa-ee je gur kay bhaanay vich aavai.
aapnai bhaanai jo chalai bhaa-ee vichhurh chotaa khaavai.
(Sorath 3rd Guru, page 601)**

In Sikhism, obeying the command of the Guru is the ultimate aim. The Lord Almighty accepts one who abides by the Guru's order. In reality, Sikhism is about obedience of the Guru's will...

**Who ever obeys the will of the Lord
That person becomes acceptable to the Lord
hukam mannay so jan parvaan.
(Basant 3rd Guru, page 1175)**

**A true disciple bows to the will of the Lord
Then the disciple finds peace in obeying the will.
In his will the disciple worships and remembers the Lord
In his will does the true disciple merge in the Lord
gurmukh hukam mannay sah kayraa hukmay hee sukh paaay.
hukmo sayvay hukam araaDhay hukmay samai samaa-ay
(Salok 4th Guru page 1423)**

Baba Lehna Ji obeyed the orders and every command of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He carried out the orders with a glad heart and without question. Due to his obedience, Guru Nanak Dev Ji blessed Bhai Lehna by instilling his own divine light in him, thus transforming Bhai Lehna Ji into Guru Angad Dev Ji. He who obeyed the Guru's edict was accepted...

**Whoever submits to the Lord's will
Is blessed with peace
The Lord has command over the heads of kings and emperors
hukam mannay so-ee sukh paa-ay
hukam sir saahaa paatisaahaa hay. ||3||
(Maru 3rd Guru page 1055)**

**If you obey the Guru's order
Then you shall meet him. Then alone
Shall ego depart from within you
hukam maneh taa har milai taa vichahu ha-umai jaa-ay. rahaa-o.
(Wadhans 3rd Guru page 560)**

So, for a gursikh the teachings given to us by the five beloved ones (panj pyara's) during baptism are akin to the Guru's order. One must endeavour to follow the Guru's order, else will be deprived of his blessings and grace.

12 - CORRECT TIME FOR THE PRAYER CALLED CHANDI DI VAAR

Baba Ji used to recite the prayer called Chandi di Vaar daily, as part of his *Nitnem*. This is a prayer composed by the tenth Guru, describing a battle between demons and the Goddess called Chandi. It is usually recited by Sikhs during war. Many a time, a question would arise in his mind as to, how many times and at what time one should recite the prayer of Chandi di Vaar? Baba Ji asked many Saints and sadhus regarding this question, but could not get a satisfactory answer.

One evening, at his room in the fields, after reciting the evening prayer of Rehras, Baba Ji went on to recite the prayer of Chandi di Vaar. After completing this prayer, he prepared to retire by saying his last prayer of Sohila. It was a moonlit night and the doors of the room in which he was sitting, were open. As he had just lain down, he noticed two men approaching at a short distance. Baba Ji thought to himself, that if these pedestrians were just travellers, he would offer them food and shelter for the night and if they were robbers, then he would challenge them in combat. No sooner had this thought entered his mind, than miraculously one of the Singh's came beside him and grabbed his feet. The other one seized Baba Ji's head and pinned him down onto the bed. Baba Ji used to tell us, "I was unable to move from the bed. A thought entered my mind that these two, who have moved faster than the speed of light in order to grasp me are neither robbers nor travellers. These two must be Shaheed Singhs (the immortal souls of Sikh martyrs). I began to recite the *Mool mantar*. I had only uttered the *Mool mantar* twice when the Singh who held my head down, let go, followed by the second Singh who was holding my feet."

Baba Ji got up and the Shaheed Singh explained, "We did not come here to fight with or seize you, but to answer your question, regarding the correct time to recite the prayer of Chandi di Vaar. As you thought about offering us a fight, we came and immediately seized you, as we did." The Shaheed Singh continued, "If you start reciting the prayer of Chandi di Vaar after sunset then, one must keep reciting it continuously through the night until dawn. Two or more Singhs may take turns to recite this prayer through the night, it is all right to do so. One must sit upon a clean mat or bed, bathing before reciting the prayer. An oil lamp lit with clarified butter should be kept alight throughout the night. During the day, one can recite Chandi di Vaar as many times as one wants. There is no specific practice to reciting the prayer except that one reads the prayer with devotion and understanding." After explaining these instructions, the Singh's disappeared through the doors towards the direction they came from.

13 - MEDITATING ON MOOL MANTAR AT ANANDPUR SAHIB

Baba Ji was now devoting a lot of time to deep meditation on the name of God. One day, an overpowering urge took hold of him. It was compelling him to go to Anandpur Sahib (Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji bought this piece of land on the bank of river Sutlej near Naina Devi Hills, in the village Makhawal in Bikrami Era 1723 and established this place as Residency of Khalsa) and meditate at that sacred place, where in 1699 Guru Gobind Singh Ji had created the sacred Saint soldier order of the Khalsa.

Anandpur Sahib was first bought by Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, on the banks of the Sutlej River, in the village of Lakhawal. At Anandpur Sahib, Guru Ji not only laid down the foundations of the Khalsa way of life, but also astonished the world with many miraculous deeds. He laid down the foundation of the spiritual road to enlightenment upon which the world could follow his footsteps. As per his own words...

I am the servant of the Almighty

Come into this world to witness the divine play unfold

(Bachittar Natak 10th Guru Dasam Granth)

He blessed the land of Anandpur with his sacred presence for many years. The wish to visit Anandpur Sahib and meditate at this sacred place penetrated deeper into Baba Ji's heart. A few days later, Baba Ji told his family of his plans to visit Anandpur Sahib and left Sargodha immediately for the sacred place.

After paying homage at Takhat Keshgarh Sahib, he came to fort Anandgarh Sahib to stay. Anandgarh fort was built by Guru Gobind Singh Ji to defend the town of Anandpur Sahib (This fort came into existence by Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji to defend Anandpur Sahib, at a distance of 1 K.M. in the South direction and named it as Fort Anand Garh).

At that time, Sant Kanhaiya Singh Ji was in charge of carrying out the building services of the fort. He gave Baba Ji a room to stay and rest in. The next day, Baba Ji became engrossed in meditation of *Mool mantar* as he had planned.

Along with his daily *Nitnem*, he would recite 32 rosaries (each rosary has 108 beads) daily of *Mool mantar*. He would then have some langar but just once daily. Any extra time Baba Ji had, he would help crush rocks into gravel and carry them in a basket to help with the construction of Takhat Keshgarh Sahib. For six months Baba Ji fulfilled his heart's desire to meditate at Anandpur Sahib and he participated in the selfless service of the Guru. The great Guru showered many spiritual blessings upon Baba Ji. After six months, Baba Ji offered "Deg parshad" (consecrated sweet dish made from flour, pure butter, sugar and water, given as an offering to Guru and distributed to the congregation in a Gurdwara) at Takhat Keshgarh Sahib and returned home to Sargodha, paying homage and visiting many historical Gurdwara's on his pilgrimage.

14 - CURING S. AVTAR SINGH DALER WITH GURBANI

During these days Sardar Avtar Singh Daler, who was Baba Ji's nephew, fell ill in the prime of his youth with incurable arthritis. His whole body became stiff and immobile. Day and night he would groan in excruciating pain. He had a constant burning sensation in his body all the time. (Avtar Singh's father S. Sunder Singh was real cousin (son of mother's sister) to Baba Ji. Baba Ji's mother Bibi Narain Kaur & Avtar Singh's mother Bibi Partap Kaur were real sisters. Their parents were from Garhdiwala, Distt. Hoshiarpur from Sahota family. Avtar Singh's grandfather was S. Gujjar Singh & his native village was Manko, Distt. Hoshiarpur. S. Gujjar Singh was serving in army. After completion of army service in 1907, he got fifty acres of land (Two Morabbas) in Chak No. 119, Distt. Sargodha, Pakistan. So, he along with his family members left his native village Manko and migrated to Chak No 119, Distt. Sargodha, Pakistan.)

His parents had grown weary of his constant groaning and crying so, his in-laws took him to their home to look after him. He was treated with ayurvedic and allopathic medicines but to no effect. On the contrary, his health and woes increased. Finally, he was admitted to Mayo hospital in Lahore, Pakistan. After six months of treatment, there was no improvement in his health. His strength and body deteriorated. As Guru Ji says...

When adversity surrounds you

All the associates and friends depart

And no one comes near you to help

bipat patee sabh hee sang chhaadit ko-oo na aavat nayrai. ||1||

(Sorath 9th Guru, page 634)

On his return from Anandpur Sahib to Sargodha, Baba Ji's mother told him of S. Avtar Singh's illness. He went over to see S. Avtar Singh at his house and enquire about his health. Baba Ji entered the room where S. Avtar Singh lay groaning in pain. No sooner had Baba Ji entered the room than S. Avtar Singh felt some relief from his pain. He immediately felt some peace and calmness in the presence of Baba Ji, as well as a slight improvement in his pains. Baba Ji returned home a short while after visiting S. Avtar Singh.

A few days later, Baba Ji went to visit S. Avtar Singh again. Once more, he felt some relief in his pain and felt mentally uplifted in the presence of Baba Ji, so much so that he even talked a little to Baba Ji. As he was getting ready to leave S. Avtar Singh requested, "Baba Ji, please bless me with your grace." Baba Ji replied spontaneously, "Say *Waheguru, Waheguru* instead of crying and groaning." Avtar Singh replied, "It is beyond me Baba Ji, even to say *Waheguru*." Baba Ji returned to his home and S. Avtar Singh confessed to his mother, "If you want me to be cured then please request chacha Ji to bless me."

S. Avtar Singh's mother asked Baba Ji's mother to ask him, if he could do something to cure S. Avtar Singh, as all other hopes, remedies and treatments had failed to cure him. Baba Ji's mother requested him to help S. Avtar Singh, pleading, that he was the only son and heir in the family. At his mother's request Baba Ji agreed to help S. Avtar Singh, replying, "I cannot return your plea unfulfilled mother."

Though my heart doesn't wish to get involved, I am ready to help S. Avtar Singh but only at your request." As Guru Ji says in *Sukhmani Sahib*:

***The God-conscious being is steeped in humility.
The God-conscious being delights in doing good to others.
barahm gi-aanee kai gareebee samaahaa.
apnaa bigaar biraaNnaa saaNdhai.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 273)***

***He does good to others
Even at detriment to himself
apnaa bigaar biraaNnaa saaNdhai.
(Gond Bhagat Namdev, page 875)***

Now Baba Ji would go to see S. Avtar Singh daily, after completing his own *Nitnem*. He would put a clean cloth on the floor, lay S. Avtar Singh beside him and would then recite aloud, 32 rosaries of the prayer below, so that S. Avtar Singh could hear it:

***The Supreme Lord God has protected my head and forehead;
The Transcendent Lord has protected my hands and body.
God, my Lord and Master, has saved my soul;
The Lord of the Universe has saved my wealth and feet.
The Merciful Guru has protected everything,
And destroyed my fear and suffering.
God is the Lover of His devotees,
The Master of the master less.
Nanak has entered the Sanctuary
Of the Imperishable Primal Lord God.
sir mastak rakh-yaa paarbrahmaN hast kaa-yaa rakh-yaa parmaysvareh.
aatam rakh-yaa gopaal su-aamee Dhan charan rakh-yaa jagdeesvareh.
sarab rakh-yaa gur da-yaaleh bhai dookh binaasneh.
bhagat vachhal anaath naathay saran naanak purakh achuteh. ||52||
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1358)***

Baba Ji recalled that, it was only a few days since he had started the above routine of reciting the prayer. On this particular day, he had just recited two rosaries when suddenly a Shaheed Singh appeared and grabbed Baba Ji with one hand behind his neck and placing his other hand at the bottom of Baba Ji's spine, trying to bend him forward. He tried a second time to push Baba Ji. When the Shaheed Singh tried to kneel Baba Ji over the third time Baba Ji said, "Come in front of me and tell me who you are, what do you want?" A second Shaheed Singh was standing beside Baba Ji, who replied, "This atheist you are trying to save through prayer, doesn't deserve to be helped. This man stood on stage and publicly denounced, maligned and insulted Guru Nanak Dev Ji, in words that cannot be mentioned. We would have killed him there and then, instead we decided to kill him slowly and make him suffer as much as possible. Now you are praying on his behalf for him to be forgiven."

Baba Ji asked the Shaheed Singhs, "If you order it, I will get him to beg pardon of you."

The Shaheed Singhs replied, "Bhai Harnam Singh what use is his pardon now? We only troubled him in order to make him suffer for his mistake. We will release him now but he does not deserve to be pardoned." After saying these words, both Singhs disappeared. Baba Ji told us that for three days following the visit of the Shaheed Singhs, there remained fingerprints on his neck where the

Shaheed Singhs had grabbed him. The hand marks remained sore to touch and his neck was stiff for the following three days. After this incident, S. Avtar Singh's health improved with every day that passed. After forty days a bhog ceremony to thank Almighty God was performed. Now the same S. Avtar Singh, who could not even get up from his bed without help, began to walk about himself, unaided.

In a few weeks, he was stout and healthy. Baba Ji questioned S. Avtar Singh about the incident narrated to him by the Shaheed Singhs. He disclosed to S. Avtar Singh, how he had come to know of S. Avtar Singh Ji's indiscretion. Baba Ji later came to know that S. Avtar Singh had become a communist, as in those days there was a wave of Marxist thinking amongst the youth. He was even a congress party worker and in his college days was a Marxist supporter. He advised S. Avtar Singh, to follow the footsteps of the great Guru in future, with reverence, awe, respect and affection. As long as S. Avtar Singh remembered his agonizing ordeal, he continued to remember God, by reciting Gurbani. After a while, he let slip his routine of reciting Gurbani and remembering God Almighty. After his encounter with death and despair from the world, he ought to have forsaken his worldly attachment and tied a firm knot of attachment to the Guru's feet alas...

Without good destiny

One cannot serve the Lord

bin bhaagaa gur sayvi-aa na jaa-ay.

(Maru 3rd Guru, page 1064)

Even so, Baba Ji repeatedly appealed to S. Avtar Singh (Baba Ji came to know after that Avtar Singh had turned to be a communist as there was a wave of Marxism in those days and Avtar Singh was a communist leader in his college days. Before the publication of second (Panjabi) edition of Se Kinehiya S. Avtar Singh passed away) to adopt a gursikh way of life, devoted to the faith and Guru. When S. Avtar Singh was working as a block development officer in Bhunga, district Hoshiarpur, he was finally inspired by Baba Ji to be baptised. Due to the karma of past destiny, he eventually faltered in his vows and fell from grace of the Guru. These days he is living in Livingston California, USA, serving as president of the Gurdwara. Through service, he is trying to atone for his previous misdeeds.

15 - CURING COLONEL PIARA SINGH UNDER THE GURU'S AUSPICE

The medicine of naam cured S. Avtar Singh's incurable illness and the whole incident became the talk of the town. Particularly amongst friends and relatives, many were wonder struck, questioning as to how the best medicine, from the most learned doctors, failed to cure him yet, somehow, he had been cured? Everyone who heard of this miraculous cure was curious to find out how this person had been cured? When they learnt that Avtar Singh had been cured by the bountiful medicine of Guru-shabad without taking any medicine, they would be astonished and a deep yearning to meet with Baba Ji would spring up in their hearts.

S. Avtar Singh had a friend called Piara Singh (S.Piara Singh belonged to village Raipur Bhaian (Sangha) Distt. Hoshiarpur). He was a gifted student of King George Royal Indian Military School, Jalandhar. He was selected as a second lieutenant in the British army artillery unit.

Before getting his commission as an officer, he had to undergo a medical examination. The eye specialist, Colonel Dr Basu failed Piara Singh because of his short-sighted vision. As a result, Piara Singh was only eligible to serve as a regular soldier. He served as a soldier for two years and was then promoted to the rank of Havaldar and transferred to Lahore barracks. Here, Piara Singh met up with Bhai Wadhawa Singh (S.Wadhawa Singh son of S Niranjan Singh deputy assistant controller military accounts Lahore. Native village is Sudhar Distt. Ludhiana) and enquired about S. Avtar Singh's illness. Bhai Wadhawa Singh replied, "He is in good health and was cured of his terrible illness. He was cured by the medicine of naam administered to him by the Saintly Bhai Harnam Singh, who has great spiritual fortitude and strength within him. The same invalid Avtar Singh now goes about his daily work rejuvenated with health."

Piara Singh was completely astounded and expressed a desire to see Avtar Singh for himself and meet the venerable Bhai Harnam Singh in person. At an arranged day, both of them set off to meet Avtar Singh at his home in Chak 119, Sargodha, Pakistan. Upon arriving, they exchanged greetings and news of their health with one another. In his own words, Avtar Singh described in detail how Baba Ji had cured him through naam recitation. The three of them decided to meet Baba Ji in person and help with the eyesight of S. Piara Singh. All of them arrived at Baba Ji's house. S. Wadhawa Singh and Avtar Singh introduced S. Piara Singh and told Baba Ji about his failed medical examination due to his eyesight. They told him how Piara Singh was due to have a second examination as ordered by the military promotion board. If the board passed his application, he would be promoted to the rank of 2nd lieutenant. They petitioned Baba Ji, "Please could you bless him accordingly so he may pass this medical examination?"

After listening patiently to their polite request Baba Ji replied, "Only the great Guru is omnipotent. You should come to the Gurdwara at 7am with parshad. We will all pray in the feet of Lord Almighty. He alone is capable of blessing us with boons."

At the appointed time, the three of them arrived to meet Baba Ji at the Gurdwara. As per his everyday routine, Baba Ji had arrived to obtain the blessings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. After kneeling in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Baba Ji prayed with folded hands to the Almighty Lord on behalf of Piara Singh. Baba Ji then read the hukamnama (a holy order of the Guru which is read from the scriptures of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and literally means the holy order or edict) from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji out aloud. He then turned to Piara Singh and said, "Your prayer has been answered and your wish has been sanctioned by our true father." He then got up and walked over to the passage in front of the palanquin where the congregation kneels in front of the Guru. Baba

Ji then picked up a pinch of dust, walked over to S. Piara Singh and applied the dust to both of his eyes. Baba Ji then said, "Go now! The board will not be able fail you." After receiving the blessings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, S. Piara Singh went back to Lahore.

The following week Piara Singh attended the medical examination. An English doctor, who was also the chairman of the promotion board, carried out the examination. S. Piara Singh read all the words from A to Z with great ease. The doctor repeated the test to satisfy himself and said, "Which stupid doctor has failed you on your eyesight and ruined your life? Your eyesight is perfectly normal." The chairman of the board recommended reinstating S. Piara Singh as a commissioned officer at the rank of 2nd lieutenant there and then. Piara Singh was reinstated and retired many years later as a colonel. Where all means and efforts known to man fail then heartfelt, humble prayer to invoke God's grace always bears fruit. What else remains to be gained when blessed by the Guru and his congregation? As Guru Arjun dev Ji tells us, that when one is blessed then...

***The cripple crosses over the mountain,
The fool becomes a wise man, and
The blind man sees the three worlds,
By meeting with the True Guru and being purified.
This is the Glory of the Saadh Sangat,
the Company of the Holy;
Listen, O my friends. Filth is washed away,
Millions of sins are dispelled, and
The consciousness becomes immaculate and pure. Pause
Such is devotional worship of the Lord of the Universe,
That the ant can overpower the elephant.
Whoever the Lord makes His own,
Is blessed with the gift of fearlessness.
The lion becomes a cat, and
The mountain looks like a blade of grass.
Those who worked for half a shell,
Will be judged very wealthy.
What glorious greatness of yours can I describe?
O Lord of infinite excellences? Please bless me
With Your Mercy, and grant me Your Name;
O Nanak, I am lost without your blessed vision
pingul parbat paar paray khal chatur bakeetaa.
anDhulay taribhavan soojhi-aa gur bhayt puneetaa. ||1||
mahimaa saaDhoo sang kee sunhu mayray meetaa.
mail kho-ee kot agh haray nirmal bha-ay cheetaa. ||1|| rahaao.
aisee bhagat govind kee keet hastee jeetaa.
jo jo keeno aapno tis abhai daan deetaa. ||2||
singh bilaa-ee ho-ay ga-i-o tarin mayr dikheetaa.
saram kartay dam aadh ka-o tay ganee Dhaneetaa. ||3||
kavan vadaa-ee kahi saka-o bay-ant guneetaa.
kar kirpaa mohi naam dayh naanak dar sareetaa. ||4||7||37||
(Bilawal 5th Guru page 809-810)***

The omnipresent Almighty Waheguru is the giver of all boons. Any gift can be obtained through his grace and selfless service of God Almighty. God makes the lowly followers into leaders and fulfils the hopes of those who have given up hope. By his grace, a poor destitute becomes a wealthy tycoon. God Almighty can banish the illness of the sick and diseased. God blesses his true devotees with devotion, faith and the boon of remembrance of the Lord God Almighty...

***Those who were left behind —
the Lord brings them to the front.
He fulfils the hopes of the hopeless.
He makes the poor rich, and
Cures the illnesses of the ill.
He blesses His devotees with devotion.
They sing the Kirtan of
The Praises of the Lord's Name.
O Nanak, those who serve the Guru find
The Supreme Lord God, the Great Giver
paachhaN karot agarneevah niraasaN aas poornah.
nirDhan bha-yaN Dhanvantah rogee-aN rog khandnah.
bhagat-yaN bhagat daanaN raam naam gun keeratneh.
paarbarahm purakh daataareh naanak
gur sayvaa kiN na labh-yatai. ||20||
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru page 1355)***

16 - TREASURED DIARY OF INVALUABLE REFLECTIONS IS BURNED

As a wealthy tycoon conceals his wealth and reveals only a small part of it when in utmost need, similarly Baba Ji hesitated in revealing the treasure of naam graced upon him by the true Guru. Whatever boons or spiritual insights he was blessed with through naam meditation, he bore and absorbed quietly within his heart. With the Guru's blessing, he lived amongst the ordinary world without attracting undue attention to himself.

In the early days of his spiritual transformation whenever Guru Ji blessed him with a visitation, spiritual insight or knowledge, Baba Ji would pen these experiences in a diary (Baba Ji began to write these self-experienced exchange of words. With the Great Guru, so that any true follower may tune himself with Almighty after his mortal body turns into ashes). Baba Ji began to write these personal spiritual experiences with the great Guru. Baba Ji wished these experiences to be published after his death, so that any true follower may read about them and attune himself with the Almighty. The diary was kept under lock and key in a wardrobe. Once, a companion of Baba Ji was staying the night at his house in Chak 119 Sargodha. As was his routine, Baba Ji went to his favourite place to meditate beside the canal near his house well before dawn. For some reason the wardrobe was left unlocked. Notwithstanding his curiosity, this companion could not help himself and read the sacred diary. After 3 or 4 hours when Baba Ji returned, the companion addressed Baba Ji, "Bhai Sahib Ji (Baba Ji neither allowed anybody to call him a saint nor any utmost respected addressing words were allowed to be used for him. He used to say, "We all are the children of true Guru, so we are brothers. Therefore, we should address each other as Bhai Sahib. Moreover, the position of 'Bhai sahib' is the highest in Gurus Home." So, the old companions of Baba Ji used to address him as Bhai Sahib, and even now use it. But due to the old age, he was address each other as "Baba Ji" by the remaining sangat)! Guru Ji has blessed you with his visions, talked and visited you on numerous occasions, yet you have never revealed any of this to us."

Baba Ji enquired, "How do you know that I have talked to and had visions of the true Guru?" This companion admitted then, "I have read your hand written diary that was in your wardrobe. In it you have penned all these utterances and visits by the true Guru."

Baba Ji said gravely, "You have not done a good deed. It is not good to unravel someone's spiritual secrets. So, what is done is done. I request politely that you do not disclose the secrets of the diary to anyone from now onwards. That companion did not keep his word. Over time, he revealed to all his friends and companions the spiritual heights Baba Ji had achieved, as written in his diary. In time, people who found out about the true spiritual accomplishments of Baba Ji started to come and see him, demanding to read the diary or be told about conversations and visits by the true Guru. Baba Ji would try to detract from such topics and put these people off. One day, a thought came to Baba Ji that, "If anyone else reads this diary then they will tell many others about the spiritual gifts that have been given to me by Guru Ji. Soon, people will start coming with worldly demands and ask for selfish boons and materialistic things. If I refuse to help them, they will return disappointed. If their desires are fulfilled, then they will encourage even more people to come and soon they will venerate me instead of God. This will give rise to vanity and attachment to this world. The mind will be entangled in these pursuits", as Bhagat Kabir Ji says...

***Kabir has made many students and disciples,
But has not made God his friend.
He set out on a journey to meet the Lord,***

***But his mind deserted him halfway.
kabeer sikh saakhaa bahutay kee-ay kayso kee-o na meet.
chaalay thay har milan ka-o beechai atki-o cheet. ||96||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1369)***

One had started meditating on naam for salvation and to meet the Lord Almighty, not to entice people to revere and worship me. If the feeling of benevolence becomes great before the time for salvation of the soul arrives, then it may become a hurdle in my spiritual progress towards redemption of the soul. Baba used to say that after much thought, he decided not to write down his spiritual experiences in the future and the diary he kept was put in a fire and burned. Had the written diary and all the spiritual experiences of Baba Ji survived, then, today they would have become an invaluable treasure for future generations of spiritual seekers of naam. However! God's will is done.

On 24th September 1970 at the age of 73 years Baba Ji narrated some of his experiences and life incidents, which were recorded on an audiocassette. It is still kept in the library and forms a large part of this biography compiled by this humble servant (Sant Seva Singh).

17 - MEDICINE OF NAAM IS EFFECTIVE WHEN GOD STANDS AMIDST

When Avtar Singh was cured by the medicine of naam (God's word), he went to visit his friends in Lahore. His friends were astonished and surprised to see his recovery. They enquired about his health and how he had managed to recover. Avtar Singh endearingly narrated his miraculous cure by Gurbani and the curative effect it's recitation had on him.

Bhai Wadhawa Singh and Bhai Baksheesh Singh (s/o S. Bhag Singh, village Bahla Distt. Hoshiarpur) were deeply impressed after hearing about this incident. At the time, both these gentlemen were studying together at F.C. College Lahore. Both of them came to meet Baba Ji at Chak 119 Sargodha and exchanged views about the principles of Sikhism (gurmat). They were both deeply impressed by the personality of Baba Ji and inspired by their newly found knowledge of Sikhism, started reading Gurbani.

S. Wadhawa Singh was from a village called Sudhar near Ludhiana. His father worked in the military accounts department in Lahore. S Wadhawa Singh was living with his parents at Lahore barracks, whilst studying at the college mentioned above. A relative called Bhai Sher Singh (s/o S.Sunder Singh) was often very sick with an unknown illness. Wadhawa Singh narrated the whole tale of Avtar Singh and how he was cured by Gurbani with the involvement of Baba Ji, to his uncle Bhai Sher Singh.

Bhai Sher Singh Ji persuaded Bhai Wadhawa Singh to take him to Baba Ji, so that, following any advice given by Baba Ji, he too could be cured. S. Wadhawa Singh took his uncle Bhai Sher Singh to meet Baba Ji at Chak 119 Sargodha. They stayed the night with Baba Ji and the next morning Bhai Sher Singh Ji narrated his condition and illness to Baba Ji. Baba Ji replied that, "You should take amrit (become baptised) and thus obtain refuge in the haven that is our great Guru. The true Guru cures not only physical ailments of his gursikhs but all manner of spiritual maladies as well. Thus, he reforms their life in this world and the world hereafter." On a chosen day, Bhai Sher Singh along with many of his companions and family took amrit at the Gurdwara in Sadar bazaar Lahore. On the same day, Bhai Wadhawa Singh and the rest of his family took baptism and obtained refuge in the feet of the true Guru.

Bhai Sher Singh Ji was illiterate and unable to read or write. As such, Bhai Sahib was ordered to recite the *Mool mantar* on a rosary instead of reading his *Nitnem*, by the five beloved ones (panj pyara's who administer Amrit in the baptism ceremony). To be cured of his ailment, he was ordered to sweep the Gurdwara as an act of selfless service (seva). After staying in Lahore for a few days, Bhai Sher Singh returned to his village Sudhar. There, he immersed himself in reciting the *Mool mantar* daily and carrying out the teachings imbibed by the five beloved ones at his baptism.

He would arise well before dawn and go to the Gurdwara to sweep the floor and courtyard. Whilst there, he would sit in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and recite the *Mool mantar* as part of his daily *Nitnem*. He would then listen to the daily edict (hukamnama) before coming home to rest. Even when lying down, he would carry on reciting the *Mool mantar*. With the grace of the Guru, so profound was his devotion that he forgot all worldly affairs and his soul became attuned to the *Mool mantar* and *Gur-mantar*.

After about six months, early one morning, Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared in front of Bhai Sher Singh and ordered, "Sher Singh! There is a physician by the name of Harnam Singh in old Ludhiana. Go to him. He will cure you."

At daybreak, accompanied by someone from his family and after making numerous enquiries, Bhai Sher Singh found the physician Harnam Singh, just as the true Guru had foretold. The physician asked in detail about Bhai Sher Singh's illness and then prescribed some medicine. After a few days of taking this medicine, Bhai Sher Singh was cured. Bhai Sher Singh Ji had tried numerous remedies before but with no improvement at all. This cure was a blessing wrapped up in the guise of medicine...

***I have grown weary of treating myself with many medicines
How can this disease be eradicated without the Guru?
a-ukhaDh kar thaakee bahutayray.
ki-o dukh chookai bin gur mayray.
(Basant 1th Guru page 1189)***

And

***The medicine of naam becomes effectual
When the Lord stands amidst them
a-ukhad aa-ay raas vich aap khalo-i-aa.
(Funhay 5th Guru page 1363)***

Bhai Sher Singh was already cured by the gracious and benevolent vision of the Guru. The medicine was just an excuse to bring about a complete cure. After this incident, Bhai Sher Singh developed tremendous faith in the true Guru. With the grace of Guru Ji, he was completely cured. He now worked vigorously in the fields and simultaneously following the Guru's edict...

***Whether standing, sitting or sleeping
Meditate on the your Lord
Walking this path sing
The praise of the Lord master.
oothat baithat sovat Dhi-aa-ee-ai.
maarag chalat haray har gaa-ee-ai. ||1||
(Asa 5th Guru page 386)***

Therefore, he made a profitable job of working and reciting His name. All the while, he would pray...

***O my bountiful Lord forget me not
And bless me with your naam
This alone is the fervent request of Nanak
O Lord, day and night may I ever sing your praises
visar naahee daataar aapnaa naam dayh.
gun gaavaa din raat naanak chaa-o ayhu. ||8||2||5||16||
(Suhi 5th Guru page 762)***

Bhai Sahib would perform all his worldly duties yet his mind would be immersed and attuned in the dear Lord, thus accumulating the invaluable treasure of His naam. As Guru Ji says...

Why apply your mind to anything but the Lord?

Standing, sitting, sleeping and when walking

Forever and ever meditate on your Lord.

kaahay ayk binaa chit laa-ee-ai.

oothat baithat sovat jaagat sadaa sadaa har Dhi-aa-ee-ai. ||1 || rahaa-o.

(Asa 3rd Guru page 379)

This truly noble deed uplifted Bhai Sher Singh to new spiritual heights yet all the while, he continued his humble duty of sweeping the floor of the Gurdwara.

18 - WARDROBE LOCK IS OPENED BY PRAYER

As per his daily routine, Bhai Sher Singh was reciting Mool-Mantar after sweeping the Guru's floor. Four or five other devotees, who used to come daily to bow to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, were sat in the Gurdwara waiting to gain a glimpse of the true Guru. The priest had mislaid the keys to the lock of the wardrobe where all the covers and robes of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji were kept (*called Rumallahs's - these ornate covers are decorated over Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*). After searching high and low, the key could not be found. All the rumallahs were locked in the wardrobe. Finally, the other devotees decided to break open the lock of the wardrobe. Bhai Sher Singh was deep in meditation and infused with resolute faith in the true Guru. Instead of breaking the lock of the wardrobe he counselled the rest of the sangat to, "Pray to Almighty God. *Ardas* has immense power in it and I believe Guru Ji will open the lock when he hears our prayer." All those present listened to the words of Bhai Sahib Ji and one of the devotees requested Bhai Sahib to conduct the *Ardas*.

Bhai Sahib agreed and prepared himself to submit his supplication to the Waheguru. Reciting whatever he could of the *Ardas*, he beseeched the Almighty, invoking the names of the ten Guru's and Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, to open the lock on the wardrobe. After bowing to the true Guru, he walked up to the wardrobe and as soon as he touched the lock, it opened! Everyone was astonished. The lock on the wardrobe opened but simultaneously the inner spiritual locks of Bhai Sher were opened too. The true Guru showered immense blessings on him, giving him deep insight and spiritual knowledge: how the great Guru empowered him to serve others, how his words were blessed to come true and how he was given the gift of prophecy is a subject of separate discussion.

Those who suffered from leprosy were cured when Bhai Sher Singh Ji would pray for them in the lotus feet of the Guru. As such, the wife of Shamsher Singh, the Inspector General of Punjab police at the time, was cured of leprosy when Bhai Sher Singh did *Ardas* for her well-being. Those who have seen Bhai Sher Singh know how deep a spiritual insight Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji bestowed upon him. Any devotees who come to him for deliverance from impediments, Bhai Sahib would be able to see into their past lives and point out what misdeeds had led to their present suffering and agony in this life. This humble servant (Sant Seva Singh) had the opportunity and honour of meeting Bhai Sher Singh Ji on many occasions. He would often come to Rampur Khera to meet and pay respects to Baba Ji, which afforded this humble servant further opportunities to meet Bhai Sher Singh Ji. As Guru Ji says...

The nine treasures and eighteen

Miraculous powers follow him

Who ever ensrines the name

Of the Lord in his mind

nav niDhee athaarah siDhee pichhai lagee-aa fireh

jo har hirdai sadaa vasaa-ay.

(Salok 3rd Guru page 649)

When one is blessed with concentration of the mind through meditation on naam then, such spiritual gifts of insight and miraculous powers are obtained with ease. Baba Ji used to say that the pursuit of such miraculous powers distracts the true seeker from obtaining the supreme position of union with Almighty God. Even if a Gursikh achieves such powers, he or she must not use them without the express wishes of the true Guru. These powers must be endured within. He who

absorbs and bears these spiritual powers within becomes one with the indestructible Lord Almighty...

The Absolute, Formless, Eternally Unchanging,

Immeasurable Lord cannot be measured.

Says Nanak, whoever endures the unendurable

This state belongs to him alone

nirgun nirankaar abhinaasee atulo tuli-o na jaavat.

kaho naanak ajar jin jari-aa tis hee ka-o ban aavat. ||4||9||

(Sarang 5th Guru, page 1205)

19 - CHAK NO 119 (SARGODHA) – A CENTRE FOR NAAM LOVERS

As Bhai Gurdas Ji says...

*As an addict loves to meet another addict
A non-addict meets a non-addict
Gamblers like the company of other gamblers
Thieves admire the company of other thieves
Cheats fraud the masses with mutual cooperation
Clowns enjoy the company of other clowns
Slanders enjoy the company of other gossipmongers
Swimmers praise other strong swimmers
Sufferers share their woes with others who have woes
Similarly, a gursikh lives for the company of holy people.
Ummlee ruchun ummliaa sophee sophee mail kurrunday
Juaaree juaariaa veykurmee veykurum ruchunday
Choraa choraa pirrhurry dhugg dhugg millee theys dhuggunday
Muskariaan mill muskuray chugglaa chuggal umaahay millunday
Muntaaroo muntaarooaa taaroo taaroo taar turunday
Dukhiaaray dukhiaariyaan mill mill upnay dukh ruvunday
Saadh sungut gursikh vusunday
(Bhai Gurdas Vaar 5 Pauri 4)*

It is only natural that where there is a fragrant flower in blossom, butterflies and bees will be drawn from afar to the fragrance and be satisfied only when they taste the nectar. So, it was with Baba Ji. His soul was overflowing with the fragrance of naam of the true Guru. To share in this fragrance of naam, devotees and gursikhs would travel from near and far to meet Baba Ji and taste the nectar of naam. Some would come to stay a day or two, others a week, at their leisure.

They would enjoy the company of Baba Ji and stay various lengths of time depending on leave from their worldly affairs. A few of these blessed Sikhs like Bhai Sher Singh Ji, Sant Sadhu Singh Ji, Sant Mangal Singh Ji, Bhai Gurbax Singh Ji, and Bhai Wadhawa Singh Ji are worth mentioning.

20 - BABA JI'S SOUL TRAVELS TO SAVE A DEVOTEE FROM A MISDEED

By this time, Baba Ji had achieved great spiritual accomplishments through constant meditation of naam. So much so, he could consciously separate his soul from his physical body and travel as an astral (Formless) body (Formless - we the lovers of this perishable body made of five basic elements think it impossible to separate the soul from the physical body or think it absurd to be able to move as an astral body because we measure everything according to our real world and thoughts. These abilities are minor for those who have adopted naam. Dr Bhai Vir Singh Ji has clarified this subject in his books "Uchay Khandaan De Kautak" (Miracles of higher dimensions), Pyaray da Pyara (Lover's lover) and Raja Shiv Nabh Singh. In these books, he has written how the soul of a deeply meditative person, through recitation of naam, leaves the physical body, feels itself free, lighter, and enjoys the openness of the spiritual and physical realms of the universe.

The soul after leaving the body observes that the body, made of five elements by God, is separate from and a different entity to the soul. The great Saints who through meditation and concentration of the mind can differentiate their soul from the body just like taking clothes off. They can travel to any part of the universe as a separate entity without obstruction. They can re-enter their concrete physical body when they wish and carry on as before. Paramhansa Yogananda writes in "Autobiography of a yogi" about such incidents as well, whereby his Guru and other yogi's could easily leave their physical bodies and travel to various places. Their astral bodies would appear real to the devotees who saw them. The need is for one to reach such a level of mental concentration otherwise such abilities are but minor fruits of the power of meditation on naam).

The astral body of Baba Ji could travel wherever he wished in the blink of an eye to talk and meet devotees. An devotee who experienced Baba Ji's astral body would feel he was talking with them as a real person, in physical form. One evening, Baba Ji was immersed in meditation (simran) following Rehras. Suddenly, his attention was drawn to a devotee who was very close to Baba Ji. In his deep state of meditation, Baba Ji saw that this person had set off to commit a deed that was immoral. The thought of sexual gratification had overpowered his conscience. Baba Ji thought that if an effort to save this person was not made then quite possibly this person would repent his misdeed, as Guru Ji says, "Only for momentary sexual pleasure, misery for many years is suffered."

"This immoral thought, which had compelled the body on the path to fulfil its desire, may land its owner into the deep well of damnation. It is one's duty to save him as this person is our well wisher," thought Baba Ji. Baba Ji prayed unto Guru's feet and with his astral body left his physical body in Sargodha. Baba Ji's astral body reached the devotee who had set off on his way in Lahore. Baba Ji asked him, "Bhai Ji, where are you going? We have come all this way to meet you." The sight of Baba Ji and his words stopped the devotee in his tracks. The overpowering thoughts that were leading him to commit an act of disrepute vanished and this devotee was overcome with shame and repentance.

The devotee returned home with Baba Ji and as they neared the house, to his surprise Baba Ji had vanished. He looked everywhere but Baba Ji was not to be found. The great Saint had already left and returned to Sargodha to re-enter his physical body. This devotee rested at home and the next day set off towards Sargodha to meet Baba Ji and ask for his forgiveness. Baba Ji inspired him to follow the Guru's teachings with greater resolve and advised that, "If in the future an immoral thought is overpowering the conscience then turn to the great Guru, who is all pervasive,

omnipotent, omnipresent and with us all the time. Beseech him with a supplication as he sees all our deeds and all our thoughts.”

**The deed done in secrecy, assuredly
Comes to light, even though
One were to do it underground
andar kamaanaa sarpar ugh-rhai bhaavai
ko-ee bahi Dhartee vich kamaa-ee.**

(Mohalla 4th Guru, ang16)

And

**He knows the innermost feelings
Of everybody and recognises
The pain of every good or bad
Ghutt ghutt kay untur kee jaanut bhulay buray kee peer
Puchhaanat**

(Benati Chaupai, 10th Guru)

A person commits an immoral deed when they know that no one is watching over them. But if they remember the words below of the great Guru Ji then they can be saved from evil deeds...

**From whom do you hide your evil deeds?
Since the all pervasive Lord is holding you
My ever-present Lord pervades in all places.
look kamaavai kis tay jaa vaykhai sadaa hadoor.
thaan thanantar rav rahi-aa parabh mayraa bharpoor. ||3||**

(Sri Raag 5th Guru page 48)

And

**Behind many screens, the mortal commits sins
But in an instant, they are laid bare to the world
anik parh-day meh kamaavai vikaar.
khin meh pargat hohi sansaar. ||3||**

(Gauri 5th Guru, page 194)

Bad deeds once committed, lead a person to the cycle of countless births and deaths. The poor soul should continue to pray at the feet of God Almighty then he will show mercy. Beseech the Lord as Guru Arjun dev Ji says...

**Regarding your mind's woe
Make supplication before the Guru
Forsake your cleverness
And dedicate unto him your mind and body
jee-a kee birthaa hoay so gur peh ardaas kar.
chhod si-aanap sagal man tan arap Dhar.**

(Mohalla 5th Guru, page 519)

Surrendering one's evil intellect and praying to Waheguru from the bottom of the heart, one becomes worthy of the Guru's grace and all our boons are granted. Taking heed of the inspirational advice given by Baba Ji, the devotee repented his past misdeed and promised to follow Guru Ji's principles more closely.

Another Incident like this

This humble servant will not think it unworthy to mention a similar incident that occurred around 1953. As it happened, a Gurmukh (one whose life is centred towards the Guru's teachings) family that was devoted to Baba Ji lived in Model town, Jalandhar. They had two daughters and one son. The family married their only son to a girl in England. Being from a rich family, this son had not been used to doing much labour, but in a foreign country, he had to struggle hard. Being alone in a new country, away from the love of his family, he became lonely and dejected. To this end, he wrote a letter to his mother explaining his lonely plight and his intention to give up work and come back home as soon as possible. Having read the letter, the mother became very distraught and went to see Baba Ji. The mother pleaded with Baba Ji, explaining that, "It was with great effort and expense that this family had sent our son to England, but now, he is planning to return. If he comes back to India then his wife will have to come back too. If his wife refuses to come back then it will create great turmoil in the family." She pleaded with Baba Ji to suggest a solution to this problem.

Baba Ji consoled the lady, urging her not to be dejected, "Pray with devotion from the bottom of your heart in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, who is without doubt the living and spiritual embodiment of the ten Guru's." He continued, "Secondly, apart from your own nitnem, recite Japji five times a day in the name of your son. Pray to Almighty to bless your son and verily the Great Guru will hear your prayers and bless your son." The mother agreed, bowed in front of Guru Granth Sahib Ji and returned to Jalandhar.

Some two weeks later, brimming with delight, the lady returned to see Baba Ji. After exchanging Gur Fateh Baba Ji enquired, "Please tell, is there any news from your son?" The lady replied, "You have blessed him immensely, I have brought his letter to show you. However, I am puzzled by what he has written in his letter." The lady handed over the letter to Baba Ji and he asked me to read the letter. The letter started with Gur-Fateh and the son wrote, "As already decided I had planned to return to India post haste. Last Sunday, in a very gloomy mood, I was sat in a quiet corner of the park saying my prayers, as I had not gone to work that day. Suddenly, Sant Baba Ji of Rampur Khera came up to me and talked to me for almost half an hour. I told him of my intention of going back home to India and how I was burdened with despair. Baba Ji consoled and persuaded me that there was no need to return to India. He counselled that, when the mind despairs and you are sad then meditate after having said your daily prayers. With humble supplication, request the Great Guru. From that day, I now feel uplifted; I go to work daily and my plan to return to India, of which I wrote to you in my last letter, is shelved. I have decided to stay here in England, please do not worry about me. I was so impressed at the sight of Baba Ji sitting next to me, that I completely forgot to ask him whose house he was staying at whilst in England. So, can you go to Rampur Khera and ask one of the attendant Sikhs there as to where and with whom Baba Ji is staying in England? Please ask them how long he is staying in England and send me a reply by return of post."

I read out the above letter to Baba Ji. Baba Ji heard the contents of the letter and taking the letter from me tore it up into pieces. He turned to the lady and instructed her not to publicise this incident to anyone. Please tell your son to steadfastly recite his prayers and carry on with reciting

the prayers of Japji Sahib that you have promised to do for your son. Do not write to your son regarding this episode.” Baba Ji then got up and walked to an open fire to destroy the letter. After the lady had departed, Baba Ji told me, “Great Guru Ji has blessed me such that my soul can travel freely as an astral body to any place in the world, whilst my physical body is still seated here.

Those who perceive me cannot tell whether it is my real physical body or my astral body that they are seeing. This is a special blessing bestowed upon me by the Almighty.” So in this manner, this exalted great soul would live amongst the physical world and when deeply immersed in meditation would free himself from the physical body to travel the world in his astral body to meet and help many devotees. To advise devotees of their true potential with his astral body in the physical and spiritual world, and to enjoy the bliss of the highest spiritual dimensions was but a minor achievement for Baba Ji.

21 - BRAVEST IS HE WHO GRAPPLES WITH THE MIND

Although many episodes in Baba Ji's life may seem trivial, yet with closer observation these apparently insignificant incidents reveal a hidden source of great motivation and inspiration. Those devotees who try to learn from these fountains of inspiration will find many obstacles removed from their spiritual journey and their life will become easy and pleasant.

Baba Ji once told us, "Back in my village of Chak 119, I would walk to the next village every few days to visit a fellow companion who was ill. On the way, I had to walk past a large field of ripe and sweet sugar cane. As I was nearing the field, I felt a desire to chew some sweet sugar cane. I thought to myself that as I walk by the field, I would pick up a couple of sugar canes from it. With this thought, a tussle started within my mind. My inner voice of conscience whispered that, undoubtedly the field wouldn't lose much if I removed one or two sugarcanes, but taking the sugarcane without consent is theft. Theft is theft, whether it is of a penny or of thousands of pounds, the great Guru has warned against stealing in that...

No one takes responsibility for a thief

How can what a thief does, be good?

chor kee haamaa bharay na ko-ay.

chor kee-aa changa ki-o ho-ay. ||1||

(Dhanasari 3rd Guru, page 662)

A second voice arose within and answered that we too are farmers. Whenever a needy person wants some vegetables or sugar cane, they take it from our fields, regardless. They don't bother to ask us for permission, do they? With this thought came an answer from my conscience that, even though such people take fruit and vegetables from our fields, without permission, we still do not hold a good opinion of their behaviour, do we? We still describe them as thieves and think that heaven knows which desperate person has stolen produce from our fields at odd hours and damaged the crops whilst stealing. We still try to catch such a person red handed, stealing from our fields. My inner voice goaded me to think about what people will say if I was caught grabbing a couple of sugar canes. Surely, they will say that Harnam Singh wears the garb of a Gurmukh, claiming to follow a spiritual path but given half a chance, he steals like any other ordinary man.

Whenever people will talk of your indiscretion, you will be defamed and so too will the name of your Guru and Sikhism. This cannot be allowed to happen at any cost. I cannot take the sugarcanes. As these thoughts unravelled and weaved in my mind, I drew closer to the sugarcane field. By now, my mind had concocted another plan. I would go up to the field, call out to the owner of the field, S. Uttam Singh and tell him that I am taking a couple of sugarcanes from his field, if it was all right with him. In this way, I wouldn't be stealing from the owner of the field. But my inner conscience began to recite spontaneously the words ...

Placing reliance on you O mind

Who is it that has not fallen?

You are bewitched my mammon

This is the way to hell

O vicious mind no faith can be placed in you

You are exceedingly drunk with sin

The foot chain of the donkey is removed

Only when a load is put on it's back

You destroy the merit of contemplation

***And penance and self-mortification
You shall suffer agony
At the hands of yama's rod
O shameless buffoon
Why do you not remember God?
You shall suffer the pain of rebirth
kavan kavan nahee patri-aa tumHree parteet.
mahaa mohnee mohi-aa narak kee reet. ||1||
man khuthar tayraa nahee bisaas too mahaa udmaadaa.
khar kaa paikhar ta-o chhutai ja-o oopar laadaa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
jap tap sanjam tumH khanday jam kay dukh daaNd.
simrahi naahee jon dukh nirlajay bhaaNd. ||2||
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 815)***

In order to fulfil your lowly desire, O mind, you make many a lame excuse and put forward many an argument. Oh my mind, if you are destined to have sugarcane from this field, you will get it. Be patient and content. Have resolve and faith upon Guru's words and the fruit of your destiny. O mind, do not make me a thief just to fulfil the sensuous but petty desire of taste. I will not give into thee, O mind. In this conflict of the mind, the voice of the desire-ridden lower mind was silenced and beaten by the true voice of the conscience. A voice from inside rose up...

***O my mind remain steadfast
Then you shall bear no injury
ay man mayri-aa too thir rahu chot na khaavhee raam.
(Page 1113)***

O my mind be brave, don't abandon your principles for petty and sensuous pleasures. The tussle within the mind was still carrying on when I came to the sugarcane field. I had only walked past about half of the field length when S Uttam Singh appeared from the midst of the sugarcane crop clutching an armful of broken and discarded shoots of sugarcane. Standing a few feet away from me, he saw me and reverently exchanged Gur-Fateh with me.

I was astonished yet felt ashamed of myself to see S Uttam Singh. After exchanging Gur-Fateh, he continued, "Some contemptible person goes through my sugarcane field stealing the sugarcane and discarding the leafy shoots into the middle of the field." S. Uttam Singh showed me the leaves he was clutching and remarked, "These are freshly broken shoots from yesterday. For a few days now I have been sitting amongst the sugarcane, lying in wait for the culprit. If I catch him, he'll be taught a good lesson and dragged publicly in front of the village council. Even now, I was sat lying in wait to catch the thief, hidden in the midst of my crop. Then I saw you coming and thought, thank God! I have glimpsed the presence of a holy man like Harnam Singh. Even though I was lying in wait to catch a thief, I have been blessed with your company. All morning I've been sitting in the heat, in wait of the culprit and am tired now. So, wherever you were going, please take a short break from your journey and sit with me a while as I wish to ask you some questions regarding Sikhism and gurnat. You can answer my questions and remove my doubts. He pointed over to a densely shady tree (tahli) and said, "Please sit on the bed under the shade. I will bring some sugarcane for us to have whilst we discuss gurnat. You will do me a great honour by letting me serve you some sugarcane and by discussing gurnat." Baba Ji used to tell us, "I tried to persuade S Uttam Singh to allow me go on with my journey as I was in a hurry but his affectionate manner overpowered me. He went to the field to collect some sugarcanes and I sat under the shady tree. I

was thanking Almighty God on the one hand and at the same time feeling guilty and ashamed on the other. The super conscience rebuked the lower mind, "O weak and feeble mind, had I at your instigation broken those sugar canes, I would have been declared a thief. Not only that, I would have been blamed for the theft of the sugarcane by the real thief. God only knows how many other people S. Uttam Singh would have told about how S. Harnam Singh was the culprit, stealing sugarcane from his field. I would have been defamed, that Harnam Singh looks like a gurmukh fellow but steals so expertly that he will even call out to the owners before he steals." The higher mind was scolding and rebuking the lower evil mind, which was shamed into silence. At the same time, my faith in God and resolve in destiny grew even stronger. My conscience explained further that, "Had I broken the sugarcane at the behest of my wicked mind I would have been labelled a thief forever. Yet, I would have got the sugarcane without stealing and as destined by God. I did not have to give in to my wicked mind, instead S Uttam Singh offered me the same sugarcane with great love and respect."

Baba Ji used to say, "From that day onwards I was determined not to believe the mind as it always drags you to the bad side. We should listen carefully to the soft, faint tone of the inner conscience, which advises one to resist temptation of misdeeds and act upon guidance. Thus, Baba Kabir Ji cautions us to guard against the mind as follows...

Kabir the mind knows everything

Yet knowingly commits sins

What use is the lamp in his hand?

If man still falls into the well

kabeer man jaanai sabh baat jaanat hee a-ugan karai.

kaahay kee kuslaat haath deep koo-ay parai. ||216||

(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1376)

In spite of knowing the merits or demerits of a sinful act, the mind still persuades one towards evil. Everyone knows that theft, adultery, cheating, robbery, lying etc are bad deeds but the mind still drags one to commit such acts. The punishment for these acts is borne by the body in this world and by the soul in the next world. To be saved from the evil machinations of the mind, we should use the touchstone that is Gurbani, to evaluate whether a deed is sinful or not. If the mind still refuses to yield to righteous action, then as Bhagat Kabir Ji says...

Beating and thrashing his mind

He applies it to the touchstone

Of the Lord's love

That person obtains perfect salvation

kut kut man kasvatee laavai.

so kootan mukat baho paavai. ||1||

(Bilawal, Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 872)

The mind must be allowed to direct our actions under the command of Gurbani, only then can we save ourselves from bad deeds. If we follow the leadership of our mind, it will tempt the body to commit all manner of absurd and ridiculous deeds of demerit...

Suffers ever in loss, The perverse wanders in doubt

The blind infidel remembers not the Lord, How can he obtain insight?

manmukh totaa nit hai bharmeh bharmaa-ay.

manmukh anDh na chayt-ee ki-o darsan paa-ay. ||6||

(Asa 1st Guru, page 421)

The person overwhelmed with base desires such as lust and anger does not know what is righteous or not. He or she cannot evaluate what is the right place or time for righteous actions...

The egocentric know not how to speak

Within them is lust pride and anger

They distinguish not between right and wrong

They ever think evil

In the Lord's court they are held to account

They are then judged as false

manmukh bol na jaananHee onaa andar kaam kroDh ahaNkaar.

thaa-o kuthaa-o na jaannee sadaa chitvahi bikaar.

dargeh laykhaa mangee-ai othai hohi koorhi-aar.

(Salok 3rd Guru, page 1248)

In order to please the Almighty, we should always abandon the teachings of the mind. Though it is difficult to let go of the devious machinations of the mind one, should remember what the great Guru advises us to do...

O mind renounce your cleverness

However hard this task may be

Receiving instructions from the great Guru

Reflect upon the Lord's name night and day

We should always listen to the Guru's word

Instead of the mind's false arguments

man kee mat ti-aagahu har jan ayhaa baat kathainee.

an-din har har naam Dhi-aavahu gur satgur kee mat lainee. ||3||

(Bilawal 4th Guru, page 800)

Instead of listening to the immoral teachings of the mind, one should listen to the Guru's true gospel...

Forsake you the mind's cleverness

And hearken to the Guru's gospel.

man kee mat ti-aagee-ai sunee-ai updays. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Bilawal 5th Guru page 814)

22 - MEDITATION IN LAHORE

Deeply impressed by Baba Ji's way of life, Bhai Wadhawa Singh once requested Baba Ji to come and stay with him in Lahore, so that others could avail themselves of his pious company too. Baba Ji accepted this affectionate invitation to come and meditate in Lahore. The family prepared a quiet and peaceful room for Baba Ji to stay in and meditate without disturbance. All day, Baba Ji would be immersed in meditation and imbued with the Lord's remembrance. In the evening, Baba Ji would sit with the family to recite the evening prayer of Rehras after which he imparted knowledge and teachings of Sikhism to the family. Baba Ji would similarly recite the morning *Nitnem* amongst the family. As the family had a separate room in which Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned, Baba Ji would pay homage to the true Guru at home instead of going to the local Gurdwara. As a matter of principle, Baba Ji would only eat after he had paid respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

One day, after completing his *Nitnem*, Baba Ji went to pray and pay his respects to Guru Ji, when a question arose in his mind, "How is it that Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji embodies the spirit of the ten Guru's?" With this thought in mind Baba Ji bowed to Guru Ji, paid obeisance, got up and pronounced GurFateh. As he did so, he looked up to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and saw the intensely radiant forms of the ten Guru's arising out of the palanquin. The room was filled with radiant, incandescent light. His eyes were finding it difficult to bear the intense brightness of the light. A few seconds later, the radiant forms of the Guru's appeared to transform into one bright, radiant, glowing light and one by one merged into the body of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Then the forms of the Guru's would reappear one by one out of the body of the true Guru. This transformation of the ten Guru's from and into the body of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji happened three times. Now all that Baba Ji could perceive was this glowing radiant light around Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji that was spreading into the rest of the room. Baba Ji thanked the Almighty and felt that this miracle was performed by God to answer his question. In Baba Ji's mind there was deep contentment and faith that...

***God the embodiment of light has caused
Himself to be called Guru Nanak
From him Angad dev became the Guru
Whom he forthwith united with the Lord
Showering his benediction
Angad dev established Amar Das as the true Guru
Amar Dass has blessed Guru Ram Das Ji with the ambrosial umbrella
Says Mathura, seeing the vision of Guru Ram Das
Nectar sweet became the speech of Arjun Dev
With these eyes, see the embodiment
Of the approved disciple Arjun dev, the fifth Guru.
jot roop har aap guroo naanak kaha-ya-o.
taa tay angad bha-ya-o tat si-o tat milaa-ya-o.
angad kirpaa Dhaar amar satgur thir kee-a-o.
amardaas amrat chhatar gur raameh dee-a-o.
gur raamdaas darsan paras kahi mathuraa amrit ba-yan.
moorat panch parmaan purakh gur arjun pikhahu na-yan. ||1||
(Swaiyas 5th Guru, page 1408)***

The divine light, which manifested within the body of Guru Nanak Dev Ji then passed through each of the ten Guru's. The same divine light passed into and is now seated in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. It is only our vision that is distorted and clouded, unable to see this reality. This is the reason we meditate on naam, so that the grime of sin is washed from our eyes and the illusion of doubt is banished from within us. May the Almighty remove this doubt that makes us perceive the Gurus and Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as separate entities, when, in fact, they are one and the same divine light. May we too, recognise this divine light as the living embodiment of the Almighty Lord. May we get guidance from the living Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The tenth master Guru Gobind Singh Ji tells us...

All know the Lord in his different forms

The rare one recognizes him as one

The one who knows this is the blessed one.

Bhinn bhinn roop subhhoo kur jaanaa

Eyk roop kinhoo pehchaanaa

(Bachittar Natak 10th Guru Dasam Granth)

Baba Ji spent a considerable time enjoying the divine miracle that had just occurred. He then read a hukamnama from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. After bowing and paying his respects to the true Guru, he returned to his room to immerse himself in meditation of naam, overflowing with bliss at witnessing the miracle. At Lahore Baba Ji spent 40 odd days in a state of divine elation and returned to Sargodha to resume his routine of meditation...

O Saints through the Lord's name

The mortal is saved

Standing or sitting down contemplate

The Lord God, night and day

Do these good deeds. Pause.

santahu raam naam nistaree-ai.

oothat baithat har har Dhi-aa-ee-ai

an-din sukarit karee-ai. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Sorath 5th Guru, page 621-622)

And

Contemplate the one name

Fruitless are all other affairs

japahu ta ayko naamaa.

avar niraafal kaamaa. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Suhi 1st Guru, page 728)

23 - EXPERIENCE OF THE COUNTRY'S PARTITION

The great Saint Baba Harnam Singh Ji spent 29 years in the graceful area of Sargodha immersed in contemplative meditation. One day, during a state of deep meditation, Baba Ji perceived that the land on which they had settled and farmed would need to be abandoned. A horrific scene, of people migrating as refugees, great looting and murderous riots flashed before his spiritual vision.

The words of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Babar Bani (This is the Gurbani uttered by Guru Nanak Dev Ji when he witnessed the massacre of people in Eminabad at the hands of the mughal invader Babar, who came from Samarkhand, Uzbekistan) materialized before his eyes. He saw, how neighbours, who lived like brethren, with mutual love and respect, helping each other in times of need, now, turned on one another with hatred. Nature fuelled their instincts of hatred and alienated friends and neighbours from one another. Genocide turned the ground red with blood. Witnessing such horrific scenes, Baba Ji became pensive at the impending havoc to befall God's creation.

The next day, seeing him in such a serious mood, Baba Ji's elder brother asked him the reason for his dejected mood. "If we have inconvenienced you in any way then please tell us without hesitation and we will try to sort out any obstacles or problems to the best of our ability?" reassured his elder brother, Bhai Tara Singh. On asking once or twice, Baba Ji tried to detract from telling his older brother what the matter was but then he agreed to talk and called all his brothers together.

He narrated to them his prophetic vision and told them, "We will have to abandon this land that we are settled on and return to our country. Countless people will become homeless refugees and have to migrate on both sides. The signs of great destruction are visible" After listening to Baba Ji, his youngest brother broke the silence and said, "A farmer does not leave his land even after death. You are telling us to leave it now when we are alive and well. How can this be possible? We bought this uncultivated land and with hard work, day and night, turned it into productive land for farming." Baba Ji answered politely, "You asked the reason for my dejected mood. Whatever insight the true Guru granted me, I have shared with you. Regarding the land, it is your collective decision whether to leave it or not." Almost four months passed. Baba Ji thought to himself, "I take food and shelter in this household and they are attached to me through deep worldly relations as brothers. I should try to persuade them one more time, so that they may be spared from the forthcoming disaster."

So, Baba Ji assembled his brothers, repeated his warning, and told them about his premonition. Baba Ji asked them, "If you don't want to leave, so be it but at least send mother and the ladies of the house with necessary things, to our native village of Dhugga. The impending hour of disaster is nearly upon us." He added further, "Someone has reliably informed me that cheap farmland is for sale near the city of Barhi, Rajasthan. Many Punjabi's have bought land there and turned them into productive farms. Please sell some land here and buy a piece of land with the proceeds of the sale, in Rajasthan."

As nature would have it, the brothers agreed to Baba Ji's request. Bhai Tara Singh, along with the ladies of the house, set off towards their ancestral village with only the most essential items. After staying in Dhugga for a week, Bhai Tara Singh returned to Sargodha. With the consent of all the brothers, Bhai Tara Singh then went to see the land for sale in a village called Karerua, near the city of Barhi, Rajasthan. After inspecting the land, he was pleased with it and returned with the

good news to Sargodha. The family sold a piece of land in Sargodha, added some more money and bought about fifty acres of land in the village of Karerua.

24 - MOVING FROM SARGODHA TO KARERUA VILLAGE

After buying land in the state of Dholpur, Rajasthan, the next step was to reclaim the land, make it productive and establish some accommodation. In order to ease their workload, all three brothers jointly requested Baba Ji to help a little in farming and resettling the land. Baba Ji replied, "What is your command?" The brothers replied politely, "It is not proper for us to involve you in farming again but, if you take up residence in the new farm then, both ends of our family needs can be met. One, you can supervise the tenants who cultivate the land. Secondly, you can carry on regardless with your meditation and simran (simran means remembrance or recitation of Gurbani usually the Guru mantar or *Mool mantar*). To enable you to stay there, we will build you a small farm lodge." As Bhagat Kabir says...

The whole world belongs to the Saint of the Lord.

Baba Ji had no particular attachment to any one place. More over, he felt intuitively that he would be leaving this place soon. So, he happily agreed to their request and bid farewell to the land of Sargodha, where he had spent nearly 30 years of his life in blissful divine communion with the Lord. He arrived at Karerua village a few days later with his brother Bhai Tara Singh. A small river passed through the farm and the brothers had constructed a small lodge with a couple of rooms on the farm. After taking care of the arrangements, Bhai Tara Singh returned to Sargodha. Tenants who would farm the land were soon found.

As per his routine, Baba Ji would arise a few hours before dawn. After bathing, he would immerse himself in contemplative meditation. At dawn, he would complete his *Nitnem* after which, he would go to the village Gurdwara to pay homage to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He would listen to the hukamnama and return home to eat and rest a little. After a short rest, he would resume his programme of reciting hymns from Gurbani. He would then go to the farm and supervise any work until the afternoon. In the evening, he would recite Rehras and sohila before he retired for the night. Whilst his body rested, his soul would remain immersed in meditation on the lotus feet of the Lord.

This land was sparsely populated, barren with thick shrubs and jungle all around. There were wild animals like lions, leopards etc. so much so, that at a short distance from where Baba Ji used to stay, was a small river and on the embankment of the river, a lion had made a small den for itself. Any deer or prey that would come for a drink of water were pounced upon by the lion and made a meal of. Being close by, Baba Ji often witnessed the lion hunting its prey. The lion never threatened or looked upon Baba Ji in anger...

Farida if you submit yourself to me then the whole world will be yours.

fareedaa jay too mayraa ho-ay raheh sabh jag tayraa ho-ay. ||95||

(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1382)

The native villagers and disciples discovered that Baba Ji had left Sargodha. The villagers of Karerua found out that Baba Ji would come to the Gurdwara everyday to perform prayers and worship Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. As a result of this, the villagers would come in large numbers to the Gurdwara everyday to listen to Baba Ji explain the hukamnama. So much so that farmers would stop their ploughing and come to the Gurdwara in order to listen to Baba Ji's daily discourse of Gurbani. He would explain the meanings of Gurbani and the hukamnama. In particular, he would extol the virtues of meditation (naam simran) and renunciation of alcohol and meat. Being a

wild area, the locals were fond of hunting and home brewed alcohol. Baba Ji often thought that if our Punjabi brethren did not stop abusing alcohol then our society would be swept away in the tide of alcohol abuse and immorality. The local king of Dholpur state and the host community, which has respect for the hard working and industrious Punjabi's now, will lose respect for them in the future. Where alcohol and meat are used frequently, one's character becomes immoral and base instincts like anger and lust overpower higher principles. In a character riddled with base desires and instincts, the mind does not immerse easily in meditation. There is not the slightest link between an emotion driven mind and meditation.

The persuasive message of Gurbani, explained with conviction by Baba Ji, convinced many to give up meat and alcohol. Many, now got ready to take amrit and be baptised by the five beloved ones. Baba Ji invited five highly spiritual Singh's and arranged for a baptism ceremony. He also gathered the necessary kakaars too (these are also known as the five k's. They are the five symbols of a baptised Sikh and these symbols are worn all the time. They are the Kirpan - a small ceremonial sword, Kesh – uncut hair, Kanga – small comb, Kara - a steel bangle and the Kashehra – special shorts). The five Singh's were sent written invitations and they arrived on the due date to administer baptism, when 20 or so villagers took amrit. Within a few months, in the village of Karerua, there was a congregation of devoted Sikhs, who assembled in the morning and evening at the Gurdwara. They would avail themselves of the company of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, getting the added benefit of being given guidance on spiritual matters and Gurbani by Baba Ji. The numbers in the congregation grew day by day until, in due course; the whole village became devotees and Sikhs of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. An old associate of Baba Ji, Sant Sadhu Singh Ji joined Baba Ji at Karerua village. Sant Sadhu Singh Ji took up residence at the Gurdwara. As the size of the congregation grew, so the size of the Gurdwara building increased accordingly. The Gurdwara is now a beautiful, grand building to behold. Sant Sadhu Singh Ji is serving the Gurdwara with great zeal and enthusiasm.

25 - MEETING DR KARTAR SINGH

A short distance from Karerua Village was a small city called Bari. People from the surrounding area would visit the markets at this city for their necessities like clothes, tea etc. If anyone became ill, they would have to travel to this city for their medicine. A Punjabi doctor called Dr Kartar Singh used to run his practice in this small city. Punjabi people from the locality would generally visit Dr Kartar Singh for their medical treatment. Dr Singh was an atheist and any leisure time he had, he spent persuading people, with gusto, about the futility of believing in God. Impressed by his arguments many became atheists.

Baba Ji too, came to hear of this make shift centre for preaching atheism. Taking some time out from his meditation, Baba Ji went to meet Dr Kartar Singh at his practice. The doctor treated Baba Ji as any other patient of his and asked him what his ailment was. Baba Ji replied, "I have nothing wrong with me physically and have only come to meet you and listen to your views." The Doctor was very pleased to receive a willing listener who had obviously travelled some distance.

Normally, he would have to persuade people to listen his views on atheism. After offering some refreshments to Baba Ji, the doctor launched straight into his lecture, which was as follows: "Look! How simple minded and innocent the people of our country are! No one has seen the Supreme Being, nor can he be seen with these eyes, neither does he have any physical body nor can anyone show another person if God exists. Such a being that has no entity is worshipped as God. What's more, people who are praying to him day and night, have given him numerous names. How can one pin their hopes on a being, which cannot be seen? How can that non-existent entity listen to our prayers? What purpose of yours will it fulfil or serve? Yes, this much is true that due to people's whimsical and delusional hopes some others profit from their vulnerability."

The doctor continued his lecture and Baba Ji listened patiently to his rhetoric. The doctor put forward many eloquent and impassioned arguments to prove that God does not exist. Baba Ji asked the doctor politely, "Doctor Sahib, according to your own words you only acknowledge the existence of those things that can be seen by our eyes? Those objects which cannot be seen, you believe do not exist. Dear doctor Sahib, to see God is a distant concept to visualise. Even some of his creation cannot be seen but only perceived through our senses. For example, has anyone seen the bitterness of chilly? You can see sugar but cannot see its sweetness. Similarly, you give quinine pills for malaria to many patients everyday but cannot see the bitterness of the tablets. Many things in nature can be seen outwardly but their hidden merits or nature cannot be seen readily."

The doctor interrupted, "Brother, no doubt sweetness of sugar or bitterness of quinine cannot be seen but it can still be tasted and we therefore know that it exists. Baba Ji replied, "They can only feel but not see. Here is a glass of milk before us. Can you see the butter that is hidden within milk? Even if you put your hand into the milk, you cannot bring out the butter from the milk. Even upon drinking the milk, you cannot taste or see the butter in the milk. If however a milkman heats the milk and curdles it, then churning and whisking the milk at the right temperature, he will be able to remove the butter from the milk. If he now melts the butter, he can then cream off the ghee (clarified butter).

Now, if this milkman tells you how to remove butter from milk but you steadfastly assert your view that there is a no butter in milk because you cannot see it, taste it, smell it, or touch it in the milk then, is it not your own ignorance to admit that that butter doesn't come from milk?

However, it is not your fault that you are not convinced by someone else's explanation of butter coming from milk. If however, you yourself prepare milk, whisk and churn it at the right temperature, you too will demonstrate first hand that butter indeed can be removed from milk, providing you follow the correct method of preparing the milk. Another example given to us by Guru Ji tells us that fire lies dormant in firewood, but cannot be seen. It does not follow that because we cannot see fire in firewood that fire does not exist. If we wish to experience a fire, we only need to rub some bamboo together to create a fire and release the heat energy within the firewood. Our fifth Guru has described the above two examples as follows...

***As fire is contained in all timber
And butter in all milk
So in high and low he resides
The Lord of wealth is all pervading
The hearts and minds of all human beings
O Saints he pervades all hearts
The perfect Lord is fully contained in all
In the water and dry land
The Lord pervades. Pause
Nanak sings the praise of the treasure of virtues
The true Guru has dispelled his doubts
The omnipresent Lord is contained
Amongst all, though ever distinct from them
sagal banaspat meh baisantar sagal dooDh meh ghee-aa.
ooch neech meh jot samaanee ghat ghat maaDha-o jee-aa. ||1||
santahu ghat ghat rahi-aa samaahi-o.
pooran poor rahi-o sarab meh
jal thal rama-ee-aa aahi-o. ||1|| rahaa-o.
gun niDhaan naanak jas gaavai satgur bharam chukaa-i-o.
sarab nivaasee sadaa alaypaa
sabh meh rahi-aa samaa-i-o. ||2||1||29||
(Sorath 5th Guru page 617)***

Just as fire cannot be seen in a piece of wood and butter is hidden within milk but is not seen. Similarly, God resides in all his creation, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, great or small. Alas, he cannot be seen with these eyes that we possess. If you yearn to see God and wish to manifest God in reality, then it is clear from Gurbani that you will need to make a special effort to see the Almighty. What effort will you adopt? Namely, to sing the Lord's praises, who is the treasure of all virtues. You will have to adopt the method of singing the praises of the all-pervasive Lord. Dear Doctor, your eyes will need the spectacles of devotion to see God as Bhagat Kabir Ji says...

***Ever perform thou the Lord's service
Wear these spectacles and
See him present everywhere
kar fakar daa-im laa-ay chasmay jah tahaa ma-ujood. ||3||
(Todi Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 727)***

If we concentrate and quieten our mind of thoughts then the omnipresent Lord's presence will become apparent in a short while...

***If you fix your mind even for a moment
Then the Lord shall be seen present before you
tuk dam karaaree ja-o karahu haajir hajoor khudaa-ay. ||1||
(Todi Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 727)***

Dear Doctor, what greater guarantee can be given by those who have seen the Lord as Bhagat Farid Ji say...

***Meet thy Lord right now O Farid
If you restrain the desires that distract the mind
aaj milaavaa saykh fareed taakim koonjarhee-aa
manhu machind-rhee-aa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Asa Bhagat Farid Ji, page 488)***

And

***Bind the pugnacious passions of the mind
Attain your beauteous Lord
dundar baaDhhu sundar paavhu. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Bhairon Bhagat Kabir Ji, page p1160)***

Dear Doctor, the need is for one to walk on the path of enlightenment to God. Guru Nanak dev Ji tell us about this path:

***Sitting down wash and perfume the vessel
Then go and fetch the milk in it
Good actions are the milk
Ferment the milk with meditation
Then leave it without desire
Curdle the milk with contemplation of the name of the Lord
Fruitless are all other affairs. Pause.
Make your mind the hand pieces
Being ever awake the cord to churn the milk
Uttering the name with the tongue
The milk is churned
In this manner, gather the ambrosial butter
Make the mind bathed in the tank of truth
The abode for the Lord
Make offerings of devotion to please him
The servant who serves the Lord
By offering his very life
Remains absorbed in his Lord
Others utter your praise
Merely reciting your praises, they depart
There is no equal to you Lord
Devotion less slave Nanak prays
May ever sing the praises of the true Lord
bhaaNdaa Dho-ay bais Dhoop dayvhu ta-o dooDhai ka-o jaavhu.
dooDh karam fun surat samaa-in ho-ay niraas jamaavahu. ||1||***

***japahu ta ayko naamaa. avar niraafal kaamaa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
ih man eetee haath karahu fun naytara-o need na aavai.
rasnaa naam japahu tab mathee-ai in biDh amrit paavhu. ||2||
man sampat jit sat sar naavan bhaavan paatee taripat karay.
poojaa paraan sayvak jay sayvay inH biDh saahib ravat rahai. ||3||
kahday kaheh kahay kahi jaaveh tum sar avar na ko-ee.
bhagat heen naanak jan jampai ha-o saalaaher sachaa so-ee. ||4||1||***
(Suhi 1st Guru, page 728)

“Listen! Doctor Sahib, if it is a matter of sight, then people all around the world feel sleepy, hungry and are subject to pain, pleasure, happiness, sadness, lust, anger, greed, affection and vanity.

These are all emotions that are experienced. If we ask some one, no matter how wise, to show us where sleep or hunger is, what will they think of our wisdom? We all feel sleep and hunger but cannot show where they come from. We can quantify, to an extent, what they are but only, subjectively. Nonetheless, only the person who experiences these emotions can describe or feel them. Look! Doctor Sahib look at how science has progressed. Scientists can measure blood pressure, temperature etc but have not invented instruments fine enough to measure the imperceptible existence of God. Neither hunger or greed, nor lust or anger etc can be measured accurately. No one has measured his or her form or quantity in a person. Only the person overpowered by these instincts can feel their influence.” Doctor Kartar Singh was listening intently to Baba Ji. Baba Ji continued, “Doctor Sahib, scientists have discovered electricity and produced light bulbs, giving us great convenience and luxury. Electricity was already present in nature but due to our ignorance, we were unable to utilise it until recently. Some scientists have devised ways to demonstrate the existence of electricity which otherwise cannot be seen.

According to the instructions given by scientists to the government, it has built power stations and built cables to carry electricity. However, until this was done, we were all unaware of the existence of and the usefulness of electricity. Similarly, if we want to manifest or reveal Almighty God, who is all pervasive in the form of energy and derive pleasure from that eternal source of energy, then we will have to follow the advice of those blessed ones who have seen the Almighty after undertaking many struggles and toiled hard.

As you say, God is invisible, but the great Guru says that, “O Man you do not have the eyes to see God! The eyes with which God can be seen are different from the ones that see the world...

***Nanak! They are some other eyes
With which the beloved spouse can be seen
naanak say akh-rhee-aa bi-ann jinee disando maa piree. ||3||***
(Mohalla 5th Guru, page 1100)

So, how can one obtain these eyes, with which one can see, the all pervasive Lord. Guru Ji has called these the eyes of divine vision or the eyes of consciousness. He tells us to walk upon the following path...

***Make fear of God thy feet
His love your hands
His understanding thy eyes
Says Nanak, in this way O wise woman***

***Union with the bridegroom is accomplished
bhai kay charan kar bhaav kay lo-in surat karay-i.
naanak kahai si-aanee-ay iv kant milaavaa ho-ay. ||2||***
(Salok 2nd Guru, page 139)

O mortal! If you walk in awe of God, work with loving hands and make divine wisdom your eyes then, by following all these actions, you can meet the Lord. Always remain in awe of your creator and know that he is watching your every action, good or bad. This awareness will remove the root of evil thought and deeds from your heart and mind. A treasure of good and noble deeds will fill your being. The heart that is full of virtues will give birth to a spring of love for God. In whose heart there is love for God, their consciousness will see the Lord himself...

***They who love him, attain him
There the eyes of consciousness see him
Jin Prem Keeyo Thin Hee Prabh Paaio***
(Tav parsad Swaiyas, 10th Guru, Akal Ustat)

“Dear Doctor! It is only recently that the radio was invented. The voice that is broadcast is present in the air. Only with a radio, can one receive this signal or hear the voice from the radio station. If we have a radio but do not tune it or it is broken, then the fact that we cannot hear the voice is our fault and not the fault of the radio station or the sound...”

***The Lord is seen, heard and known
But his relish is not obtained
How can a lame armless and blind person
disai sunee-ai jaanee-ai saa-o na paa-i-aa jaa-ay.
ruhlaa tundaa anDhulaa ki-o gal lagai Dhaa-ay.***
(Salok 2nd Guru, page 139)

It means that God is present in all his creation and is visible. His life force reverberates audibly, in all creation. He works through his creation but the human condition is such that we are unable to relish the taste of union with God. Why is this? It is because humans have not the hands, feet nor eyes with which to perceive God. How can this hapless being embrace God? In order to meet him and be embraced by God, we will have to follow the path as mentioned before. The path is to walk in awe of God, love for God should be the labour of our hand's, divine intellect the eyes with which we see God.”

With these eloquent examples from Gurbani given by Baba Ji, Dr Kartar Singh was nearly convinced about the existence of God where upon he hinted of an acquaintance of Baba Ji. He asked about S. Avtar Singh Daler, who had recovered through recitation of prayers by Baba Ji. Baba Ji replied, “I was only given the humble service of reciting Gurbani to him.”

Gurbani can cure physical ailments of the body as well as the disease stricken soul of maladies that have accumulated over many lifetimes. Curing ailments of the body is a minor benefit of Gurbani compared to what Gurbani can do for us in allowing us to meet God. Through bad deeds, the soul becomes stricken with disease and eventually the body becomes ill too. When Dr Kartar Singh came to know that this person was the same Saint that cured S. Avtar Singh and whom he had heard of as being a stalwart Saint, his conviction and faith strengthened further. (Dr Kartar Singh was the brother in law of S. Avtar Singh)

Dr Kartar Singh politely persuaded Baba Ji to stay the night. After reciting Rehras, his remaining doubts were dispelled. Baba Ji answered all his questions and removed all his doubts based upon the teachings of Gurbani. At last, Baba Ji said, "If you wish to have eternal bliss then research and study Gurbani further. As you study Gurbani deeply, your doubts will be swayed like grass swayed by a current of water. Moreover, you will begin to see what reality is. You will feel that much time has been wasted in idle ignorance. Doctor Sahib! The hard worker gets everything from the Lord's door and the one who argues baselessly, leaves his door empty handed. When you tread upon this path, others will then seek your guidance."

The practical life of Baba Ji so impressed Dr Kartar Singh that within a few days, he had totally changed. He brought Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji to his house and started to recite it. Baba Ji came to visit regularly and their meetings became more frequent. In a short period, the Doctor had developed a deep understanding of Gurbani and he started to mould his life according to it.

After studying and understanding Gurbani, Dr Kartar Singh Ji wrote several books and tracts. These were distributed far and wide for the missionary purpose of spreading the teachings of Gurbani. The very person who was unwilling to accept that God existed was now guided by Gurbani to preach its message. The true company of Baba Ji had transformed Dr Kartar Singh into a firm believer of God, who now became a great preacher of divinity, guiding numerous people towards the message of Gurbani. He wrote several books on Sikhism:

1. Aim of life
2. What is naam and its form
3. Ego
4. The gurmat method of practicing naam
5. How to focus attention in meditation
6. The nectar of naam
7. Why is it essential to practice naam time and again
8. Attainment of naam and its test
9. Fundamental principles of gurmat and our present mode of living
10. How is Gurbani the Guru?

26 - EXPOSING A FALSE GURU

It is worth mentioning another incident concerning Dr Kartar Singh that made his faith in Gurbani firmer and gave him deeper insight into the faith. In the inspirational company and guidance of Baba Ji he was now of the firm conviction that “Gurbani is the Guru and Guru is the Bani”, but his father and other members of the family had no such faith. In fact, they were followers of a living Guru (Living Guru: Doctor Kartar Singh’s father and other members of the family were followers of Narankari Darbar of Baba Rattan Singh of Rawal pindi And believed in the physical form of a Guru. Baba Hara Singh Ji was the present head of that Dera).

They were followers of the Nirankari sect based in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, who’s Guru at the time was Baba Ratta Singh. (The sect is still in existence and its present Guru is Baba Hara Singh). The Guru of this sect taught that a living Guru is required for salvation and would himself sit on a soft throne whilst Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was placed on a bookstand beside his stage. The common masses would bow to him and in his discourses he would quote Gurbani yet maintain that, understanding of Gurbani could only come through the living Guru. He would emphatically state that no spiritual progress could be made without the living Guru. His view was that, the person who teaches you Gurbani, is the true living Guru.

Gurbani Is The Only Guru

On the contrary, Dr Kartar Singh was a firm believer of Gurbani and that it was the true Guru. His elder sister Bibi Prem Kaur, who lived in Lahore, had an Akhand path (a continuous, non stop recital of the entire scriptures of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji usually over two days. Literally akhand – without break, path - prayer or hymns) performed at her house. Bibi Prem Kaur had specifically invited Baba Ji to grace the occasion along with all her relatives and friends to the bhog ceremony (this is the ceremony at end of a religious act or deed to thank God). S. Avtar Singh Daler (who was her brother in law), squadron leader Surat Singh (her eldest brother), wing commander Murat Singh (her younger brother) and some other devotees arrived at the akhand path a day early.

In the evening, Dr Kartar Singh’s father arrived with Baba Ratta Singh Ji, whom they all revered as the living Guru. The family greeted him with garlands of flowers and led him to a specially built and decorated room to stay in for the duration of the akhand path. After light refreshments, the congregation went for an audience with Baba Ratta Singh. Dr Kartar Singh and his friends struck up a conversation on the issue of “Gurbani being the true Guru.” The issue was discussed and debated late into the evening. Several hours of contentious debate yielded no firm answer to the question and finally an exasperated Dr Kartar Singh resolved, “We must decide once and for all tonight whether Gurbani is the true Guru or a living Guru is required.”

A Strange Suggestion – Baba Ji’s Firm Faith

Dr Kartar Singh said excitedly, “This discussion won’t end. We clearly need an evident, yes or no answer. I have a novel suggestion. We will side with and believe whoever can materialize 5 kilograms of Kashmiri apples through their spiritual prowess in the presence of the congregation. The entire congregation fell silent for a few minutes. At last Dr Kartar Singh’s father broke the silence and said contentiously, “First of all, you should ask your Bhai Sahib (Baba Ji was called Bhai Sahib then) if he agrees to the conditions of your strange challenge? We too will consult with our Guru over this matter. Dr Kartar Singh Ji and his friends left the congregation and went to Baba Ji’s room. He told Baba Ji about the discussion and the condition he had set to resolve the issue of whether “Gurbani is the Guru.” Baba Ji listened patiently about the whole incident, paused for a

few moments and replied, "If it is a question of upholding the honour, prestige and sanctity of Gurbani, the embodiment of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, then not just 5 but 10 kilograms of apples will materialize amidst the congregation. It is not a big task for the true Guru. We simply have to pray to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The true Guru will fulfil our prayers."

On hearing these robust, resolute and faith imbued words from Baba Ji the devotees spontaneously hailed, "Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal" (means - true is the timeless Lord, exalted are the ones who declare this) in unison. They all went to the room of the living Guru and said "The followers of Gurbani, the true Guru are willing to materialize 10 kilograms of apples, instead of 5 kg. So please tell us where you stand."

On hearing these fervent words the living Guru simply backed out of the demand and said that he does not believe in such miracles being performed. He further added that he had been invited to the house and insulted. Protesting thus, he left hastily during the night before dawn of the next day. In the morning, after the bhog ceremony "Gurbani is the true Guru" was the topic of discussion in the congregation. After *Kirtan* (singing of hymns) was performed, Baba Ji explained the meanings of the hukamnama taken from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji to the whole congregation.

He specially instructed the sangat that who so ever wants to attain spiritual enlightenment through Gurbani must first take into their hearts the Guru's instruction. The instruction to all Sikhs is to be initiated into the spiritual path of Sikhism by taking amrit (baptism). Baptism is administered by the Panj Pyara's (five beloved ones) in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, as ordained by the tenth master Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Where a gursikh takes the shelter of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji by being baptised then there is no need to seek refuge in a living Guru. In essence, it is vital to be baptised to obtain any blessings from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Dr Kartar Singh and the other devotees made a programme and a day was fixed on which an amrit ceremony would be held so that one and all could take amrit. Baba Ji nominated five Singh's with the duty of preparing amrit and a large number of devotees from Lahore took amrit on the chosen day.

Every gursikh must be cautious and not be deluded by the concept that a living Guru is needed. Only Gurbani is the Guru of a gursikh. One only has to study the words of Guru Ram Das Ji...

***The Word, the Bani is Guru, and Guru is the Bani.
Within the Bani, the Ambrosial Nectar is contained.
If His humble servant believes, and
Acts according to the Words of the Guru's Bani,
Then the Guru, in person, emancipates him.
bantee guroo guroo hai bantee vich bantee amrit saaray.
gur bantee kahai sayvak jan maanai partakh guroo nistaaray. ||5||
(Nat 5th Guru, page 982)***

And

***The true Guru is the word
And the word is the true Guru
The holy word shows
The way to emancipation
satgur bachan bachan hai satgur paaDhar mukat janaavaigo. ||5||
(Kanra 5th Guru, page 1309)***

And

***The Gurbani of the true Guru
Is the embodiment of truth
Through Gurbani, the mortal becomes perfect
satgur kee banee sat saroop hai gurbaanee banee-ai.
(Vaar Gauri 4th Guru, page 304)***

And

***Through the true Guru's word
The most sublime persons are revealed
They fix their mind on the Guru's word
Hearing the Guru's word
My mind becomes tender
And imbued with it
This mind has returned to its home.
satgur banee purakh purkhotam banee si-o chit laavaigo. ||2||
gurbaanee sunat mayraa man darvi-aa
man bheenaa nij ghar aavaigo.
(Kanra 4th Guru, page 1308)***

The dictate of our Guru's leaves no room for doubt and no concession for the concept of living Guru's. The need is to recognize Gurbani as the true Guru; it is the word and message of God to us. Whoever has faith in Gurbani...

***He who hears and practices Gurbani is saved.
jo sunay kamaavai so utrai paar.
(Asa 5th Guru, page 370)***

27 - PARTITION OF 1947

Here in Karerua village, Baba Ji was performing his duty of meditation and service of the congregation. Simultaneously, in what is now Sargodha, Pakistan the visions that Baba Ji had experienced about a violent partition started to materialise in actuality. Hatred grew in the hearts of people who once lived as affectionate neighbours. Now they became mortal, bloodthirsty enemies. Arson, looting, communal riots and rape erupted all over the sub continent but were particularly fierce in Punjab. Now Baba Ji's brothers began to repent their decision to stay on in Chak 119, Sargodha, and acting upon his prophetic words.

Had they agreed to take Baba Ji's advice then they would not have had to face the misfortune of the partition of India that had befallen them. What could be done at this late hour? A deep sense of repentance now tormented them every moment. In desperation, they loaded as many of their belongings as they could on a cart pulled by oxen and joined the convoys of refugees towards their native country and village.

They left behind the land that they decided not to abandon in the first place with great sorrow. At last, they arrived in their native village of Dhugga, after witnessing mass murders, riots, experiencing many hardships, thirst, hunger and the constant shadow of death's noose hanging over their heads.

After a few days rest in their village, a new plan was made to send the younger brother Bhai Lacchman Singh to Karerua village, where Baba Ji was looking after the farm whilst the other two brothers would remain and look after the land and family in Dhugga.

28 - BABA JI AND THE TANTRIC YOGI

Yogi - An ascetic who practices Tantric yoga- a form of yoga which gives one miraculous powers through practicing yogic body postures

A person who in deed and word is true and valiant, whatever they say then carries influence and weight upon others. Those who merely preach to others and do not act upon their words find that their words have no effect on others. So Guru Ji says...

At first he instructs his own mind

Then after he pleases others.

parathmay man parboDhai apnaa paachhai avar reejhaavai.

(Asa 5th Guru, page 381)

One should first earn the spiritual wealth of enlightenment before preaching to others. Just witness how Guru Ram Das Ji honours such a person who through meditation fills his own heart with loving remembrance of the divine Lord and then helps others to do the same...

Servant Nanak seeks the dust of the feet

Of that gursikh of the Guru

Who himself recites God's name

And encourages others to do so as well

jan naanak Dhoorh mangai tis gursikh kee

jo aap japai avrah naam japaavai. ||2||

(Salok 4th Guru, page 306)

And Bhai Gurdas Ji says...

Deeply I revere the endeavour of those

Who practice the Guru's teachings?

(Vaar 12, Pauri 4, Bhai Gurdas Ji)

The person who preaches to others without acting on their own words, Bhagat Kabir says of them...

Sand falls into their mouths, Who do not practice what they preach

They keep an eye on another's property, Whilst their own field is being robbed.

kabeer avrah ka-o updaystay mukh mai par hai rayt.

raas biraanee raakh-tay khaa-yaa ghar kaa khayt. ||98||

(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1369)

Guru Arjun dev Ji give us the same message in *Sukhmani Sahib*...

He who practices not what he preaches to others

Shall come and go, subject to many births and deaths

avar updaysai aap na karai.

aavat jaavat janmai marai.

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 269)

Throughout his life, Baba Ji first practiced and verified Gurbani for himself, and then he enjoined the message of Gurbani to others and told them what he had personally experienced. It was only natural that a personality of such unflinching conduct had an influence on his surroundings. Fellow devotees of Baba Ji heeded his words and enshrined them in their hearts. Thus, they abandoned their ego driven mind (manmat), following instead the way of the true Guru (Gurmat). Amrit replaced their use of alcohol. A non-vegetarian diet, which incited basic instincts like anger and lust, was substituted with a vegetarian diet.

Tantric Nath

Near the village of Karerua where Baba Ji lived, resided an ascetic who practiced Tantric yoga. The practice of this form of yoga had given him miraculous powers like granting boons or wishes and being able to cast spells on people. As such, he had built up quite a following of people locally by use of these powers and often people would hold banquets of meat and alcohol at which to honour the yogi. For some time now, the people of the area had started to abandon such ways and started to follow Gurbani. Consequently, the followers of the yogi dwindled day by day and he came to know the reason for his dwindling congregation. The yogi thought that who ever had disrupted his flourishing business should be dealt with somehow and this person should be disgraced and evicted from the village. He now thought of trying to chase Baba Ji out of the village with his magical powers but as Gurbani says...

*If one were to be a charmer of scorpions
And be able to handle cobras by hand
He is beaten badly and struck down by their own doing
mantree ho-ay athoohi-aa naagee lagai jaa-ay.
aapan hathee aapnai day koochaa aapay laa-ay.
(Salok 2nd Guru, page 148)*

First Assault By The Yogi

It was a sunny winter day; Baba Ji was sat in deep meditation in front of his house in the sun. About 200 yards from the house there was a narrow dusty footpath. The yogi stood on this path, intending to use his magical powers that he was adept at, in order to influence Baba Ji.

Baba was in deep meditation and was unaware that the yogi was trying to use his magical powers on him. Baba Ji used to tell us that whilst in deep meditation, his heart began to beat a little faster. Baba Ji opened his eyes and looked around, only to see the yogi standing in the footpath staring back. Unperturbed Baba Ji resumed his meditation.

Second Assault

The next day the yogi had returned and tried again to spell bound Baba Ji with his Tantric powers. Baba Ji's concentration was disturbed again and he looked up to see the yogi standing in the distance, trying to do something. Baba Ji resumed his simran unconcerned.

Third Assault

The third day the yogi returned and tried to cast his Tantric magic spell on Baba Ji. Baba Ji looked up and noted that this person hadn't stopped his ill willed practices and has continued to use all his energies to cast Tantric spells. So in order to check the yogi's Tantric powers, Baba Ji looked at the yogi and with deep concentration uttered, "*Waheguru.*" The moment he said this, the yogi suddenly fell to the ground. Baba Ji again uttered, "*Waheguru*" and this time he saw the yogi was dragged four or five feet towards Baba Ji, as if pulled by some invisible rope. When Baba Ji

uttered, "*Waheguru*" a third time, the yogi was dragged a few feet further towards Baba Ji and the yogi started to beg for forgiveness," Please forgive me and let me go. I have made a mistake. I wont try to cast a spell on a Sikh Saint again. Please excuse me this time."

Baba Ji told us that the feeling with which he uttered the *Gurmantar* left him and he resumed his mediation in bliss, just as before. After a short while, the yogi got up, bowed to Baba Ji and left that place in a hurry. After his simran was complete, Baba Ji got up and went over to where the yogi had fallen. He saw that the ground bore imprints and marks, as if some one had been dragged on it. This incident further strengthened Baba Ji's resolve and faith in the true Guru. He felt elated that indeed the *Gur-mantar* blessed to us by Guru Nanak Dev Ji is supremely powerful and without equal. Great indeed is SatGuru who has blessed the Sikhs with the supreme Gur-mantar "*Waheguru*" which is above all other names of God, in all the ages.

In each spiritual age of humanity, the name of God upon which one had to meditate holds the key to enlightenment and is different for the four ages (these ages are called - yug's). Bhai Gurdas Ji explains in his writings that in Satyug – the age of truth Almighty was addressed as Vasudeva. In the second age of Duapar, he was called Harikrishan. In the third age of Treta yug, God was called Ram and in Kalyug, he was called Gobind. By combining the names of God in all ages, Guru Nanak Dev Ji gave us the name of God - "*Waheguru*." According to Sarab Loh Granth, the finest, most sublime, precise and supreme name of God is "*Waheguru*" and is gifted to the Khalsa by the true Guru. Thus the power of all the names of God are encapsulated in the Gur-mantar *Waheguru*.

In Satyug Vishnu in the form of Vasudeva was incarnated

"V" of Waheguru reminds us of our Lord the sustainer of life

In Duapar, the true Guru was Har krishan

"H" of Waheguru reminds us of Hari

In Treta Ram was the true Guru

"R" in Waheguru brings joy and happiness

In kalyug, Gobind is the Guru in the form of Nanak

"G" of Waheguru reminds us of the God who gives enlightenment

Merging the four letters, reciting Waheguru

The one who recites the Guru mantar merges into the Lord again

(Vaar 1, Pauri 49 Bhai Gurdas Ji)

29 - RAMPUR KHERA ESTABLISHED AS A CENTRE FOR GURMAT PREACHING

One day Baba Ji was deeply engrossed in meditation. His consciousness was attuned to the Lord, when the tenth master Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared before him and ordered, "Bhai Harnam Singh! You must now leave the solitude of this place and return to your ancestral village. This land is bereft of Sikhism and has sunk into the quicksand of atheism. Guide those people onto the path of Sikhism and preach to them the principles laid down by the Waheguru." The dictate of the true Guru sunk deep into Baba Ji's soul and rebounded with a question, "O great Guru where should I go? Should I go to my village or some other place? The tenth Guru replied, "Now you must not stay at home. There is a deserted, barren mound about five miles due east from your village.

Make that place a centre for teaching gurmat." The place in question then appeared in Baba Ji's inner consciousness. It appeared to have a huge cluster of twelve or so banyan trees, overgrown and thickly covering a raised area of land. There was thick undergrowth of smaller trees and bushes making the whole area seem like a dense, inhospitable and inaccessible jungle. There seemed to be no room for a dwelling, nothing but thorny bushes, tall trees, thick undergrowth and dense forest.

Then a thought came to Baba Ji, "Most of my life I have lived away from my ancestral village. No body knows me and I know very few people in the area. What am I to do in the area? How will I carry out your order?"

The true Guru replied "Harnam Singh! Just go and sit at this place, all other arrangements will be made for you by Almighty God."

All arrangements the Lord himself makes

By remembering the Lord

All desires are realized

sagal saraNjaam karay parabh aapay.

bha-ay manorath so parabh jaapay. ||2||

(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 805)

Inwardly Baba Ji wanted to enjoy the blissful pleasure of meditation, but it was the order of the Guru to leave this sublime solitude and wander the land preaching gurmat. Even though his being was drenched in the nectar of naam and had no desire to leave the deep state of meditation, Baba Ji could not ignore the order of the tenth Guru. To obey his order and walk on this path is difficult. In front of the order of Almighty God, one's own entity has no stature. The will of God is supreme, against which there is no choice, no pretence and without discretion, one must submit without question, abandoning any ego. The ego dies when one submits to his will and yet the mortal stays alive.

Bhai Gurdas Ji, a great Sikh scholar says that the ego of a true Sikh must die whilst he or she is alive. He must abandon the ego and not just through mere words. He must have unwavering faith and not be deluded by worldly materialism. He should be ready to be a martyr and enslaved to the divine will, obey the orders of the Guru. In carrying out the order of the Guru, the devotee must ignore personal comforts, hunger and sleep...

In obeying the divine will one must,

Abandon the minds intellect,

**Give up the love of materialism
Thus you shall appease your Lord
Even the hot winds shall not touch you.
ti-aagayN man kee mat-rhee visaarayN doojaa bhaa-o jee-o.
i-o paavahi har darsaavarhaa nah lagai tatee vaa-o jee-o.
(Suhi 5th Guru, page 763)**

In the house of our lord, only the order of the Guru (hukam) is supreme, and is accepted beyond a shadow of doubt. He, who bows in submission to the will of the Almighty and abides by it, appeases the Lord. The Lord then accepts such a person as his own...

**Whosoever obeys the Lord's will
Becomes acceptable to the Lord.
hukam mannay so jan parvaan.
(Basant 3rd Guru, page 1175)**

And

**Approved are those persons
Who accept the Lord's will?
har kaa bhaanaa maneh say jan parvaan.
(Bhairon 5th Guru, page 1129)**

**The Lord approves of the one who accepts his will
All others accept the one who accepts his will
The Lord himself causes all to accept his will
Khusmay soee bhaavdaa khusmay daa jis bhaanaa bhaavay
Bhaanaa munnay munneeay upnaa bhana aap munaavay
(Bhai Gurdas Vaar 29 Pauri 13)**

So, he who plays the ardent game of obeying the will of the Lord is included in the divine will...

**He who submits to the Lord's order
Is consigned to his treasury
hukam rajaa-ee jo chalai so pavai khajaanai.
(Asa 1st Guru, page 421)**

Baba Ji bowed to the order of the Lord and accepting it in his heart became determined to abide by the order. Baba Ji thought to attain the pleasure of the Lord by accepting his will and command. He made up his mind to leave the village of Karerua immediately. Baba Ji's younger brother had already arrived with his family to help on the farm in Karerua. He recounted the divine order of the tenth master to go and set up a missionary centre near their ancestral village to his younger brother. He told his younger brother of the mission given to him to preach and spread the message of Sikhism and asked his younger brother to take over the management of the farm.

From Rajasthan To Punjab

Baba Ji returned to his mother in Dhugga village from Rajasthan. After meeting his mother, he sought out the place that the tenth master had shown him in his inner vision. He soon found the place that was hinted at by the tenth master. The mound of land had been deserted for centuries

and was now covered by impenetrable forest. He walked around the inhospitable mound of land, surveying it carefully for any clearing or shelter that may be available. He then walked to the nearby village of Bahle' to the house of S.Gurbax Singh, whom he had known since his days in Sargodha. Baba Ji stayed the night with him, telling him about the plan to lodge at this inhospitable, deserted mound and set up a centre to preach Sikhism and meditation. S Gurbax Singh expressed his happiness that Baba Ji would be nearby and thanked God that he would now be able to enjoy the Saintly company of Baba Ji without having to go very far.

Preparation Of An Earthen Cave

The next day at dawn, Baba Ji took Bhai Gurbax Singh with him to inspect the deserted mound of land. He surveyed the land for a protected spot where he could build a shelter easily, without too much expense. The land was a little lower at the end, where the present day Gurdwara now has a tube-well and bathrooms. This bit of the deserted mound had fewer trees and undergrowth. Baba Ji along with the help of Bhai Gurbax Singh decided to dig a hole in the shape of a small cave into the side of the high ground. With the help of a couple of others, Baba Ji soon dug out the small cave into the earthen mound. It was just big enough to accommodate a small bed. For a cover to the cave entrance, an improvised door was made from weaving some reeds and grass into a flat thatched panel. The next day, Bhai Gurbax Singh returned with S. Hari Singh and Bhai Dasaundha Singh from Bahle' village; They brought some spades and chisels and carried on digging the cave during the day, returning to their homes in the evening. The next day, they returned to finish digging the cave, which one day would become the grand Gurdwara Rampur Khera, a centre for naam meditation and mission for preaching the gospel of Sikhism.

While they were digging, an old man from the nearby village of Gondpur came to Baba Ji and asked, "I was passing this way, when I saw these boys were digging up a sweat. I asked them what they were digging for. They told me that their Saint was going to stay and meditate in the cave that they were digging. I advised them that this Saint should first stay here at least one night. If he lasts the night then put all this effort into digging the cave else why waste the effort digging, lest your cave remain uninhabited." In those days, Baba Ji used to wear simple, ordinary clothes and turban. No one could tell he was a Saint just by looking at him. The old man did not realize that the Saint referred to was Baba Ji himself. None the less, Baba Ji replied, "Who so ever will come, will come to this place to stay here. Try not to worry yourself. This cave will not remain unoccupied." The old man replied, "My beard has become white watching this place. So many people have come to stay here but no one stays for long in this inhospitable place. This is a mysterious place that is haunted by ghosts, demons and spirits, who do not allow anyone to stay on this land."

Saying these words the old man whose name was Narain Singh went on his way. The cave was ready within a couple of days. Reed grass from the nearby stream was cut and fashioned into a woven door so that the cave entrance could be covered. So, a place to lodge was built without the need for money, bricks, mortar or wood. A small bed (still preserved in the Gurdwara museum) was placed in the cave, which completed the abode where Baba Ji would stay. That night Baba Ji returned to the house of Professor Gurbax Singh.

The next day after offering prayers to Waheguru, Baba Ji started to recite naam in this dug out cave. Baba Ji would get up at 2 am, take a bath, and complete his daily *Nitnem*. He would then recite *Sukhmani Sahib* and complete his daily meditation of 32 rosaries of the *Mool mantar*. At noon, Bhai Gurbax Singh would bring food for Baba Ji, and serve him with affection and devotion. He would eat at noon and then rest a little before resuming his meditation in the afternoon. In the evening, he would say the prayers of *Rehras* and *Sohila*, after which he would immerse his

consciousness in meditation of *Gur-mantar*. When sleep overpowered him, he would rest for a short while and though his body would be resting, his soul would still be attuned to the lotus feet of Almighty God. Bhai Gurbax Singh would devote time to meditation by sitting with Baba Ji after lunch. He attained much spiritual benefit from the company, service and humble offerings to Baba Ji.

30 - AN ASCETIC AND MUSLIM FAKIR TRY TO EVICT BABA JI

The next morning, Baba Ji prayed to Almighty God to bless him, before he started his programme of meditating on the *Mool mantar* over the next forty days. All through the day, he would recite 32 rosaries of *Mool mantar* and end the day with the evening prayers of *Rehras* and *Sohila*. One evening, he was deeply immersed in meditation, when at about 10pm due to the hot and humid conditions inside the cave, he took his bed outside. He carried on with his recitation whilst sitting on the bed, when suddenly; a Muslim fakir (an ascetic) came by. He spoke in an anguished voice, "This is our land. We do not allow anyone to stay on this land." Baba Ji replied, "I have left my own farmland and have no wish to capture your land. You can do as you please. I do not stop you from coming here." The Muslim fakir replied, "When you recite your Gurbani and Guru's *mantar*, it disturbs me immensely. If you stay here, then my stay will be difficult." Baba Ji just replied casually, "Bhai I have done *Ardas* to Almighty God to recite *Mool mantar* for forty days. I must fulfil my pledge." Hearing this, the fakir said, "The words of your Guru are very powerful. So, my power becomes ineffective on you. Hence, I am leaving this place forever. Before you came, I allowed no one to stay in this place." Baba Ji replied in a few words, "Go if you please," after which the Muslim fakir went away, never to return.

Jatadhari Sadhu (Jattadhari: A person having long ,unoiled,uncombed hair,a member of sect of Hindus who believed in Shiva as the ultimate creator of universe.) Only a few days had elapsed in meditation when a Hindu ascetic with matted hair arrived at the cave. He too repeated his claim like the Muslim fakir and told Baba Ji that this was his land. He asserted that Baba Ji had lodged here while he was away. Upon his return, the sadhu now threatened to evict Baba Ji. He claimed that his mystical powers were having no effect on Baba Ji. He too said that he would leave this place because the recitation of Gurbani by Baba Ji was interfering with his powers. Baba Ji replied casually, "Go if you please." Hearing this the Hindu sadhu left as well never to return.

Evil Spirits Invade

Baba Ji used to say that about half an hour after the sadhu left, he heard the footsteps of several people approaching. When he opened his eyes, he saw that many people with ugly, disfigured faces, of all ages, young and old, men and women, appeared from all directions. All of them gathered around Baba Ji's bed, surrounding him from all directions. Baba Ji clapped his hands, hearing which, suddenly; all these entities fell down, asleep on the ground, as if in a trance. After a couple of minutes, an aged man got up from the direction of Baba Ji's feet and said, "We are all dispossessed spirits who did not get salvation after death. When we were alive we used to practice occult and black magic using Tantric powers, charms and talismans to control other people and their lives. These other spirits were my followers, who did not get salvation either. Now we roam about as spirits. Until today, we didn't allow any one to stay in this place but now we have no power over you. We will hence forth leave this place forever." Saying these words the spirits departed one by one as they awoke, forever. Baba Ji recalled the words of the old man, Narain Singh, who said that this place was indeed haunted by evil spirits. However, one who is sheltered by the Almighty, powerful, supreme Lord does not need any other shelter...

He whose supporter is the world sustainer

Say under whose subservience can he be?

taa ka-o kahhu parvaah kaahoo kee jih gopaal sahaa-ay. ||1||

(Malar 5th Guru, page 1266)

And

**He on whose side is the Lord
How can pride of wealth entice him?
He on whose side is the Guru
What harm can millions of arms do to him?
jaam guroo ho-ay val dhaneh ki-aa gaarav dij-ay.
jaam guroo ho-ay val lakh baahay ki-aa kij-ay.
(Swaiyas 4th Guru, page 1399)**

He who is protected by the Guru and lodges the name of the Lord in his heart, even the king of the angels of death (dharamraj), as well as evil spirits pay him utmost respect...

**They who contemplate the Lord's name
O friend win the treasure of human life
Nanak the righteous judge addresses them thus,
'My mansion has been sanctified by your presence'
naam Dhi-aa-in saajnaa janam padaarath jeet.
naanak Dharam aisay chaveh keeto bhavan puneet. ||10||
(Salok 5th Guru, page 1425)**

Dharam raja has given specific advice to his angels of death (yamraj) that...

**O Nanak where the Saints ever repeat
The name of the Lord of the world
The righteous judge says unto his couriers,
Do not go near such a place otherwise
Neither you nor I will be able to escape
jah saaDhoo gobid bhajan keertan naanak neet.
naa ha-o naa tooN nah chhuteh nikat na jaa-ee-ahu doot. ||1||
(Guru, Bawan Akhri 5th Guru, page 256)**

And

**The recording angels write
The accounts of all mortals
But the Saintly persons
The angels do not raise their eyes on them
Saintly souls are served everywhere
chitar gupat sabh likh-tay laykhaa.
bhagat janaa ka-o darisat na paykhaa. ||4||
(Asa 5th Guru, page 393)**

And

**The world is in the power and
Bondage of deaths influence
None can hold him under Guru's instructions
Serve him who has created death
And no grief shall befall you
jin jam keetaa so sayvee-ai gurmukh dukh na ho-ay.**

naanak gurmukh jam sayvaa karay jin man sachaa ho-ay. ||1||
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 588)

And

**God the treasure of all excellences
Abides within the heart of spiritual farers
They meditate on the Lord, enemy of the ego
The righteous judge is in their service
Felicitous is the Lord, their adorer.
aDhi-aatmee har gun taas man jaapeh ayk muraar.
tin kee sayvaa Dharam raa-ay karai Dhan savaaranhaar. ||2||**
(Sri Raag 3rd Guru, page 38)

The evil spirits that had haunted this deserted mound of land for centuries and tormented the local people had left this place forever.

31 - TALE OF THE SECOND NIGHT

The next day Baba Ji arose early in the morning, drew water from a small well nearby and bathed. After reciting his *Nitnem*, he continued with his meditation. By the evening, he finished his prayers of *Rehras* and had settled back into meditation of the *Mool mantar* when suddenly a voice from nowhere said, "Harnam Singh *Maya* (mammon) is approaching you. Be careful!" Baba Ji thought to himself, "It's ok if *Maya* is coming. What has it to do with me? Let her please herself, what business do I have with *Maya*?" After a short while, Baba Ji noticed that an old woman with torn clothes approached him and sat at the edge of his bed. Baba Ji closed his eyes in meditation and the voice spoke again, "This is *Maya*." The old woman sat for a while and then left.

After she departed, a little while later a very beautiful, young woman, well adorned with jewellery, came from the eastern side towards Baba Ji. She had a very radiant face, as if light was emitting from it. She moved in a very charming and animated manner. A thought crossed Baba Ji's mind that *Maya* has returned in her true form. Who knows what she will do when she comes any closer. Baba Ji tried to stop her with his power but she still kept coming closer, undeterred. He tried again but in vain. Finally, unable to stop her, Baba Ji prayed to God, "Almighty Lord, shelter of the poor, please help me and save me from the onslaught of *Maya*. Please save the honour of your slave, grant me shelter." The true Guru heard Baba Ji's prayer. The third master Guru Amar Das Ji appeared in front of him. Guru Ji who gave strength to the weak, shelter to the homeless, and gave worth to the worthless placed his hand on Baba Ji's forehead. As soon as the Guru's hand touched Baba Ji's forehead, the form of *Maya* disappeared. It seemed as if the form of *Maya* had just vanished into the earth.

32 - WHAT IS MAYA?

Maya (mammon) is that ignorance due to which all material objects and physical things appear real to us. Attachment to all material things and physical life arises within us and as such, we feel separated from God. All of creation that was created by God appears true and real and we are unable to identify our creator, the true Lord. One becomes attached to worldly objects, our daily life revolves around these objects, and we become enslaved by our desire to acquire these objects.

As we slowly become engrossed in our attachment to material things, we come to accept this world as real and we identify this world as our home. Engrossed in desire we become attached to creation and forget the creator. Our ego identifies itself as being part of this world and we feel separate from our Lord the creator. Guru Amar Das Ji has explained to us simply the meaning of Maya. He tells us that it is not just gold, silver or objects of desire that are maya but anything of this world that deviates the mind from devotion of the Almighty, involving us in greed or lust for worldly things is maya. All that is maya, causes us to forget the creator, ensnaring us through attachment to all manner of objects...

***The Lord's love departs
Greed attaches to the child
Mammon's writ begins to unfold
Such is this mammon
Through which the Lord is forgotten
To the love of another
liv chhurhkee lagee tarisnaa maa-i-aa amar vartaa-i-aa.
ayh maa-i-aa jit har visrai moh upjai bhaa-o doojaa laa-iaa.
(Ramkali 3rd Guru page 921)***

To gain pleasure and dispel misery and woes brought on by unfulfilled desires one goes through their daily routine to gratify the ego...

***What do men call mammon?
What work does mammon do?
In woe and weal mammon has
Enchanted the mortal and caused it
To go about his life in ego.
maa-i-aa kis no aakhee-ai ki-aa maa-i-aa karam kamaa-ay.
dukh sukh ayhu jee-o baDh hai ha-umai karam kamaa-ay.
(Sri raag 3rd Guru, page 67)***

This maya acts through the five thieves of lust, greed, anger, attachment and ego. It entangles the mind of all mortals. Only the lucky one is sheltered by the Guru and thus able to escape its hold. The visible maya is an outward expression of the five abstract thieves of the mind...

***The forest fire has burnt down much grass
Some rare plant has escaped green
So powerful is the Lord
I cannot describe him
His praise I cannot utter
daavaa agan bahut tarin jaalay ko-ee hari-aa boot rahi-o ree.***

aiso samrath varan na saaka-o taa kee upmaa jaat na kahi-o ree.
(Asa 5th Guru page 384)

So powerful is the attraction of maya that it not only ensnares mere mortals, great sages and seers have been unable to escape its influence...

***None is more powerful than mammon
The she serpent has deceived
The likes of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva
sarpanee tay oopar nahee balee-aa.
jin barahmaa bisan mahaaday-o chhalee-aa. ||1||***
(Asa Kabir Ji, page 480)

Men call themselves silent sages, yogi's

***And learned in shastras
But mammon has them all under control
The three God's Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva
The three hundred and thirty million demi God's
Their astonishment knew no bounds
Powerful, mammon pervades amongst all
Her secret is obtained by Guru's grace
No other besides the Guru knows this secret. Pause.
mun jogee saastarag kahaavat sabh keenHay bas apnahee.
teen dayv ar korh tayteesaa tin kee hairat kachh na rahee. ||1||
balvant bi-aap rahee sabh mahee.
avar na jaanas ko-oo marmaa gur kirpaa tay lahee. ||1|| rahaao.***
(Gujri 5th Guru, page 498)

All pervading God has created

***Such a temptress as mammon
She has devoured the whole world
The Guru has saved me O brother. Pause.
Administering the sweet yet poisonous potion
She has secured the whole world
She has bewitched the three God's Brahma Vishnu and Shiva
aisee istaree ik raam upaa-ee.
un sabh jag khaa-i-aa ham gur raakhay mayray bhaa-ee. rahaao-o.
paa-ay thag-ulee sabh jag johi-aa.
barahmaa bisan mahaaday-o mohi-aa.***
(Asa 5th Guru, page 394)

And

***Mammon, which keeps under its control
The world of three dispositions
And the four direction of the universe
And destroys the merits of sacred feasts***

***Ablutions, penances and places of pilgrimage,
Before her of what strength is this poor man?
jin keenay vas apunai tarai gun bhavan chatur sansaaraa.
jag isnaan taap thaan khanday ki-aa ih jant vichaaraa. ||1||
(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 673)***

Maya and its attraction have devoured the whole world without teeth. He who abides by the Guru's word is saved. He who follows his mind and desires is unable to avoid the grip of maya...

***Bewitching is the love of wealth
This without teeth has devoured the whole world
The apostates are eaten away
The Guru ward who fix their mind
On the true name are saved
maa-i-aa mamtaa mohnee jin vin dantaa jag khaa-i-aa.
manmukh khaaDhay gurmukh ubrray jinee sach naam chit laa-i-aa.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 643)***

***Mammon is a she serpent
This is clinging to the world
He who serves her
Is ultimately devoured by her
maa-i-aa ho-ee naagnee jagat rahee laptaa-ay.
is kee sayvaa jo karay tis hee ka-o fir khaa-ay.
(Mohalla 3rd Guru, page 510)***

As a female snake is loved by its offspring, she kisses them to the extent that she swallows them. Similarly, her jaws devour those who are drenched in mammon. Bhagat Kabir Ji tells us that humans aside even other species of animal are not immune from the clutches of mammon ...

***The fish in water are attached to mammon
The moth burns in the lamp of mammon
The mammon of lust clings to an elephant
The serpents and bees perish through mammon
So bewitching is mammon o brother that
As many beings there are have all been deceived by it
The birds and deer are imbued in mammon
Sugar causes great hardship to mammon
The horses and camels are absorbed in mammon
Eighty-four men of miracles play in mammon
The six celibates are slaves of mammon
So too the nine yogis, the sun and moon
The penitents and supreme sages
Are asleep in mammon
In sway of mammon are death and five demons
The dogs and jackals are dyed in mammon
So too are the leopards monkeys, lions
Cat's sheep foxes trees and tubers are rooted in mammon.
The demi God's are saturated in mammon so are the earth***

the sky and oceans.

Says Kabir; he who has a belly is affected by mammon

When a man meets a true Saint then alone is he freed.

jal meh meen maa-i-aa kay bayDhay.

deepak patang maa-i-aa kay chhayday.

kaam maa-i-aa kunchar ka-o bi-aapai.

bhu-i-angam bharing maa-i-aa meh khaapay. ||1||

maa-i-aa aisee mohnee bhaa-ee.

jaytay jee-a taytay dehkaa-ee. ||1|| rahaa-o.

pankhee marig maa-i-aa meh raatay.

saakar maakhee aDhik santaapay.

turay usat maa-i-aa meh bhaylaa.

siDh cha-oraaseeh maa-i-aa meh khaylaa. ||2||

chhi-a jatee maa-i-aa kay bandaa.

navai naath sooraj ar chandaa.

tapay rakheesar maa-i-aa meh sootaa.

maa-i-aa meh kaal ar panch dootaa. ||3||

su-aan si-aal maa-i-aa meh raataa.

bantar cheetay ar singhaataa.

maaNjaar gaadar ar loobraa.

birakh mool maa-i-aa meh paraa. ||4||

maa-i-aa antar bheenay dayv.

saagar indraa ar Dhartayv.

kahi kabeer jis udar tis maa-i-aa.

tab chhootay jab saaDhoo paa-i-aa. ||5||5||13||

(Bhairon Kabir Ji page 1160)

How powerful is Maya? Knowing full well that maya is illusion, us mortals still cannot escape from its clutches. From this, one can gauge how powerful maya is...

O mother Maya is powerful

Without meditation of the Lord name

It destroys, like fire to dry straw.

Illusion like the fleeting shadow of a cloud

And the running waters of a flood.

maa-ee maa-i-aa chhal.

tarin kee agan maygh kee chhaa-i-aa

gobid bhajan bin harh kaa jal. rahaa-o.

(Todi 5th Guru, page 717)

Bhai Gurdas Ji tells us (Kabit 591) that the attraction of maya is overwhelming. An opium addict knows opium to be harmful but cannot leave it. As a gambler cries time and again after losing but still indulges in gambling. As a thief is always fearful of being caught but still steals. So all know that maya is the prime source of all woes and no one is able to overpower it. On the contrary, Maya is looting them all. Maya has five accomplices, lust, ego, wrath, attachment and greed. They enter our being like thieves in a house and loot the priceless treasure of naam by diverting our attention through sensual pleasures. Thus our mind hankers after outward pleasures; unable to concentrate and meditate it is unable to achieve union with the Almighty. The mortal is deprived of the everlasting bliss of naam, unfulfilled one leads and an empty and hollow life...

**Within this body dwell the five thieves
Lust wrath aVaarice attachment and pride
They plunder the nectar the apostate knows it not
None hears is complaint
Blind is the world ands blind its dealings
Without the Guru, it is pitch dark
is dayhee andar panch chor vaseh
kaam kroDh lobh moh ahaNkaaraa.
amrit looteh manmukh nahee boojheh ko-ay na sunai pookaaraa.
anDhaa jagat anDh vartaaraa baajh guroo gubaaraa. ||2||
(Sorath 3rd Guru, page 600)**

**The five fell enemies are defrauding the world
The blind apostate has no knowledge of this
panch doot muheh sansaaraa.
manmukh anDhay suDh na saaraa.
(Maajh 3rd Guru page 113)**

**Five are the opponents and I am but one
How can I protect my hearth and home?
O, my soul they beat and plunder me daily
To whom should I turn and profess my state?
avar panch ham ayk janaa ki-o raakha-o ghar baar manaa.
maareh looteh neet neet kis aagai karee pukaar janaa. ||1||
(Gauri cheti 1st Guru, page 155)**

Guru Ji has warned us to guard against each of these five thieves. Each of these vices spoils the body and tarnishes the mind. We are advised by our Guru not to entertain these five vices. We are advised to base our lives on the moral teachings of our Guru's. Regarding lust Guru Arjan dev Ji tell us...

**O lust you land the mortal in hell
You cause the mortal to wander in many species
hay kaamaN narak bisraamaN baho bharmaavneh.
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1358)**

**Lust, wrath and company of evil people
From them run away day or night
kaam kroDh sangat durjan kee taa tay ahinis bhaaga-o. ||1||
(Raag Gauri 9th Guru, page 219)**

**Within the sinners mind abides lust
Thus, the mercurial mind cannot be restrained
This net of lust is cast on all yogis
On all wandering ascetics and renunciates
paapee hee-ai mai kaam basaa-ay.
man chanchal yaa tay gahi-o na jaa-ay. ||1|| rahaa-o.
jogee jangam ar sannii-aas.
sabh hee par daaree ih faas. ||1||**

(Basant Hindol 9th Guru, page 1186)

Anger or wrath destroys the body just as lust does too...

As borax smelts gold easily

So, lust and anger rot the body

kaam kroDh kaa-i-aa ka-o gaalai.

ji-o kanchan sohaagaa dhaalai.

(Dakhni Oankar 1st Guru, page 932)

Go not near the neighbourhood of those

In whose heart dwells the pariah wrath

onaa paas du-aas na bhitee-ai jin antar kroDh chandaal. ||3||

(Sri Raag 5th Guru, page 40)

O wrath you are the root of strife

Compassion never wells up in you

Sinful mortals you take into your power

Then they dance like monkeys at your behest

hay kal mool kroDh-aN kadanch karunaa na uparjatay.

bikh-yant jeevaN vas-yaN karot nirt-yaN karot jathaa marakteh.

(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1358)

Concerning greed and avarice gurbani tells us that...

The tide of avarice is all consuming

Like the rabid ness of a mad dog

lobh lahar sabh su-aan halak hai halki-o sabheh bigaaray.

(Natt 4th Guru, page 983)

Greed soils the mortal

As green algae ruins clear water

lab vinaahay maansaa ji-o paanee boor.

(Ramkali ki vaar, page 967)

O covetousness you have clung even to the great

By numerous ripples, you enchant many mortals

Through you the beings run in all directions

They greatly wander in many ways

You have respect for neither friend nor Guru

Nor relation nor father or mother

You make man do what he ought not to

You make man eat what he should not

Such is your reputation you make man

Amass that what he should not amass

Prays Nanak o Lord man lion

Save me as I have sought your protection

hay lobhaa lampat sang sirmohreh anik lahree kalolatay.

Dhaavant jee-aa baho parkaaraN anik bhaaNt baho doltay.

nach mitraN nach istaN nach baaDhav nach maat pitaa tav lajyaa.

**akranaN karot akhaad-ya khaad-yaN asaaj-yaN saaj samajyaa.
taraahi taraahi saran su-aamee big-yaapati naanak har narhareh.
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1358)**

Guru Ji tell us about attachment that...

**All these worldly attachments, affections and dainties
All leave a black stain on the soul
He who departs with this stain of sin
Finds no place to sit in the Lord's palace
jaytaa moh pareet su-aad. sabhaa kaalakh daagaa daag.
daag dos muhi chali-aa laa-ay. dargeh baisan naahee jaa-ay. ||3||
(Dhanasari 1st Guru, page 662)**

**Stuck in the quicksand of attachment
His feet cannot move
pankaj moh pag nahee chaalai ham daykhaa tah doobee-alay.
(Asa 1st Guru, page 12)**

**Intoxicated in worldly love and the company of sinners
The mortal in his mind has forgotten the Lord
moh magan patit sang paraanee aisay maneh bisaaran. ||1||
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 820)**

**Forsake your worldly love and doubt O brother
Repeat the true name in your body and soul. Pause.
When one receives the nine treasures of the true name
Their children weep not nor his mother grieves
In worldly love the world is drowned
Some rare pious person swims across
moh ar bharam tajahu tumH beer.
saach naam riday ravai sareer. ||1|| rahaa-o.
ayt mohi doobaa sansaar.
gurmukh ko-ee utrai paar. ||3||
(Asa 1st Guru, page 346)**

Concerning pride and vanity, Guru Ji cautions us...

**O, self conceit the soul of sins
You are the cause of birth and death
You abandon friends, hold fast to enemies
Spreading many illusions
Through you, the mortal grows weary of coming and going
And undergoes many cycles of pain and pleasure
Through you, one wanders in the lonely wilderness of doubt
Contracting supremely troubling and incurable ailments
The only physician is the transcendent Lord
The great God meditate upon Nanak
Remember the life-giving Lord**

*hay janam maran moolaN ahaNkaarN paapaatmaa.
mitraN tajant satraN darirh-aaNt anik maa-yaa bisteerniH.
aavant jaavant thakant jee-aa dukh sukh baho bhognah.
bharam bha-yaan udi-aan ramnaN mahaa bikat asaaDh rognah.
baid-yaN paarbarahm parmaysvar aaraaDh naanak har har haray.
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1358)*

And

*He who takes much pride and is haughty
In an instant is made dust with dust
jay ko bahut karay ahaNkaar.
oh khin meh rultaa khaakoo naal. ||3||
(Gond 5th Guru, page 868)*

*The Vedas proclaim aloud that
The reverend Lord likes pride not
They who die of ego go bereft of salvation
They die are born and come again
har jee-o ahaNkaar na bhaav-ee vayd kook sunaaveh.
ahaNkaar mu-ay say vigtee ga-ay mar janmeh fir aavahi. ||9||
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 1089)*

Naam does not lodge in the heart that has pride ...

*Ego is at odds with naam
The two dwell not in the same place
In ego service cannot be performed
So, the soul goes empty handed
ha-umai naavai naal viroDh hai du-ay na vaseh ik thaa-ay.
ha-umai vich sayvaa na hova-ee taa man birthaa jaa-ay. ||1||
(Vadhans 3rd Guru, page 560)*

*In self-conceit Lord's devotional service cannot be performed
Nor can his will be realized
The name comes not to abide in the mind
Nanak meeting with the true Guru
Mans ego is destroyed
The true Lord comes to dwell within his mind
Then he practices truth and abides in truth
By serving the true one, he is absorbed in the Lord
ha-umai vich bhagat na hova-ee hukam na bujhi-aa jaa-ay.
ha-umai vich jee-o banDh hai naam na vasai man aa-ay. ||3||
naanak satgur mili-ai ha-umai ga-ee taa sach vasi-aa man aaay.
sach kamaavai sach rahai sachay sayv samaa-ay. ||4||9||12||
(Wadhans 5th Guru, page 560)*

So, through these five accomplices the mortal mind comes under the influence of maya to such an extent that he is deprived of the bliss of naam, spiritual insight, and true pleasure of union with

God Almighty. Now the question arises that if highly evolved sages and demi God's have succumbed to the influence of maya and all creation is afflicted by it, then the question remains; is there a method of escaping its clutches?

The great Guru has told us that O mortal! This maya cannot be killed nor be sold off at a shop. Only by taking the shelter of the true Guru and practicing Gurbani can we get rid of maya. The practice of naam meditation allows us to burn the accomplices and thus be rid of the influence of maya. In this manner, the soul is purified by naam given by our Guru and the nectar of Lord Almighty runs within our being. Thus, Lord Almighty grants us salvation...

***Through fascinating mammon wells up ego
Thus, man is yoked to duality
By slaying, it is not slain
Nor can it be sold off at a shop
When man burns it through Gurbani
Then only does it depart from within
His body and soul become immaculate
The name comes to abide in his mind
Nanak the Lord's name is the destroyer of mammon
And it is obtained through the Guru
ha-umai maa-i-aa mohnee doojai lagai jaa-ay.
naa ih maaree na marai naa ih hat vikaa-ay.
gur kai sabad parjaalee-ai taa ih vichahu jaa-ay.
tan man hovai ujlaa naam vasai man aa-ay.
naanak maa-i-aa kaa maaran sabad hai gurmukh paa-i-aa jaa-ay.***
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 853)

And

***O man destroy the poison of self-conceit
This allows you not to meet your Lord
Ah, this gold coloured body
Pride has ruined and disfigured it
Alas, love of material valuables is all black
This foolish apostate is attached to it
O Nanak the mortal is emancipated
Through the Guru and through his instruction
This mortal is released from ego
maarayhis vay jan ha-umai bikhi-aa
jin har parabh milan na ditee-aa.
dayh kanchan vay vannee-aa in ha-umai maar vigutee-aa.
moh maa-i-aa vay sabh kaalkhaa in manmukh moorh sajuteeaa.
jan naanak gurmukh ubray gur sabdee ha-umai chhutee-aa. ||1||***
(Suhi Chhant 4th Guru, page 776)

O brother! This maya has never allowed anyone to meet God. This body which was as priceless as gold, has been spoiled by ego. Attachment to maya is like attachment to black ashes and only the foolish one attaches himself to something that is worthless. Those who have earned the wealth of naam have become pious and become rid of maya. Guru Amar Das Ji tells us the way to be rid of

the influence of maya. With sheer love and devotion, meditating on naam, the illusion of maya burns up and reality dawns upon the mortal:

***Without love the Lord's meditation cannot be performed
And without naam, one remains unacceptable
With naam the ego is stilled
Mammon's illusion departs
Through the Guru man easily obtains
The wealth of God's name
bin pareete bhagat na hova-ee bin sabdai thaa-ay na paa-ay.
sabday ha-umai maaree-ai maa-i-aa kaa bharam jaa-ay.
naam padaarath paa-ee-ai gurmukh sahj subhaa-ay. ||7||
(Sri Raag 3rd Guru, page 67)***

The fifth Guru also tells us that he praises the true Guru who enabled the understanding of the mysterious drama of maya, in whose unseen fire the whole world burns. Those who meditate are spared from the heat of maya...

***I am a sacrifice unto my Guru
Who has shown me this wondrous play?
With the inner fire the world is consumed
But to the Lord's slave mammon clings not.
ha-o balihaaree satgur apunay jin ih chalat dikhaa-i-aa.
goojhee bhaahi jalai sansaaraa bhagat na bi-aapai maa-i-aa. ||4||
(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 673)***

And

***Seeing this world upon fire
I have rushed to the Lord's refuge
Save me and bless me with
The glory of thy name, o Lord
ayhu jag jaltaa daykh kai bhaj pa-ay har sarnaa-ee raam.
ardaas kareeN gur pooray aagai rakh layvhu dayh vadaa-ee raam.
(Wadhans 3rd Guru, page 571)***

Our ninth Guru also tells us that if one follows the path of worship, meditates on naam and sings the praises of the light giving transcendent Lord then this ever wandering, mercurial mind is stilled. The attachment to maya is removed and the mind is filled with supreme, spiritual intellect. Greed and attachment, the agents of maya, which involve the mind, cannot come near such a person. The feeling of doubt that was the cause of birth and rebirth and had tarnished the soul is dispelled too. All mind born desires end, and it becomes calm. When desire is quenched, eternal spiritual bliss is obtained. This treasure of naam is only attained through the blessing of the great Guru...

***O mother I have obtained the wealth of God's name
My mind has ceased to wander and laid down to rest. Pause.
The love of riches has fled from my body
Immaculate divine knowledge has welled up inside
Avarice and worldly love cannot touch me***

***I have firmly grasped the Lord's meditation
 When I acquired the jewel of naam
 My fear of continual births was dispelled
 My mind was rid of all desire
 And I was absorbed in bliss
 Upon whom, God the treasure of compassion is merciful
 He alone sings the hymns of praise of the Lord
 Says Nanak only the rare one
 Gathers this wealth by the Guru's grace.
 maa-ee mai Dhan paa-i-o har naam.
 man mayro Dhaavan tay chhooti-o kar baitho bisraam ||1||rahaao.
 maa-i-aa mamtaa tan tay bhaagee upji-o nirmal gi-aan.
 lobh moh ayh paras na saakai gahee bhagat bhagvaan. ||1||
 janam janam kaa sansaa chookaa ratan naam jab paa-i-aa.
 tarisnaa sakal binaasee man tay nij sukh maahi samaa-i-aa. ||2||
 jaa ka-o hot da-i-aal kirpaa niDh so gobind gun gaavai.
 kaho naanak ih biDh kee sampai ko-oo gurmukh paavai. ||3||3||
 (Basant 9th Guru page 1186)***

Guru Nanak dev Ji tell us of two methods to purify the soul. He tells us that if we want to purify the soul, taste the reality of spiritual bliss then dedicate the mind to the Almighty. Considering him to be your master, pray to him and gather the wealth of naam through single-minded devotion. If any hurdle obstructs the practice of meditation then single minded and with heartfelt devotion pray to your master for divine help. Prayer or *Ardas* has immense power in it. Where a mortal is helpless to achieve something then humble prayer or supplication brings about divine intervention...

***Nanak is your dealer and you Lord are my capital
 Then alone does doubt depart from the mind
 When I praise and pray to you.
 naanak tayraa baanee-aa too saahib mai raas.
 man tay Dhokhaa taa lahai jaa sifaf karee ardaas. ||4||1||
 (Wadhans 1st Guru, page 557)***

Sometimes we can be so engrossed in doing good deeds that we are caught up in the web of Maya discreetly. The subtlest of self-pride can affect us when we are performing good deeds. As Bhagat Kabir Ji, tell us...

***Kabir what avail is the abandonment of mammon
 If man does not abandon his self conceit
 The sages and sublime Saints are
 Destroyed by ego. Ego eats up all.
 kabeer maa-i-aa tajeer ta ki-aa bha-i-aa ja-o
 maan taji-aa nahee jaa-ay.
 maan muneer munivar galay maan sabhai ka-o khaa-ay. ||156||
 (Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1372)***

Pride of meditation, of reciting our prayers, of going to pilgrimage, of donations and conducting pious deeds create a subtle form of conceit and soil the soul of this mortal. Only the rare one is spared the clutches of maya...

***I am great poet and have high caste family
I am a scholar an adept yogi and hermit
I am divine, virtuous a warrior and a donor
Such egotistical thinking never left thee.
ham bad kab kuleen ham pandit ham jogee sani-aasee.
gi-aanee gunee soor ham daatay ih buDh kabeh na naasee. ||2||***

Escape from such subtle egotism is possible through taking shelter of the Guru and meditating on naam...

O serf Nanak the mortal is emancipated Through the Guru and through the Guru's instruction is he released from the ego.

***jan naanak gurmukh ubray gur sabdee ha-umai chhutee-aa.
(Suhi chant 4th Guru page 776)***

How does one pray? We should abandon our ego and surrender ourselves to the Almighty. Even Ardas must not to be taken as a matter of pride. In the Lord's court only the truly humble devotee obtains regard, the powerless gain power and the homeless receive shelter ...

***If Almighty pleases only then Ardas can be heard O God
binat kara-o ardaas sunhu jay thaakur bhaavai.***

(Swaiyas 5thGuru, page 1386).

***Some have others as their friends
I without honour have only you O Lord
kis hee ko-ee ko-ay manj nimaanee ik too.***

(Vaar Suhi 2nd Guru, page 91)

***Hear my supplications O my Lord master
I am full of millions of sins,
Nevertheless, I am your slave
sunhu banantee-aa su-aamee mayray raam.
kot apraaDh bharay bhee tayray chayray raam.***

(Bihagra 5th Guru, page 547)

***O master you are my beneficent Lord
The cherisher and the spouse
Every moment you nurse me
I your child have your support alone. With this tongue of mine what virtues of yours can I narrate?***

***Infinite and limitless are you, O Lord;
No one knows your limit. Pause.
You destroyed millions of my sins and instructed me in many ways.
I am ignorant with little understanding.
Save me by your holy innate nature.***

*I seek your protection, as you alone are my hope and sympathetic friend.
O merciful master and saviour
Save Nanak the slave of your house.
tum daatay thaakur partipaalak naa-ik khasam hamaaray.
nimakh nimakh tum hee partipaalahu
ham baarik tumray Dhaaray. ||1||
jihvaa ayk kavan gun kahee-ai. baysumaar bay-ant su-aamee
tayro ant na kin hee lahee-ai. ||1|| rahaa-o.
kot paraaDh hamaaray khandahu anik biDhee samjhaavhu.
ham agi-aan alap mat thoree tum aapan birad rakhaavahu. ||2||
tumree saran tumaaree aasaa tum hee sajan suhaylay.
raakho raakhanhaar da-i-aalaa naanak ghar kay golay. ||3||12||
(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 673-4)*

Pray acknowledging ourselves as guilty and surrendering unconditionally...

*My Lord God, I am yours as it pleases you so preserve me.
How many misdeeds of mine should I count? They are innumerable. Countless sins and errors I
have committed,
Day by day I go wrong. I am inebriated with worldly love and the Hideous worldly valuables; by
your grace can I be redeemed.
In Secrecy I commit agonizing sins but the Lord show mercy unto me and pull me out of the
whirlpools of the dreadful world ocean
ji-o jaanhu ti-o raakh har parabh tayri-aa.
kaytay gan-o asaNkh avgan mayri-aa.
asaNkh avgan khatay fayray nitparat sad bhoolee-ai.
moh magan bikraal maa-i-aa ta-o parsaa-dee ghoolee-ai.
look karat bikaar bikh-rhay parabh nayr hoo tay nayri-aa.
binvant naanak da-i-aa Dhaarahu kaadh bhavjal fayri-aa. ||1||
(Jaitsari 5th Guru, ghar 2nd Chant page 704)*

*As it pleases you, so cherish me, O Lord.
You are my supreme Lord master and the true Guru.
I am your child and you are my compassionate father. Pause.
I am virtue less and have absolutely no virtue.
I cannot comprehend your doing, your state and measure.
You alone know. My soul, body and wealth are yours.
You are my omnipresent Lord, the knower of hearts
You know my circumstances unuttered.
Says Nanak O sire Lord bless me with your eye of grace,
That my body and soul be tranquillised.
ji-o bhaavai ti-o mohi partipaal.
paarbarahm parmaysar satgur
ham baarik tumH pitaa kirpaal. ||1|| rahaa-o.
mohi nirgun gun naahee ko-ee pahuch na saaka-o tumHree ghaal.
tumree gat mit tum hee jaanhu jee-o pind sabh tumro maal. ||1||
antarjaamee purakh su-aamee anbolat hee jaanhu haal.
tan man seetal ho-ay hamaaro naanak
parabh jee-o nadar nihaal. ||2||5||121||*

(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 828)

**Unite me with you, O my merciful master.
I have fallen at your door.
Safeguard me, O merciful to the downtrodden,
Wandering about, I have become weary.
It is your innate nature to love your Saints and
Save the sinners, O Lord.
Without you there is not another.
To you I make this supplication o God.
Take me by the hand O beneficent Lord and
Ferry me across the world ocean.
mayl lai hu da-i-aal dheh pa-ay du-aari-aa.
rakh layvhu deen da-i-aal bharmat baho haari-aa.
bhagat vachhal tayraa birad har patit uDhaari-aa.
tujh bin naahee ko-ay bin-o mohi saari-aa.
kar geh layho da-i-aal saagar sansaari-aa. ||16||
(Pauri Jaitsari page 709).**

We need only pray on the doorsteps of Waheguru that for...

**O supreme Lord
In view of his account
The mortal can never be released
Since he errs every moment.
O thou pardoner, pardon me and
Ferry Nanak across the world ocean
laykhai kateh na chhootee-ai khin khin bhoolanhaar.
bakhsanhaar bakhas lai naanak paar utaar. ||1||
(Gauri Bawan Akhri 5th Guru, page 261)**

Bhai Gurdas Ji instructs us how to pray to the Almighty...

**I am a sinner, a criminal, evil and an apostate
I am thief, adulterer, gambler who covets another's household
I am a slanderer, knave, venal & a swindler cheating the world
I feel proud of my sexual urges, anger, greed, infatuations and intoxications
I am treacherous and ungrateful
None like to keep me with them
Remember singing disciple! The true Guru alone is capable of pardoning your sins
(Vaar 36 Pauri 21 Bhai Gurdas Ji)**

At door of the Lord Almighty one can only repeat the following words of Guru Arjun Dev Ji...

**Have mercy on me O beneficent to the meek
And consider not at all my merits demerits.
How can the dust be washed?
Such is the state of man o my Lord.
kirpaa karahu deen kay daatay**

*mayraa gun avgan na beechaarahu ko-ee.
maatee kaa ki-aa Dhopai su-aamee maanas kee gat ayhee. ||1||
(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 882)*

*Thou o Lord are potent to do all the deeds.
Hide thou my faults, o my Guru-God.
I, a sinner, have sought the refuge of your feet. Pause.
Whatever the man does, that
Thou watch and know, o Lord.
The shameless man sees no way to deny.
Great is thy glory, I have heard, o Lord.
Thy name destroys millions of sins.
My nature is ever, ever to err and
Thy faith is to save the sinners, o God.
My merciful master, the embodiment of kindness and
The treasure of compassion, your vision
Has blessed me with immortal status.
tumH samrathaa kaaran karan.
dhaakan dhaak gobid gur mayray
mohi apraaDhee saran charan. ||1|| rahaa-o.
jo jo keeno so tumH jaani-o paykhi-o
tha-ur naahee kachh dheeth mukran.
bad partaap suni-o parabh tumHro
kot aghaa tayro naam haran. ||1||
hamro sahaa-o sadaa sad bhoolan tumHro birad patit uDhran.
karunaa mai kirpaal kirpaa niDh
jeevan pad naanak har darsan. ||2||2||118||
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 828)*

*I am filthy, stonehearted, deceitful and lustful.
As you deem it fit, so save me, o my Lord. Pause.
Thou are all-powerful worthy of giving refuge and
Exercising your might, you save us the mortals.
Worship, penance, religious vows, physical purity and
Self-mortification, by these means,
emancipation is attained not.
Casting your eye of grace, O Lord, pull Nanak,
From this awful dark ditch
kuchil kathor kapat kaamee.
ji-o jaaneh ti-o taar su-aamee. ||1|| rahaa-o.
too samrath saran jog too raakhahi apnee kal Dhaar. ||1||
jaap taap naym such sanjam naahee in biDhay chhutkaar.
garat ghor anDh tay kaadhahu
parabh naanak nadar nihaar. ||2||8||19||
(Kanra 5th Guru, page 1301).*

Bhagat Namdev Ji also shows us in humble prayer God will help...

Float me over, O Lord, float me over. I am unskilled man and know not how to swim. O God, my dear father, give me your arm. Pause.

mo ka-o taar lay raamaa taar lay.

mai ajaan jan taribay na

jaan-o baap beethulaa baah day. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Gond Namdev ji, page 873)

Such deep and emotional prayer prevents one's mind from being tarnished. Humility and politeness enter the human mind. Thus, the great Guru cautioned Baba Ji to be careful from every form of maya and escape from it. How did he escape? By losing his ego and unconditionally surrendering his being at the Lord's feet. When Baba Ji abandoned all other hopes and completely dedicated himself to the Almighty, the great Guru saved him from the effect of maya with his own hand. When Sri Guru Nanak dev Ji set off from Talwandi to Sultanpur, Rai Bular respectfully asked Guru Ji what was the order for him? The Great Guru smilingly replied, "O Rai, if you agree, then my order is that when your own will fails then take the shelter of the Almighty with folded hands and pray. God will help you."

It does not take much time to pray and neither are particular words required to please the supreme Lord. One needs to surrender from within, be humble, and offer servitude to the Lord...

How can he be defrauded who has thy support o Lord? Pause.

taa ka-o Dhokhaa kahaa bi-aapai jaa ka-o ot tuhaaree. rahaao.

(Todi 5th Guru, page 711)

And

Without you, I have no other friend. In the end, you alone shall be my sustainer. They who enter your sanctuary you redeem them.

mai tujh bin baylee ko nahee too ant sakhaa-ee.

jo tayree sarnaagatee tin laihi chhadaa-ee.

(Vaar Suhi 5th Guru, page 792)

Baba Ji spent all his life living the tenets of divine Gurbani. Living under the shelter of the great Guru, maya could not affect him in any form or disguise. Baba Ji spent all his life beyond the grip of maya as stated in Gurbani below...

As a lotus flower remains unaffected in the water,

As also a duck swims against the streams current and becomes not wet, so with fixed intent on the Guru's word and uttering the name, o Nanak, the dreadful world ocean is crossed.

He who lives in seclusion, ensrines the one Lord in his mind, living without desire in the midst of desires, and sees and shows to others the inaccessible and incomprehensible Lord; of him Nanak is a slave.

jaisay jal meh kamal niraalam murgaa-ee nai saanay.

surat sabad bhav saagar taree-ai naanak naam vakhaanay.

raheh ikaaNt ayko man vasi-aa aasaa maahi niraaso.

agam agochar daykh dikhaa-ay naanak taa kaa daaso. ||5||

(Ramkali 1st Guru, Sidh Gosht, page 936)

33 - TAKING MEALS AT VILLAGE BAHLA

Having stayed in his ancestral village of Dhugga for the early years of his life, Baba Ji spent a further 29 years at Chak 119, Sargodha (Pakistan) working and meditating simultaneously. He spent a further two years in Karerua village Rajasthan after the partition of India. He finally settled at the blessed place that Guru Ji had instructed Baba Ji to turn into a centre for preaching Sikhism. As was his routine before, in this new place Baba Ji was deeply engrossed in meditation of the lord and attuned in recitation of Gurbani. After the showdown with evil spirits over the first few nights, every thing was calm now. Baba Ji rose daily well before dawn, bathed, and sat to recite his nitnem, meditate on gurmantar and recite 32 rosaries of mool mantar.

Bhai Gurbax Singh Ji (M.A B.t P.C.S) who now lives in Canada, bought lunch (Langar) for Baba Ji at noon daily. After joining Baba Ji in some recitation of mool mantar, he would return home in the late afternoon. Baba Ji had been settled in this new place for about six months when news spread in the neighbouring villages that a great Saint had taken abode at the centuries old, inhospitable, barren mound, which all knew was haunted by evil spirits. Out of sheer curiosity and admiration, people started to come to this place in order to see who had dared to stay at this forbidden mound.

A Hut For Baba Ji

Bhai Bawa Singh Ji (son of S.Sunder Singh) of Gondpur village, whose land was near the barren mound, was greatly impressed by Baba Ji's Saintly nature. Because of this, he became a devoted follower of Baba Ji. Where the present day Nishaan Sahib (saffron Khalsa flag) stands in the Gurdwara, some devotees prepared a hut for Baba Ji by fixing wooden supports into the ground and thatching a grass reed roof over the wooden supports. The hut was prepared because the earthen cave would get very hot and humid during the summer.

Sublime and beauteous is the hut

Where in God's praises are sung

Of no avail are mansions

In which the lord is forgotten.

bhalee suhaavee chhaapree jaa meh gun gaa-ay.

kit hee kaam na Dha-ulhar jit har bisraa-ay. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Suhi 5th Guru, page 745)

In amongst the 10-12 banyan trees there now was a small clearing where this hut was erected. Baba Ji continued in his meditation bringing new spiritual energy to the hut and the deserted mound. By this time, Bhai Gurbax Singh¹ had become a professor. After 40 days of meditation, Baba Ji performed an Ardas to thank almighty for his protection and strength to complete the prayers. After the bhog ceremony, Baba Ji went to Dhugga village to visit his mother. He stayed for one night only and returned the next day with about 4kg of roasted wheat and molasses mixed together to make a dry cereal that he could have in order to sustain him. Upon his arrival, he started another 40 days of constant meditation and recital of hymns from Gurbani. When he got hungry, he would dissolve the roasted wheat and molasses in some water for sustenance. Some times this was all the food he would eat in 24 hours...

With every breath, he ever remembers the lord

Not a single breath passes in vain

***Thus, he obtains honour in eternal life.
dam dam sadaa samaaldae damm na birthaa jaa-ay.
janam maran kaa bha-o ga-i-aa jeevan padvee paa-ay.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 556)***

Baba Ji would meditate with such intensity that not a single moment went by without remembering the lord. All the possessions that were present at the hut were a bed, earthen pitcher, one brass glass, one brass bowl, iron bucket, two earthen pots and some bed linen. These are all the utensils Baba Ji used for his daily living.

Water shortage

In those days, after a short period of draught, water in the nearby well dried up. Baba Ji would carry water back from a well about 300 yards from where the hut was for his daily use. After bathing at the well, he would bring a bucket load of water that would last him the whole day. Baba Ji used to say that at 2 am when he would go to the well, whether it was stormy or raining, by the grace of God the weather would calm down or cease to be stormy just long enough for Baba Ji to have his daily bath. This was Guru Ji's special blessing upon him. He would walk around the fields so as not to damage the farmers' crops. After his bath, he would immerse himself in his daily meditation.

Meeting S.Kabul Singh

During these days S.Kabul Singh son of S.Bawa Singh of Gondpur had an opportunity to spend time in the company of Baba Ji. In his leisure time, he would come to see Baba Ji and learn recitation of Gurbani (called Santhiya which means to learn the meanings of hymns from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji). Baba Ji would listen to Sukhmani Sahib from Bhai Kabul Singh Ji daily. He attained spiritual insight through meditation as well. He was a keen player of kabbadi and fond of the game. Baba Ji had insight into spiritual matters and arranged for S.Kabul Singh Ji to receive basic teacher training. Baba Ji then arranged his marriage as well. S.Kabul Singh received baptism and to this day has cordial relations with the Gurdwara Sahib.

Meeting Bhai Labh Singh of Bahle

Baba Ji had been meditating for six months or so without taking any food except the wheat and molasses that he brought from home. One day Labh Singh of Bahle village came to see Baba Ji as he had learnt of the great Saint meditating at the deserted mound. He bowed respectfully to Baba Ji and asked when Baba Ji would finish his routine of prayers. Baba Ji replied that his present routine would be completed in a few days. S Labh Singh Ji enquired if Baba Ji was going to have langar (sacrament food) at the bhog ceremony or not. Baba Ji replied that no langar was arranged for that particular day. After this, Labh Singh left.

On the day of the bhog S Labh Singh Ji arrived at the time of Ardas and politely requested Baba Ji, "I have prepared langar for you at my house, please accompany me and bless us by accepting the food." Baba Ji refused flatly. S Labh Singh repeated his request compelling Baba Ji to accede. Baba Ji agreed reluctantly but on condition, "today I will go with you to have langar but in future do not compel me to do so." S Labh Singh agreed and took Baba Ji home to have langar. After langar, Baba Ji went back to his village Dhugga to see his mother and restock on his 4kg of wheat and molasses. As soon as he arrived back at the hut, he started another programme of meditation the next day. S.Labh Singh was deeply impressed with Baba Ji's sacrifice and determined meditation. After a week he presented himself with four other Sikhs in front of Baba Ji, humbly requesting, "Today we have come to request you as sangat to have one meal daily at our house please. If you

do not agree then allow us to bring langar for you here at the hut.” Hearing these words Baba Ji fell into thoughtful silence. He began to ponder that if this gursikh was alone, he would have declined the invitation. However, these people have come as a congregation (sangat). The sangat is the abode of God and to serve sangat is the highest honour. If one refuses to go with the group of gursikhs, it is an insult of the sangat. Secondly, the gursikh has asked to bring langar here to the hut. If they start to bring langar, here to the hut then they will have to take time out from work and their daily work routine will be disrupted. After all, almighty Waheguru provides sustenance for all. Waheguru Ji has inspired the thought in the minds of these gursikhs to bring langar.” After a short silence Baba Ji replied, “I did not want to go to people’s homes to have langar. However, as you have come in the form of sangat, one cannot refuse. So I will come daily, in the morning to have langar at your home.”

Bhai Labh Singh Ji went back to his village after this invitation was accepted by Baba Ji. Next morning Baba Ji went to the village Gurdwara in Bahle, bowed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, read the daily hukamnama (daily sermon or edict of the Guru) and then proceeded to the house of S Labh Singh Ji to have langar. This routine continued daily for some time. If the langar was not ready yet, then Baba Ji would recite Gurbani until the langar was prepared. Slowly neighbouring households came to know of the “great Saint who stays at the deserted mound” coming to have langar daily at the house of S Labh Singh. The fortunate ones started to arrive to meet Baba Ji. Slowly four or five people gathered daily at the time of langar. Now Baba Ji started to give a discourse on Gurbani to the assembled congregation and inspired them with tales from the illustrious Sikh history. Any children or ladies that came were taught how to read Gurbani. In due course, with greater inspiration, a number of people started to recite Gurbani from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. As a result, a number of people took amrit (baptism). After langar, Baba Ji would return to the hut and resume his meditation. In this manner whilst visiting Bahle village for langar, he would sing praises of the almighty lord, continuing ever forwards on his spiritual journey.

34 - MY MEETING WITH BABA JI

My mother Mrs Charan Kaur told me that, "One afternoon, Baba Ji suddenly came to our house. He sat on one of the beds in the veranda and sat you on his lap. You were seven years old at the time." My mother was apprehensive, in so much that, she had heard that these Sadhus could mesmerise children or harm them in some way. She thought to herself that the sooner this sadhu leaves the better. Thoughts of this type were still running in her mind when Baba Ji spoke, "I am going to professor Gurbax Singh's house and am taking this boy with me. I shall soon bring him back." After waiting a while, my mother seeing I had not returned, set off for Gurbax Singh Ji's house. On the way she saw Baba Ji coming back to drop me off. Baba Ji handed my arm back to my mother and said, "Bibi (sister), we have been coming together to this world for numerous past lifetimes. In this life, I was looking and searching for him and he was searching for me. With the grace of God, we have been united again. From today onwards neither shall I leave him nor will he be able to leave me." So, from that day onwards Baba Ji became so near and dear to me that he was closer to me more so than my parents. If any valuable or good thing would come into my possession, I would be determined to give it to Baba Ji first. In the summer, I would pick the ripest mangoes and save them for Baba Ji. At the time, I was studying in the government primary school in the nearby village of Talwandi jattan. When Baba Ji would come to have langar at the home of S. Labh Singh Ji, before going to school I would go over to present mangoes and such items of food that I had saved for Baba Ji. I would pay my respects and then leave for school. On occasion I would get late for school and be rebuked by the teacher, however Baba Ji would always try to arrive early at the house of Labh Singh Ji so that I would not be late for school.

After school, I would go to the hut where Baba Ji stayed rather than going home. This is the place where Gurdwara Rampur Khera now stands instead of the barren deserted mound. Upon my arrival, Baba Ji would give me something to eat, and then he would teach me Gurbani. Towards the evening, either Baba Ji would drop me off at my nearby village or my mother would come and fetch me.

After a few days, my mother requested Baba Ji to grace our house, by having langar for at least half the days of the week. Baba Ji agreed to do so and would now have langar for three days at our house, three days at Labh Singh Ji's house and one day at Banta Singh Ji's house. He was the father of Headmaster Puran Singh - My maternal uncle (Headmaster Puran Singh S/o S. Banta Singh of village Bahla was my uncle (Paternal side). He was deeply religious from the very childhood. The company of Baba Ji developed his inner-religious potentialities very soon. He was a man of high quality and calibre having higher-spiritual flight After passing B.A.B.T, he started his career as a teacher in Khalsa school Garhdiwala. During his teaching tenure at Garhdiwala. During his teaching tenure at Garhdiwala, he took twice the training (Santhya) of studying Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji from Baba Ji. In this training institute we were three students. Headmaster Puran Singh Ji, S. Nirmal Singh S/o S. Gurbachan Singh of village Bhana and my self. All three of this took training from Baba Ji for sufficient time. At the same time we acquired much worldly and spiritual merits from Baba Ji's company. Headmaster Puran Singh worked for sometime at Garhdiwala and then joined public high school Nangal (Ropar). From that place he shifted to Guru Nanak Khalsa High school Takhtupura (Faridkot) as a Headmaster and stayed there for a number of years. As he had some physical ailments. So he had to under go operation for more than but he was not cured as medicine, he disappeared on 5.9.1983. Reason? Why? Where? Requires thorough investigation and verification).

To this day langar still comes from these homes to be served at the Gurdwara. After studying at the primary school in Talwandi jattan, I joined Khalsa high school in Gardhiwala. Even at high school, I would visit Baba Ji daily after school to learn how to read Gurbani and understand it. After learning to read and understand the panj granthi, (a compilation of five prayers) I progressed to reading from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. By the time I had finished high school I had been taught to read and understand Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji three times. With encouragement from Baba Ji, I would recite my five prayers of nitnem even before I was baptised. With Baba Ji's blessing, I was administered baptism by him personally.

In the evening after studying Gurbani with Baba Ji, I would go home and dine with my family. I would then return to the Gurdwara to stay the night. Baba Ji would sit beside me and personally oversee me recite many different hymns (*shabads*) on the rosary. Prayers like mool mantar, Jaap Sahib, Chachri chhand (*gobinday mukanday, udaaray, appaaray, hariang, kariang nirnaamay akaamay*) and many other shabads were recited 125,000 times in succession and many times over.

If due to laziness I could not complete the rosaries, the Baba Ji would complete the shabads and pray to almighty pledging the shabads on my behalf. This was his personal blessing upon me. After completing my education, I tried to get a job but was unable to find suitable work for three years. Then I got a job as a stenographer in a place called UNA (Himachal Pradesh). Baba Ji wished me to stay close and I decided to look for a job nearer home. In those days Dr Pritam Singh Ji was a doctor in the government health service. He wanted to retire and start up his own practice. Dr Pritam Singh Ji was a true follower of Sant Teja Singh Ji (double MA). Sant Teja Singh Ji's predecessor was Sant Attar Singh Ji Mastuana. Dr Sahib met Baba Ji and gained a great deal of spiritual insight from keeping company with Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji. In time, he became a near and dear devotee of Baba Ji. Because of Dr Pritam Singh Ji meeting Baba Ji, I too became close friends with Dr Pritam Singh Ji. We had great mutual respect and affection for each other. Baba Ji wished that Dr Pritam Singh and I work together and after consulting Baba Ji, we opened a practice in the nearby town of Dasuya. We worked together for our daily livelihood and gained much spirituality from each other's company.

We worked together for sixteen blissful, years and this span of time passed with such mutual affection and respect that my mind still feels elated recalling this time spent in Dasuya. We would eat together, pray together, faced many trials and tribulations together. We shared our good and bad fortunes and as brothers in arms faced our joy and sorrow together. Though I did not feel like getting married, Baba Ji still arranged my marriage to Bibi Gurdial Kaur, daughter of S. Rattan Singh of village Talwandi jattan in 1966. Our marriage was blessed by Baba Ji by his Sainly attendance. After my marriage, I moved my residence to Dasuya and at least three times a week would come to meet Baba Ji. If for some reason I could not come Baba Ji would come himself to visit our house. Almighty lord accepted Baba Ji's prayer and blessed me with a son on 25th august 1969, whom Baba Ji personally named Bhupinder Singh. This gifted child had the great fortune of playing in Baba Ji's lap and received numerous, affectionate blessings from him.

Due to unavoidable circumstances, I had to leave the practice of Dr Pritam Singh Ji and return to my native village Bahle where I resumed farming our land. After that, I have been performing the duties entrusted to me by the great Guru to this day with the lord's patronage.

35 - THE DESERTED MOUND IS NAMED KUTTIA RAMPUR KHERA

Baba Ji cleared the area around the hut of bushes and thicket for daily use. However, the overgrown trees were still too dense in covering the ground. He now named this place kuttia Rampur Khera. Leaves from the large banyan and peepul trees would cover the ground in an ever-moist carpet that was a haven for poisonous insects. A couple of reed stools and dry straw would be used to cover the ground. This was all that visitors had to sit on. Baba Ji kept some tongs and earthen pots. Whenever Baba Ji would lift these stools or straw mats, he would find deadly insects and scorpions. He would use the tongs to remove these insects and store them in the pots. In the evening, he would walk down to the stream and let the insects loose. Two or three snakes would appear daily; Baba Ji would catch them in a jute bag and release them away from the hut. If a large snake appeared, he would use a large bamboo stick and by striking it on the ground, scare the snake away from the hut. Baba Ji had specifically told everyone who came to visit not to hurt these creatures. Sometimes people would ask, "Why don't you kill such poisonous creatures?" Baba Ji would reply, "When they don't bother us, why should we kill them without reason. Suppose we start killing them, will we finish all of them?"

Baba Ji is Annoyed Over Killing A Cobra.

Baba Ji continued to rescue little creatures as he did for sometime. Once an incident occurred that I witnessed with my own eyes. The congregation had come together for the meditation session (called Naam Abhyas Kammai Smagam) one time and it was raining heavily. S.Chanan Singh, Dr Pritam Singh, S. Kartar Singh from Rasulpur village and some other devotees were out for an afternoon walk. The Gurdwara used to have a hedge of cactus plants all around its perimeter. On this evening at the eastern edge of the cactus fence, a large king cobra appeared.

On seeing the poisonous snake, two Sikhs immediately killed the snake with sticks. S.Chanan Singh and the others went immediately to tell Baba Ji of this large hooded snake that appeared amidst the cactus fence. Baba Ji interrupted them immediately, "You haven't killed the snake have you?" Chanan Singh Ji replied, "Baba Ji when we saw it was a large poisonous snake, so we killed it." Baba Ji was angry and said, "Why did you need to kill the snake. By killing every poisonous snake, will you eradicate all snakes? Was the snake chasing you?" with these words he made his annoyance clear to the others.

Repentance and forgiveness.

Charan Singh Ji and the others respectfully asked for forgiveness from Baba Ji and went out for a walk again. As they were walking, they stumbled upon another snake in the path just like the one they had killed earlier. On returning, they told Baba Ji about seeing this snake on the path when out walking. Baba Ji said, "You could try to kill it again but before killing the snake you should have asked me." Meanwhile a few more Singhs returned and said that they too saw a large snake on the way to the Gurdwara. Finally, the devotees got together and pleaded with Baba Ji for forgiveness for their ignorant act. They promised not to kill snakes indiscriminately in the future. Baba Ji replied, "Ask someone to prepare degh parshad (sweet dish made from equal parts flour, sugar, butter and water) and bring it in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji to be blessed. The parshad was prepared and brought in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Baba Ji stood in front of Guru Ji to pray, "O God almighty we mortals are prone to error. Some Singhs have made an ignorant mistake. Forgive us and guide us so that we may be diligent in the future." Parshad was distributed to the sangat and for the rest of the week no one saw any more snakes again.

Baba Ji had a very kind-hearted and tender nature; he was not in favour of cruelty to or harassing any creature. He would say that if we wish to see God at all then...

Your light is in all creatures

And they are contained in your light.

jjaat meh jot jot meh jaataa akal kalaa bharpoor rahi-aa.

(Asa 1st Guru, page 469)

And

Among all, there is light and that light is you.

sabh meh jot jot hai so-ay.

(Dhanasari 1st Guru, page 13)

Recognise the light of God in all creatures and his creation. We must follow the edict of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji that...

The Saints proclaim that

In all hearts abides the venerable Lord.

ghat ghat mai har joo basai santan kahi-o pukaar.

(Salok 9th Guru, page 1426)

Guru Arjun Dev Ji tell us the Lord pervades in all his creation...

The luminous Lord the supreme master

The great Lord abides in all hearts

ghat ghat basant baasudayveh paarbarahm parmaysureh.

(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1356)

And

He the Lord abides in all hearts

Without him, there is no other

ghat ghat antar ravi-aa so-ay.

tis bin beejo naahee ko-ay.

(Parbhathi 5th Guru, page 1348)

And

In every heart, salute the exalted Lord

Without the one master there is no second other

Nanak this is the essence of wisdom of the father.

ghat ghat antar paarbarahm namaskaari-aa.

ikas vin hor doojaa naahee

baabaa nanak ih mat saaree jee-o. ||4||39||46||

(Maajh 5th Guru, page 108)

And

All are partners to your grace

You are alien to none.

sabhay saajheevaal sadaa-in toon kisai na diseh baahraa jee-o. ||3||

(Maajh 5th Guru, page 97)

So the Great Guru has enjoined upon us, several times to observe and regard the light of the divine Lord residing in all creatures, great and small. The person who sees the light of God in all can harm no one. Such a person will not speak rudely to anyone...

Farid the creator abides in his creation

And the creation abides in its creator

Whom shall we call bad

When there is non without him

fareedaa khaalak khalak meh khalak vasai rab maahi.

mandaa kis no aakhee-ai jaaN tis bin ko-ee naahi. ||75||

(Salok Bhagat Farid, page 1381)

And

Utter not a single harsh word

Since your true master abides amongst all

Break thou not any one's heart

As invaluable are all these jewels

Precious like jewels are the minds of all

To hurt them is not at all good

If you desire to meet the beloved Lord then

Hurt thou not anyone's heart

ik fikaa na gaalaa-ay sabhnaa mai sachaa Dhanee.

hi-aa-o na kaihee thaahi maanak sabh amolvay. ||129||

sabhnaa man maanik thaahan mool machaaNgvaa.

jay ta-o piree-aa dee sik hi-aa-o na thaahay kahee daa. ||130||

(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1384)

Sri Guru Nanak dev Ji tell us that ...

The beings are yours and you are their master.

tayray jee-a jee-aa kaa tohi.

(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 25)

This change in our outlook is not possible by mere reading or empty discussions of divine knowledge. To change our outlook requires meditation, introspection of Gurbani and for us to act upon the message contained within Gurbani. Even when walking, Baba Ji would step with care and attention, lest he inadvertently trample insects on the ground. Moreover, he would warn others walking beside him to mind and not trample the insects on the ground.

36 - BHAJ MOHINDER SINGH SEES A SNAKE DAILY

Bhai Mohinder Singh Ji was Baba Ji's jeep driver and he told us of an incident he was involved in during these early days. Baba Ji was away from the Gurdwara on some important business. In his absence, some of the devotees discovered a very large cobra, which had entered the cave where Baba Ji used to meditate. The attendants and devotees at the gurdwara were trying to kill the snake. No one would dare enter the pitch-dark cave as the snake was a large and poisonous. All and one decided to light up a kerosene lamp in order to illuminate the cave.

Meanwhile some of the attendants brought a couple of live electric wires and tied the bare copper wire onto the end of a long bamboo pole. They carefully hung the kerosene lamp in the cave, plugged in the live electric wire, and tried to electrocute the snake. When the snake was touched with the wires, it hissed and spat so violently that it blew the lamp out. All the attendants were extremely scared by now, and Bhai Mohinder Singh stepped in, ushering all the others to leave the cave. He took a jute bag, dipped it in kerosene and tied it to a long bamboo stick. Igniting the jute bag, he threw it onto the snake, this tactic eventually killed the snake.

In the evening when Baba Ji returned, the attendants told him what had transpired with the snake in the cave. Baba Ji was very angry about the whole incident and summoned Bhai Mohinder, "You have committed a great wrong. If the snake had entered the cave then you should have left it there. I hadn't gone to another country; I was due to come back and would have dealt with the snake. In the future ask me before you carry out such a task." Baba Ji was silent for a while and then said "Well, what is done is done, take care in the future."

Bhai Mohinder Singh told us that from that day onwards, whenever he went from the Gurdwara to his home, he would daily come across a snake in his path. When this happened for about four days, he came to Baba Ji. Baba Ji told Bhai Mohinder Singh that you must complete two rosaries of the Mool mantar for 21 consecutive days, in the morning and evening, begging forgiveness from the Great Guru. Then the snakes will leave you alone. When you complete your rosaries, prepare some parshad, donate 1.25 rupees at the Gurdwara and pray for forgiveness with all your devotion. From the day Bhai Mohinder Singh started to recite the Mool mantar he did not come across any more snakes. He completed the prayers entrusted to him. He then had "degh parshad" prepared, prayed in repentance for his wrong doing and begged for forgiveness in front of the great Guru Granth Sahib.

Bhai Mohinder Singh was the son of Sri Rode Ram and belonged to the village Loharli, district Una, Himachal Pradesh. In his early childhood, he came to S. Gurnam Singh Sandher of village Machhian, District Hoshiarpur. He was brought up by the family like their own son and was educated at Khalsa Secondary School, Ghardiwala and then Khalsa College Gardhiwala up to degree level. He served S. Gurnam Singh and Bibi Parmjeet Kaur like his own parents. In Baba Ji's company, he became a Sikh.

After his education, he obtained "Santhiya" (teaching in Gurbani) of Guru Granth Sahib whilst serving as a jeep driver for Baba Ji. After his marriage, he began working as a clerk at Khalsa Secondary School Gardhiwala and is serving the Guru's sangat regularly, with devotion. He makes his life a success by first meditating and reciting himself and then inspiring others to follow the path. In time, numerous people were moulded to "Gurmat" in Baba Ji's company and were subsequently baptised thus following the path laid down by the great Guru.

37 - GOD IS DISPLEASED BY CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Due north from Baba Ji's hut were fields that were farmed by local villagers. One day a farmer (whose name is not mentioned so as not to cause offence) had been ploughing the fields since early morning. It was a hot, humid, August day. Being close to midday the heat was relentless and at its peak. The farmer was clearly hot and sweating profusely as he was ploughing. He was working the oxen without rest, beating them whilst ploughing, trying to get them to move faster and plough harder. The tired, thirsty animals were helplessly walking with their tongues hanging out with thirst. Baba Ji came out of his hut and looked upon the pitiful condition of these helpless animals. Taking pity on the plight of the animals, his heart filled with kindness and he made up his mind to ask the farmer to give the animals a rest. He decided to ask the farmer to allow the animals to have some water and the farmer to finish ploughing in the afternoon when it would be cooler. With these kind intentions for the welfare of the animals, he walked up to the farmer and humbly asked him to take a short break to allow the animals to be watered and rested. The farmer listened to Baba Ji and replied, "I have been working since morning with these animals, don't interfere in a farmers work. You better go about your own job."

After another half an hour or so, Baba Ji's conscience again compelled him, "Animals cannot speak. This stubborn person is working the animals far more than they can bear to work in such intense heat. If animals are speechless and cannot complain, we must look after their well being and welfare." With these thoughts, Baba Ji again went up to the farmer to ask him to rest and water his animals for a while. Baba Ji advised him that by working the animals mercilessly will not improve the yield of the crop. The yield of the crop and what will be harvested from the fields was in God's hands. Baba Ji tried to reason with the farmer that, "If God were to give a bumper crop then it would not be more likely to happen if the field were deeply ploughed. Furthermore, by treating the animals mercilessly, without care for their welfare, speechless animals curse us heavily. However, the farmer paid no attention to Baba Ji's reasoning and replied on the contrary, "A farmer will not even cremate his mother until he has finished sowing his crop". Baba Ji said, "I have done my duty by asking you, the rest is at your discretion".

The farmer went on ploughing his field, levelling it and finally going home with the animals. The animals being thirsty drank lots of water as soon as they got back and one of the oxen fell ill, needing prolonged treatment from the vet. This humble servant witnessed with my own eyes that a field that used to yield a good crop every year, this time yielded a handful of sacks of grain. The young farmers father was a God fearing person and happened to ask his son about the low yield, "How is it that a field you ploughed so diligently has had such a meagre harvest of grain compared to all the other fields?" A few days later, the young farmer confessed to his father that when he was ploughing the field, the Saint at the mound approached him, asking for him to give the thirsty animals a rest. He told his father that the animals were hot and the Saint came over twice to ask the animals to be rested and given water by the Saint. The young farmer told his father how Baba Ji told him that speechless animals could curse us if we do not treat them properly.

The old father was wise and intuitively realised that the poor harvest was due to overworking the speechless oxen in the hot afternoon. The old man explained to his son, "You worked extra hard yourself, overexerted your oxen in order to reap a better harvest. However, you got the opposite result. You ended up tormenting a speechless animal that went on to get ill and you harvested a meagre crop from that field. In the future, be careful, if our animals cannot tell us of their pain then we should look out for their welfare ourselves. Furthermore, one should heed and act upon the words of a divine Saint even if at the time you will lose out materially"

After rebuking his son, the old man came to Baba Ji and pleaded, " My young son did not listen to your words of warning or your advice and as a result the harvest from the field was very poor. Please forgive him." Baba Ji replied very politely, "A good or bad harvest is in the hands of God. On that hot day the animals were thirsty, tired and were being overworked. Their tongues were hanging from their mouths with exhaustion. They were being beaten and their pitiful plight was disturbing to see. Their anguish was disrupting my meditation repeatedly. In the future, do not beat animals with a stick without reason. They too have a soul like ours, which feels pain and pleasure. It is due to their past karma and deeds they committed that they have to endure this animal life. By harassing animals, we commit cruel deeds, earning bad karma ourselves. We will end up having to pay for our bad actions. If we torment animals, then they can curse us and we earn bad karma. We must work but within our strength. The rewards for our labour are within the hands of God alone...

***If one could have good fortune
By our own efforts alone
Then everyone would be fortunate and rich
Even though all desire to be fortunate
Our destiny is decided according to our past deeds
aapan lee-aa jay milai taa sabh ko bhaagath ho-ay.
karmaa upar nibrhai jay lochai sabh ko-ay. ||3||
(Salok 1st Guru, page 156)***

And

***Without good deeds nothing can be obtained
Though one may chase rewards with all effort
vin karmaa kichh paa-ee-ai naahee jay bahutayraa Dhaavai.
(Tilang 1st Guru, page 722)***

One should engage with others with the precept that God's light abides in all his creatures. To take pity on the sentient beings is more beneficial than bathing and giving alms at the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage considered holy by Hindu's. Our Guru Ji tells us...

***Cause not annoyance to any being
And go to thy home with honour.
athusath theeruth sugul punn jeea dhaeiaa puruvaan
(Salok 5th Guru, page 322)***

Sri Guru Nanak dev Ji consider kindness to be an attribute of God and forgiveness a divine rosary...

***Those people are sublime
Who make compassion their deity
And forgiveness their rosary
da-i-aa dayvtaa khimaa japmaalee tay maanas parDhaan.
(Salok 1st Guru, page 1245)***

By making, the teachings of our Guru the basis of our lives we will be able to attract his benevolence.

38 - EFFECT OF A CURSE

It was the summer season. Baba Ji was sat under the shade of a mango tree outside his hut meditating in bliss. It so happened that a couple of devotees who were passing by, came over to Baba Ji, exchanged Gur-Fateh and sat down beside him. Baba Ji offered them cool water and enquired about the purpose of their visit. They replied, "We were on our way to the nearby town of Gardhiwala and decided to drop by to see you, rest and chat a while". As soon as they exchanged pleasantries, they delved into idle chitchat about all manner of things from politics to worldly matters. Baba Ji sat patiently listening for a while but quickly gathered that the two visitors were yoking water i.e. making idle conversation to while away the time. Baba Ji sensed that these two were not in any hurry to leave either, so he started to quietly recite Sukhmani Sahib (a prayer composed by Guru Arjun Dev Ji). The two men spoke up, "Baba Ji, we had come to sit and talk with you, we do not know how long your prayers will take so please give us leave. We bid you farewell." Baba Ji nodded his head whilst still reciting his prayer, to acknowledge the visitors' wish to depart. Baba Ji would often have people like the one's above come to waste his time in idle worldly discussion and politics. If Baba Ji would sense that the conversation is turning to idle gossip then he would ask those assembled to join in meditation or reciting prayers. This was to prevent wasting time in gossip instead of remembering God. On such occasions, he would either recite prayers himself or get one of the devotees to read prayers.

Often it would come to pass that at the start of the prayer recitation, people who were there to make idle gossip would get up and ask permission to leave. He would just nod to acknowledge those who were leaving. Only a few blessed one's would remain to listen to Gurbani, some would sit and listen to a few more verses as Guru Ji says...

There is no food for them in Saintly company

The false go and find filth like sheep

onaa daa bhakh so othai naahee jaa-ay koorh lahan bhaydaaray.

(Salok 4th Guru, page 332)

The food of gossip and idle slander no longer available, those who thrived on this diet, would depart. We can put this experience of Baba Ji to the test. One can gossip for hours on end about worldly matters but if we start reciting naam amid such company we will find that one by one, such people will leave. Only a few exceptional ones who are purveyors of the true merchandise of Gurbani will remain with you to listen. As Guru Arjun Dev Ji says...

Only a few engage in this fruitful trade.

ih vaapaar virlaa vaapaarai.

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 283)

And

The merchant who follows the Guru's instruction o brother

He definitely secures this true merchandise of God's name.

ih vakhar vaapaaree so darirhai bhaa-ee gur sabad karay veechaar.

(Sorath 1st Guru, page 636)

Truth and falsehood do not go hand in hand. As Guru Amar Das Ji tell us...

***Falsehood does not mix with truth
O my soul witnesses and verifies this
Gurbani inspires us to be truthful
Whereas the basis of the world is a lie
vich sachay koorh na gad-ee man vaykhu ko nirjaas.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 314)***

Gurbani strengthens our resolve in the truth thus...

***Rare is the one among millions
Who enshrine the Lord's name in his mind O Nanak.
kotan mai naanak ko-oo naaraa-in jih cheet. ||24||
(Salok 9th Guru, page 1427)***

And

***The Saints are few in number
The rest is a show of wrangling in the world
hain virlay naahee ghanay fail fakarh sansaar. ||12||
(Salok 1st Guru, page 1411)***

The aforementioned visitors had just left when a man named S.Harbax Singh from the nearby village of Machhian arrived. He paid his respects to Baba Ji by greeting with a Gur-Fateh and sat down to listen to Gurbani being recited. When Baba Ji had completed his Sukhmani Sahib prayer, he asked Harbax Singh Ji the reason for his visit? Harbax Singh Ji pleaded with Baba Ji, "As you know, rain is unpredictable because of which crops can sometimes perish. My neighbouring farmers have had tube wells dug into their fields so that they can draw water from the ground to irrigate the crops. They can now water their fields anytime they choose. Seeing them, I too decided to dig a borehole into the ground in order to install a tube well. I have dug up 10 or 12 boreholes into the ground to great depths but no water comes up. The water engineer agrees that the boreholes are dug correctly to the right depth. The boreholes in neighbouring farmers' fields are of the same depth. They produce sufficient water but no water comes up in my fields. I beseech you. Can you advise of a remedy so that too get water in my fields? I have lost all hope and have therefore come to see you."

After listening to Harbax Singh Ji's plea, Baba Ji fell silent for a while and then said, "You have come in the heat of the day, first have something to drink and eat." Harbax Singh Ji had something to eat and drink and returned from the langar, taking a seat near Baba Ji. As soon as he sat down, Baba Ji continued, "Sardar Ji you owe some money to a poor man, which you did not return. You could have returned the money but deliberately sat on his money. The poor man's curse is now becoming an obstacle in your attempts to draw water from the borehole." Hearing this startling revelation, Harbax Singh Ji cunningly denied that he had usurped any money or owed any money to anyone. Baba Ji asked again, "Harbax Singh Ji! Think again carefully, this is the only reason. As long as you don't return that poor man's money, you will not escape his curse. Not just 12 bore holes, you can dig as many bore holes for ground water as you like but you will not get water from that land. The curse of a poor man is long lasting and deep. A poor man may not have the force or means to recover his money from you in a court but the constant curse that arises from his heart is nonetheless becoming an obstacle in your effort to raise water in your tube well. Take a few moments to search your heart and jog your memory. You will find this is the only reason. Harbax

Singh Ji already knew what the truth was but hearing the resolute, truthful words of Baba Ji, his inner conscience broke out from behind the veil of falsehood. He was forced to admit that what Baba Ji had said was indeed true. He confessed, "I indeed have not repaid Rs 280 to a poor man. It has been two years since I have not repaid his money. In fact he has asked for his money on several occasions but I deliberately did not repay his money." Baba Ji replied, "Sardar Ji! If you want water in your field then return the poor man's money. You will gain his pleasure and his good will too. Once you return his money, ask for forgiveness from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji by offering parshad and admitting your mistake in front of the Guru. You will see that water will rise in the tube well on your land from the boreholes already dug."

Baba Ji's resolute, prophetic and truthful words sunk deep into Harbax Singh Ji's heart. They had the effect of filling him with remorse. Gurbax Singh Ji promised Baba Ji to return the poor man's money and asked permission to leave. When he arrived home, he gathered the money he owed and added another Rs 50 on top and invited the poor man to his house. The poor man was delighted to receive Rs 330 and the money rekindled many dreams within him. Even though the poor man received the money with interest that was due to him from Harbax Singh Ji, he was elated and full of hopeful dreams again. The unexpected return of his money made the poor man overjoyed and he left showering his good wishes and blessings. The next day Harbax Singh Ji gathered all the ingredients for parshad and arrived at the Gurdwara. Baba Ji offered Ardas (supplication or prayers) in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, "Forgive your devotee Lord, who has erred in his ways. Forgive his trespass against another, which was committed in ignorance. Grant Harbax Singh Ji's inner wishes as per your divine, sweet, will." At the end of the prayers, Harbax Singh partook of the deg parshad and hastened to his fields. The water engineer cleared the borehole of any residual sand and started the water pump. Lo and behold! To everyone's amazement, water came gushing through the tube well! It has been about 30 years since this incident occurred; the tube well still produces a strong flow of water to this day. The moral of the story is that God dwells in all his creation, and in all beings, whether high or low. When we hurt someone's feelings without just cause and unnecessarily, it not only becomes a hindrance in our spiritual progress but becomes an obstacle in our worldly affairs too. As Baba Farid Ji says...

***Precious like jewels are the minds of all
To hurt them is not good at all.
sabhnaa man maanik thaahan mool machaaNgvaa.
jay ta-o piree-aa dee sik hi-aa-o na thaahay kahee daa. ||130||
(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1384)***

Bhai Nand Lal Ji who was a very dear and beloved Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh Ji also writes that...

***Hurt not the nature knowing it
To be the creation of the creator.
If you hurt his creation
You earn the creators displeasure.***

Baba Farid Ji also says...

***Farid creator abides in his creation
And the creation abides in him
Whom can we call bad
When there is none without him***

**fareedaa khaalak khalak meh khalak vasai rab maahi.
mandaa kis no aakhee-ai jaaN tis bin ko-ee naahi. ||75||**
(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1381)

And

**You are contained amongst all o Lord
Everyone thinks of you day and night.
sabhnaa vich too varatdaa saahaa sabh tujheh Dhi-aavahi din raat.**
(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 670)

And

**He the one Lord is contained amidst all.
sabhnaa vich vartai ik so-ee.**
(Maru 5th Guru, page 1049)

And

**All belong to you and you belong to all
O Lord you have created all
sabh tayree too sabhas daa sabh tuDh upaa-i-aa.
sabhnaa vich too varatdaa too sabhnee Dhi-aa-i-aa.**
(Pauri 5th Guru, page 548)

If we cannot help or fulfil another person's need or we cannot bring happiness or comfort to another then we should not earn ill will by committing misdeeds upon fellow human beings. Guru Ji has cautioned us not to violate another person's earnings and avoid the sin of usurping another person's wealth. Thus...

**Nanak another's wealth is like eating
Swine for a Muslim and a cow for the Hindu
The spiritual guide or prophet will only vouch for you
In God's court if man surely does not eat such carrion
hak paraa-i-aa naankaa us soo-ar us gaa-ay.
gur peer haamaa taa bharay jaa murdaar na khaa-ay.**
(Mohalla 1st Guru, page 141)

39 - OLD COMPANIONS SEEK OUT BABA JI

Baba Ji had come discreetly to Rampur Khera, without telling anyone except his immediate family. Old acquaintances and companions were searching for Baba Ji. Slowly, these old companions began to discover that he was engrossed in solitary meditation of God at a deserted barren mound called Rampur Khera. Love is such a condition that it attracts people through an invisible bond even across the seven seas. So, the pull of devotion and love led these spiritual seekers to this place.

As there was no provision for staying in the cave at the mound of Rampur Khera, these devotees would spend the day in the company of Baba Ji, gaining spiritual knowledge and guidance. At night, Baba Ji would accompany the guests and visitors to Bahle village. He would delegate some one from the village to accommodate the visitors for the night. After a while, at the request of the congregation, a small veranda and cavern was built, extending westwards, in front of Baba Ji's hut.

The foundation for this veranda was laid on 29th April 1951 and within 20 days; the whole veranda and cavern were completed.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Enthroned

The cavern and veranda were complete by now and Baba Ji mused that the cavern is well built, so why not install Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in the cavern. He himself could move out into the veranda. By so doing, the visiting spiritual seekers would get guidance from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and Baba Ji would get to carry out daily service of the true Guru. All necessary preparations were made and equipment was gathered in order to install Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Baba Ji fulfilled his honourable dream by bringing Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji from the Gurdwara in Bahle' village. He enthroned Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in the newly built cavern.

Baba Ji would now arise, bathe and then with great affection and devotion install Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji daily. He would then read the daily sermon (*Hukamnama*), after which he recited his daily *Nitnem* in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. After having something to eat at Bahle' village, he would come back and immerse himself in meditation again.

Baba Ji once told us that when he first installed Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, one evening he wondered what to use in order to illuminate the cavern where Guru Ji was installed? He could not use kerosene oil in a lantern as the tenth master prohibits its use. It is said that once some Sikhs asked him whether they could use kerosene oil for lanterns and Guru Gobind Singh forbid the use of this oil because it produces soot and black pungent flames. Baba Ji thought, "I have no clarified butter (ghee) to burn in lamps. He was still in thought when a lady appeared and placed about 0.5 kilogram of ghee. She said, "Our buffalo has just had a newborn calf. I would have brought the ghee earlier but hadn't collected enough butter to melt into a sufficient amount of ghee. Then I thought, let's just take whatever ghee has accumulated regardless and offer it to the Guru." Baba Ji accepted the offering of ghee and returned the container to the lady. He then put some ghee into a small lamp, lit it and placed it in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Baba Ji offered thanks to Almighty God thinking...

God knows the wishes in everyone's heart

God knows the suffering of the good and bad

(Benati Chaupai 10th Guru, Dasam Granth)

Baba Ji thanked God, "Lord you alone give rise to noble sentiment and inspire your devotees with noble thoughts." From that day onwards, only a lamp with ghee was used to illuminate the room of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. When the ghee would run low, God would inspire someone, somehow to bring in an offering of more ghee. Never did the ghee run out. Eventually, provision for electricity arrived a few years later.

Every evening, after the prayer of *Rehras*, Baba Ji would have some light refreshment and then sit outside in the veranda. Beds would be laid out on the clearing in front of the veranda. Just north of the veranda was the high ground where the Gurdwara now stands. At first, this area was inaccessible due to heavy vegetation and trees. The long vines from *banyan* and *peepul* trees draped and restricted access. The tall trees had nests of eagles and vultures. These birds would often bring carrion and such into their nests causing a lot of mess. Anyhow, Baba Ji would sit on the bed along with any other visitors, listening to historical tales of the Guru's and of illustrious Sikhs. He would regularly listen to stories from texts like *Kalgidhar Chamatkar*, *Guru Nanak Chamatkar* (by Bhai Vir Singh). When one book was finished, he would start listening to the next one. The duty of reading these historical texts was performed by this humble servant (Sant Seva Singh). Occasionally, one or two people would stay to listen and I would be very pleased that there were some other people listening to the great deeds of our Guru's.

After the evening session of listening to the life of our Guru's Baba Ji would recite *Sohila* (the last prayer a Sikh reads before sleeping) and recite some extra shabads before going to sleep. At the behest of the congregation and to accommodate the need for water Baba Ji had a hand operated water pump installed, near to where the present day shoe depository stands.

40 - HE PROVIDES FOR THE HUNGRY

Along with reciting his five prayers of the daily *Nitnem*, Baba Ji would read a prayer called *Sukhmani Sahib* everyday. This prayer is composed by Guru Arjun Dev Ji. One day whilst he was deeply attuned in the prayer of *Sukhmani Sahib*, he came across the following passage...

God Can Revive The Dead

He Gives Sustenance (Food) To The Hungry

mirtak ka-o jeevaalanhaar.

bhookhay ka-o dayvat aDhaar.

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 283)

He stopped to introspect upon these words and repeated them over to himself several times. The meaning of the phrases overpowered him and he thought, "Look how powerful the Lord is! He can bring alive those that have died and sustains the hungry with the power of naam." Baba Ji then thought of a novel experiment. He thought that if naam can sustain one without the need for water or food then why not try this out practically. Why not try to exist and live on the power of naam for forty days, without having any food or water. In this way, the strength of Gurbani can be experienced and in the future one will be able to guide spiritual seekers on the basis of practical experience. One can assure the seeker that naam indeed is the only sustenance of the body and not food or water. It can be shown that the meditation of naam is all-powerful and can fulfil the needs of the physical body. Naam can be shown not to be some abstract concept but a tangible practical force that is the basis of this physical universe.

It was the summer season. Baba Ji completed his prayer of *Sukhmani Sahib*. He then set off towards the residence of S.Bawa Singh to the north from his hut. Bawa Singh wasn't at home, so he left a message for him to send his son S SurJit Singh over to Rampur Khera as soon as he came home, as Baba Ji had an important task for him. Baba Ji had already decided to practically verify the reality of the phrases that he had read. He wanted to find out if naam can indeed support and nourish the body.

After completing his work, S SurJit Singh came over to see Baba Ji in the evening. Baba Ji told SurJit Singh that, " For forty days I am going to meditate in this cave and will not be having anything to eat or drink for that duration. For the first 4 or 5 days, can you come and just look through the ceiling vent to check if I am still alive and that my body hasn't decomposed? If I have passed away then cremate my body before it decomposes. If I'm ok after the first few days then you don't need to come to check on me any further."

Hearing these grave instructions, SurJit Singh was deeply moved, fearing the worst for Baba Ji. However, Baba Ji reassured SurJit Singh, that one must be firm in their resolve to live in the will of the Almighty. Baba Ji said, "I have firm belief in the Lord that nothing will happen to me. I only told you so that if I do expire then my body does not decompose in the summer heat."

Jaap Without Food Or Water

The very next day Baba Ji completed his daily prayers and then made a supplication to the Lord, "O patron of the poor! This humble body of mine is presented in your feet so that it may earn the rewards of the truth enshrined in naam. Shower your blessings so that naam becomes the only sustenance of this body." Baba Ji started his simran. He would arise at 2am, bathe and recite his *Nitnem*. He would then recite *Sukhmani Sahib* with great devotion and then spend the rest of the

day meditating on *Mool-mantar* and *Gur-mantar*. In the evening, he would recite *Rehras* and *Sohila*. He would take a short walk for half an hour and then retire for a short rest. This was his routine the forty days. Baba Ji used to tell us that those forty days and nights passed in unimaginable bliss (this incident is also recorded on audiocassette in his own words). Hunger and thirst aside, even the mere thought of food or water did not enter his mind. Baba Ji told us that his body didn't feel weak in any way, whatsoever. The words of the true Guru were verified...

***God's name is my thirty-six Varieties of food
Partaking of which I am satiated.
har naam hamaaraa bhojan chhateeh parkaar
jit khaa-i-ai ham ka-o taripat bha-ee.
(Mohalla 3rd Guru, page 593)***

At the end of the forty days, Baba Ji thanked Almighty Lord with an *Ardas*. During those forty days, the Almighty showered upon Baba Ji many boons, spiritual gifts and the nectar of naam, the bliss of which is indescribable until experienced for oneself. His belief in Gurbani became immovable and firm that, Gurbani is true without a doubt, like an indelible mark on a stone. A mark on a stone may disappear in time but Gurbani is eternally true and timeless...

***The mountains, the earth, all the water
And the air shall all pass away
But the Saints' word is infallible.
gir basuDhaa jal pavan jaa-igo ik saaDh bachan atlaaDhaa. ||1||
(Sarang 5th Guru, page 1204)***

The shortfall is in our faith. If one believes firmly and with resolve in Gurbani, then its power definitely, transforms the person who believes in it. The need is to believe firmly in the truth of Gurbani. As Guru Ram Das Ji say...

***O the disciples of the Guru
Know that the Guru's hymns are true
God the creator causes the Guru to
Utter the hymns with his mouth
satgur kee banee sat sat kar jaanhu
gursikhahu har kartaa aap muhhu kadhaa-ay.
(Mohalla 4th Guru, page 308)***

If one has any doubt about the validity of Gurbani then that person should verify the principles of Gurbani by acting upon them. Denouncing Gurbani without personally testing the truth enshrined in Gurbani is a great sin and ultimately deceiving oneself. They who firmly believe and have faith in Gurbani become attuned in the Lord, eventually becoming his form...

***Accept the word of the Guru as true
In this way, you shall merge in the all-pervasive Lord
satgur kee banee sat sat kar maanhu i-o
aatam raamai leenaa hay. ||14||
(Maru 1st Guru, page 1028)***

And

***The word of the Guru is the embodiment of truth
Through the word, the mortal becomes perfect
satgur kee bane sat saroop hai gurbaanee bane-ai.
(Pauri 4th Guru, page 304)***

Gurbani is therefore the embodiment and essence of the ultimate truth. Through faith in Gurbani, one can be transformed into the form of the true Lord.

41 - O MIND IF YOU WAVER I WILL STRIKE YOU WITH LORD'S LOVE

Headmaster Puran Singh Ji¹, who was my uncle, was a devout gursikh of deep faith and had a profound ability to meditate. After finishing his degree and postgraduate teacher training, he started teaching maths at the Khalsa high school in Gardhiwala. He was spiritually minded and devoted from childhood. To awaken and develop his spiritual potential he would come to meet Baba Ji regularly. Baba Ji advised Master Ji, "Just as you have received worldly education to a high standard, similarly you should make efforts to obtain the treasure of spiritual knowledge that Guru Ji has blessed us with in Gurbani. As Guru Ji says...

***The inexhaustible and immeasurable stores are full to the brim With the priceless emeralds and jewels
ratan laal jaa kaa kachhoo na mol.
bharay bhandaar akhoot atol. ||2||
(Gauri Guareri 5th Guru, page 186)***

Firstly, your inner spiritual qualities are very good and you will gain quickly from learning Gurbani. Moreover, you are a teacher. When you acquire the priceless jewels of spiritual knowledge of the Lord, you can impart this to your students. Headmaster Puran Singh Ji asked Baba Ji to elaborate further. Baba Ji continued, "Master Ji you should begin learning Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. You will soon discover what a priceless treasure lies unopened. As you become introspective and meditate deeper on Gurbani you will realise that truly the treasure of Gurbani is far more valuable compared to worldly wealth. This treasure lies within us, unused, unexplored and abandoned carelessly. As soon as you finish your work, come here straightaway, eat with us and after taking Santhiya return home in the evening. S. Nirmal Singh, son of Gurbachan Singh and your own nephew Seva Singh have nearly completed Santhiya of panj granthi (a collection of prayers from Guru Granth Sahib Ji) and are due to finish in a day or two. After this, they will start Santhiya of Guru Granth Sahib Ji. We have books (pothiaan) to read from; so all three of you can start together." Master Puran Singh Ji agreed immediately to Baba Ji's advice and decided to come on the appointed day for Santhiya.

During our recitation, we would all read a page in turn. Baba Ji would quietly listen and would rectify any mispronounced words and if there were any difficult words to understand, he would explain their meanings. He would get us to write them down in our notebooks as we went along. If there were any noteworthy incident or related story from the lives of our Great Guru's, he would oblige us by narrating these too.

A daily routine was in progress whereby all three of us would take tuition from Baba Ji. Master Ji would come after teaching at school and the two of us would return with our schoolbags. Baba Ji would have langar with us, tutor us for an hour or so and this routine continued until half of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji was completed without any problems. One day master Puran Singh Ji fell ill with a high fever of 102 degrees. He managed to reach his school after pausing to rest a couple of times on the way. He taught his pupils all day long. In the evening, he arrived at the gurdwara and lay down straightaway. Baba Ji served langar and refreshment and enquired about master Ji's health. Master Ji told Baba Ji how he was ill with a fever and if they could continue Santhiya tomorrow. Baba Ji replied, "Do as your body permits but if your health allows it, try to take a little tuition so that we do not miss a day. Master Puran Singh Ji declined to stay again. Baba Ji asked when did his fever start. Master Ji replied, "Since yesterday night." "How did you go to school?" asked Baba Ji. "By resting twice on the way to school," replied Master Ji. "Did you teach the

children?" asked Baba Ji. "Yes, I took all the lessons. I took some medicine before I left and felt a little better." answered master Puran Singh Ji Baba Ji spoke, "MasterJi you have managed to take all your lessons despite your fever. You have done it with the fear that if you take a day off, you will lose your newly appointed job. Now when the time to earn the real treasure of life has arrived the mind is wavering and losing hope. All day you continued regardless of your fever. Now, despite you admitting yourself that you feel a little better, you are ready to abandon the true gift of knowledge that will only take half an hour. MasterJi please search within you. Look deep into your mind. Is this the correct thing to do? In your own words, you have admitted that you feel better now than you did earlier today." MasterJi remained quiet for a while and replied, "Baba Ji you are right indeed. Despite my feverish condition this morning I went to work all day. Now when I feel less feverish, maybe a little tired, my mind is becoming lazy at the time of reciting just half an hour's tuition in Gurbani." Saying this MasterJi arose at once denouncing the mind as idle...

***The human is indolent to do good
But becomes a tiger to do evil
chaNgi-aa-eeN aalak karay buri-aa-eeN ho-ay sayr.
(Salok 5th Guru, page 518)***

MasterJi washed his hands, face, and feet and completed an hour or so of tuition as he normally would have done. Though Baba Ji asked MasterJi twice during Santhiya if he wanted to stop, MasterJi carried on regardless, saying, "This mind can run about in worldly affairs even in adversity but a little effort to gain real spiritual benefit and it will make excuses even if the body is slightly ill." At the end of tuition, Baba Ji explained using Gurbani that one should work within the capacity of the body. One should not overwork obstinately. But if the mind gets worldly work carried out easily but makes excuses for spiritual effort, which is much less taxing then, remember what Bhagat Kabir Ji has said...

***O steed left me drive you to the Lord's mansion
If you hesitate then I will strike you
With the whip of the Lord's love.
chal ray baikunth tujheh lay taara-o.
hicheh ta paraym kai chaabuk maara-o. ||2||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 329)***

The Great Guru has tried to mould the mind in numerous ways to encourage the mind from dithering and wandering...

***O vicious mind no faith can be placed in you
You are exceedingly inebriated with sin
The chain of the donkey is removed only
When a load is first put on his back.
man khuthar tayraa nahee bisaas too mahaa udmaadaa.
khar kaa paikhar ta-o chhutai ja-o oopar laadaa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 815)***

"So MasterJi, had your mind convinced you otherwise we would have been deprived of an hour of the company of great SatGuru. Sometimes the mind shirks away from real work. If we remain vigilant against its wily ways, it will not dither or wander. If we do not rein it in and let it run amok, it will end up taking us into spiritual loss. As Guru Arjun Dev, Ji has warned us about the mind...

*O fool you are very slow realise your real profit
But in regard to your loss you hastily run to it
O sinner you take not the merchandise of God's name
But are tied to the debt of vice.*

*ray moorhay laahay ka-o tooN dheelaa dheelaa
totay ka-o bayg Dhaa-i-aa.*

sasat vakhar tooN ghinneh naahee

paapee baaDhaa raynaa-i-aa. ||1||

(Asa 5th Guru, page 402)

42 - ANNUAL GURMAT CAMP IN SEPTEMBER

As the congregation (sangats) discovered that Baba Ji was at Rampur Khera, they started to visit him, coming from places near and far. At the inspiration of some near and dear devotees, the very first Akhand path (continuous recitation of Guru Granth Sahib Ji) was held on 22nd September 1951 and completed two days later on Sunday 24th September 1951.

At the end of the prayers (bhog), hymns (kirtan) were sung and religious discourses (katha) were given by kirtani ragi Singhs (hymn singers). They sung the glories of Waheguru, awakening the thirst for Sikh dharma in the hearts of the congregation. Baba Ji discussed with sangats the true reason for our human existence and why we are here...

This human body has come to hand

This is your chance to meet

The Lord of the world

Other affairs are of no avail

Joining the society of Saints

Contemplate over the name alone.

bha-ee par gobind milan kee ih tayree baree-aa.

aapat maanukh dayhuree-aa.

avar kaaj tayrai kitai na kaam.

mil saaDhsangat bhaj kayval naam. ||1||

(Asa 5th Guru, page 378)

This can be realised only by taking shelter of the Great Guru. One who has not taken refuge of the true Guru has a meaningless life...

They who have neither seen nor adopted their Guru

Vain are they in this world

jin guroo na daykhi-a-o nahu kee-a-o tay akyath sansaar meh. ||4||8||

(Swaiyas 4th Guru, page 1399)

Preaching gurmat inspired a large number of people in the sangats to be baptised. The next day amrit was prepared with the iron double edged sword in an iron vessel. Amrit was administered in front of Guru Ji by the five beloved ones (panj pyara's) and the sangats were guided to follow the path laid by the true Guru. The month of September was chosen because traditionally farmers have some free time between crops. The weather is neither hot nor cold and a Sunday allowed any people in regular jobs to attend as they had a day off work too. To this day, the same annual gurmat camp is still held in September and is called the Assu (September) Smagam (session). After the Smagam was held any fears or deliberation that was in the minds of the congregation were dispelled. Soon people started to visit this once barren mound Rampur Khera in greater numbers.

43 - MAKE YOUR INVALUABLE HUMAN LIFE BEAUTIFUL, THEN YOU SHALL NOT GO DEFEATED TO THE GOD'S COURT

At the September camp in 1951, with the Guru's inspiration Baba Ji addressed the congregation. He told them that such events are useful only, if we take full advantage of the opportunity to meditate on naam. If we simply come to the gurdwara for such assemblies, bow to the Guru, offer money for parshad, have langar and slip off back to our homes, then we will gain very little. We have come to the house of the Guru, leaving our jobs behind. Therefore, it would be better if we took some spiritual guidance, reflect upon it and put these teachings into practice in our daily lives. Only then can these assemblies be beneficial to us. The Almighty Lord has blessed human beings with the supreme position in the whole of the animal kingdom such that...

***Out of all the eighty-four lakh species
The Lord has blessed man with glory
lakh cha-oraaseeh jon sabaa-ee.
maanass ka-o parabh dee-ee vadi-aa-ee.
(Maru 5th Guru, page 1075)***

And

***Other creatures are your water carriers,
In this world you are the sovereignty
avar jon tayree panihaaree.
is Dhartee meh tayree sikdaaree.
(Asa 5th Guru, page 374)***

And

***In eighty four lakh life forms, human life is the supreme life form
lakh chouraaseeh jon vich maanus junum dhulunbh oupaayaa
(Bhai Gurdas Vaar 15, Pauri 3)***

We have been bestowed this life to serve the Guru and meditate upon the Lord's name. Those who use this life to meditate on the Lord's name and serve their Guru can be considered to have succeeded in their life mission. Even the angels and lesser God's yearn to be born as human beings. So with this human body serve God, meditating on his name and do not lose sight of your aim to derive maximum benefit from this precious life...

***Through the Guru's service
The Lord's adoration is practiced
Then alone is obtained the fruit of this human body.
Even the Demi Gods long for this human body.
So through that body of yours,
Think of rendering service unto God.
Meditate thou on the Lord of the
Universe and forget him not.
This alone is the advantage of human life. Pause.
gur sayvaa tay bhagat kamaa-ee.***

**tab ih maanas dayhee paa-ee.
is dayhee ka-o simrahi dayv.
so dayhee bhaj har kee sayv. ||1||
bhajahu gobind bhool mat jaahu.
maanas janam kaa ayhee laahu. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Bhairon Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1159)**

The fifth Guru reminds us in our evening prayer of *Rehras*, as to why we have been given this human life and how can this life be made fruitful...

***This human body has come to your hand
This is your chance to meet the Lord of the universe
Other affairs are of no avail to you
Joining the society of Saints
Contemplate on the Lord's name only. Pause.
bha-ee paraapat maanukh dayhuree-aa.
gobind milan kee ih tayree baree-aa.
avar kaaj tayrai kitai na kaam.
mil saaDhsangat bhaj kayval naam. ||1||
(Asa 5th Guru, page 378)***

The fifth Guru cautions us that, we have obtained this life as a human being after wandering many lifetimes as other species. So, with this body meditate, recite, contemplate the Lord's name and merge with the Almighty of whom you are a part...

***For several past lives you were a worm and a moth
In several, you were an elephant, a fish and a deer.
In several lives, you became a bird and a snake.
In several lives, you were yoked as a horse and an ox.
Meet the Lord of the universe; this is the only time,
After a long time this being has been fashioned into a human. Pause.
ka-ee janam bha-ay keet patangaa.
ka-ee janam gaj meen kurangaa.
ka-ee janam pankhee sarap ho-i-o.
ka-ee janam haivar barikh jo-i-o. ||1||
mil jagdees milan kee baree-aa.
chirankaal ih dayh sanjaree-aa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Gauri Guareri 5th Guru, page 176)***

Bhagat Kabir Ji tells us not to waste this golden opportunity in which we have obtained a human life...

***Kabir, difficult is it to obtain the human life.
This chance comes not again and again.
Just as the ripe fruit falls to the forest floor
It attaches not again to the branch.
kabeer maanas janam dulambh hai ho-ay na baarai baar.
ji-o ban fal paakay bhu-ay gireh bahur na laageh daar. ||30||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1366)***

And

*The leaf (soul) separated from the tree (body)
Unites not with it again and all alone,
It proceeds on its way to death
tarvar vichhunay nah paat jurh-tay jam mag ga-un ikaylee.
binvant naanak bin naam har kay sadaa firat duhaylee. ||1||
(Bihagra 5th Guru, page 546)*

How can this precious human life be utilised fully? Guru Arjan dev Ji tell us...

*Forever and ever should you
Remember your luminous Lord
Never forget him in your mind. Pause.
Attain to the society of the Saints,
By which you shall not go down
The way of death.
Have the viaticum of God's name,
Thus, no blemish shall attach to your lineage.
They who meditate on the master,
Are not thrown into hell.
Even the hot wind touches them not
Within whose mind the Lord has come
And acquired an abode.
Beauteous and good looking are they
Who dwell amongst the society of the Saints.
Who have amassed the wealth of God's name
They are sagacious and extremely exquisite
Drink thou the name nectar
The home of happiness and live thou
By viewing the face of the Lord's slave
Have all your affairs of set aright
By ever worshipping the feet of the Guru
He alone reflects on the Lord
Whom God has made his own
He is the warrior and the chosen one
On whose forehead good fortune is recorded
Within my mind I have meditated on the master
For me this is like enjoying
The revetments of sovereignty
Evil never originates in me
Being dedicated I am saved
To the righteous action
The creator I have ensrined in my mind
And I have obtained the fruit of my life
O bride! If God the spouse becomes
Pleasing to your mind
Then shall your married life become ever stable
By seeking the shelter of the dispeller of fear*

***I have obtained the eternal wealth of the name
 Attaching to his robe the Lord has saved Nanak
 And he has won for himself the peerless life
 nit nit da-yu samaalee-ai. mool na manhu visaaree-ai. rahaa.
 santaa sangat paa-ee-ai.
 jit jam kai panth na jaa-ee-ai.
 tosaa har kaa naam lai tayray kuleh na laagai gaal jee-o. ||1||
 jo simranday saaN-ee-ai. narak na say-ee paa-ee-ai.
 tatee vaa-o na lag-ee jin man vuthaa aa-ay jee-o. ||2||
 say-ee sundar sohnay. saaDhsang jin baihnay.
 har Dhan jinee sanji-aa say-ee gambheer apaar jee-o. ||3||
 har ami-o rasaa-in peevee-ai. muhi dithai jan kai jeevee-ai.
 kaaraj sabh savaar lai nit poojahu gur kay paav jee-o. ||4||
 jo har keetaa aapnaa. tineh gusaa-ee jaapnaa.
 so sooraa parDhaan so mastak jis dai bhaag jee-o. ||5||
 man manDhay parabh avgaah-aa.
 ayhi ras bhogan paatisaahee-aa.
 mandaa mool na upji-o taray sachee kaarai laag jee-o. ||6||
 kartaa man vasaa-i-aa. janmai kaa fal paa-i-aa.
 man bhaavandaa kant har tayraa thir ho-aa sohaag jee-o. ||7||
 atal padaarath paa-i-aa. bhai bhanjan kee sarnaa-i-aa.
 laa-ay anchal naanak taari-an jitaa janam apaar jee-o. ||8||4||38||
 (Maajh 5th Guru, page 132)***

The great Guru has taught us the method by which we can make sure we use our body for spiritual gain...

***Supremely fruitful are the feet
 If these feet walk on the way of Guru Amar das
 Supremely fruitful are the hands
 If these hands touch the feet of Guru Amar das
 Supremely fruitful is this tongue
 If this tongue utters the praise of Guru Amar das
 Supremely fruitful are these eyes
 If these eyes behold the vision of Guru Amar das
 Supremely fruitful are these ears
 If they hear the praise of Guru Amar das
 Fruitful is the mind, in which Guru Amar das
 The father of the world, himself abides
 Fruitful is that head, says "jalap" which
 Ever bows before Guru Amar das
 charan ta par sakyath charan gur amar paval ra-y.
 hath ta par sakyath hath lageh gur amar pa-y.
 jeeh ta par sakyath jeeh gur amar bhanijai.
 nain ta par sakyath na-yan gur amar pikhijai.
 sarvan ta par sakyath sarvan gur amar sunijai.
 sakyath so hee-o jit hee-a basai gur amardaas nij jagat pit.
 sakyath so sir jaalap bhanai jo sir nivai gur amar nit. ||1||10||
 (Swaiyas 3rd Guru, page 1394)***

In the prayer of *Anand Sahib*, Guru Ji tells us to question every sense organ of ours to account for its use. All our senses are guided towards spiritual betterment. What is to be avoided in our daily life and how we should use our senses dutifully is ordained in this prayer...

***O, My tongue you are engrossed in other relishes
Your thirst departs not
Your thirst shall not depart by any means
Until you attain the Lord's elixir
If you obtain the Lord's elixir
And drink the Lord's elixir
Thirst shall not again affect you
saa rasnaa Dhan Dhan hai mayree jindurhee-ay
gun gaavai har parabh kayray raam.
tay sarvan bhalay sobhneek heh mayree jindurhee-ay
har keertan suneh har tayray raam.
so sees bhalaa pavitar paavan hai mayree jindurhee-ay
jo jaa-ay lagai gur pairay raam.
gur vitahu naanak vaari-aa mayree jindurhee-ay
jin har har naam chitayray raam. ||2||
tay naytar bhalay parvaan heh mayree jindurhee-ay
jo saaDhoo satgur daykkeh raam.
tay hasat puneet pavitar heh mayree jindurhee-ay
jo har jas har har laykkeh raam.
tis jan kay pag nit poojee-ah mayree jindurhee-ay
jo maarag Dharam chalayseh raam.
naanak tin vitahu vaari-aa mayree jindurhee-ay
har sun har naam manayseh raam. ||3||
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 922)***

Guru is addressing the mind behind the sense of taste i.e. the tongue. Your thirst for all relishes and tastes will not be quenched until one tastes the nectar of Lord's name. Similarly the eyes are addressed in *Anand Sahib*, "My eyes your task is to see the Lord of the world in every thing that you see."

***O my eyes God has infused light in thee
Without the Lord see not another
Save the Lord see not any other
The merciful master alone is worthy of
Beholding this entire world
The entire world you behold
Is the Lord's manifestation
See God's image alone in it.
ay rasnaa too an ras raach rahee tayree pi-aas na jaa-ay.
pi-aas na jaa-ay horat kitai jichar har ras palai na paa-ay.
har ras paa-ay palai pee-ai har ras
bahurh na tarisnaa laagai aa-ay.
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 922)***

One must warn the mind to use these ears to listen to the praises of the Lord so that your soul can hear the name of the Lord only...

***O ears of mine you were sent to hear the Lord's name
You were sent and attached to the body
To hear the true name. Hear ye the true word
Hearing which the soul and the body
Are revived and the tongue is
Absorbed in the name nectar
ay naytarahu mayriho har tum meh jot Dharee
har bin avar na daykhu ko-ee.
har bin avar na daykhu ko-ee nadree har nihaali-aa.
ayhu vis sansaar tum daykh-day ayhu har kaa roop hai
har roop nadree aa-i-aa.
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 922)***

One must take an account from the whole body and remind our mind that the light of the Almighty that he has placed in us is responsible for allowing one to live. The Lord has given us sensory organs, limbs to walk, intelligence and beauty and then placed us at the top of all living creation. However, the one who made and fashioned us, has been forgotten. Remember the Lord creator affectionately then your life will be fruitful...

***O, my body what deeds have you done since
Your advent into this world?
What deeds have you done O body of mine?
Since you came into this world?
He the Lord, who created and fashioned you
That Lord you have not ensrined in your mind
By the Guru's grace the Lord abides within my mind
And I obtain what is predestined for me
Says Nanak this body of his
Who attaches his mind to the true Guru
Becomes acceptable
ay sareeraa mayri-aa is jag meh aa-ay kai
ki-aa tuDh karam kamaa-i-aa.
ke karam kamaa-i-aa tuDh sareeraa jaa too jag meh aa-i-aa.
jin har tayraa rachan rachi-aa so har man na vasaa-i-aa.
gur parsaa-dee har man vasi-aa poorab likhi-aa paa-i-aa.
kahai naanak ayhu sareer parvaan ho-aa
jin satgur si-o chit laa-i-aa. ||35||
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 922)***

And

***O ears of mine yewere sent to hear the true Name.
Ye were sent and attaché to the body
To hear true Name. Hear ye the true word.
Hearing which the soul and the body
Are revived and the tongue is, Absorbed in the Name Nector***

**ay sarvanhu mayriho saachai sunnai no pathaa-ay.
saachai sunnai no pathaa-ay sareer laa-ay sunhu sat bane.
jit sunee man tan hari-aa ho-aa rasnaa ras samaanee.
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 922)**

We must address our own mind and tell it that, "The Lord is not obtained through cunningness, so leave all your guile and treachery aside. Adopt the path shown by the Guru. Walk on the principles of Gurbani and practice them. Do not lead your body into sinful acts, committing which you will repent later." Bhai Gurdas Ji too, scolds each of his sense organs, which lead the body astray and compel it towards evil actions...

**Cursed is the head that does not bow or touch the Guru's feet
Cursed are the eyes that behold another than the Guru
Those ears are cursed that do not listen to the Guru's word
And do not meditate upon the word
Cursed is the tongue, which recites other mantras
And not the Guru's mantar
Without service to the Guru
These hands and feet are cursed
(Bhai Gurdas ji, Vaar 27, Pauri 10)**

No doubt, these organs are to be used in the pursuit of good actions but Guru Ji has told us of the most supremely pious action for which we must all endeavour. By taking this action, our life's mission is realised, obtaining honour and praise in this world and in the Lord's court hereafter.

This action is to meditate on the Lord's name. In so doing, the noose of the angel of death becomes ineffective and enemies turn to friends...

**Make thou your human body fruitful
Thus, you shall not go defeated to the Lord's court
And in this world and the next one
You shall obtain honour
The Lord shall deliver you at the last moment
Sing the praises of the all-pervading God
Man contemplating the wondrous Lord
You shall be embellished thus
Here and in the here after. Pause.
Sitting and when standing reflects thou on God
Thus all your afflictions shall pass
All your enemies shall become your friends
And your soul shall be rendered immaculate
This is the most majestic deed
Of all the faiths, this is the most sublime faith
By God's meditation you shall be emancipated
And you shall be rid
Of the burden of sins of man past births
Your hope shall then be fulfilled
And the noose of death shall be shorn
Hear thou the Guru's instruction and**

**O Nanak thou shall merge in celestial bliss
dulabh dayh savaar. jaahi na dargeh haar.
halat palat tuDh ho-ay vadi-aa-ee.
ant kee baylaa la-ay chhadaa-ee. ||1||
raam kay gun gaa-o.
halat palat hohi dovai suhaylay
achraj purakh Dhi-aa-o. ||1|| rahaa-o.
oothat baithat har jaap. binsai sagal santaap.
bairae sabh hoveh meet. nirmal tayraa hovai cheet. ||2||
sabh tay ootam ih karam. sagal Dharam meh saraysat Dharam.
har simran tayraa ho-ay uDhaar.
janam janam kaa utrai bhaar. ||3||
pooran tayree hovai aas. jam kee katee-ai tayree faas.
gur kaa updays suneesai. naanak sukh sahj sameesai. ||4||30||41||
(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 895)**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji states that...

**Contemplate thou the one name
Unfruitful are all other affairs
japahu ta ayko naamaa. avar niraafal kaamaa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Suhi 1st Guru, page 728)**

Guru Arjun Dev Ji tell us in *Sukhmani Sahib*...

**Of all the religions
The best religion is to repeat the Lord's name
And this is the most pious deed
sarab Dharam meh saraysat Dharam.
har ko naam jap nirmal karam.
(Guru Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 266)**

And

**O friendly Saints, do this work only, abandon all else and repeat God's name
saajan sant karahu ih kaam, aan ti-aag japahu har naam.**

The fifth Guru tells us that man works hard and does all manner of jobs from morning until evening yet finds no time to contemplate God's name. Only a rare person indulges in this majestic deed...

**Man goes about making all efforts
He makes not the one effort to meet his Lord
Nanak, rare is the person who realises this effort
Which saves the world?
aahar sabh kardaa firai aahar ik na ho-ay.
naanak jit aahar jag uDhrai virlaa boojhai ko-ay. ||2||
(Salok 5th Guru, page 965)**

In this world, all pious actions like donating money, austerities, ritual chanting and self-restraint are nowhere near as fruitful and supreme as the uttering the Lord's name...

**As many as there are alms giving
Charities, penances and chanting
Above them all, is God's name
Who ever with his tongue utters God's name
God arranges his affairs
punn daan jap tap jaytay sabh oopar naam.
har har rasnaa jo japai tis pooran kaam. ||3||
(Asa 5th Guru, page 401)**

And

**To all religious rituals
And Vaarious ceremonial rites
Superior is the conduct of meditating on his name
karam Dharam anayk kiri-aa sabh oopar naam achaar. ||2||
(Asa 5th Guru, page 405)**

And

**Charities, giving alms and religious rites
Equal not God's name
This destroys all the sins
Supplicates Nanak
I live by meditating on the Lord
And my coming and going have ended
punn daan na tul kiri-aa har sarab paapaa hant jee-o.
binvant naanak simar jeevaa janam maran rahant jee-o. ||1||
(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 927)**

And

**I have weighed all the merits
Of visiting the places of
Pilgrimage, observing fasts
Performing sacred feasts and giving alms
But they equal not the measure
Unto the Lord God's name
sabh tirath varat jag punn tolaahaa.
har har naam na pujeh pujaahaa.
har har atul tol at bhaaree gurmat jap omaahaa raam. ||3||
(Jaitsari 5th Guru, page 699)**

In this dark age. Guru Ji has recommended the most sublime deed is to sow the seed of naam (meditating the name of God). All other acts of worship especially ceremonial rituals and rites are useless in this age. He has warned us not to fool ourselves in the pursuit of such false practice...

***O the Dark Age has come arrived
Sow, sow thou the seed of the one Lord's name
Now it is not the season for other planting
Wander and stray not in doubt
ab kaloo aa-i-o ray. ik naam bovhu bovhu.
an root naahee naahee. mat bharam bhoolahu bhoolahu.
(Basant 5th Guru, page 1185)***

Bhagat Ravi Das Ji tell us that in the past three ages different rituals and rites were needed to obtain salvation. In the age of *Satyug*, truthful living was practiced to reach salvation. In the age of *trayta*, sacrificial rites and offerings were required for salvation. In the age of *Duapar*, performing ritual ceremonies correctly was the way. In the age of darkness or *kalyug*, salvation is obtained through uttering and meditating on the Lord's name...

***In Satyug was truth
In trayta yug sacrificial feasts
And in Duapar yug
The performance of good worship
In the three ages of men, held fast to these three
In the age of kalyug, the name is the only prop.
satjug sat taytaa jagee du-aapar poojaachaar.
teenou jug teenou dirhay kal kayval naam aDhaar. ||1||
(Gauri Bairagan Bhagat Ravi Das Ji, page 346)***

Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji tells us as well that, in this age of darkness meditate on the name of the benevolent Lord, doing which this mortal can obtain salvation. Even the Vedas (Hindu scriptures) say that no amount of rituals can measure up to the meditation of the Lord's name.

***kal mai ayk naam kirpaa niDh jaahi japai gat paavai.
a-or Dharam taa kai sam naahan ih biDh bayd bataavai. ||2||
(Sorath 9th Guru, page 632)***

The third Guru, Guru Amar Das Ji, tells us that uttering the Lord's name and singing his praises are paramount. It was in the past that pilgrimages, austerities and sacrifices were the way to salvation but in this age, the ultimate method to obtain salvation is to meditate on the Lord's name:

***Celibacy, self discipline and pilgrimages
Are the faiths of past ages
In the dark age, glorification of
Lord's name is the only righteous deed
jat sanjam tirath onaa jugaa kaa Dharam hai
kal meh keerat har naamaa. ||2||
(Bilawal 3rd Guru, page 797)***

Our fifth Satguru, Guru Arjun Dev Ji informs us that salvation in the dark age can only be had through the practice of naam meditation:

In the Dark Age

***One is emancipated only through the name
Nanak utters the name of the creator Lord
kalijug meh ik naam uDhaar.
naanak bolai barahm beechar. ||2||11||
(Bhairon 5th Guru, page 1138)***

Guru Ram Das Ji has told us that the practice of meditation on the Lord's name is sublime and whosoever practices this, will obtain salvation in this age regardless of their caste, colour or status in this life:

In this Dark Age

***The Lord's name is the supreme wealth
Through it the Saintly persons are saved
All the blemishes of Namdev, Jaidev, Kabir, Tarlochan
And Ravi Das the tanner were dispelled.
kaljug naam parDhaan padaarath bhagat janaa uDhray.
naamaa jaiday-o kabeer tarilochan sabh dokh ga-ay chamray.***

In our daily prayer of *Rehras*, the great Guru tells us that, the most sacred act in this dark age is contemplation of the Lord's name:

***This is the only virtuous deed in the Dark Age
The one who sings the praise of the world Lord
kal meh ayho punn gun govind gaahi.
(Salok 5th Guru, page 962)***

Guru Ram Das Ji clearly gives his verdict that, one who does not sow the seed of naam in kalyug, and simply dabbles in rituals, loses everything including the priceless breath that the Lord has given him to recite the name of God.

In the Dark Age

***If a man sows any other seed apart from the name,
He loses all his profit and capital.
kalijug beej beejay bin naavai sabh laahaa mool gavaa-i-aa.
(Asa 4th Guru, page 446)***

The above-mentioned edicts of our Guru show, that in the age of darkness, naam is given the utmost importance and is the supreme method of obtaining salvation. Gurbani guides and directs only to contemplate, meditate and recite the name of the Lord. It would not be an exaggeration to say that God has given us this human life to meditate on his name and escape the cycle of rebirth, ultimately merging into the Almighty Lord. The mortal who confines his life to working, worldly affairs and blind rituals is shunned by Guru Amar Das Ji.

Accursed is the mortal

***Along with his family and friends
When one attains not his master now
The opportunity lost comes not to hand again
And such a man loses his life in vain***

***Dharig sareer kutamb sahit si-o jit hun khasam na paa-i-aa.
pa-orhee chhurhkee fir haath na aavai ahilaa janam gavaa-iaa.
(Bilawal 3rd Guru, page 796)***

Guru Ram Das Ji says that it would have been better if mothers of those who do not utter the Lord's name were barren. Such people are stuck in this world and lament like someone caught in a bush of thorns.

***O Lord master the mother of those
Within whose mind the name abides not
Ought to have been barren
Their forlorn bodies wander about without the name
And they waste their lives and die crying.
jin har hirdai naam na basi-o tin maat keejai har baaNjhaa.
tin sunjee dayh fireh bin naavai o-ay khap khap mu-ay karaaNjhaa.
(Jaitsari 4th Guru, page-697)***

Now the question arises how and where can naam be obtained? Naam, which allows one to enter the Lord's kingdom, brings bliss and peace. All Gurbani resoundingly declares repeatedly it to be the only way to salvation. Guru Ram Das Ji tells us that the great Guru himself bestows the gift of naam on the mortal. Those, who are blessed, meet the Guru, who then bestows the gift of naam upon them. The Guru has already known the Lord Almighty. God has empowered the Guru to bestow naam upon the mortal...

***The true Guru is the giver of God's name
Himself he causes me to meet the Lord
The true Guru has understood the Lord God
None else is as great as the Guru
I go and fall under the Guru's protection
By his grace he unites me with the Lord
satgur daataa har naam kaa parabh aap milaavai so-ay.
satgur har parabh bujhi-aa gur jayvad avar na ko-ay.
(Sri Raag 4th Guru, page 39)***

Guru Amar Das Ji tells us that only the true Guru can bless us with naam. Who gets to meet the true Guru? The one who is showered with the blessings of the supreme Lord:

***From the true Guru, the name is obtained
By the Guru's grace the Lord is obtained
ssatgur tay naam paa-ee-ai karam milai parabh so-ay. ||4||
(Gauri Bairagan 3rd Guru, page 233)***

Once the true Guru establishes resolutely, the name of the Lord within our hearts, then our destiny awakens. When does the Guru awaken and change our destiny? Answer - when we submit our selves unconditionally to him so that...

***For the sake of the Lord master
I have sold off my body to the perfect Guru
The beneficent true Guru has implanted***

**God's name within me
On my face and forehead
Very auspicious destiny is inscribed
har har arath sareer ham baychi-aa pooray gur kai aagay.
satgur daatai naam dirhaa-i-aa mukh mastak bhaag sabhaagay.
(Gauri Purbi 4th Guru, page 171)**

Gurbani tells us that without receiving naam from the true Guru, there is no salvation...

**Without the true Guru
The name is not obtained O brothers
And without the name doubt departs not
bin satgur naam na paa-ee-ai bhaa-ee
bin naamai bharam na jaa-ee.
(Sorath 1st Guru, page 635)**

And

**It is through the perfect Guru
That the Lord's name is obtained
To remain merged in the
True Lord is the only true form of yoga
pooray gur tay naam paa-i-aa jaa-ay.
jog jugat sach rahai samaa-ay.
(Ramkali 1st Guru, page 941)**

And

**O my intimate friend
Devote yourself to meditation of Lord your spouse
Ever serve thou your Guru
And obtain the wealth of naam
saajan mayray pareetmahu tum sah kee bhagat karayho.
gur sayvhu sadaa aapnaa naam padaarath layho.
(Asa 3rd Guru, page 440)**

So dear friends, meditate on the Lord's name, as this is what appeases the Lord. This blessing of remembrance is obtained from the true Guru...

**O knowledgeable seeker without the Guru
Lord's devotional service cannot be performed
As the bleached cloth cannot assume colour of dye
However much we may desire it. Pause.
gi-aanee gur bin bhagat na ho-ee.
korai rang kaday na charhai jay lochai sabh ko-ee. ||1|| rahaao.
(Suhi 4th Guru, page 732)**

As starched cloth will not pick up the colour of a dye until it is washed of its starch and bleached, similarly to cleanse the mind, so that it may become imbued with the colour of the Lord's name, it is important to be in awe (reverential fear) of the Guru...

***Without the Lord's awe
His devotional service cannot be performed ever
Loving worship enters on the wings of reverential awe
bhai bin bhagat na ho-ee kab hee
bhai bhaa-ay bhagat savaaree. ||6||
(Ramkali 3rd Guru, page 911)***

Guru Amar Das Ji tells us that, they who worship without the guidance of a Guru, waste their effort and become weary. They, who follow their mind and meditate without the Guru, find that their effort is not accepted in the Lord's court. As they are unable to wash the dirt of ego themselves...

***The perverse worship the Lord
Without the Guru
But how can devotional service be
Performed without the Guru
manmukh bhagat karahi bin satgur
vin satgur bhagat na ho-ee raam.
(Raag Suhi 3rd Guru, page 768)***

So, my mind, the mortal is only cleansed when he enters the refuge of the Guru and pleads...

***O my mind! If you seek the shelter of the Guru
Then you shall become filth less
The perverse have grown weary of repeating God's name
But their dirt of ego could not be cleansed
man mayray gur saran aavai taa nirmal ho-ay.
manmukh har har kar thakay mail na sakee Dho-ay. ||1|| rahaao.
(Sri Raag 3rd Guru, page 39)***

Everyone is uttering the name of the Lord with his or her tongue. Just the mere recital of his name will not lead to our salvation. Through Guru's grace, when God's name awakens and imbues our complete being then, our effort bears fruit...

***All men utter God's name
But such utterances does not unite one with the Lord
If by the Guru's grace, the Lord abides in the mind
Then alone does one gather the fruit.
raam raam sabh ko kahai kahi-ai raam na ho-ay.
gur parsadee raam man vasai taa fal paavai ko-ay. ||1||
(Gujri 3rd Guru, page 491)***

So, it is clear that without the Guru's grace, naam cannot abide in the heart. Now the question arises, how do we obtain the Guru's grace? It would be appropriate to give a worldly example. In

order to obtain a favour from our parents, friends or relatives, one would have to appease them by doing what they ask us to do. We would follow their every command or wish in order to appease them first. In the same way, if we wish to gain the Guru's grace then we need to appease him...

***O sister you who walk on this path
Do the work that the Guru bids you to do
Abandon thou your minds intellect
And give up the love of another
Thus, you shall have the Lord's vision
Even the hot winds shall not touch you
By myself I know not how to speak
I utter all that is the command of the Lord
it maarag chalay bhaa-ee-arhay
gur kahai so kaar kamaa-ay jee-o.
ti-aagayN man kee mat-rhee visaarayN doojaa bhaa-o jee-o.
i-o paavahi har darsaavarhaa nah lagai tatee vaa-o jee-o.
ha-o aaphu bol na jaandaa mai kahi-aa sabh hukmaa-o jee-o.
(Suhi 3rd Guru, page-763)***

Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji orders

***He who abides by Guru's order,
Gets pleasure of Guru.
hukam mani-ai hovai parvaan taa khasmai kaa mahal paaisee.
(Aasa Di Var, page-471)***

So, by obeying his command, man becomes acceptable and obtains a place in the Lord's mansion. He who accepts his masters bidding obtains all that his heart desires.

What Is The Order Of The Guru?

During the lifetime of our Guru's, whenever a devotee came looking for spiritual enlightenment, then, considering him as deserving, he would be given Charan-amrit. At that time, amrit was prepared by chanting *Mool mantar* and *Gur-mantar*. It was then consecrated and blessed by the Guru, dipping his toe in the water. Bhai Gurdas Ji tells us in his Vaar that, "The feet of the Guru were washed after prayer and the water (Charan-amrit) was offered to the Sikhs to drink."

After Guru Nanak Dev Ji started preaching the gospel, the Lord's aim of naam meditation came to fruition when Guru Ji established a separate panth (religion or spiritual path). Bhai Gurdas Ji wrote that great Guru Nanak Dev founded a new Panth in this world, winning over numerous disciples of all faiths and creeds including the Sidhs. To develop and preach the gospel of naam meditation further, Bhai Lehna Ji (later called Guru Angad dev Ji) was entrusted with the duty to preach the message further. He in turn entrusted Guru Amar Das Ji after wards to nourish the world with the message of the Lord Almighty. Guru Gobind Singh Ji writes in Bachittar Natak...

***God has graced him as his own son
And sent him here to this world to preach religion
And establish the Sikh panth so that the masses
Could be stopped from indulging in evil doing***

The tenth Guru eliminated the institution of a physical Guru, by creating perfection as he handed the devotee over to "Shabad Guru" (The Word). After performing the miraculous deed of Baisakhi 1699, when he established the Khalsa in the image of the five beloved ones (panj pyara's), he arrived at Hazoor Sahib, Nanded, India. Here at Nanded, the congregation was amassed and while Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned, the tenth Guru – Guru Gobind Singh Ji bowed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and placed five pennies and a coconut as an offering. In doing so, he transferred his divine light into the "Shabad Guru" and ordered the Khalsa to accept Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as their Guru in all the ages to come. This, he told them, was the order of the Almighty Lord. The Sikhs bowed to the orders of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and then asked, "O redeemer of the poor, we will accept and regard Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as our Guru but how will we transfer the divine light of the word into the mortal body without the technique of preparing Charanamrit? Who shall be able to give Charan-amrit and bless it now? The great Guru smiled as he heard their request and replied," We have already bestowed this power to the Khalsa on Baisakhi of 1699.

The authority of baptising resides with the five beloved ones (panj pyara's). They are entrusted with the authority and personify me when they administer baptism. They can impose penance or absolve a devotee if they see fit. They are the supreme authority and their order is the final word. They will now administer the amrit prepared by a doubleedged sword (Khande Ki Pauhul).

For us, it becomes an immovable fact that who so ever wants to appease the Guru and attract his grace must take baptism at the hands of the five beloved ones. He or she must take Khande Ki Pauhul and not any other type of initiation what so ever, from any other physical Guru. All spiritual guidance is to be taken from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the five beloved ones. One must follow the code of conduct given to us by the five beloved one's in the amrit ceremony and if we deviate in any of our vows, seek pardon from the five beloved one's at the first available opportunity. In a nutshell, we must completely surrender our whole being, mind, body and soul to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, in the presence of the five beloved one's. One must follow the Guru's orders with faith.

The code of conduct and living imparted to us by the five beloved ones, in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, must be followed without fail. Our inner and outer code of conduct is to read Gurbani, recite *Gur-mantar* and *Mool mantar*, *Nitnem* and live according to the principles laid down by the Guru. Only then, can one be a claimant to the Guru's grace..:

***Surrender all your body soul and wealth
Unto the Guru and submit to his will
Thus shall you obtain the Lord
tan man Dhan sabh sa-up gur ka-o hukam mani-ai paa-ee***
(*Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 918*)

The Guru too, donates his all to the devotee who surrenders completely to him. As the five beloved ones gave their heads when asked, the Guru gave himself for baptism at the hands of the Khalsa. So much so, the Guru gave his son's to maintain the prestige of the panth. To such a devotee, the Guru gives everything and hides nothing from him. "Khalsa" the true devotee is given supreme honour by Guru Gobind Singh Ji...

***The Khalsa is my true embodiment, I reside within the Khalsa
Khalsa is my mouth and organs, I am forever with the Khalsa***
(*10th Guru, Sarab Loh Granth*)

The Guru's edict received through the five beloved one's, once put into practice, slowly starts to wash away the dirt of ego and vanity...

***The soul defiled with sins
Is cleaned with the love of God's name.
bharee-ai mat paapaa kai sang.
oh Dhopai naavai kai rang.
(Japji 1st Guru, page 4)***

Gurbani serves the purpose of spiritual soap and medicine for the diseased mind. Recitation of *Gur-mantar* and Gurbani is a must, whether we concentrate or not. To clean our mind rapidly, *Seva* (humble service without material reward) of the congregation is essential. Slowly, after repeated trying, the mind becomes pure. Affection and liking for Gurbani arises in the mind. A taste then develops for uttering *Waheguru*. These are symptoms of a mind beginning to purify. A mind such as this is attracted to Gurbani and itself appeases the Guru. The purified mind will concentrate on Gurbani and it will enshrine the words of the Lord or naam. This becomes the stage of unity with the Almighty.

The code of conduct given by the five beloved one's helps to stabilise naam in our hearts. The length of time it takes naam to enshrine in our hearts depends on how promptly one abides by the Guru's order and practices the Guru's instructions with faith and devotion...

***He who heartily realizes this Gurbani
Within his mind abides the Lord's name
ih banee jo jee-ahu jaanai tis antar ravai har naamaa. ||1||
(Bilawal 3rd Guru, page 797)***

***And by the Guru's grace God's fear is obtained
And by great good fortune God comes
And abides in the mind
gur parsaa-dee bha-o pa-i-aa vadbhaag vasi-aa man aa-ay.
bhai pa-i-ai man vas ho-aa ha-umai sabad jalaa-ay.
(Sorath 3rd Guru, page 645)***

When fear of the Lord arises, the mind is restrained and through naam ego is burnt up. Ego is burned through *Gur-mantar* and Gurbani...

***If she effaces her ego
Then she merges in her spouse
ha-umai jaa-ee taa kant samaa-ee.
(Suhi Astpadian 1st Guru, page 750)***

Then Guru Nanak Dev Ji tells us that, when the ego is burned, one obtains salvation...

***When self-conceit departs
The highest rank is obtained
ha-umai jaa-ay param pad paa-ee-ai. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Guru 1st Guru, page 226)***

**When through naam the ego is stilled
Then he finds the Lord's mansion pause
ha-umai jaa-ay sabad ghar lahee-ai. ||1|| rahaa-o.**
(Ramkali 1st Guru, page 904)

**If man stills his ego by Guru's grace
He imbibes Lord's love then he becomes pure
And attains supreme status
ha-umai jaa-ay ta nirmal hovai
gurmukh parchai param pad pa-ee-aa. ||7||**
(Bilawal Astpadian 4th Guru, page 834)

And

**When ego is stilled then knows he the one Lord
Such a Guru ward merges into the Lord
ha-umai jaa-ay ta ayko boojhai so gurmukh sahj samaa-idaa. ||13||**
(Maru Sohila 5th Guru, page 1076)

When ego dies, the ultimate spiritual position (param padh) is obtained. Then the human life of the mortal becomes successful and he merges with the Almighty...

**He O Nanak blends with the Lord
As water mingles with water
naanak leen bha-i-o gobind si-o ji-o paanee sang paanee. ||3||11||**
(Sorath 9th Guru, page 633)

And

**The pervading God and Kabir have become one
And no one can distinguish between them.
raam kabeeraa ayk bha-ay hai ko-ay na sakai pachhaanee. ||6||3||**
(Ramkali Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 969)

So in order to attain this blissful state of union, it is in our benefit that we do not waste anymore time. By taking the Guru's shelter, we must seek his blessings. Guru Arjun Dev Ji orders that we should delay actions that are sinful and promptly take those actions that are pious and good. So...

**Delay not in practicing righteousness
Delay only in committing sin
nah bilamb DharmaN bilamb paapaN.**
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1354)

Dear friends, to perfect this human life, take the amrit of *khanda and batta* (Iron double edged sword and bowl). In this manner, attain the blessing of the great Guru, otherwise...

**You shall be born repeatedly
And die and be born again
You shall suffer much punishment**

***On the way to the distant country of the Lord
jam jam marai marai fir jammai.
bahut sajaa-ay pa-i-aa days lammai.
(Maru 5th Guru, page 1020)***

...and this circle of life, death and rebirth will continue. Baba Ji would give this sermon at every gurmat camp and numerous devotees would be inspired to take amrit thereafter.

44 - SHARING COMMUNAL FOOD (LANGAR)

At the end of the Akhand path held during September 1951, the entire congregation sat in straight rows (pangat – literally means rows) alongside one another, so that they could all share in the langar (the communal kitchen where all Sikhs share food) together. Our Guru's started the tradition of langar, and free food is served to all who come, regardless of caste, colour, creed or status. A few people from Gondpur village got together, and approached Baba Ji, and asked to have a private audience with him. Baba Ji consented politely to go ahead and ask whatever they wanted, without hesitation. The spokesman for the group asked Baba Ji, "Please could you announce it over the speakerphone that those people who belong to lower and untouchable castes to sit in a separate row." Hearing these words Baba Ji rebuked the group of people and said, "At no cost can this request of yours be accepted. This cannot happen. In the eyes of our Lord and Guru, we are all equal, with no one of high or low caste. All have been blessed with equal status. Do not even dream of our acceding to your request. If you few people feel you are above the rest of the congregation then you can sit somewhere separately but the rows will remain for all of us to eat langar together."

Hearing these robust and impressive words, the group of people stood in silence, none daring to speak another word. On the contrary, they too were influenced by Baba Ji's words, and sat back amongst the rest of the congregation in the common rows.

The above-mentioned incident was not just mere words on Baba Ji's behalf. Baba Ji practiced the principle of langar and pangat all his life. He would always sit in the sangat, daily, to have langar in rows, on the floor, just as it was in the times of our beloved Guru's. He would never have food made for himself or eat separately from the congregation. He would eat whatever was available in the Guru's kitchen for one and all. In fact, this principle showed the humility of Baba Ji and his belief in the equality of all human beings. It showed his practical application of the highest principles of our Guru, that he too, was a part of the Guru's congregation and not above it.

Generally, he would take very little salt in his food. If there were too much salt in the Daal (lentil soup), he would just dilute it with some water. He almost never ate green or red chillies. If he was due to eat at anyone's house, he would ask them before hand to refrain from using chillies in the food. If somehow, the family had put chilli in the food inadvertently, he would discreetly, without fuss, just dip his chapatti in water and eat it. Similarly, if there were too much sugar in the tea, he wouldn't scold anyone. He would just add some water to dilute it. It was as if he followed what Bhagat Kabir Ji has said...

***The Lord's elixir of naam I have tasted
Tasting which nectar all other relishes I have forgotten.
raam ras pee-aa ray.
jih ras bisar ga-ay ras a-or. ||1|| rahaa-o
(Gauri Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 337)***

Baba Ji was utilitarian, in that he ate for the simple purpose of satisfying his nutritional needs and not to indulge in tasting culinary delicacies. He was not in favour of frying food or eating spicy foods. He would prefer simple food without too many spices, garlic and other garnishes. The Daal made for the sangat would be made simply, by boiling lentils with chopped onions and some butter. He would often have Masur Daal (a yellow lentil made into a soup) or yoghurt with some chapatti.

In the early days, if a devotee brought milk to the Gurdwara, Baba Ji would make tea or herbal tea (called Saunfa) and use the milk for the service of the sangat. If no milk was available, he would make tea as normal but, instead of adding milk, he would add a little butter and offer it to the sangat. With the tea, he would offer his apology, "We have no milk in the Gurdwara and I don't go to beg for milk. Please accept this tea as it is. Whatever the true Guru sends here, we distribute it as it comes, back to the sangat."

45 - A THOUGHT ABOUT FALSE GURU'S (GURUDOM)

Gurudom- A slang often used for a dera in which the priest considers himself as a Guru (Physical god) and he runs his institutions on so called religious lives in which the general public is asked to worship him. This is against Sikhism.

Only a short while had elapsed since Baba Ji had come to Rampur Khera. One day a man called Balwant Singh arrived from Baba Ji's village to see him. After exchanging pleasantries, he petitioned Baba Ji, "Dear Bhai Sahib Ji! You have been extolling the Virtues of becoming a Sikh of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and asserting that Gurbani is the true Guru with much enthusiasm. You also tell the sangat that it is the divine order of the Almighty to believe in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the true Guru. You also said that Gurbani is the Guru and the Guru is Gurbani.

Yet, despite your fervent message many people of your own village are becoming followers of living Guru's. At first, only a few low caste people joined this cult but now, even people from well-off families have started to follow such living Guru's. The farm workers who joined the cult of a living Guru persuaded their landowner employers to convert to the new religion. Two such families have gone as far as to have special mantra's whispered into their ear as a mark of initiation into the fold of this living Guru."

S. Balwant Singh continued, "I asked these people why they had joined the growing flock of this living Guru and abandoned the shelter of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji? They told me that the living Guru preaches about Gurbani too. They told me they sing and recite Gurbani just like us. Moreover they tell me that they only found out after visiting the living Guru that Gurbani teaches us that a living Guru is needed for salvation."

Balwant Singh narrated the whole incident and went on to plea to Baba Ji to do something to stop the tide of conversion or else the whole village would end up following the so-called living Guru. Baba Ji replied, "You should pray in the feet of our Guru that he bless these people with greater intellect and insight so that they are not led astray." Baba Ji told me later, "I felt great pity and sorrow for these people Balwant Singh had told me about. A thought arose within me that if the spread of false living Guru's were not dealt with there and then then, in time, it would erode the values of the Sikh faith. Moreover, we worldly people do not want to toil in order to earn the fruit of spiritual bliss, obtained by meditating on naam. People want a ready-made blessing and want someone else to guarantee that they will get salvation. They want someone else to assure them that their spiritual debt is repaid. So, these false Guru's, give these ready-made blessings and guarantees to save their followers in the afterlife. By giving such ready-made blessings, they propagate their false business causing the devotee to lose any chance of redemption in the afterlife.

Baba Ji told me, "A powerful thought came over me that to stop the spread of such false prophets from spreading their Gurudom, divine strength is required. With this power these false Guru's will be filled with trepidation and stop proliferating their false religion. With this in mind, I prayed to Almighty God to bless me with divine strength. After three days of constant prayer, the Guru blessed me with a vision. In the vision, the true Guru said to me, "I give you all my power and bestow all my strength upon you. Use it as you please.""

After hearing these words of the true Guru, Baba Ji felt as if the whole power of the universe, the Lord's miraculous, mysterious and unimaginable strength poured into his being. He felt so

powerful that he could kill a person by his thought alone. Baba Ji felt he could stop a great flowing river by uttering a single word. In short, he felt he could make anything happen with just a word or his thought. Baba Ji used to say that after attaining this tremendous power, another thought came to him. He thought, "How exactly can I use this power? What if by using this power someone is killed, or injured or harmed in any way? Who will be responsible for their suffering? Ultimately, I will be responsible for what I do to them. Though this power belongs to God Almighty, the responsibility for its use or misuse is mine. It is me who will reap the fruit of good or bad actions."

Two days passed in this state of introspection and turbulent thoughts. In the end Baba Ji pleaded with the true Guru, "O saviour of the poor! Please take this divine power you bestowed upon me, as I am incapable of using it correctly. Your will is sweet, do as it pleases you. You alone know the hearts of all. This creation is unfolding according to your will and only you are capable of directing it. Nothing is in the hands of us mortals:

***What can we poor puppets do?
The play master knows everything
The puppeteer dresses the puppet
To plat the role assigned to it
kaath kee putree kahaa karai bapuree khilaavanhaaro jaanai.
jaisaa bhaykh karaavai baajeegar oh taiso hee saaj aanai. ||3||
(Guru 5th Guru, page 206)***

We mortals act as destined by the Lord:

***As is the command issued by you
And is the written destiny
So are the deeds the mortal enacts
jayhaa tooN hukam karahi tayhay ko karam kamaavai
jayhaa tuDh Dhur likh paa-i-aa. ||2||
(Suhi 4th Guru, page 736)***

And

***As you cause me to move, so do I move
O illustrious Lord so does everyone move
O God only you show and guide one on the true path
And who can find the path if you mislead them?
ji-o aap chala-ay tivai ko-ee chaalai ji-o har bhaavai bhagvaanaa.
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 797)***

And

***He whom the Lord shows the way
Who can mislead him?
Who can show the path to him?
Whom he causes to stray from the outset
jisahi dikhaalaa vaatrhee tiseh bhulaavai ka-un.
jisahi bhulaa-ee panDh sir tiseh dikhaavai ka-un. ||1||
(Salok 1st Guru, page 952)***

And

My beloved himself leads one into wilderness

And he shows the way

O Lord bless me to walk in your will

aapay ujharh paa-idaa pi-aaraa aap vikhaalay raahu.

(Sorath 4th Guru, page 604)

46 - GOD'S ELIXIR MAKES POISON INEFFECTIVE

S. Amar Singh from village Gondpur (now aged about 65) used to tell us that in his youth he used to drink alcohol and became addicted to opium because of the bad company he used to keep. Drugs and alcohol not only destroy the body and spiritually bankrupt its user but also destroy family life. S.Amar Singh was so deeply addicted to these intoxicants; he would be intoxicated day and night without any shame or remorse for the effect on his family or community.

Being intoxicated all the time had become the aim of his life and his addiction grew to such an extent that he would daily need about 12 grams of opium. To increase the duration of his intoxication he would use dope powder twice a day. If he became a little sober, he would then resort to drinking alcohol. The house in which addiction to drugs takes hold, heads straight to bankruptcy; Money became tight and soon he found himself penniless. To sustain his addiction to opium and buy it, he started to brew and distill alcohol at home. He would sell this illicit liquor to fund his addiction to opium. Under compulsion, his wife would have to keep a fire going under his homemade distillery. She would collect the evaporated, distilled alcohol all day long so that he could sell it illegally. S. Amar Singh used this money to support his addiction. Home brewed alcohol also allowed him to remain drunk all the time. The local police would raid his house every few days to disrupt his home enterprise. S Amar Singh constantly played 'cat and mouse, catch me if you can' with the local police. He was prosecuted many times and would appear in court repeatedly, paying fines.

Litigation became a constant companion; hardship was now a way of life but still his mind would not allow him to give up his awful addiction. Bhai Amar Singh would say that he was destitute and would sleep outside his house in case the police raided his house during the night. His heart was deeply troubled but as Bhai Gurdas Ji says...

An opium taker knows

Taking opium is very bad

He is unable to leave this habit.

jaisae posuthee sunuth kehuth posuth buru

thaakae bas bhuyo shaadduo chaahai pai n shoottee

(Swaiyas Bhai Gurdas Ji page 591)

So, it was with S.Amar Singh Ji. If one part of him agreed to kick the addiction, another part of him would tell him that this is the only way to earn a livelihood. His mind would tell him that survival without distilling alcohol was impossible. There seemed to be no alternative but to continue as he had done, financing his addiction by selling homemade alcohol. "If I do not drink with visitors how will I encourage more customers to buy my alcohol," he thought. Amar Singh used to be a soldier in the military and was physically well built and fit to start with, but addiction to drugs and alcohol had weakened his body into a feeble, emaciated state.

One day S.Amar Singh was stood around with his friends and customers talking business by the roadside. Suddenly, Baba Ji, who was walking to Gardhiwala, caught his eye. He quickly deserted his friends for a while, ran up to Baba Ji and bowing his head greeted Baba Ji. Baba Ji halted in his tracks. Amar Singh at once pleaded with Baba Ji, "Baba Ji I am fed up with taking these intoxicants. There is no substance that I do not abuse. My family is in deep throes of poverty; the police are constantly on my back. I sleep rough in the fields to avoid arrest. I am unable and powerless to give up substance abuse, I have heard that you have helped numerous people to kick their

addictions to drugs and alcohol and put them on the righteous path. Please take pity on this poor fellow, remedy and bless me somehow." Baba Ji spontaneously replied, "Amar Singh! First, we must have compassion for ourselves, and then the Lord too becomes benevolent upon us. Secondly, if you wish to abandon your addiction to substances then get baptised. When the elixir of immortality (amrit) enters your heart, then intoxicating poisons will leave your body as long as you remain steadfast in your vows. Earn the favour of the Great Guru by acting and living by the words of our Guru." Without questioning any further, he agreed with Baba Ji and asked when the next baptism (amrit sanchaar) ceremony was due to take place. Baba Ji replied that the week following, the day before the birthday celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, an amrit sanchaar was due to take place. "On that day, Amar Singh," Baba Ji replied, "Take amrit and ferry yourself across the ocean in the Guru's ship." Amar Singh agreed to be baptised and returned to his companions but said nothing even though they kept asking why he was talking to the Saint with such solemnity.

When Amar Singh came home, he ordered his wife to have some kacheras (special type of shorts part of the five k's) made. His wife was flabbergasted at this request from her husband regarding his intention to be baptised. Amar Singh's wife could not help herself and retorted, "Before getting baptised why don't you try and give up substance abuse or will you distill your wine with a kirpan (another one of the five k's) around your neck or when selling liquor."

S Amar Singh replied, "Good lady I have given my word to Baba Ji. So if we go hungry, live or die destitute I am going to give up drugs and alcohol." Amar Singh's wife knew his promises were often empty. She could not judge if he was telling the truth or pulling the wool over her eyes, with another half-baked dream. She kept staring at his face to judge if he had not taken too much opium, to see if it was the drug making him talk irrationally. A little convinced that Amar Singh was not under the influence, she thought maybe God has turned the tide and turned his mind as well. She thought, "Thankfully I too might get relief from the heat of the furnace used to distill alcohol." She then said to her husband, "If you are just going to return to you old days of drink and drugs then it is better that you do not get baptised in the first place. But if you are going to stick to your vows after taking amrit then you can have as many kacheras as you want."

S Amar Singh reassured his wife that he was returning after tasting the bitter experience of addiction. "The truth be known, in my mind I wanted to give up alcohol and drugs, but my mind was faltering and wavering. I met the Saint from Rampur Khera on his way to Gardhiwala. I told him about my wretched addiction and he suggested that to help myself I must take amrit. To rid me of intoxicants amrit will help in obtaining the grace of God. These words of resolve from Baba Ji strengthened my will and my mind has been made up to get baptised ever since, so you too should get prepared to take amrit on the gurgurab of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Let us both drink the elixir of immortality, instead of the evil poison that was alcohol and see what ensues," said Amar Singh to his wife. Amar Singh's wife was taken aback and thanked God for his mercy that her husband was today talking of divine knowledge and morality. His wife replied, "I do not object to being baptised but let's not become the laughing stock amongst the community. I have heard from people that a person cursed by the Guru gets no compassion here in this world or the hereafter. I am afraid that we do not commit a sin by breaking our vows instead of earning the Guru's blessing."

S Amar Singh replied, "Dear wife, do not let your mind waver. Get ready. The true Guru, whose amrit we drink, will protect us himself. We are mere mortals and cannot claim the ability to follow his views. As Baba Ji said, amrit will guard you. Get ready and dispel your doubts. If you do not believe then give me all the distilling, equipment and I will break it up right here in front of you. This evil furnace has swallowed my health, wealth and everything in the house. I am not going to

keep this furnace in the house,” Amar Singh reassuringly consoled his wife. In this angry mood, S Amar Singh gathered all the equipment, broke it up and threw it in the stream near his house. He touched his ears and thanked God for ousting this wretched evil from his house. He was so emotional he kept touching the ground and then his forehead repeatedly exclaiming “O dear God if you truly exist save me from this evil addiction. Do not let these cursed intoxicants re-enter my house. Forgive my past deeds and keep me from faltering in the future. His wife was convinced that Amar Singh had reformed and God had blessed him with the good intention of being baptised.

She encouragingly said, “You have done a good thing by throwing your distilling equipment out of the house. I was constantly worried lest the police raid our house and find it here. When the police came, you would jump over the wall and hide in the fields but I was the one left behind to listen to the abusive, filthy language of the police. I would sit next to the furnace day and night brooding over the threat of being arrested. I was constantly anxious, always watching over my shoulder. At least now, we will be able to sleep sound and in peace. Why worry about hunger, the Lord who has made us will provide a livelihood too.”

Both of them prepared to take amrit and on Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s gurburb they were baptised. Without difficulty, both followed the modest life required after baptism. Due to the notoriety he had gained, the police visited several times and exclaimed, “Amar Singh what have you done? We are surprised by your sudden transformation. You are not still dealing in illicit drugs or alcohol under this new disguise are you?” Amar Singh would reply, “If I was only going to wander back to my old lifestyle, I had no need to be baptised. No one compelled me to take this new guise. Since I abandoned my addiction and old lifestyle, I feel that my real life has only just begun. My life as an addict was a living hell and all that time was just a waste. Anyhow if I do start dealing in illicit substances it is not as if you won’t find out sooner or later. But for now, I truly feel from my heart that I have forsaken all intoxicants.”

To bring more resolve in his character Amar Singh would come to visit Baba Ji at the gurdwara. He would spend time in service of the Gurdwara and the rest earning his livelihood. A year passed by in this way and S Amar Singh started to stay permanently at the Gurdwara. Baba Ji told Amar Singh that a gursikh must earn his daily bread. He would reply that I do not feel like leaving the presence of Guru Ji to go home. The Almighty who has created us mortals will provide sustenance too. At home by God’s grace, his fields would produce enough of a harvest for his family’s needs. After many years of service at the Gurdwara, Baba Ji had him appointed as an attendant at Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara, central town, Jalandhar. He carried out his duties diligently and with great respect for three years and finally returned to Rampur Khera where he is still carrying out his duties as an attendant.

By God’s grace, his two daughters were married and settled into good families at the hands of Baba Ji. The youngest son learned to become a driver and landed a well-paid job in Assam. Both husband and wife are enjoying a life of devotion without worries and receiving the Guru’s grace. Witnessing the transformation of S Amar Singh, others were motivated to follow the Sikh way of life.

Even today if a gursikh happens to meet S Amar Singh he will speak frankly of his past life and how it compares with his new lifestyle: “My life as an addict was pure slavery, dependence, full of worries and doubts equivalent to a living hell, where my wife and children were neglected. I was taunted and cursed from all directions. Even my neighbours were traumatised by my life of addiction. My family would suffer harassment from the police on my account. Even my relatives

would make me feel unwelcome, wishing I would leave their presence as soon as possible. I had no standing or respect in the community. No one trusted me. No one believed a word I said and in fact they would tell me to my face, “no one can trust an addict’s word.” In this intoxicated state you could get me to promise anything but when sober I would not remember my word or deeds. Compared to my life now, it would not be overstating the facts that life, as an addict was far worse than hell. Now wherever I go I get utmost respect. People are willing to believe me” says Amar Singh. “I have no financial worries now. I am rid of the slavery of addiction. The best thing now is I have peace of mind, my life is tranquil and I am satisfied. All these gifts were obtained through the blessing of sangat when I became baptised. As the sips of amrit (elixir or nectar) passed my lips, it happened just as Bhagat Kabir Ji describes...

Lord’s elixir I have quaffed

By which nectar I have forgotten

All other relishes

raam ras pee-aa ray.

jih ras bisar ga-ay ras a-or. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Gauri Bhagat Kabir, page 337)

And

By quaffing that nectar

This worldly relish remains not pleasing.

uh ras pee-aa ih ras nahee bhaavaa. ||35||

(Gauri Purbi Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 342)

There is enormous strength in the Guru’s amrit, lest one imagines it is just water sweetened with sugar (patashas – round sugar crystals used to prepare amrit). This nectar has tremendous power to transform a life, drastically, as it did with me. If anyone has any doubts, they can come and discuss their doubts with me. I am still a living proof of the transformation brought about by amrit. Life without Guru Ji, without tasting the elixir of immortality, is worthless, accursed and foul. One cannot fathom its depth or evaluate its worth. The Guru’s amrit completely transforms one’s life...

Without tasting

No one enjoys the name’s relish

By the Guru’s instruction

One drinks the Lord’s nectar in drinking nectar

The mortal acquires immortal status

And nectar he enjoys through the Guru’s gospel.

vin chaakhay saad kisai na aa-i-aa.

gur kai sabad amrit pee-aa-i-aa.

amrit pee amraa pad ho-ay gur kai sabad ras taahaa hay. ||7||

(Maru 3rd Guru, page 1046)

47 - CONSTRUCTION OF GURDWARA SAHIB

One day, after the September Akhand path, about thirty people got ready to be baptised. The five beloved ones (Panj Pyara's) assembled the sangat at the Gurdwara in the nearby village of Bahle, bestowing amrit and gurmat way of life upon them.

Baba Ji thought to himself that the Almighty Guru is accomplishing the mission he was sent for, by inspiring the sangat. After the first Akhand path in September Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was installed in the cave and kirtan would be performed every Sunday until twelve at night.

No professional singers were called from outside. Bhai Tara Singh, Baba Ji's elder brother, S Dalwant Singh, Bhai Gurbax Singh from Dhugga village came regularly from Bahle Village. My family and S Labh Singh, Master Kabul Singh and two other gursikhs would congregate at Rampur Khara. The sangat would sit in the lap of Guru Ji, singing devotional hymns without any musical instruments except a chimta (cymbals arranged on a long iron fork) in straightforward simple melodies, thus trying to spend time in remembrance of Waheguru.

Night Session during Full Moon

To take advantage of the time, the sangat would recite Japji Sahib (the prayer composed by Guru Nanak Dev Ji) in turns on the night of full moon. One person would recite and the others would listen. Then one rosary of the following prayer was chanted...

The dreadful diseases, sins of numerous murders

The penury of many births and immense miseries

Contemplating the Lord's name destroys all

Just as the fire reduces to ash piles of wood.

ghor dukh-yaN anik hat-yaN janam daaridaraN mahaa bikhyaadN.

mitant sagal simrant har naam naanak

jaisay paavak kaasat bhasmaN karot. ||18||

(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1355)

It would be early morning (amrit vela) by the time these prayers were completed. Then all would recite the five prayers of Nitnem followed by Sukhmani Sahib. Then, deg parshad would be offered with Ardas to the Great Guru. Everyone would then have tea in the langar before leaving for his or her homes. This routine continued for a year and the number of devotees began to increase. Sometimes due to rain or cold, the sangat would experience some hardship. So a big hut was erected to the north of the cave in which Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was installed.

Kirtan Throughout The Night (Raensabhai Kirtan)

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was installed in the newly built hut. The weekly Sunday programme continued regularly and on the night of full moon, with the effort of the sangat, kirtan was performed throughout the night. It was attended by sangat from neighbouring villages. Kirtan was regularly performed by the likes of Bhai Santokh Singh Usman Shaheed, Dr Pritam Singh, Jagat Singh, S Baljit Singh from Dasuya and any other devotees who would come to perform kirtan. It was a truly blissful event. Day by day the number of people in the congregation increased and soon another hut had to be built in front of the old one.

Wooden beams were used to make a separate kitchen to cook langar. The sangat would bring cooking materials from home and prepare langar at the gurdwara. It would be distributed

throughout the night and continue until after the bhog ceremony. It slowly became necessary to clear some more land for the sangat to sit on, have langar and for general use. More land could only be acquired by clearing the trees on the higher ground above the cave. There was a dense coverage of trees and vines from large banyan trees. However, people still trembled with fear and held whimsical thoughts about clearing these large trees. No one dared to cut them down and no merchant would dare buy the wood.

Clearing The Banyan And Pipal Trees

One day at about 3pm, a courageous Sikh called S Ujjagger Singh of Village Gondpur came by to see Baba Ji. Baba Ji said to him, "Ujjagger Singh, if you help, then we can clear away some of these banyan tree branches and create a clearing where the sangat will be able to sit."

Ujjagger Singh replied with concern, "Two people from our village tried to cut down a pipal tree and met with a terrible fate. One fell from the tree breaking his backbone and hip. The second chap lost his mind. I cannot disobey you but I fear I may injure myself and end up being the laughing stock of the village for having tried to cut down these trees." This humble servant (Seva Singh) was sat nearby, listening. Baba Ji assured him at length that things were not like they used to be, the situation had changed. "Gurbani is chanted in this place and moreover the evil spirits that haunted this place left the day I started meditating here. All that remains is people's perception that this place is haunted. When you cut the branches of the banyan tree I will be beside you. Let me shoulder all the responsibility for you cutting these tree's down. Be mindful though, not to tell your family, otherwise they will not let you come." S Ujjagger Singh (now living in England) was now convinced and returned the next day with an axe, a saw and a hatchet. Baba Ji offered him something to eat and drink. Then he offered prayers to the Guru Ji, "Lord we ask permission to start clearing away the wood for the comfort and service of the sangat. Please shelter your humble servant."

After Ardas, S. Ujjagger Singh climbed the banyan tree and cut the two main branches from the tree. Any doubt or fear now left his mind. Seeing Baba Ji and Ujjagger Singh at work, other devotees began to help them. Slowly the trees were cut down, one by one. The wood was cut into planks and beams, with any leftovers used as firewood in the kitchen for cooking langar.

As more and more people found out about Rampur Khera, the size of the congregation grew, as did the number of functions held there. Now every Gurburb (birth anniversary (known as Avtaar) of the Guru's) was celebrated by holding an Akhand path. On the second day of the path, a baptism ceremony would be held and many devotees would take amrit. Baba Ji would always be ready to administer baptism even if there were only two people. He would gather five Singhs (panj pyara's) the next day to administer baptism.

Tube well To Provide Water For Bathing

As there was only a hand operated water pump and the sangat would sometimes have to wait to have a bath, the need arose to have a tube well installed. A deep tube well was sunk in front of the present day Gurdwara. A holding tank for water was constructed with several taps on the side of this tank to deliver water readily. The installation of the tube well meant water was freely available for many purposes including bathing, cooking and cleaning.

As old companions of Baba Ji found out about where he was residing, they increasingly started to visit and take part in the various gatherings and functions throughout the year. To take advantage of his divine company and receive blessings of the congregation, old companions like Bhai

Wadhawa Singh, Bhai Sher Singh, Bhai Kulwant Singh, and Dr Kartar Singh Ji started visiting, bringing with them many others to these religious gatherings. Rehansabhai kirtan continued every month for two years and then Baba Ji stopped these and continued with more daytime gatherings.

Inspiration To Construct Gurdwara

Baba Ji was hesitant about rapid expansion lest it disrupt his meditation and lead to undue attachment, the cause of all misery. So much so, that if any money was left over from a religious function, he would get sweets (ladoos) made. He would have the sweets distributed to children in the nearby schools and any that were left over were distributed to passers-by. Even though Baba Ji was hesitant, some Singhs who attended the September gathering in 1957 requested Baba Ji to build a large Gurdwara to accommodate the needs of the larger sangat. Baba Ji obeyed the sangat but replied that if it pleased Guru Ji then their wishes would take shape. However, the sangat collected about Rs 3000 for this cause and gave it to Baba Ji. He handed this money to S. Labh Singh for safekeeping.

Another year went by. Sangat gathered for another gurmat camp and again requested Baba Ji to reconsider the need for a gurdwara. Baba Ji again reassured the sangat that, "Bhai! Work that is accomplished steadily is better. So, leave it in the hands of the Great Guru. When it pleases the Lord it shall happen without delay." The day after the September Smagam sixth Guru Hargobind Singh Ji (Lord of emperors and Saints of all Saints) appeared as a vision to Baba Ji. He said, "Bhai Harnam Singh Ji! We sent you to this place to attach the sangat with Waheguru. This place is to become a centre for missionary propagation of Sikh dharma. The sangat that has asked for the Gurdwara was inspired by us to do so. The place where we have made you sit was an ancient site where sages over many millennia sat and meditated. This is the place where in the age of Duapar Lord Krishna met the exiled Pandav kings (The Pandav Kings hid disguised as servants under the shelter of King Viraat during their exile. Lord Krishna once came to see the Pandav kings and was told by King Viraat that they had gone out hunting. Lord Krishna followed the Pandavs, sat and rested with them at this mound Rampur Khera. The pandavs narrated their tale to Lord Krishna, who blessed this mound with a boon that for 3 miles around this place, no calamity will befall the area and it will always be a refuge for the needy). Moreover, many other holy Saints have meditated here. We visited this place with our warriors and rested here a while. The Gurdwara Sahib to be established in due course will benefit many people, bestowing Naam Simran (meditation) and Gurbani on them. You may start the construction of the Gurdwara. No hindrance or obstacle will befall the building of the Gurdwara. What you deem to be undue expansion will not affect your meditation in fact it will aid your spiritual progress."

Having obtained this blessing from the Great Guru, the next day the sangat gathered for the September function in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, offered deg parshad and read a hukamnama (the Guru's edict). Their hukam read as follows...

Humbly bow to the Perfect Divine Guru. Fruitful is His image, and fruitful is service to Him. He is the Innerknower, the Searcher of hearts, and the Architect of Destiny. Twenty-four hours a day, he remains imbued with the love of the Naam, the Name of the Lord. ik-oNkaar satgur parsaad. kar namaskaar pooray gurdayv. safal moorat safal jaa kee sayv. antarjaamee purakh biDhaataa.

aath pahar naam rang raataa. ||1||

(Gond 5th Guru, page 869)

Baba Ji addressed the congregation and said, “Your wish to have a Gurdwara constructed has been accepted by Guru Ji, so the task will be start as soon as possible. The congregation was overjoyed, as their wish had taken three to four years to be fulfilled. A resolution was passed with the Guru’s blessing on 7th September 1958. Soon all manner of building materials began to arrive. With five beloved ones, Baba Ji laid the foundation stone of the present Gurdwara on 30 March 1959.

Before laying the foundation stone, an Ardas was performed, deg parshad offered to Guru Ji and the sangat. The following hukamnamas appeared.

Salok Mohalla 3

O my soul remember your Lord lovingly

Single minded remember the Lord

With rapt attention

Imperishable, ever lasting are God’s glories

He never regrets what he gives

I am a sacrifice unto God

Serving God peace is obtained

Nanak burning ego through naam

The Guru-ward remain immersed in the Lord

sulok mu 3

ay man har jee Dhi-aa-ay too ik man ik chit bhaa-ay.

har kee-aa sadaa sadaa vadi-aa-ee-aa day-ay na pachhotaa-ay.

ha-o har kai sad balihaarnai jit sayvi-ai sukh paa-ay.

naanak gurmukh mil rahai ha-umai sabad jalaa-ay. ||1||

(Salok 3rd Guru, page 653)

Construction Of Gurdwara Begins

The building work for the Gurdwara started in earnest. People from neighbouring villages would arrive and help with great zeal and vigour. Baba Ji would tend to the needs of the sangat personally with his own hands. During his free time, Baba Ji would carry bricks and mortar on his head or break up rocks for the concrete with a hammer.

Many a time the congregation would affectionately ask Baba Ji to stop and leave this service to them. Baba Ji would reply, “This is not my personal job. This is the Guru’s work that I am doing. He who toils in the Guru’s house with devotion will reap untold benefits. If you work selflessly, you will earn the benefits and if I do some work, I will reap some benefit too. Moreover this opportunity to do the Guru’s work (Seva) does not arise every day.” After the sangat left, Baba Ji and I would gather up all the tools, equipment and would wash the spades etc. Baba Ji never appealed for money at religious gatherings, neither did he print promotional literature to raise money for the building of the Gurdwara. Whatever money was required would arrive mystically at the hands of the sangat inspired by the Great Guru himself. If money became scarce, Baba Ji would withdraw money from the “hidden treasure.” Your humble servant will relate an incident that I witnessed during these early days.

It was the summer season and I had gone out on an errand. I arrived back to see Baba Ji at 4 pm. Baba Ji sat me beside him, served me a sweetened cold drink and said, “Seva Singh, you know

Sadhu Singh who has the cement shop? He came to me this morning and said he had two truckloads of cement arriving soon. He said that instead of buying a little cement at a time, it would be cheaper to buy it in bulk. He can send one truckload over to us as soon as it arrives. I told him that we would let him know by this evening.” After a short while Baba Ji continued, “It would be convenient if we get the cement in bulk as every few days we have to ask for a cart to bring smaller loads of cement. This also disrupts the cart owners’ work.

Baba Ji then said, “Young man, how much money will 200 bags of cement cost?” At that time bags of cement cost Rs 6.25. I advised Baba Ji that I had calculated the total amount as Rs1250. Baba Ji pulled out a cloth bag from under his mattress and handed me the bag. “Have a look at how much is in the bag.” I counted the money and told him, “There is just over Rs 200 here Baba Ji.” Baba Ji fell silent for a while.

He then said, “Go to the large hut where Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is enthroned. There is a cloth bag upon the floor with which to wipe our feet before one sits behind the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Look in that bag and see if there is any money in it. Just before I got up to fetch the money, Baba Ji asked me, “Only bring the exact amount that we need and no more.” I replied, “Yes sir ” and went into the hut. I bowed before Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and looked in the bag as directed.

Much to my amazement, there were several hundred rupee notes in it. So, I took Rs1100, returned to Baba Ji, and told him that there was still a lot of money in the bag. Baba Ji said, “This is the “hidden treasure”.

Do not touch it as it is there for when we really need it. He then instructed me to go and hand over the money to S Sadhu Singh and ask him to send the truck straight to the gurdwara. As instructed, I went to Gardhiwala and paid S.Sadhu Singh as requested by Baba Ji. I came back to Baba Ji and both of us sat together to recite *Rehras*. After sukhasan of SatGuru, he sat upon the bed laid in front of the hut and meanwhile asked me to bring Bhai Vir Singh’s book ‘Kalgidhar Chamatkar’ that he used to listen to daily. I went indoors with a lantern and mused about looking at the bag again with the hidden treasure to see how much more money was in it? I knelt by the bag, putting the lantern beside me to look but found that the bag was empty! Seeing it empty, my mind was filled with remorse, thinking that Baba Ji specifically asked me not to touch the “hidden treasure.” It was meant for times of need and I had made a mistake. Anyhow, I took the book outside and filled with repentance told Baba Ji that out of curiosity I looked in the bag to see how much money was in it and found that it was empty.

Repenting my mistake, I clutched Baba Ji’s feet and cried begging for forgiveness. Baba Ji affectionately reassured me and said, “Seva Singh do not make a mistake like this in the future. This is the true Guru’s “hidden treasure”. When there is need for money for the sangat Guru Ji has instructed me to use this treasure when required. I make no distinction between you or me, which is why I asked you to fetch the money this time. What has happened has past, so no need to repent over it now.

Why don’t you read us a story from the life of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, telling us how he guided the mortals of the Dark Age.” I began to read the book and read three chapters with such deep pleasure, as I had never experienced before. I continued to read with devotion whilst Baba Ji listened intently until unbeknown to us it was nearly 11 pm at night.

So, in this way whenever there was a shortfall in cash required for the service of the sangat, Baba Ji would use the money from the hidden treasure. From the day construction of the Gurdwara started no hindrance in its building work occurred. It continued uninterrupted unless Baba Ji's specifically asked work to stop. A hall 60 x 40 feet was ready with a separate 12x12 room upstairs in which Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was laid to rest at night was completed within two years. The main hall that Guru Ji pointed to was the place where ancient Saints used to meditate. A 10-foot wide veranda surrounding the hall was erected soon after to shelter the congregation from rain or sun and to accommodate extra sangat on special occasions. Soon after the completion of the gurdwara, eight rooms of 15x20 to accommodate sangat overnight were built too. At the completion of the gurdwara, Baba Ji sent out invitations to the congregation requesting them to attend an Akhand path held to thank Almighty Waheguru for his divine guidance.

Baba Ji prayed and thanked the Lord that...

He whose task it was

Has himself accomplished it

What can a mere man do?

jis kaa kaaruj thin hee keeaa maanus kaaa vaechaaraa raam

(Suhni 5th Guru page 784)

Sincere and heartfelt thanks were given to Guru Ji by the sangat for "having overseen the completion of the whole building without any obstacles. In the future whatever service Almighty Lord you wish to derive in preaching Sikh dharma from this place please guide us according to your will. Such places are beneficial only if gurmat is taught and the sangat can avail itself of this noble benefit thereby securing spiritual wealth for this world and the hereafter. This task too can only be completed with your guidance O Lord."

48 - ONLY THE DESTINED ARE ORDERED TO SERVE

The construction of the gurdwara was progressing and with no means of transport being available, the stock of bricks once ran low. The building work would have ground to a halt the next day if new supplies were not brought from the brick factory immediately. The masons and bricklayers would be left standing. At the end of the day, the bricklayers warned Baba Ji that the shortage of bricks would bring work to a halt. The stock of bricks required replenishing as soon as possible. Baba Ji replied to the mason's "We will try to get more bricks; it is the Guru's work that is being carried so he will inspire someone to do this service."

As usual, Baba Ji went for his evening walk after the labourers had gone home. On this day instead of walking towards Talwandi village Baba Ji said, "Today, we will walk to S. Bawa Singh's house. If we meet him or his sons on the way to his house, we'll ask them to participate in the effort to build the Gurdwara by fetching the bricks from the brick kiln. This way we will accomplish two tasks."

Baba Ji and a couple of others including myself arrived at S. Bawa Singh's house whilst reciting prayers on the way there. S. Bawa Singh Ji wasn't home. However, his son Daya Singh was planting onions in a neighbouring field. After completing Chaupai Sahib, Baba Ji walked over and greeted him with a Gur-Fateh. He was the second eldest son of S. Bawa Singh and ignorant about gurmat. He gave priority to worldly duties and would do service of the sangat only if he could fit it into his daily schedule. He had a rugged farmer's temperament and responded half-heartedly to Baba Ji's greeting, asking him the reason for his visit. Baba Ji replied, "Daya Singh! You know that construction of the Gurdwara is in progress and the bricks have all but run out. If new bricks are not brought by tomorrow then, work will come to a standstill and the labourers will sit idle. If you could oblige me by making one trip to fetch the bricks then work can continue uninterrupted and you will be able to carry out service of the Great Guru."

After listening to Baba Ji, Daya Singh spoke, "As you can see, I am busy planting onions. How can I abandon this job to go and fetch the bricks? You know that a farmer never leaves his tasks unfinished. I am able to go tomorrow evening after I have planted these onions and not before." Baba Ji said, "I am also a farmer, which is why I am asking you to go today as the onions can be planted tomorrow without any harm to them. I would not have asked you to go if it was not to your benefit." Daya Singh heard Baba Ji out but repeated his view that he could only go once his job was complete. Baba Ji replied, "Daya Singh it is your choice. You could easily have carried out both tasks of fetching the bricks and planting your onions without loss." Saying this, Baba Ji bid farewell and we all returned to the Gurdwara.

On the way, back Baba Ji told us, "See how without the correct destiny a human cannot even carry out seva. If Daya Singh had agreed to this he would have earned great blessings from the Almighty and managed to plant his onions. He does not know if the onions will thrive or not but he certainly has lost an opportune moment to do seva. Alas, it is destiny. Whomever Almighty Lord wishes to grant service will be inspired to carry it out. One can serve only if destined to do so because..."

He who has good destiny marked on the forehead

He alone carries out service of the Lord

jaa kai mastak bhaag se sayvaa laa-i-aa.

(Asa 3rd Guru, page 45)

Service of the Guru's house is a most valuable commodity obtained by Waheguru Ji's blessing...

That person alone is attached to Lord's service

Whom the Lord himself blesses

jis har sayvaa laa-ay so-ee jan laagai.

(Maru 4th Guru, page 1070)

Baba Ji continued telling us about the virtues of selfless service of the Guru and that we should participate according to one's ability in the service of the Guru. After completing one's daily work, we should spend as much time as possible in the service of the Guru so that this body is put to spiritual use as well. In this manner, we attract the blessings of our Guru and of people we help that are less fortunate than us. Sometimes the Almighty causes situations to arise where one has to leave aside family duties in service of others. The fortunate one who takes such an opportunity of selfless service not only gains the Lord's favour but his worldly affairs suffer no hindrance. The Great Guru compensates any losses many times over. In obtaining the Guru's favour, many obstacles in one's life are obliterated. Such service Guru Ji appreciates as Gurbani states...

Profitable is that service to carry out

Which appeases the Guru's mind

By appeasing the Guru's mind

All evil sins and deeds are redeemed

saa sayvaa keetee safal hai jit satgur kaa man mannay.

jaa satgur kaa man mani-aa taa paap kasamal bhannay.

(Vaar Gauri 3rd Guru, page 314)

Listening to these words of Baba Ji, we arrived back at the gurdwara. As per our routine, we all washed our faces, hands and feet. Sitting together, we took turns to recite *Rehras*. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was laid to rest (sukhasan) following which we had langar and sat down to listen to stories from Sikh history. We retired to bed and awoke the next day before dawn to install Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji when Baba Ji explained the edict of the day (hukamnama). Whilst he was explaining, a devotee from Gondpur arrived with his brand new truck. He bowed in front of Guru Ji, sat down and listened to the ongoing discourse. At the end of the session, the person in question asked Baba Ji, "Baba Ji, the Almighty has blessed me with a new truck and before starting any job I wish to use the truck to partake in some service of the Gurdwara so that my business will be blessed by the Guru. As the construction of the Gurdwara is ongoing, with your permission, can I bring a couple of loads of sand? If there is any other service required pray tell me now."

Baba Ji heard the gentleman's request and bowed in thanks to Guru Ji. They came outside where everyone had langar together. Baba Ji addressed the devotee, "We have plenty of sand but if you could bring a couple of loads of bricks we would be most grateful." The person in question promptly brought two loads of bricks by midday before work could come to a halt. Before leaving, the devotee petitioned Baba Ji humbly to send for him again if any more loads were to be carried for the construction work.

Baba Ji thanked God Almighty and said, "Great Guru has only made pretence through me. All worries for the construction of the gurdwara he carries on his own shoulders. He himself arranges all the deeds."

S. Daya Singh had by now planted his onions with the help of his family. As is God's will the next day there was heavy rainfall. All water from the nearby road washed off, drained into the field, and pooled around the newly planted onions. Whilst some of the onion plants had already been washed away on the first day of heavy rain, the remaining onions started to rot in the standing water.

A few days after this S. Daya Singh repented his folly and came to see Baba Ji. Admitting his mistake, he confessed, "Baba Ji I did not listen to your humble request. The very onions I was busy planting were either washed away or are rotting. If there is any service, tell me now? Baba Ji replied, "Whenever there is any seva to be carried out, the sangat and you are the ones that will do it. We will definitely tell you if such an opportunity arises." After sitting a while with Baba Ji, S Daya Singh left. One should also learn from this incident. It is beneficial to heed the advice of those blessed ones who have sacrificed everything at the feet of the Guru. We should listen to their words even if we feel we will lose financially or otherwise. By listening to a blessed being and acting upon their words, we attract their blessings. The blessing that is laden with the Guru's favour is the only grace worth obtaining. This is real meditation and will transform our present world and the hereafter. This boon is obtained only if we heed the words of Guru Amar Das Ji that...

***As the elephant offers its head to the goad
As the anvil offers itself to the hammer
So, place your soul and body
Before the Guru and ever be ready to serve him
In this way the Guru-ward effaces his ego and
Gains sovereignty of the whole world
hastee sir ji-o ankas hai ahran ji-o sir day-ay.
man tan aagai raakh kai oobhee sayv karay-i.
i-o gurmukh aap nivaaree-ai sabh raaj sarisat kaa lay-ay.
(Salok Mohalla 3rd Guru, page 647)***

Furthermore, service carried out at the Lord's behest at a time of need far outweighs service done at our whim. Such service in a time of need is much more valuable and bestowed upon those with good fortune...

***Nanak when the Lord casts his gracious glance, then alone does man understand his will
naanak gurmukh bujhee-ai jaa aapay nadar karay-i. ||1||
(Page 648)***

When Waheguru blesses those with good fortune, they obtain deep insight. We pray that the Almighty Lord blesses us too, so that we may carry out service that is in his command and pleases him. Only then will we derive full benefit from this human life...

***In this world, perform the Lord's service
Then you shall obtain a seat in heaven
Thus, you will swing your arms in delight
vich dune-aa sayv kamaa-ee-ai.
taa dargeh baisan paa-ee-ai.
kaho naanak baah ludaa-ee-ai.
(Sri raag 1st Guru, page 26)***

49 - ABANDONING WICKED DEEDS IS THE REAL SERVICE

A few days later S. Daya Singh visited Baba Ji again to ask if there was any seva to be performed. Baba Ji took pity on Daya Singh and replied, "Daya Singh, if you heed my advice, then all benefits will come from carrying out this service." Daya Singh thought to himself, "The bricks have already been delivered, at most I will be asked to carry a load or two of sand or cement. Whatever service he asks of me I will do it." With these thoughts in his mind he agreed to Baba Ji's advice and said, "Yes." Baba Ji smiled and continued, "This service has nothing to do with your wet or dry fields but concerns cultivating the inner field of your heart in which you must sow the seed of God's word (Naam). The inner field is dry and barren. To cultivate it, you must stop drinking alcohol and after preparation get ready to be baptised. If you accept this seva, then all charitable services will come under this paramount service."

Daya Singh was dumbfounded hearing this new and strange request. Seeing him silent Baba Ji questioned, "You asked for a service, be strong now and carry it out!" Daya Singh emerged from his silence, "Your eminence, this type of service is best suited to you. I am a farmer's (jat) son. Drink and jat's go together hand in hand. One is not the son of a Jat if he does not drink. Secondly, we people cannot be tied by the vows of baptism. We are used to a life of freedom and ease. Day and night, we work in the mud, who will be able to look after these kakaars (five k's are symbols worn by baptised Sikhs)?" Baba Ji replied, "Look here Daya Singh. Your other four brothers are baptised. Being your brothers their status as farmers has not changed. They work all day in the fields and still maintain their vows. They have never complained that their symbols are a hindrance to their work. Do not make excuses; your benefit is in being baptised. Moreover, if you do leave alcohol and get baptised what benefit do I get? None; I am only telling you what is best for you. Secondly you asked for a service and now you are reneging on your word."

Daya Singh said, "I asked for a service like bringing a load of bricks or sand not to get baptised." Baba Ji replied, "It is your wish. I told you of a service that is far more valuable and worthwhile than the one asked of you before. For you to follow my advice or not, is your choice."

Daya Singh thought, "I had a few days free in which I could carry a few loads of building materials and thus gain the favour of the Saint. On the contrary, Baba Ji has asked me to give up liquor and wear a sword around my neck. Better make a move before Baba Ji sets any more conditions." With these thoughts, Daya Singh sought leave of Baba Ji. As he was leaving Baba Ji said, "Daya Singh I have great affection for your father and family, which is why I asked this service of you. If you had accepted this advice, it would have been better for you. You could have honoured my words and done yourself a great service. But take heed! If someone does not change for the better at another's behest then nature has its own way of subduing you onto the noble path." Hearing these last words left Daya Singh feeling somewhat ashamed, and so he quickly took his leave.

50 - LIFE CHANGES IN THIS WAY TOO

Time went by and Daya Singh carried on with his wayward lifestyle. S Bawa Singh, his father was fed up of him and tried many times to talk some sense into his son, but to no avail.

Six to seven months later at the festival of Dushehra (festival commemorating Lord Rama defeating Ravan) Daya Singh donned his best clothes, tied his best turban and tanked up with alcohol, made his way to nearby Gardhiwala. As is the nature of alcohol, it removes all inhibitions from the drunk and is unable to distinguish between good or bad, friend or foe. In a drunken stupor, one feels all-powerful and aggressive. So, Daya Singh started to pick a fight by abusing passersby. He was of a strong and stout build and started to swear at others as well. In the meantime, a few policemen arrived on the scene and tried to stop Daya Singh from misbehaving but to no avail. In his stupor, Daya Singh felt even an elephant was no bigger than an ant. He turned on the policemen, swearing at them and a fight ensued. The four or five policemen removed his loincloth, tied his legs and removed his turban. They went on to beat him badly before tying his hands, arresting him and taking him to the local police station. There they thrashed him before locking him up.

Daya Singh regained consciousness and thought, "I had come to visit the Dushehra festival but looks like I am in another Ram Lila (ironically another name for a religious play). No turban on my head or no loincloth. No money in my pocket and my body is bruised and aching all over." In this strange state, he was inwardly cursing himself. No one offered him water and evening was closing in. The constables were all leaving for their homes and Daya Singh waited in hope that someone from the village would soon come to have him released. Daya Singh thought that his friends would go home, tell his family what had happened and in no time, someone would arrive to set him free. In fact, when his friends told S Bawa Singh what had happened he absolutely refused to set foot in a police station to have his son released. "What will I say when they ask if this is your son?" replied S Bawa Singh. A few of the villagers petitioned him to go to bail his son out, but being a principled man, he refused saying, "You can bail him out but I will not go to a drunkard, even if he is my son."

Hearing these steadfast words, a few reputed village elders went to the station officer. They told the officer about S. Bawa Singh's refusal to bail out his wayward son. The villagers gave reassurances to the officer that Daya Singh would not cause any further disturbances. The police officer listened carefully. He was an intelligent person and understood the father's honesty and farsightedness. He agreed to set Daya Singh free as his father was a principled man and on the condition that Daya Singh would stop drinking. So these elders asked Daya Singh if he would give up drinking and he replied, "I will not drink this evil liquor which has caused me to lose face in society and had me beaten up. From today onwards I vow never to drink again." He recalled Baba Ji's fateful words, that if one does not reform at someone's behest, nature has ways to reform you onto the noble path. "I did not understand the gravity of his words then, but now nature has conspired to turn me onto the right path under compulsion." The elders managed to secure Daya Singh's release, brought him home with a scarf on his head and his underwear because the police had misappropriated all his belongings.

When asked, the police said they had found him in this condition when they brought him to the police station. After a few days of recovery, Daya Singh came to see Baba Ji. He bowed in greeting to Baba Ji and said, "I did not listen to your prophetic words, making excuses to avoid honouring your words. I have seen the error of my way and wish to give up drink, which has cost me dearly. My name has been sullied in public and even my father does not talk to me. I promise you not to

touch it again and am ready when you are, to get baptised.” Baba Ji reassured Daya Singh, “You have made a righteous and noble decision. In giving up drink, you obtain respect in this world and gain favour with your Guru. He alone is a real person who admits his mistake, repents and does not make the same mistake again. He who makes mistakes repeatedly is like an animal. You have realised your errors and are ready to put it right. May God Almighty bless you and shower his grace on you always. Start your preparation by chanting mool mantar and wearing your five symbols as practice for your baptism. We will arrange for a baptism ceremony as soon as possible.” Soon after, Daya Singh was baptised. He maintained his vows and led a pious, disciplined life.

He would recite mool mantar constantly even when working. Before starting his work, he would first come to visit and bow to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Repentance At Departing Guru-less

As Daya Singh recited mool mantar and gurmantar, his spiritual wealth increased. In 1993, his youngest brother S. Charan Singh who was a soldier in BSF based in Kashmir passed away in the line of duty. His body was brought to the village for cremation. After the cremation, I (Sant Seva Singh) went with a few companions to pay my condolences. After a few mournful words S. Daya Singh changed the subject and said, “As man comes to this world, he surely has to leave too. Many have left this world before my very eyes. I have no regrets that my brother has left this abode because one only lives as long as the good Lord has ordained. I do regret that my brother passed away without having accepted the Guru. Many a time I stressed to him the importance of being baptised and coming into the fold of the true Guru; I told him that even though you are younger than me, there is no guarantee how long one has to live. So, do not delay a moment in accepting your Guru. He made many an excuse and now has missed his chance. With what face can I ask Almighty to bless my brother and forgive him, because he has no Guru. Who will shelter him now? I feel awful for my brother because he departed without accepting amrit. Who will vouchsafe his soul now?”

51 - ONE MUST BEAR THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR GOOD OR BAD DEEDS

Bhai Daya Singh Ji told us about one of his visits to Baba Ji. "A few devotees were sat with Baba Ji discussing various topics. As the Almighty had guided Baba Ji to dispense divine knowledge, he was telling the gathered devotees, "One must avoid indulging in immoral deeds. As Gurbani advises us to avoid certain immoral actions one must act upon what Gurbani tells us. We should follow the righteous actions which Gurbani enjoins us to accept. Gurbani gives us lessons to follow everyday. This is why the Great Guru ordered his Sikhs to read seven prayers daily as a matter of routine. From Gurbani we obtain a noble direction for our actions."

As Baba Ji kept stressing the recitation of Gurbani repeatedly, Bhai Daya Singh could not restrain his question any longer. He said, "You enjoin the sangat repeatedly to read Gurbani but are all the people who do this any better off? Some are dragging themselves on the ground; some cannot even walk whilst others are surrounded by all manner of troubles." Bhai Daya Singh told us, "Saying these words I had stirred up a storm in a teacup. The other devotees started to stare at me, thinking that the farmer has created a hot topic for discussion. Seeing their keen faces, I became ready to further my point of view to Baba Ji as well.

Baba Ji replied patiently, "Daya Singh Ji, if a person who reads Gurbani has any physical ailments then it is a consequence of his past actions..."

Impute not blame on anyone

The fault is of your own deeds

Whatever I did, for that I have suffered

I blame no one else

dadai dos na day-oo kisai dos kammaa aapni-aa.

jo mai kee-aa so mai paa-i-aa dos na deejai avar janaa. ||21||

(Asa 1st Guru, page 437)

And

Find no fault with other's O man

What you sow that alone you reap

By your deeds, you have bound yourself

Involved in worldly affairs

Thou shall continue coming and going

dos na deejai kaahoo log.

jo kamaavan so-ee bhog.

aapan karam aapay hee banDh.

aavan jaavan maa-i-aa DhanDh. ||1||

(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 888)

The blame does not lie with Gurbani. By reading Gurbani the debt of bad deeds decreases. A believer of Gurbani accepts physical ailment as repayment for any past transgressions and follows it as the will of God. By accepting this, a gursikh passes their time in contentment and in remembrance of God. I persisted in my question and again said to Baba Ji, "If a person is baptised and reads Gurbani as you guide them and they sing hymns daily, tell me, for what sin are they suffering that caused them to lose their ability to walk." Baba Ji asked, "Bhai Daya Singh pray tell who are you talking about." I replied, "I am talking of Santokh Singh Usman Shaheed, who was

baptised at your hands, reads Gurbani and sings kirtan too.” Baba Ji fell silent for a while and then replied, “Daya Singh one should not lift the veil on anyone’s past. We are all paying for our past deeds. There is no margin for doubt or room for questioning. This is the eternal truth: we reap what we sow. You are blaming Gurbani without due cause. Can you see his past and be sure that he is not paying for some past transgression in this life?” I replied, “I cannot, but you can tell us what past deed he committed that caused the loss of his legs in this life.” Baba Ji replied, “There was no need to discuss his past actions but I am compelled now because these other devotees who have a little faith in Gurbani will become agnostics if your question is not answered satisfactorily. If you were alone then there would have been no need to discuss this any further. Baba Ji’s face glowed with zeal and said, “Now listen! Daya Singh, Santokh Singh is indeed repaying for his actions from a past life. In his last life, he was a human being. He was God fearing but was of an angry temperament. One day he arrived home after a hard days work. He had a wash and sat down to eat his food served by his family. He had only taken a few bites when, he walked over to the kitchen to get something. His pet dog saw no one attending the plate and as is a dog’s habit, started to eat the food on it.

When Santokh Singh arrived back with what he needed, he saw the dog happily eating his food. Seeing this, he became so enraged that he swung a stick hard at the unsuspecting dog, which broke its hip. The dog lay crying in pain for a long while. Now he was full of remorse, but the fit of anger had caused him to overreact. The dog survived but due to a broken hip, dragged his legs around for the remainder of his life. It walked on its front legs only.” “Now if he had taken a while to check his anger and introspected, then he would have realised that, firstly the food is gone and spoiled, it was destined for the dog’s consumption. Secondly, being angry and hitting the dog will not bring the food back. A little time to introspect would have saved him from committing such an act. In committing this action, he did not think at all and was led by anger. Now, if he has to pay for his actions in this life, people like you raise questions about past actions.

Even though Santokh Singh cannot walk, reading Gurbani and the blessing of the Almighty means he copes very well with his disability. He is passing his days with fortitude and contentment. This state of being is the boon of Gurbani. If he were not attached to Gurbani, then he would have spent his time complaining about his condition and directing resentment at God Almighty.” This is why Guru Arjun Dev Ji says...

Delay not in practicing righteousness

Delay thou only in committing sins

Tar nah bilamb DharmaN bilamb paapaN.

(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1354)

It is better to delay committing a sin. Think over the consequences of a sinful action before we commit it. Sometimes, merely delaying the action deters the act of sin from being committed. Daya Singh told us that as Baba Ji was narrating this tale, everyone’s hair stood on end and no one dared to raise a question. A stream of thought arose within us compelling us to avoid committing any immoral acts. We were all sat there like statues and Baba Ji elaborated with more examples from Gurbani in order to dispel the last vestiges of doubt from our minds. I do not know much Gurbani but he recited a line from Japji Sahib” ...

What one sows so shall he reap

aapay beej aapay hee khaahu.

(Japji 1st Guru, page 4)

And

**As one sows so shall he reap such is the field of actions
jayhaa beejai so lunai karmaa sand-rhaa khayt.
(Barah maha 5th Guru, page 134)**

Guru Ji tells us that in this world, whatever actions we take, good or bad, result in us receiving a reward or punishment. This body that Waheguru has bestowed upon us is received due to our past actions. Some have good stout bodies others, ugly and deformed. Some are born with disabilities and some without intelligence. All this is a direct result of our past actions. Guru Nanak Dev Ji says...

**Mortals obtains a human body as a result of good deeds
But he reaches the gate of salvation with God's kind grace.
kurumee aavai kupurraa nudhuree mokh dhuaar
(Japji, 1st Guru, page 2)**

So, due to our past actions or karma, we are blessed with a body and due to God's grace we obtain salvation through this vessel. If there is still some doubt regarding past actions then listen to what Bhagat Tarlochan Ji says...

**Why do you slander the Lord?
O erring and ignorant woman?
Your pain and pleasures are according to your acts
On the doorsteps of the Almighty.
naaraa-in nindas kaa-ay bhoolee gavaaree.
dukarit sukarit thaaro karam ree. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Dhanasari Bhagat Tarlochan, page 695)**

And

**One is to bear the consequences of ones' good or bad deeds
mandaa changa aapnaa aapay hee keetaa paavnaa.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 410)**

And

**As are the deeds, we commit
So is the fruit, which we obtain
fal tayvayho paa-ee-ai jayvayhee kaar kamaa-ee-ai.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 468)**

So one has to bear the fruit of what we sow in our actions because...

**The body is the field of actions in this age
Whatever one sows that, he reaps
karam Dhartee sareer jug antar jo bovai so khaat.
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 78)**

God has given humans the freedom to commit any actions but is bound by the fruit of these actions. So, before acting, always ponder over the fruit. Weigh up the costs and benefits of your deeds. This eternal truth is illuminated in Gurbani. The recitation of Gurbani lessens the effects of past actions. There is not even an iota of doubt or ambiguity in that. As Guru Ji says:

Dreadful diseases sins of various murders

The penury of many births

And immense miseries are all destroyed

By contemplating the Lord's name, says Nanak

Just as the fire reduces to ashes the piles of wood

ghor dukh-yaN anik hat-yaN janam daaridaraN mahaa bikhyaadN.

mitant sagal simrant har naam naanak jaisay paavak kaasat bhasmaN karot. ||18||

(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 1355)

52 - LEAVING IDLE THOUGHTS IS BENEFICIAL

S. Hari Singh son of Degar Singh of village Gondpur was serving in the Indian air force. In July 1975, he came to visit his family whilst on leave. As is the order of our Great Guru, a Sikh must donate one tenth (dasvandh) of his income to the needy, poor or service of the Guru. As he had some money he thought, why not donate this money to the Gurdwara being built at Rampur Khera. His fields were near the Gurdwara and whilst roaming his field he came to the gurdwara with the money.

He met Bhai Amar Singh and asked if he could meet Baba Ji personally. Bhai Amar Singh replied that Baba Ji has retired to his room for meditation and will come out in the afternoon. Hari Singh was disappointed to hear this news. He was in two minds because he wanted leave before midday to return to his duty and still had a few people he wanted to meet. His mind was wavering and though he had wished to see Baba Ji personally to give him the dasvandh, Hari Singh was unsure if he could wait so long. He was thinking of all the people he had yet to meet and preparations to make for his return journey. In this emotional turmoil, S Hari Singh asked Bhai Amar Singh to knock on Baba Ji's door so that he could meet him briefly. Bhai Amar Singh replied, "No matter how important the job is, I have been instructed not to disturb his daily routine of meditation and neither does he come out until he has completed it. So it would be better if you had some langar and waited a couple of hours or return later in the day". S Hari Singh wished "GurFateh" outside Baba Ji's room and went out towards the fields where Bhai SurJit Singh was ploughing the fields. He told him of his desire to see Baba Ji but could not wait that long as he had only one day left of his leave.

Bhai Surjit Singh said, "We cannot interrupt Baba Ji's meditation. He may be deeply meditating; we should not disturb him as it disrupts his meditation."

Hearing this, S Hari Singh was in a quandary to stay or not. He started back towards the gurdwara. On the one hand, he thought that Baba Ji knows and understands my position. I hope he opens the door so that I can see him and give him the money. With these thoughts, he came and sat in the veranda around the Gurdwara. Suddenly the door of Baba Ji's hut was heard opening; Baba Ji came out of the hut and looked around for a few moments. S Hari Singh rushed up to Baba Ji, said Gur-Fateh and handed him the money for dasvandh. Baba Ji took the money and stood in the same place to perform Ardas to the Almighty, he then took S Hari Singh into the hut and said, "Look S Hari Singh Ji. We were blessed and in a deep state of meditation. But since you arrived with thoughts of handing dasvandh personally to me, your worries about going back home in a hurry created vibrations that interfered with my meditation. Even by trying hard to concentrate, I was unable to attach myself to a deep state of connection because your worried state of mind was disrupting my mind. As a result, I had to stop meditation and open the door. If we just think a little that the money for dasvandh belongs to the Guru and if you consider Guru Ji to be all knowing, you could have put the money in the golak (money collection box) in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The Great Guru would have accepted your dasvandh, as he knows all our deepest desires and longings. The money in the golak belongs to Guru Ji so you could have given it direct to the Almighty and avoided all the mental anguish and uncertainty. As a result, your anguish would have been dispelled and my meditation would not have been disrupted either. Moreover, your desire to see me personally should be superseded by your desire to meet Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

If one gets an opportunity to meet a gursikh then consider it to be our good fortune as the...

***Khalsa is my particular image
I reside amongst the pure
(10th Guru Sarab Loh Granth)***

So, if we have had a glimpse of the Guru we have had a glimpse of the Khalsa. Further, if you visit the Guru's house, abandon thoughts of haste and worry because bliss and haste do not go together. Where there is worry, anguish and haste, there can never be bliss. Whatever time we are blessed in the company of SatGuru Ji, we should abandon our thoughts, worldly work, leaving behind all worries and mental turmoil outside. In this manner, greater benefit is obtained when we visit Guru Ji. Lastly, one should not test another's spiritual and telepathic abilities thinking that if he is all knowing he will answer the door etc. This is not a noble thought. If God chooses to bless a person with telepathic ability or not, it is not a measure of their spiritual achievement; These are all gifts bestowed by Guru Ji. The duty of a gursikh is to meditate devotedly on naam and leave the Guru to bless us with these abilities as he wills it.

Hari Singh Ji, what has happened has happened. I have been given the audience of a gursikh like you. In the future, be mindful of these minor points. Though these appear to be insignificant points, they carry great significance, spiritually." Bhai Hari Singh Ji honoured Baba Ji's words by taking them to his heart and asked for forgiveness.

53 - WE REAP WHAT WE SOW, SUCH IS THE FIELD OF ACTION

Baba Ji had a devotee who lived near Jalandhar. He was God loving and religiously minded but was nonetheless easily misled by materialistic thoughts. That person arranged his daughter's marriage to a rich but materialistic family. The day for the wedding was fixed. The gifts and dowry to be exchanged had been agreed. Finally, the menu for lunch was discussed. The groom's family insisted on having liquor and meat at the wedding lunch. This devotee of Baba Ji raised some opposition to this demand but hesitated, thinking that if he were to flatly deny this demand then the groom's family may break off the engagement. Influenced by his soon to be relatives, he agreed to serve meat and liquor at the lunch. The wedding day drew closer. The family came to deliver an invitation to Baba Ji and requested Baba Ji to attend the wedding ceremony and bless the couple.

Baba Ji asked them where they had arranged their daughter's marriage. He told Baba Ji about the family where his daughter was to be married and let slip that meat and liquor would be served because the groom's family insisted upon it. Baba Ji listened patiently to the devotee's admission and sighed deeply. He said, "O my good man, to stifle your own conscience under the influence of your relatives, showing your back to the Guru's principles and doing that which is immoral reflects badly upon you. In doing so, what do we hope to gain in attracting the Guru's displeasure. Our wise ancestors considered marrying our daughters off as a great and pious act of charity. On one hand, you are to perform a pious act and on the other many innocent animals are to be slaughtered for the transient pleasure of our taste buds. Says Bhagat Kabir Ji:

Kabir to use force is tyrannical

And the Lord shall call you to account.

When thy account is produced from the Lord's office,

Thou shalt suffer strokes on thy face and mouth

kabeer jor kee-aa so julam hai lay-ay jabaab khudaa-ay.

daftar laykhaa neeksai maar muhai muhi khaa-ay. ||200||

(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1375)

After the wedding, your daughter will go to her new house but who will shoulder the sin of slaughtering so many animals? Remember, you will have to carry this burden of sin and repay the debt in this and the next life. If your daughter is destined to be married into that household then she will marry into that family without any doubt. By offering meat and liquor is not going to cement her relations with that family anymore strongly than they are already destined. Neither will her marriage to that family deteriorate if you do not offer meat and drink. If you, as a baptised Sikh, falter in your vows like this, then what hope is there for the rest of the people? A gursikh should not abandon one's vows or principles. He who abandons his principles is pushed around in this world and pushed out of God's abode in the hereafter. If, as a gursikh, you behave in such a way, with what face can you or I tell others to abstain from liquor or meat. Only the one who practices moral principles can preach to others. He, who does not practice what he preaches and is thus a hypocrite, is not accepted in the Guru's house. There is still time to rethink your decision and change your mind. Remember the Guru's words":

They who have one thing in their heart

And another on their false are accounted as false

jinH man hor mukh hor se kaaNdhay kachi-aa. ||1||

(Asa Bhagat Farid Ji, page 488)

The devotee listened despondently and with a sense of shame but still asked Baba Ji to attend the wedding. Baba Ji replied that a wedding where so many animals were to be killed for pleasure of the palate and where the Guru's principles were abandoned in favour of public approval would be difficult to attend.

That devotee sat a while and then left for his abode. The wedding party arrived on the appointed day. On one side, the wedding was being conducted in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and on the other, a short distance away; lambs were awaiting their death in order to provide pleasure for the guest's palates. This surreal programme, of joy mixed with sorrow, finished at noon. The guests drank and ate, returning to their homes in a drunken stupor. Next the bride's relatives had their turn to finish off the remaining alcohol and meat. With drunken people falling all over the place, it was amusing, in that no one needed a bed for the night to sleep in.

Anyhow, the girl went to her in laws and a few days later the Sardar Ji was on his way into Jalandhar riding his scooter when he had an accident and broke his hip. Writhing in pain Sardar Ji was transported by car to a local hospital. The doctors there could not treat him and advised that he be taken to a bigger hospital with an experienced surgeon. He required major surgery, which involved replacing his hip with a steel prosthetic implant. The family members asked the doctor's to relieve his pain until he could be taken to another hospital. The doctors attached a weight to Sardar Ji's foot and laid him to rest. Five or six days were spent crying with excruciating pain. Only he knew how painful the fracture was but any visitors who came heard his blood curdling cries of pain. Contrary to the advice of the doctors the family brought Sardar Ji home and asked a local quack to fix his fractured hip instead of taking him to the specialist hospital.

For three months, he was unable to move and being bedridden had to relieve himself whilst on the bed. He was utterly dependent on others to help him. By the fourth month, he was well enough to sit on the bed. Whoever visited him during these days would be told by Sardar Ji that he had been punished for killing those speechless animals. "To appease my daughter's in-laws I ordered the killing of these animals and in return, I have been punished and must endure this extreme suffering and pain." In the early days of his recovery, he had sent word to Baba Ji to come and visit him. He sent a message apologising to Baba Ji for not listening to his advice. As is the gentle, forgiving nature of Saints, Baba Ji decided to visit Sardar Ji. Baba Ji sat me beside him in the car. As soon as we arrived, the devotee started crying inconsolably, repenting his mistake and begged forgiveness. He confessed, "I abandoned my Guru's principles under the influence of my new found relatives. Please forgive me Baba Ji. Baba Ji replied, "Sardar Ji you are mistaken to ask for my forgiveness, it is the Almighty who forgives. Pray for his forgiveness and repent your mistake in front of him alone. I only petitioned you take a particular action which you ignored. Are those people now sharing your pain for whose sake you earned and took upon such a sin? They made merry, ate and drank, then vanished off to their homes. You however must carry the burden of sin. They only came to enquire about your health once or twice. The pain you suffered is but a partial payment for your sin, there is more yet to repay because Gurbani says...

In this age what one does with this hand

Receives the same with the other hand

None is apprehended in place of another

ah kar karay so ah kar paa-ay ko-ee na pakrhee-ai kisai thaaay.

(Asa Mohalla 5th Guru, page 406)

Whatever deeds you have performed or are carried out at your command, you alone will have to answer for them. No one else can repay your debt or suffer for your sins. The Lord is beneficent and forgiving. In front of his grace, these sins are washed away like straw in a flood of water. Bhai Vir Singh Ji has mentioned a beautiful anecdote in his poem "Necklace of waves" that time, which has elapsed, cannot be recalled. The present time cannot be utilised by repenting our sinful deeds in remorse. Try to ask our friend the Almighty Waheguru to forgive our trespass. In the future, try to avoid making mistakes by acting upon the Guru's' advice." For nearly a year Sardar Ji was left bedridden and even today, he limps on one leg when walking. To this day Sardar Ji guides people by giving them the benefit of learning from his experience, telling them of his traumatic experience. We must forever be vigilant in our lives because situations can arise when we stifle our moral intellect, ignoring the guidance of Gurbani and doing something sinful. In so doing, we suffer agony in this life, pain in the hereafter and endure separation from our Lord Waheguru. Great Guru Ji has alerted us to stay vigilant from deeds that are immoral...

***Do not commit such a deed
For which you may have to repent in the end
aisaa kunm moolae n keechai jith anth pushothaaeeai
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 918)***

So, Guru Amar Das Ji tells us not to commit any act that one will repent later because...

***We will reap whatever we sow in this world and the next.
Man himself obtains the fruit of bad and good deeds
One may issue one's heart desired commands here
But he shall proceed by the narrow road hereafter
mandaa changa aapnaa aapay hee keetaa paavnaa.
hukam kee-ay man bhaavday raahi bheerhai agai jaavnaa.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 470)***

And

***As are the deeds, we do
So is the fruit that we obtain
fal tayvayho paa-ee-ai jayvayhee kaar kamaa-ee-ai.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru page 468)***

And

***Everyone has to reap the fruit of his own actions
And adjust his accounts
keetaa aapo aapnaa aapay hee laykhaa sandhee-ai.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, p473)***

Just as the farmer sows a seed in his field, he can expect to harvest whatever he has sown. It is a fallacy that man sows one type of fruit and expects to harvest something else:

***Farid the farmer plants a thorny tree
And desires the grapes of Bijour
He goes about spinning wool***

***But he wishes to wear silk
fareedaa lorhai daakh bij-uree-aaN kikaar beejai jat.
handhai unn kataa-idaa paiDhaa lorhai pat. ||23||
(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1379)***

Bhagat Farid Ji gives us a beautiful example. As a farmer wishes to harvest the finest grapes but in fact plants the seed for an acacia tree, it can never come to pass that the farmer will harvest grapes in fact he will get bitter pods and thorns from the acacia tree. Similarly, one cannot expect to get silk by weaving with wool. So, one's actions will determine what we earn. Guru Nanak Dev Ji tells us clearly that...

***As you sow, so shall you reap
jayhaa beejai so lunai mathai jo likhi-aas.
(Barah maha 5th Guru, page 134)***

Before taking any action, any thought or any word spoken, we should verify that it agrees with the righteous path laid by our Guru's. If it fits with the path illuminated by Gurbani then it is worthwhile proceeding with the action:

***Leading a life according to the edicts of Gurbani is blissful...
He alone is the true disciple, friend
Kinsman and brother, who walks in Guru's will
He who walks according to his own will
O brother is separated from the Lord and bears blows
so sikh sakhaa banDhap hai bhaa-ee je gur kay bhaanay vich aavai.
aapnai bhaanai jo chalai bhaa-ee vichhurh chotaa khaavai.
(Sorath 3rd Guru, page 601)***

54 - ONE GETS THE FRUITS OF THE COMPANY WE KEEP

Around 1970 a lady by the name of Joginder Kaur came to Baba Ji. The lady appealed to Baba Ji, "My parent's village in Ramtatwali near Dholwaha in Hoshiarpur and my in laws are from the nearby village of Gondpur. I have a younger brother who is disabled. He cannot hear or speak properly or communicate his needs to others. His legs are crooked and he is unable to walk properly due to pains in his legs. He is also mentally subnormal. When I was at home, I would look after him. My mother is mentally retarded and just about manages to look after herself. Another younger brother of mine Shankar Singh has a business in Ludhiana so cannot visit often. Anyhow, a simpleton like my brother would not survive in the city. Secondly Baba Ji, the whole world, be it your brother, sister or relatives, only tolerate you when in need. After many days of deliberating, I have come to appeal at your feet. If you give permission, may I bring him to stay here at the Gurdwara? At least here, he will get a decent meal. I will come to visit every few days to check on him. "

Baba Ji enquired, "How old is your brother and what is his name?" Joginder Kaur replied, "Baba Ji he is about 40 years old. We call him by the name of Sadhu."

Baba Ji remarked to the lady "You have given him a very nice name. Moreover, Bibi Ji the Guru's home is a refuge for the homeless, haven of strength for the powerless and honour is obtained by the dishonoured. If one does not get shelter in the Guru's house, where else will one get refuge? Bring him here without hesitation and we will look after him as much as we can."

Hearing these encouraging words from Baba Ji, Joginder Kaur went back to her parent's house, brought Sadhu Singh on a mule cart to the Gurdwara. Seeing Sadhu Singh walking up aided by others Baba Ji said, "So you've come to stay my good man? Baba Ji fed him langar and gave him something to drink. When Sadhu Singh had eaten about 8 chapattis an attendant, Bhai Amar Singh, who served langar asked Baba Ji, "This self absorbed person goes on eating and eating. He keeps on wolfing down all that I serve him. I am worried that he will fall ill." Baba Ji smiled, "It doesn't matter. Keep feeding him if he wants more. If his hunger cannot be satisfied in the Guru's house, where else can his hunger be satiated? This time make sure he gets to eat his fill, whatever happens later we'll see to it." Bhai Sadhu Singh ate another four or five chapattis finally raising his hands in appreciation and was very pleased.

His sister sat a little while longer and then left for her village. Everyday when Baba Ji would recite his Sukhmani Sahib after Nitnem he would send a Singh to fetch Sadhu Singh. Baba Ji would seat Sadhu Singh beside himself whilst Baba Ji read the prayers. Sadhu Singh would remain seated the whole time whether he heard the prayers or not. After a few days, Baba Ji gave him a rosary of his own and showed him how to count it. He then turned to Sadhu and said aloud in his ear, "Keep saying Waheguru, Waheguru all the while that you are sat with me." Baba Ji showed Sadhu Singh how to progress one bead after another when he said "Waheguru." Baba Ji then asked, "Did you understand what I told you?" He then said, "Well ok, now show me how you are going to say Waheguru." Bhai Sadhu progressed through the whole rosary saying "Wardu Wardu" because he was debilitated in speech. Baba Ji was very pleased to hear Sadhu Singh's "Wardu, Wardu" effort at simran and again said in his ear, "Go on repeating Waheguru all day on your rosary." Relaxing a bit Baba Ji said, "Now the matter is resolved."

In a few months, Bhai Sadhu Singh's appetite was stable and he started to walk unaided on his own. His deafness improved, his speech was becoming clearer and more recognisable. His

pronunciation of 'wardu' now sounded closer to Waheguru only with a little lisp in it. Whenever he got time, he would either start sweeping the floors or start weeding the fields with a hoe. Such was the grace of the Guru that in about six months he was strong as any other man and was able to dig with a spade. He would even repair any beds or cots in the Gurdwara. Whilst working he would continue to recite "Waheguru, Waheguru." He would hear no gossip through his ear. He carried on with selfless service with his hands and constantly repeated Waheguru with his tongue.

So engrossed did he become in this simran and seva that after his morning meal he would pick up his spade, hoe and shears and continuously tend the fields surrounding the Gurdwara. If he got hungry, he would come and eat, otherwise he would carry on working whilst continuously reciting Waheguru gurmantar. He would sit morning and evening when Nitnem was recited whether he could hear it or not. In the second year, Baba Ji saw the service Sadhu had been carrying out and was pleased with his progress. As a result, he arranged for panj pyara's to baptise Sadhu who had soon become Sadhu Singh. Sadhu Singh who was without refuge, after taking the shelter of the Guru obtained the dual bounty of Seva and simran, thus becoming independent; So much so, he was now a positive help to others through his endeavours of selfless service. He would tend to and plant vegetables that would be used regularly in the langar. In fact, he would make sure that seasonal vegetables were constantly available for langar. Furthermore, his constant recitation of Waheguru after his baptism was so profound that even when he was deep in sleep his voice could be heard saying Waheguru! Waheguru!

Many a time, we quietly stood beside his bed and listened to his simran whilst he was sleep for up to 15-20 minutes. He would retire to bed with his rosary and whilst chanting Waheguru, would fall asleep but he would continue to recite Waheguru as he slept. We all reported this habit of chanting in his sleep to Baba Ji, who also witnessed Sadhu Singh reciting Waheguru in his sleep. Then Baba Ji turned to us and said, "This is the fruit of truly, devotionally and selflessly attaching oneself to the Lord's feet. This is because he does his simran all day whilst performing seva without taking any rewards in return. Morning and evening, he tries to listen to Nitnem. He neither listens to gossip through his ears nor slanders anyone by needlessly talking to anyone. His simple-minded aim to recite gurmantar has borne fruit. His mind is not troubled by doubt as to whether one should or should not do simran or what benefit will I gain from simran? He was just told he should say Waheguru; this is what is best for you and he accepted it without any doubt. Those words he accepted without reservation, burying them deeply in his mind and all you see now are the fruits of that labour. What has Guru Ji has ordered:

***Whether standing sitting or sleeping
Meditate thou on the Lord
Walking on the way,
Sing thou the praise of the Lord master
oohat baithat sovat Dhi-aa-ee-ai.
maarag chalat haray har gaa-ee-ai. ||1||***
(Asa 5th Guru, page 386)

And

***To repeat the name says Nanak,
Is ever whilst standing, sitting and sleeping
The vocation of God's slave
oohat baithat sovat naam.***

kaho naanak jan kai sad kaam. ||6||
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 286)

Some people doubt whether a man can recite simran even when he is deep in sleep. You can see for yourself that his body is asleep but his tongue is reciting simran. What better example does one need than to witness this deed with your own eyes. If he carries on as he is now and his mind does not wander or waver, then you can be sure he will win the game of life. The bounty of simran of God's name has cured his ailments. His ears can hear much better and he can speak much more clearly.

Time went by and Sadhu Singh remained absorbed in the dual tasks of seva and simran. Naam aroused further spiritual talents and he started to hear *Anhad shabad* (literally the celestial music of the universe). Sometimes he would wake up from his sleep and would come to ask Baba Ji why he was hearing musical instruments nearby? Baba Ji would just laugh and tell Sadhu Singh "Let the musical instruments keep playing, you just carry on saying Waheguru Waheguru." Sometimes he would climb the gurdwara roof to see where this celestial music was coming from. He would look all around the compound and then come back to his bed. When he would get up and roam at night we would ask him what is the matter with you? He would then reply, "Can't you hear them? I can hear loud musical instruments and the sound of Waheguru from somewhere." We would reply that we could not hear anything then Sadhu Singh would reply, "Why, sure you can, they are loud enough to keep me awake at night, wherever I go, I constantly hear someone saying Waheguru with me." Bhagat Kabir Ji's Salok reminds us that...

I have understood the riddle
I Am face to face with a whole host of troubles
hamhu jo boojhaa boojhnaa pooree patee balaa-ay. ||181||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1374)

We could not help but wonder at the grace of Almighty on Sadhu Singh. We wondered if he realised how easily he had gained this spiritual height that many spent their lifetimes to achieve:

In the absence of a customer
It was going in exchange for a shell
banjanhaaray baahraa ka-udee badlai jaa-ay. ||154||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1372)

In due course, he was blessed with the power to manifest anything with his words. If someone offered Sadhu Singh something to eat or wear even casually, Sadhu Singh would become pleased and whatever boon he would utter from his lips would appear. He had gained such great spiritual heights.

Now we come to the second stage in his life. Time lapsed and Sadhu Singh's brother saw he was cured and started to come and visit him. With Baba Ji's permission, he would take Sadhu Singh to Ludhiana for five or six days and at his brother's house, he would just sit idle around the home. To keep him occupied, the family would switch on the television for him and let him watch it all day. When they would bring him back after a week he would talk about what he had watched on TV for a whole month. Even though he could not hear the TV properly, he would tell everyone that he had watched "trolley" at his brother's house. Sadhu Singh could not say television and called it a "trolley." Instead, he would tell everyone that in the trolley he saw running water, people farming

inside, some were dancing, and some would fight inside it. It even rains inside the "trolley"; even a Gurdwara comes on it occasionally. In short, watching one week of TV would influence him for a complete month afterwards. Baba Ji would tell him repeatedly not to watch TV and that it is bad. Sadhu Singh would ask why it was bad. Baba Ji would say, "Sikhs do not watch TV, Guru Ji gets annoyed if you do." He would say, "OK then," but would talk of the TV during the day. Baba Ji would warn us "He has only watched TV not listened and see how his concentration has been ruined. If he could hear as well then think what effect it would have had on him?"

In time Baba Ji merged into the Almighty and left for his heavenly abode. Sadhu Singh carried on with his selfless service as before. His night time habit of simran during his sleep continued. Not just myself but nearly all the people at the Gurdwara had witnessed this strange but miraculous incident pertaining to Sadhu Singh's night time simran.

As is God's will, Sadhu Singh's eldest sister passed away in Delhi. Shankar Singh his brother took Sadhu Singh back to Ludhiana and said, "There is no need to come for him. I will bring Sadhu back when I come to attend a wedding in a nearby village." A couple of weeks later Bhagat Ji, a couple of other Singhs and myself were visiting Ludhiana and thought it an opportune time to pick up Sadhu Singh. We arrived at Shankar Singh's house and found Sadhu watching TV like he did every other day he was in Ludhiana. Seeing us arrive the family turned off the TV and offered us some refreshments.

After a little while we offered to take Sadhu Singh back to Rampur Khera with us if he wanted to go. We asked him if he wanted to come now or later. Shankar Singh's daughter in law went to Sadhu Singh and told him that Baba Ji and a few other Singhs have come to fetch you. Sadhu Singh declined to go back saying that there was no trolley at the gurdwara and got up to turn the TV back on again. We waited a little while and then got ready to leave. As we were leaving, I asked Shankar Singh's daughter in-law, "Does he watch TV like this all day?" She replied that he watches TV until late at night and gets up only when the programmes stop showing. If we switch the TV off he puts it back on again." I turned to the lady and said "It is okay for you to do as you please but by bringing him here you have ruined his concentration. Does he do his rosary daily?" "Occasionally he might but he mainly watches television," replied the daughter in law. We then took leave and arrived back at the Gurdwara.

After about ten days, Sadhu Singh's brother brought him back to the Gurdwara. Now instead of his usual food of naam, his diet was that of watching TV. He asked a TV to be set-up in the veranda, telling everyone the "trolley" is a good thing. In this manner, he would incessantly talk about what he watched on TV with everybody he met. By the evening, he could no longer contain himself. Master Mohinder Singh's house was about half a mile away from the Gurdwara. Silently and without telling anyone, Sadhu Singh crept out to Master Mohinder Singh's house. There he watched TV from about 7pm until late at night.

Next day he stayed there too. We were searching for him when Master Mohinder Singh's daughter came over to tell us that Sadhu Singh was at their house watching TV. She said, "My mother has sent me over to tell you that not to worry about Sadhu Singh, he is at our house." I replied casually, "Unfortunately the situation is way passed worrying now." Sadhu Singh returned in the afternoon. The next day he left for the nearby village and watched TV at someone else's house. So now, he would go from house to house watching TV. On his return, he would talk of nothing else but what he had watched. He would now demand people to bring a TV to the Gurdwara.

He was infatuated with TV 24 hours a day. One day I advised Sadhu Singh not to go to other people's houses. He replied, "I will stay if you get me a trolley." I told him that one does not bring a TV to the Gurdwara. He replied, "Don't keep a trolley here in the gurdwara but put one in the rooms where we sleep or put one in the langar hall?" I asked him again "Can you hear Waheguru Waheguru inside you anymore?" He replied that he could not. I asked him if he could hear those musical instruments anymore and he said not any more. I was astonished that on the one hand the fruit of twenty years of seva, simran and holy company had raised him to the spiritual height where he could hear Anhad shabad. On the other, just a few weeks of TV had overwhelmed all his past good actions.

I remembered how much truth was hidden in Baba Ji's words. He used to say that if a person through pious deeds, seva and simran gets his foot in the door of heaven he would lose his foothold if he has the misfortune of keeping bad company. Keeping immoral company is so powerful and effective it can cause us to lose our place in heaven. Secondly, I could not help but think that if Sadhu Singh had just watched TV for a few weeks what would become of all those people who watch TV for years and years. The deterioration of our concentration aside I wondered how many lives it would take to regain the focus of our conscious again. If a simpleton Sadhu Singh's attention can be disrupted so easily who could only see but not hear a TV, what becomes of the person who can watch, see, hear and understand all the sordid things shown on TV. As Baba Farid Ji says...

The sinless are beaten What of us sinners?

ayhu nidosaan maaree-ai ham dosaan daa ki-aa haal. ||39||

(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1379)

Oh spiritual master in the age of darkness, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, you started the tradition of transforming each home into a temple where celestial music is sung day and night. But you kalyug (master of darkness) have placed TV in all homes and turned them into cinema halls; Well done! You have stealthily absorbed the time of *Rehras* and now people watch TV instead. Whatever we watch at night now roams freely in our imaginations. Sleeping late at night after watching TV, you have stolen the ambrosial hours of dawn from people. It is your age and your rule. Only a fortunate few ones have escaped your influence. The words of Rattan Singh Bhangu in his book "Panth Parkash" are true. He says that...

Kalyug the age of darkness wants to sink the sinner

While the Great Guru wants him to swim across

The Great Guru does not leave his force

Though he has to help the whole of the world

To swim across

Oh, Dark Age you have not only snatched the Nitnem from gursikhs but have also taken their holy company. Instead of presenting one self before the Guru, you persuade people to present to you through the TV. But be warned Baba Nanak has immense stamina. You will not be able to withstand his majestic and celestial power. He will subdue you in the long run. Oh Sikh of the Guru! You now have only one method to save yourself and that is to resort to prayer. Baba Nanak Dev Ji said to Rai Bular, his devoted follower, "Rai Bular! When your own strength fails you, fall at the Lord's feet and beseech him in humility. The Almighty will come to your rescue. So, if you cannot save yourself from the tentacles of kalyug by your own strength then pray to Almighty Waheguru. He alone is omnipotent, all pervading and Almighty. He alone will help you. Sadhu

Singh is still living at the Gurdwara and is in good health. If anyone wants to ask him about the change television brought about in his spiritual status you can still do so. He will readily tell you his personal experience. Even now when he visits a new house, he will ask if they have a TV. Only after repeated persuasion, has he moulded his attention towards simran a little, but his infatuation with watching TV remains.

O Sikh of the Guru, be alert and cautious. TV is the sweetest poison of the Dark Age. Nonetheless, poison is poison even if it tastes sweet. Like the rest of the world, do not let your consciousness be disrupted and dispersed. Guru Ji has instructed us to attune our conscious mind. A scattered conscious will not be able to gain any spiritual benefit. To obtain a higher spiritual state we have to follow what Bhagat Kabir Ji says...

***The Lord is very near
Why do you say he is far?
Bind your pugnacious passions
And attain unto the beautiful Lord
hai hajoor kat door bataavhu.
dundar baaDhhu sundar paavhu. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Bhairon Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1160)***

So, the Lord can be attained if we restrain our inner noise of passions and bind our instincts. We should try not to disperse our mental concentration and stop our mind from its inner aimless dialogue. By listening, talking or watching endlessly will never satisfy the mind's curiosity. Guru Angad Dev Ji tells us that...

***The mouth is not sated with speech
And the ears are not sated with hearing
The eyes are not sated with what they see.
Each organ is the purchaser of one sort of trait.
The hunger of the hungry departs not.
By mere words of mouth the hunger
Only then, the hungry man is satiated
When by uttering his praises
He gets absorbed
aakh na raji-aa sunan na rajay kann.
akhee daykh na rajee-aa gun gaahak ik vann.
bhukhi-aa bhukh na utrai galee bhukh na jaa-ay.
naanak bhukhaa taa rajai jaa gun kahi gunee samaa-ay. ||2||
(Mohalla 2nd Guru, page 147)***

Bhai Gurdas Ji too corroborates what Guru Ji says...

***The eyes are not satisfied with beholding sights and exhibitions,
The ears are not satisfied with hearing praise or blame, mourning or rejoicing,
The tongue is not satisfied with eating what affords pleasure and delight; the nose is not
contented with good or evil odours;
Nobody is satisfied with his span of life,
And everyone entertains false hopes.
But the Sikhs are satisfied with the Guru and***

***Theirs is the true love and delight
aakhan aakh na raji-aa sunan na rajay kann.
akhee daykh na rajee-aa gun gaahak ik vann.
bhukhi-aa bhukh na utrai galee bhukh na jaa-ay.
naanak bhukhaa taa rajai jaa gun kahi gunee samaa-ay. ||2||
(Bhai Gurdas Ji, Vaar 27 Pauri 9)***

No one to this day has ever satisfied the mind through his or her senses. As Guru Ji tells, one can only satisfy our hunger for pleasure by adopting the quality of praising the Lord. Then one can merge into the Lord, tasting the ultimate pleasure.

Let us learn from the experience of the simple minded Sadhu Singh:

***Kabir O wretched man
You shall be drowned through
Undue regard for the opinion of many men
Know that the fate which has befallen your neighbour
Shall also come upon you
kabeer doob-higo ray baapuray baho logan kee kaan.
paarosee kay jo hoo-aa too apnay bhee jaan. ||167||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1373)***

55 - BECOMING GURU WARD IS THE ONLY RELATIONSHIP

Baba Ji had deep regard and affection for the sangat of Talwara. At every meditation camp, men and women from Talwara would come to perform kirtan and katha at Gurdwara Rampur Khera.

Whenever the sangat of Talwara invited him, Baba Ji would definitely attend any religious occasions. If he had to stay the night in Talwara, he would often stay at the home of Bhai Joginder Singh Ji or Bhai Harsharan Singh Ji (affectionately called Bhagat Ji).

In the office where Bhai Joginder Singh and Bhai Harsharan Singh Ji worked was a senior engineering official named S. Anaar Singh Ji. He was their superior officer and worked for the irrigation and canals department. S. Anaar Singh was a zealous atheist and if he saw a baptised Sikh, he would bombard him with vague and absurd questions about Sikhism.

Sometimes he would come over to the office of Bhai Joginder Singh or Bhai Harsharan Singh and pose irrational questions. Most of his subordinate officers, who were Sikhs, avoided any discussion with him and he was becoming a headache to any Sikh who worked around him.

One day, Anaar Singh Ji came to Bhagat Ji and started asking his irrational and logical (in his view) questions. In order to put off any arguments Bhagat Ji replied, "I don't know much about logic and religion. If you want to know more about spirituality and logic then why don't you accompany me to Gurdwara Rampur Khera? Baba Harnam Singh Ji can answer your questions as he has experience of these matters." Anaar Singh Ji replied, "I shall go and meet your Baba Ji. However, you have been going to see him for many years, why can't you answer my questions? Are you wearing these kirpans only for show? See, you can ask any of my comrades (fellow atheists) whatever questions you like and they will answer them, there and then. I will go and see this Baba Ji of yours but I will go alone." With these words, Anaar Singh Ji left for his office and Bhagat Ji breathed a sigh of relief, thanking God that the encounter was over. Bhagat Ji told us that they would be filled with trepidation at the sight of Anaar Singh Ji because firstly, he would stall the office work with arguments and secondly, it was very difficult answering his questions which were often obtuse and absurd. When one could not answer Anaar Singh Ji's questions then one would feel rather small.

After some time the annual meditation camp came around in August. The annual camp was in full swing and one day Anaar Singh Ji set off from Talwara and came to the Gurdwara. He sat in the congregation for the whole morning session. In those days, Bhai Wadhawa Singh Ji from Patiala (he was an early devotee of Baba Ji) used to give a discourse, explaining the order of the day taken from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Anaar Singh Ji listened to the whole session, had langar and set off back home. As he was leaving, Bhagat Ji (who was in charge of the cloak room) saw him and in astonishment came over to greet his superior officer. Bhagat Ji greeted Anaar Singh Ji and asked him why he was leaving so soon. Anaar Singh Ji replied, "I was here to see your Saint and now I have heard him as well. I was leaving now to attend to my duties." Bhagat Ji asked quizzically, "Where did see and hear Baba Ji? He was sat amidst the congregation listening to a discourse on Gurbani. He has just gone straight back to his hut" Anaar Singh Ji replied, "The man who was explaining the Guru's order, was he someone else? I took him to be the Saint. I listened to his explanation and was now ready to leave."

Bhagat Ji explained, "The man who was narrating the meanings of Gurbani is S. Wadhawa Singh Ji. He works in the languages department at Patiala University. He is very pious and noble Sikh and is

an honoured devotee from Baba Ji's earliest days. He is highly regarded and is performing exemplary, selfless and honourable service for the congregation." Bhagat Ji then offered Anaar Singh to come and meet Baba Ji if he wished to do so. Anaar Singh Ji agreed to meet Baba Ji, as that was why he had come to Rampur Khera. Bhagat Ji took Anaar Singh Ji to Baba Ji's hut, which was above the kitchen. When Anaar Singh entered the hut, Baba Ji was sitting on the bed. He bowed in respect to greet Baba Ji. Before he could bow his head Baba Ji caught hold of his folded hands and said, "Welcome Sardar Ji, you have graced us with your presence." During this exchange of greetings Bhagat Ji introduced Anaar Singh Ji to Baba Ji as his superior officer at work.

Baba Ji asked Anaar Singh Ji if he would like something to eat or drink and then invited him to grace them with a visit to the Gurdwara in future as well. As Anaar Singh has often told us, "When Baba Ji caught hold of my hands I felt a sweet strange sensation intoxicate my inner self. This sensation lasted for two days and this was the first time in my life that I experienced anything like this."

The annual camp was due to finish on a Sunday in three days time. Anaar Singh Ji came early to the Gurdwara early the next morning. He sat attentively listening to the discourse in one corner of the hall until the session finished. At the end, he exchanged Gur-Fateh with Baba Ji and quietly left for Talwara. Partly due to his past good deeds from previous lives and in part due to the spiritually cleansing effect of sitting with the congregation, the seeds of spirituality germinated within Anaar Singh Ji. He underwent a drastic change in his lifestyle now. He got a gutka (prayer book) of daily prayers. Arising early in the morning, he now started to recite his prayers daily. He would bolt himself in his bedroom so that no one would know he was reciting his prayers. He kept his transformation so secret that even his wife did not know for the first six months that he was reciting prayers. Suddenly, the absurd and obtuse questioning stopped. His office colleagues were spared the routine humiliation inflicted upon them. Anaar Singh Ji started to consult other gursikhs in order to get spiritual upliftment.

Bhagat Ji too thanked God that he was now spared the questioning and taunting of his beliefs by his superior officer. Anaar Singh Ji's wife met Bhagat Ji once and could not help but ask, "What spell have you cast over my husband? The atmosphere at home has changed completely. Before, when my husband came home there used to be an air of tension and awe in the household. Now there is a complete reversal of this situation. He comes home, has tea and bolts himself in his room. God knows what he does in there. His nature has totally changed." Bhagat Ji shrugged and replied, "You know Sardar Ji better than us. We have done nothing to him. Whatever he is does he must be doing for the better."

Six months passed and Anaar Singh Ji was now reciting his prayers regularly. In the meantime, he read books written by Bhai Vir Singh Ji as well as other religious scriptures. Whenever he came across anything that was doubtful he would come to Gurdwara Rampur Khera without telling anyone and discuss his doubts with Baba Ji. Through his discussions, he would clear his doubts about spiritual matters and then quietly return home. One time he requested Baba Ji, "Please pray for me in the feet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji so that I too may get glimpses of the holy Guru."

Baba Ji listened to him carefully and replied, "Anaar Singh Ji, we shall pray in the feet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji but with what words will I plead in front of the Great Guru. What is your relation to the Guru and what words will I use to describe your relation to him? Should I address you as the devotee of the Guru or his Sikh? You have yet to become his Sikh. Guru Ji defines what a devotee

is. A true devotee is one who has surrendered his body and mind to the Guru and does what the Guru asks of him or her:

***The Lord's slave is he who embraces Guru's service
Dedicating their mind and body
Making an offering of these to the Guru
sayvko gur sayvaa laagaa jin man tan arap charhaa-i-aa raam.
(Asa 4th Guru, page 444)***

And

***He is said to be God's attendant
Who keeps God clasped close to his heart
Dedicating his soul and body
He places them before the Lord
And roots out ego from within
so sayvak har aakhee-ai jo har raakhai ur Dhaar.
man tan sa-upay aagai Dharay ha-umai vichahu maar.
(Sri Raag 3rd Guru, p 28)
To become a servant of the Lord one has to...
Surrender all your body
Soul and wealth to the Guru
And submit to his will
Thus shall you obtain the Lord
tan man Dhan sabh sa-up gur ka-o hukam mani-ai paa-eeai.
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 918)***

He who surrenders becomes a true servant and is accepted by the Lord:

***Such service the Lord renders to him
That he surrenders his soul to whom it belongs
He who is pleasing to the Lord
Becomes acceptable in the Lord's court
Such a slave obtains honour in Lord's court
aisee sayvak sayvaa karai. jis kaa jee-o tis aagai Dharai.
saahib bhaavai so parvaan. so sayvak dargeh paavai maan. ||3||
(Dhanasari 1st Guru, page 661)***

Guru Amar das Ji defines a Sikh as:

***He alone is your true disciple, friend, kinsman and brother
Who walks in the Guru's will
so sikh sakhaa banDhap hai bhaa-ee je gur kay bhaanay vich aavai.
(Sorath 3rd Guru, page 601)***

Guru Ram das Ji describes the daily routine of a Sikh:

***One who calls himself a Sikh of the Guru, the True Guru?
Shall rise in the early morning hours and***

Meditate on the Lord's Name.
Upon arising early in the morning,
He is to bathe, and cleanse himself in the pool of nectar.
Following the Instructions of the Guru,
He is to chant the Name of the Lord.
All sins, misdeeds and negativity shall be erased.
Then, at the rising of the sun, he is to sing Gurbani;
Whether sitting down or standing up,
He is to meditate on the Lord's Name.
One who meditates on my Lord
With every breath and every Morsel
That Gursikh becomes pleasing to the Guru's Mind
To whom my Lord and Master is kind and compassionate
Upon that gursikh, the Guru's teachings are bestowed.
Servant Nanak begs for the dust of the feet of that gursikh,
Who himself chants the Naam, and inspires others to chant it.
gur satgur kaa jo sikh akhaa-ay
so bhalkay uth har naam Dhi-aavai.
udam karay bhalkay parbhaatee
isnaan karay amrit sar naavai.
updays guroo har har jap jaapai
sabh kilvikh paap dokh leh jaavai.
fir charhai divas gurbaanee gaavai
bahdi-aa uth-di-aa har naam Dhi-aavai.
jo saas giraas Dhi-aa-ay mayraa
har har so gursikh guroo man bhaavai.
jis no da-i-aal hovai mayraa su-aamee
tis gursikh guroo updays sunaavai.
jan naanak Dhoorh mangai tis gursikh kee
jo aap japai avrah naam japaavai. ||2||
(Mohalla 4th Guru, page 305)

After uttering the above mentioned divine words, Baba Ji said to S Anaar Singh, "Can you tell me now on what grounds should I pray to the almighty in order for him to bless you with His vision when you haven't yet created a relationship with him? You have neither become a Sikh of the Guru nor his servant." Sardar Ji was an intelligent man and understood what Baba Ji was trying to say. He pleaded, "Please give me more time to rectify this shortfall and to strengthen my relationship with Waheguru." Sardar Anaar Singh had a deep yearning to establish his discipleship of the Guru by being baptised. He was eagerly waiting for the day he could be baptised thus, becoming a Gursikh and creating a relationship with Waheguru.

Baisakhi was fast approaching. Sardar Anaar Singh Ji decided to be baptised on this day. Anaar Singh met up with Bhagat Ji and asked him, "Please can you arrange to get some kakaars for me because I wish to get baptised and establish my relationship with the Guru." Bhagat Ji was astonished to hear this request from Anaar Singh. Bhagat Ji gathered the kakaars for him with great pleasure and handed over a beautiful sword secured within a gatra (belt for securing the sword). On the appointed day, Anaar Singh Ji was blessed with amrit and joined the fold of the Khalsa.

A few months later Baba Ji was attending a religious function in Talwara. Anaar Singh Ji discovered that Baba Ji was visiting Bhagat Ji, so he came over to meet him. Seeing an opportune moment Anaar Singh made a supplication to Baba Ji, "I have taken amrit and established the true relation with Waheguru just as you requested. Can you now do an Ardas in the feet of the Guru on my behalf? Please ask Guru Ji how much life I have left to live."

Baba Ji listened patiently to Anaar Singh's request and said, "Sardar Ji please return in the evening. I will do the Ardas on your behalf in the feet of our Guru. Whatever Guru Ji commands or tells me I will pass his message onto you." Anaar Singh Ji stayed a little while longer and after having some refreshments left happily.

In the evening, Anaar Singh Ji returned to meet Baba Ji. He sat with the congregation and Baba Ji to recite *Rehras*. After prayers had finished, Baba Ji took Anaar Singh to one side and said, "Guru Ji has asked me to tell you that..."

***O brother! Deem death to be hovering over your body
In this manner as is the fish so is man,
Death's noose like a hook befalls him unawares.
bhaa-ee ray i-o sir jaanhu kaal.
ji-o machhee ti-o maansaa pavai achintaa jaal. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 55)***

What will you gain by asking about death? Death is inevitable as Bhagat Kabir tells us:

***Day by day, hour-by-hour, Life draws to a close,
The body withers away.
Death walks around like a hunter, a butcher.
In what way, in which direction should man escape?
din tay pahar pahar tay gharee-aaN aav ghatai tan chheejai.
kaal ahayree firai baDhik ji-o kahhu kavan biDh keejai. ||1||
(Dhanasari Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 692)***

Anaar Singh! death hovers over our heads, laughing over our shoulders and man is blissfully unaware for:

***Death hangs over man's head
But the beast does not understand this
Involved in the strife, pleasure and pride
He does not remember death.
mirat hasai sir oopray pasoo-aa nahee boojhai.
baad saad ahaNkaar meh marnaa nahee soojhai. ||1||
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 809)***

Even now S. Anaar Singh Ji if you have any doubt, Guru Ji has said that you can ask him without going through me." On hearing this, Anaar Singh replied, "How can I ask the Great Guru my questions when I cannot see Guru Ji at all.?" Baba Ji replied, "Nurture the vision and eyes with which one can see the divine Guru. Those eyes and vision which Gurbani tell us about, are different from the eyes we use to see our world:

***Nanak, different are those eyes, With which my spouse is beheld
naanak say akh-rhee-aaN bi-ann jinee disando maa piree. ||1||
(page 577)***

In order to see the true Lord our Guru has shown us the path...

***Make awe of God your feet,
His love your hands his understanding your eyes,
Says Nanak, in this way O wise woman,
You will be united with your bridegroom.
bhai kay charan kar bhaav kay lo-in surat karay-i.
naanak kahai si-aanee-ay iv kant milaavaa ho-ay. ||2||
(Mohalla 2nd Guru, page 139)***

The path that you have joined will lead you to glimpse the true Guru. Moreover, it will remove any vestiges of doubt and answer all your questions. Guru Arjun dev Ji guarantees that...

***The Lord converses with his devoted Saints
There is no weal nor woe, neither birth nor death
bhagat sang parabh gosat karat.
tah harakh na sog na janam na marat. ||3||
(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 894)***

There is no need to worry or become impatient. Surrendering our intellect to the Guru, we must endeavour to remain ever hopeful and await his grace. The omnipotent Lord is benevolent and forever giving. He will heed your supplication and in his benevolence grant all your boons. Always remember the words of Bhai Vir Singh Ji:

***Surrender yourself before him
Like a carpet lay your mind in his feet
Lay your mind without compulsion, surrender and wait
As the earth awaits rain from heaven
So, you too await the shower of his blessings.***

S. Anaar Singh developed an awe of death in his mind. His mind became aware of the uncertainty of death. This awe turned the mind towards devotional meditation. Apart from his daily nitnem, Anaar Singh would continuously recite gurmantar, remaining ever hopeful of Guru's grace. He had now started amassing the wealth of naam much like a miser amasses worldly wealth. He would not let anyone know of his inner state of being or his spiritual state. Even if he went to pay his respects at the Gurdwara, he would bow discreetly and silently slip away from the sangat. Whilst walking or moving about, inwardly he would immerse himself in naam simran. When he retired and returned to his village, Anaar Singh would spend all his time in meditation of Waheguru and make his time fruitful. By Anaar Singh Ji's own admission, his mind did not wander, nor did any doubts arise in his mind. Even though he moves about in this world, his mind remains free of worldly attachments. His inner being remains immersed in constant gratitude and acceptance of Guru's will. All these boons and state of spiritual being were obtained after being baptised.

So dear friends, if we have forged a relationship with the Guru by being baptised then we are extremely fortunate and worthy of praise. If we have not joined the fold of the Guru then to whom

shall we appeal? Who will render assistance in our time of need? Who will emancipate us? Who will hear our pleas of deliverance? Because...

Daily they beat and plunder me.

In front of whom should I complain?

maareh looteh neet neet kis aagai karee pukaar janaa. ||1||

(Gauri Cheti 1st Guru, page 155)

If we have joined the Guru's family by being baptised, Guru Ji will heed our prayers. He will render us assistance in every possible way. Bhagat Kabir Ji says...

Raising my arms aloft, I complained to my Guru.

And he did save me. Pause.

oopar bhujaa kar mai gur peh pukaari-aa tin ha-o lee-aa ubaaree. ||1|| rahaa-o.

(Suhi, Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 793)

And

Taking my arm,

You have pulled me out of the blind well,

Of worldly attachments and mammon.

Says Nanak the Guru has broken my bonds

He has united me with God from whom I was separated.

baah pakar kadh leenay apunay garih anDh koop tay maa-i-aa.

kaho naanak gur banDhan kaatay bichhurat aan milaa-i-aa.

(Sarang 1st Guru, page 1218)

A mortal without a Guru is like an orphan. Such a being is not accepted in this world or the hereafter. We too should forge a true relationship between almighty Lord and our soul. By coming to the Guru's shelter i.e., being baptised by the five beloved ones, our present world and the hereafter will be blissful and free of strife:

You shall be born repeatedly,

Die and reborn again.

You shall suffer much punishment,

On the way to that distant country.

jam jam marai marai fir jammai.

bahut sajaa-ay pa-i-aa days lammai.

(Maru 5th Guru, page 1020)

56 - BEGINING OF NAAM MEDITATION SESSIONS

By now, Baba Ji had enjoyed and tasted untold spiritual pleasures through meditation of naam. He now wanted to share the bliss of meditation that had blossomed within him with others. He wanted to share the divine truth – which is that we all have this lifetime for the singular purpose of achieving a higher spiritual existence through meditation of naam.

As in all religions, meditation of the Lord's name or naam is pivotal in achieving enlightenment. Naam meditation is the supreme practice in all faiths as described in Sukhmani Sahib:

***Lord's meditation is exalted above all else
Through meditation many have been saved
parabh kaa simran sabh tay oochaa.
parabh kai simran uDhray moochaa.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 263)***

And

***Of all religions the best religion is to
Repeat the lord's name
This alone is the most pious of deeds
sarab Dharam meh saraysat Dharam.
har ko naam jap nirmal karam.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 266)***

Those who remain devoid of this priceless and supreme pleasure of naam meditation are considered low according to Gurbani...

***Accursed is their life in this world
Who are without the true name
Dharig jeevan sansaar sachay naam bin.
(Vaar Ramkali 3rd Guru, page 956)***

Guru Ramdas Ji proclaims...

***O lord the mothers of those
Within whose mind naam does not abide
Ought to have been barren]
Their bodies wander without the lord's name
They waste their lives and die crying
O my soul repeat the name of the lord
The lord God who is within you
jin har hirdai naam na basi-o tin maat keejai har baaNjhaa.
tin sunjee dayh fireh bin naavai o-ay khap khap mu-ay karaaNjhaa. ||1||
(Jaitsari 4th Guru, page 697)***

Guru Arjan Dev Ji prays to almighty God for the boon of naam:

Meet me, O my Lord of the Universe.
Please bless me with Your Name.
Without the Naam, the Name of the Lord,
Cursed, cursed is love and intimacy. . Pause
Without the Naam, one who dresses and eats well
Is like a dog, which falls in and eats impure foods
Without the Naam, all occupations are useless,
Like decorations on a dead body
One who forgets the Naam and indulges in pleasures,
Shall find no peace, even in dreams;
His body shall become diseased.
One who renounces the Naam and engages in other occupations,
Shall see all of his false pretences fall away.
One whose mind does not embrace love for the Naam shall go to hell,
Even though he may perform millions of ceremonial rituals
One whose mind does not contemplate the name of the lord
Is bound like a thief, in the city of death.
Hundreds of thousands of ostentatious shows and great expanses
Without the naam, all these displays are false.
That humble being repeats the name of the lord,
O Nanak, whom the lord blesses with his mercy.
mil mayray gobind apnaa naam dayh.
naam binaa Dharig Dharig asnayhu. ||1|| rahaa-o.
naam binaa jo pahirai khaa-ay.
ji-o kookar joothan meh paa-ay. ||1||
naam binaa jaytaa bi-uhaar. ji-o mirtak mithi-aa seegaar. ||2||
naam bisaar karay ras bhog.
sukh supnai nahee tan meh rog. ||3||
naam ti-aag karay an kaaj.
binas jaa-ay jhoothay sabh paaj. ||4||
naam sang man pareet na laavai.
kot karam karto narak jaavai. ||5||
har kaa naam jin man na aaraaDhaa.
chor kee ni-aa-ee jam pur baaDhaa. ||6||
laakh adambar bahut bisthaaraa.
naam binaa jhoothay paasaaraa. ||7||
har kaa naam so-ee jan lay-ay.
kar kirpaa naanak jis day-ay. ||8||10||
 (Gauri 5th Guru, page 240)

Guru Arjan Dev Ji questions the usefulness of the life spent without remembering God and asks...

Why don't they die who forget the all-pervading lord?
Without naam of what avail is this life. Pause
Eating, drinking, playing, laughing
And amassing wealth
Of what use are decorations of the dead?
mar na jaahee jinaa bisrat raam.
naam bihoon jeevan ka-un kaam. ||1|| rahaa-o.

**khaat peet khaylat hasat bisthaar.
kavan arath mirtak seegaar. ||2||
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 188)**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji give us his verdict in our daily evening prayer of Rehras ...

**Vile are they who forget their master O Nanak
Without God's name such men are outcast wretches
khasam visaareh tay kamjaat.
naanak naavai baajh sanaat. ||4||3||
(Asa 1st Guru, page 10)**

And

**They are lepers who dress and
eat without serving the true Guru
They suffer repeated births and death
jo bin satgur sayvay khaaday painday say mu-ay mar jammay korhHay.
(Gauri 4th Guru, page 306)**

We may think that we are living life but in the eyes of our Guru...

**He alone lives
Within whose mind the master abides
O Nanak one other is truly alive
so jeevi-aa jis man vasi-aa so-ay.
naanak avar na jeevai ko-ay.
(Salok 1st Guru, page 142)**

One may live a long and prosperous life but without remembering the lord, one will depart this world without honour for only...

**Those mortals are seen to live forever
Who contemplate their true lord master
Through the society of Saints
They obtain the vision of the lord
jeevat paykhay jinHee har har Dhi-aa-i-aa.
saaDhsang tinHee darsan paa-i-aa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Suhi 5th Guru, page 740)**

And

**Without the Lord's meditation
To live is like burning in fire
Even though ones life may be long like that of a serpent
bin simran jo jeevan balnaa sarap jaisay arjaaree.
(Todi 5th Guru, page 712)**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji teaches us the method of living a remarkable life:

**Arising early each day
Drink the lord's elixir of naam
In this way, you shall have eternal life
With your tongue, utter
The name of your God, God God.
jeevat jeevat jeevat rahhu.
raam rasaa-in nit uth peevhu.
har har har har rasnaa kahhu. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Bhairon 5th Guru, page 1138)**

And

**To forget the lord of the world is one's own death
To contemplate God's name is life
marnaN bisranaN gobindah.
jeevanaN har naam Dha-yaavaneh.
(Gatha 5th Guru, page 1361)**

**They are beyond praise who treasure even a iota
Of God's name in their hearts
kinkaa ayk jis jee-a basaavai.
taa kee mahimaa ganee na aavai.
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 262)**

Having lived and died over many lifetimes, our soul becomes tarnished with the filth of sins that we have committed...

**The dirt of multiple lives has attached to the soul
In this way it has become pitch black
janam janam kee is man ka-o mal laagee kaalaa ho-aa si-aahu.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 651)**

How do we remove this dirt? Guru Nanak dev Ji tell us of a method to remove the grime that has tarnished our soul...

**If hands, feet and body are covered in dust
The dust is washed off by water
When clothes are soiled with urine
Soap is used to wash the clothes
When the mind is polluted with sins, it is washed
By colouring it with the Lord's name
bharee-ai hath pair tan dayh.
paanee Dhotai utras khayh.
moot paleetee kaparh ho-ay.
day saaboon la-ee-ai oh Dho-ay.
bharee-ai mat paapaa kai sang.
oh Dhopai naavai kai rang.
(JapJi 1st Guru, page 4)**

And

**By repeating the Lord's name
The soul is sanctified
Pride from within departs
vaahu vaahu karti-aa man nirmal hovai
ha-umai vichahu jaaay.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 515)**

And

**A mere iota of the lord's name, Effaces millions of sins
katay paap asaNkh naavai ik kanee. ||11||
(Vaar Malar 1st Guru, page 1283)**

**Millions of sins are destroyed
By repeating the Lord's name
Singing God's praises
One obtains the hearts desires
The fear of death and rebirth is removed
An eternal true abode is obtained
kot aghaa sabh naas hohi simrat har naa-o.
man chinday fal paa-ee-ah har kay gun gaa-o.
janam maran bhai katee-ah nihchal sach thaa-o.
(Jaitsari 5th Guru, page 707)**

The soul can be purified by the alchemy of naam. The mortal once purified becomes immortal. Within each mortal lies a hidden but latent, potential seed of naam. Thus:

**Nine treasures and nectar of the lord's name
Within the human body are nestling
na-o niDh amrit parabh kaa naam.
dayhee meh is kaa bisraam.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 293)**

And

**Rectify this body and soul of yours
By contemplating the Guru's hymns
By unbounded love for the Guru
Is this treasure found
ih man dayhee soDh tooN gur sabad veechaar.
naanak is dayhee vich naam niDhaan hai
paa-ee-ai gur kai hayt apaar. ||8||10||32||
(Asa 3rd Guru, page 427)**

Naam has no shape or colour, Naam is formless. It is beyond measurement and yet self-contained. To draw out this latent hidden treasure of naam we need to repeat the "worded" name of the lord blessed to us by our great Guru. By repeating the lord's name (naam) time and again, our mind will

be purified. The purified mind will develop an attraction or love for God. Once this love for God arises in the mind the inner, eternal love for God is revealed. The fifth Guru Ji hints towards this as follows:

***The mind is the mansion
The body is a fence around it
Within the mind is the unrivalled commodity
In the heart the great merchant lord abides
Who is the dealer that commands credit there?
Rare is the dealer who deals in the jewel of naam
man mandar tan saajee baar.
is hee maDhay basat apaar.
is hee bheetar sunee-at saahu.
kavan baapaaree jaa kaa oohaa visaahu. ||1||
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 181)***

Guru Gobind Singh Ji proclaims in no uncertain terms:

***I speak truly and all should listen
They who love God, alone will realise him
Saach Kahu Sun Leho Sabeh
Jin Prem Keeyo Thin Hee Prabh Paioo
(10th Guru Tav Parsad Swaiyas)***

So in order to create love for him we must repeat the gurmantar Waheguru. To reveal the latent spring of naam and instill gurmantar within the heart of everyone, Baba Ji embarked on a special program. Baba Ji planned to bring together all those gursikhs who wanted to advance spiritually in meditation of gurmantar for a naam simran session at least once a year. All the gursikhs who wanted to attune themselves upon meditation and introspection of naam would be invited to congregate, recite and meditate as one, forming a mutual, Sainly society devoted to naam. The camp or session (called a Naam Abhyas Kammai Smagam) was organised over a ten-day period with a program chalked out for the pursuit of meditation on naam. Starting at 2am in the morning the program continued throughout the day until 9.30pm at night following the schedule outlined below.

Programme Timing

Bathing + personal Nitnem	2.00 am — 3.45am
Tea or herbal tea	3.45 am — 4.00 am
Enthroning SGGS	4.00 am — 4.15 am
Naam recitation (all the congregation)	4.15 am — 5.15 am
Asa di Vaar (hymns singing + kirtan)	5.15 am — 7.15 am
Explanation of Guru's (order+ardas)	07.15 am— 08.15 am
Breakfast and rest	08.15 am— 10.00 am
Path Sri Sukhmani Sahib	10.00 am— 11.15 am
Explanation of Vaars of Bhai Gurdas Ji	11.15 am — 12.00 pm
Lunch and rest	12.30 pm— 3.30 pm
Herbal tea	3.30 pm— 4.00 pm
Naam recitation (jointly)	4.00 pm— 5.00 pm
Kirtan	5.00 pm— 7.00 pm

Sodar, Arti, Ardas (evening nitnem)	7.00 pm— 7.45 pm
Sukhasan of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji	7.45 pm— 8.00 pm
Dinner	8.00 pm— 9.00 pm
Individual naam recitation (on beds)	9.00 pm— 9.30 pm

A day before the meditation camp was to finish a baptism ceremony would be held. On this day, numerous people would be baptised, the panj pyara's (five beloved ones) would bestow naam in the form of gurmantar and mool mantar to the Sikhs of the Guru. Devotees from far off places would congregate in greater and greater numbers with increasing enthusiasm. They would spend more and more time at these sessions in order to enjoy the bliss of meditation and would try to rekindle the inner fountain of eternal love for God. The congregation would be informed beforehand to try to control their mind and not to let it wander in idle thoughts and to try to concentrate on meditation. The aim was to still the mind and free it from distraction or disturbances of worldly thoughts. As such, devotees became more attuned to naam and were encouraged to recite naam even in their leisure time. The congregation was affectionately advised to be present in the naam meditation sessions particularly as in these sessions one's mind is encouraged to attune itself to the lord's name easily. Spiritual growth is quicker in these sessions when naam is recited with the congregation collectively. In these sessions, kirtan singers, be they male or female would offer their services without any charge. People of all backgrounds and all sections of the Sikh religion would come to spend time at these annual camps. In the first few years of the camps Dr Kartar Singh of Bari and his companions would perform kirtan and give discourses on Gurbani. Then S Wadhawa Singh Ji devotedly and affectionately performed this service for several years. After he immigrated to USA, Saint Jarnail Singh Ji Bhindranwale took over the duty of explaining the Guru's order with vigour and devotion as his predecessor did. He would remain at the Smagam the whole week and awakenen the masses to Sikhism, gurmat and Sikh philosophy.

In honorary service Bhai Joginder Singh Ji of Talwara performed kirtan for several years at the Smagam. After his ill health, Bhai Mohinder Singh of Dasuya took over this duty. The Sikh ladies from Talwara have also been performing kirtan with devotion for many years now. Kirtan jathas from Damdami Taksaal, Jatha Bhindran would also spellbind the congregation with their melodious and devote singing. Sant Kartar Singh Ji Bhindranwale and his successor Sant Jarnail Singh Ji would enamour the sangat with the uplifting discourses on Gurbani.

Sant Kartar Sing Khalsa Ji' S View Of The Smagam

During his discourses on Gurbani (katha) Sant Kartar Singh Ji Khalsa often said, "No doubt all places of worship are revered but the bliss obtained by meditating, through kirtan and katha at Rampur Khera is rare. In these eight days, we get our spiritual batteries recharged and our heart longs all year, waiting to return to the next annual Smagam. It is true the Singhs of Damdami Taksaal are involved in learning Gurbani, reading and studying Gurbani they are fond of listening to kirtan and katha but by attending this Smagam the deficiency of simran and meditating on naam is fulfilled." Sant Baba Kartar Singh Ji Khalsa started the routine of meditating on naam within the jatha (group of Singhs).

Effect Of Nam Simran

Another curious yet interesting aspect of the Smagam is that there is pin drop silence during the naam meditation session even if there are thousands of devotees partaking in the meditation. Whilst meditating in the congregation, one feels as if no one else was present in the whole precinct. In the hour, there is perfect solitude, peace and concentration. The soothing effect of

simran is such that even a little baby forgets to cry. Whoever attends once eagerly awaits the next Smagam to come around, often bringing other gursikhs with a meditative bent of mind to partake in the Smagam.

To allow the camp to run efficiently the duty of security and night watch was first performed by S Kartar Singh Ji then S Mohinder Singh Ji and now Major Sardara Singh (retired) of Narialan village carries out this duty with almost military precision. The service of langar (free kitchen) was entrusted to Charan Singh of Resulpur Village. He is still carrying out this duty with great devotion considering it his great fortune to perform the service of langar. Sardar Harsharan Singh Ji affectionately called Bhagat Ji has from the very beginning been entrusted with duty of distributing rooms, arranging for board and lodging, and looking after the cloakroom (gathri ghar). He still vigorously, lovingly and with an accommodating attitude performs this service to this day.

The arrangements for lighting, sound and other electrical appliances is shouldered by master Harbhajan Singh of Dasuya. He has great enthusiasm for the task yet conducts his duty efficiently.

In the early days around 1966 when the Smagam first started, there was insufficient capacity for board and lodgings. To accommodate the congregation tents were used to lodge the sangat and the remaining space was improvised in whichever manner possible to accommodate the congregation. On one occasion, it rained heavily and a strong wind blew away the tents, causing heavy damage. The next year a veranda, big hall and six rooms were constructed to provide shelter and some limited accommodation.

To encourage the Smagam to be improved constantly a register was kept in the cloakroom where one can make helpful suggestions, which if possible are put into action for the following camp.

On the last day of the camp, the congregation is advised specifically that once they leave the camp to daily meditate for an hour or two apart from reciting their daily prayers. This advice is given so that blissful memories of meditation upon almighty God keep invigorating their daily lives until the next camp. The meditation camp is only useful if we pursue the path of introspection and meditation in our daily lives. Those who promise to meditate at home are encouraged to enter their names in a register so that others are inspired by the precedent set by devotees who carry out the exalted service of meditation upon God. To develop an interest in our religion and encourage learning of Gurbani a special programme for young boys and girls was instituted in 1984. A competition had been set up to test their knowledge of Sikh history, Sikh culture, Gurbani and its correct pronunciation. A leading Sikh personality would judge the competition and award prizes to the children. The following categories and curriculum was selected: -

Grade one – children aged up to 11 years – the ability to recite from memory, Jap Ji Sahib, Rehras Sahib and Kirtan Sohila.

Grade two – ages 12-16 – Children able to recite their entire Nitnem from memory.

Grade three – ages 17 to 21 – Children who are able to recite the entire of their Nitnem off by heart. In addition, they would also be able to recite from memory, Sukhmani Sahib or Asa Di Vaar. A child of this category should be baptised before participating.

At the end of the Smagam, all the children are honoured by receiving shields, prizes, religious books and siropaas according to their capabilities in front of the assembled congregation. This

encourages other children and acts as an incentive for children to learn Gurbani off by heart, ready to participate the following year.

NB- with the consent of the sangat the date of this Smagam is fixed for the first week of October (first Sunday to second Sunday of October) rather than September.

57 - YOU TOO DID NOT DO SIMRAN

The annual Smagam was in full swing. One evening Baba Ji was about to retire after his evening nitnem. Eight or ten other gursikhs were sat exchanging views on Sikhism and gurnat with him. Suddenly S. Kartar Singh Ji (known as jathedar as well) of Rasulpur, rushed in and without listening to the conversation interrupted loudly "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh." Baba Ji and the others responded with "Fateh". Without a breath Kartar Singh Ji continued, "I have come with a complaint." As was his tolerant nature Baba Ji replied, "Kartar Singh Ji what appears to be your complaint." Kartar Singh replied, "Today between 4 and 5 pm Balwant Singh did not do his simran."

Baba Ji gently replied, "You should have advised him that it is our duty to sit amongst the congregation and meditate instead of wandering outside. We have all come together to get maximum benefit from the katha, kirtan and simran. We all have left aside important household duties to avail ourselves of this blessed opportunity to meditate. What use is our effort if we then do not meditate and partake of this blessing by sitting amongst the congregation? We lose out in this world and the next."

Kartar Singh Ji replied, "Baba Ji, Balwant Singh was not outside. He was sitting in the congregation but kept looking here and there instead of meditating with his eyes closed." Baba Ji asked, "Jathedar Ji where were you at the time?" "I was sitting in the sangat and meditating." Kartar Singh replied. Baba Ji smiled and said, "Jathedar Ji if Balwant Singh was not meditating then you too did not do simran!" Kartar Singh Ji responded at once, "No Baba Ji I have been sitting in the congregation the whole time and recited simran."

Baba Ji asked, "If you were engrossed in simran then how did you come to know that Balwant Singh was looking around and not meditating?" Kartar Singh replied, "I was watching him intently the whole time and he was looking around here and there instead of doing simran."

Baba Ji smiled and said, "Kartar Singh Ji! Though you were sitting in the sangat both of you did not do simran. If Balwant Singh Ji was looking around watching others then you were busy watching Balwant Singh. What is the difference between you two? Balwant Singh was looking around and his mind was occupied in this action whilst your mind was occupied in looking at what he was doing. None of your minds were engaged in simran. Both of you did not have the presence of mind to be immersed in simran. In the Guru's house only those who silence their mind, engage it in simran and have presence of mind are accepted."

Jathedar fell silent, feeling ashamed at Baba Ji's true and insightful observation. He had come to complain about Balwant Singh yet was now caught out himself. Baba Ji then addressed the whole sangat, "Wherever one sits in sangat shun the habit of looking around. Sit in attention, with your eyes closed whilst listening to kirtan, katha or during simran. The wandering mind and its thoughts should be stilled and quietened. Undoubtedly all our sense organs scatter the mind's concentration but eyes are particularly adept at breaking our mental concentration and distracting our thoughts. Whatever we see, those images are then engraved on our inner consciousness. The mind is then incited towards acting upon these deeply embedded images in our mind."

The thirst of these eyes is never quenched; in fact, it increases the more we indulge our eyes. Bhai Gurdas Ji tells us that...

**The eyes are not satisfied beholding sights and exhibitions
Hearing praise, slander, laughter or mourning does not satisfy the ears
The tongue is not satisfied tasting pleasurable delicacies
The nose is not content smelling sublime perfumes or evil odours
None are satisfied with the span of their life, all entertain false hope
The Sikh, is satisfied meeting the Guru, theirs is the true love
(Vaar 27 Pauri 7 Bhai Gurdas Ji)**

Thus, watching never satisfies our eyes nor hearing, tasting or touching. All manner of enjoyments tires other sense organs. Guru Arjan Dev Ji tells us that...

**Vain are the eyes that behold the beauty of another's wife.
Whose eyes see not the beauty of other's wives?
mithi-aa naytar paykhat par tari-a roopaad.
par tari-a roop na paykhai naytar.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 269)**

“So Jathedar Ji, whereas Balwant Singh Ji did not attain any spiritual benefit whilst sitting in the sangat, you too could not attain any benefit either, as you spent your time watching him. When sitting in the congregation, abandon all thoughts of who sits where or how. Dedicate yourself to listening single-mindedly to simran. Only then can we obtain full spiritual benefit of being in the sangat. If another is forgoing the spiritual benefit of sitting attentively in the congregation, why should you follow their example? If another commits a mistake, what is the difference between you and them if you too make the same error? When sitting in the sangat for simran, utter “Waheguru” and then listen with all your attention to what you have just uttered i.e. the gurmantar. Calm all your inner thoughts when listening to simran or kirtan. Bear in mind what Guru Ji says”

**In lord's love is spiritual vision
Through spiritual vision
The lord is comprehended
By Guru's grace this ineffable discourse is known
Dhun meh Dhi-aan Dhi-aan meh jaani-aa
gurmukh akath kahaanee. ||3||
(Ramkali 1st Guru, page 879)**

When we sit in katha or kirtan, our attention should be focussed on the words of the speaker. In this manner, we will become attentive listeners. Our nature will become introspective when listening to Gurbani. As told in Japji Sahib, the truly attuned listener is indeed exalted thus:

**Truthfulness, contentment and divine knowledge
Are obtained by hearing the name of the God
Spiritual benefit at sixty-eight holy places
Is obtained by hearing the name of God.
One gets honour by hearing and reading
The name of the God again and again.
One is absorbed in the meditation of God
Easily by hearing the name of God.
SatGuru Nanak says that true Saint always remains blissful.**

**Hearing the name of God destroys diseases and sins.
Scattering of mental energy stops
And it changes into mental concentration.
suni-ai sat santokh gi-aan.
suni-ai athsath kaa isnaan.
suni-ai parh parh paavahi maan.
suni-ai laagai sahj Dhi-aan.
naanak bhagtaa sadaa vigaas.
suni-ai dookh paap kaa naas. ||10||
(Japji Sahib 1st Guru, page 3)**

So, always be mindful that, when sitting in the congregation, we endeavour to obtain the maximum benefit in the minimum of time blessed to us. We should keep in mind the words of Bhagat Farid Ji:

**Farid if you possess a keen understanding
Then do not write black writs against others
Lower your head and look beneath your collars
fareedaa jay too akal lateef kaalay likh na laykh.
aapnarhay gireevaan meh sir neeNvaan kar daykh. ||6||
(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1378)**

If we see a shortfall in the behaviour of others, do not become judgemental. Be careful so that we do not possess the same weakness. If we are mindful of our own faults and demerits then by vigilance against these faults we will slowly eliminate these faults one by one. In time, our faults will be replaced by merits and virtue will reside in our hearts. We should not count the faults of others, on the contrary learn from and appreciate the good qualities of others. Thus:

**Let us form a partnership with virtues
And abandoning vices walk the lord's way
Let us wear silks of virtues
Make decoration of goodness
And take possession of our arena
Whenever we go and sit Let us talk with goodness
And skim and drink in the nectar
If the mortal has basket of fragrant virtues
He should extract fragrance from it.
saajh kareejai gunah kayree chhod avgan chalee-ai.
pahiray patambar kar adambar aapnaa pirh malee-ai.
jithai jaa-ay bahee-ai bhalaa kahee-ai jhol amrit peejai.
gunaa kaa hovai vaasulaa kadh vaas la-eejai. ||3||
(Suhi Chhant 1st Guru, page 766)**

58 - FORGO ARROGANT CLAIMS EMBRACE HUMBLE SERVITUDE

Baba Ji started the annual meditation camp in 1966. It was officially called the Naam Abhyas Kammai Smagam. Baba Ji organised this event over a period of eight days. During the camp, the congregation immersed itself in meditation, katha and kirtan, bringing all who participated closer to Waheguru. Devotees who wished to learn how to meditate and thus meet the Guru came from afar to participate in the annual camp. In the congregation, they would earn the wealth of naam by meditating and attuning their consciousness to the feet of the great Guru. As our great Guru has told us that if one wants to accumulate the wealth of naam, this wealth can be gathered through saadhsangat i.e. the company of holy people.

Mixing with the Sainly congregation

God's wealth is earned

God's wealth is earned no where else

By any other effort whatsoever

satsangtee sang har Dhan khattee-ai

hor thai horat upaa-ay har Dhan kitai na paa-ee.

(Suhi 4th Guru, page 734)

For the convenience of the congregation, a large water tank and taps were installed so that members of the sangat could bathe in the morning before the routine of meditation started. Occasionally, due to a power cut, water would run out because the water pump used to fill the tank was powered by electricity. A few days before the annual camp was due to start a few devotees were discussing various aspects of the camp when the issue of water shortage came up. A man called S. Bachittar Singh from Phambian village near Nanda Chaur, stood up and said, "Baba Ji there is no question of a shortage of water arising when I am here. You leave it to me. I will arrange for water to be supplied for the whole eight days even if there is a power cut. How can water run short when I am here? (He was a diesel engine mechanic). Don't you worry; I have the means to arrange an unending supply of water. You all can be free of any worries."

Everyone present looked at S. Bachittar Singh's face. His claim to provide uninterrupted water reeked of vanity and conceit. Baba Ji replied, "Ok, now the responsibility for the water supply lies with you." Bachittar Singh responded, "Baba Ji, do not worry. I will arrange everything." Bachittar Singh constructed a new diesel engine three days before the Smagam. He brought the diesel engine, a pulley and a new water pump (draws water from the ground) to the gurdwara. He connected the whole apparatus and successfully filled the water tank. He checked all the equipment for leaks etc. and then informed Baba Ji, "I have checked everything and am fully satisfied the water pump works. Now Baba Ji you don't need to worry." Baba Ji replied, "The sangat and I are under the Lord's shelter. He alone worries for us. If you are satisfied then it is good."

Bachittar Singh returned to his village and came back the day before the Smagam was due to start. He laid his bed in the room where the equipment (water pump) was installed so that he could keep an eye on the equipment. Three days of the Smagam went by without a power failure and as a result, there was no water shortage either. Bachittar Singh was struck by one thought and he wondered if he would have to return home without having tried his engine since there hadn't been a power failure. As almighty willed it, that same afternoon whilst Bachittar Singh was busy in these thoughts, there was power cut following a mild windstorm. The wind had knocked down an electricity pole and the chances of restoring power were slim. Bachittar Singh went straight to

Baba Ji and said, "Baba Ji, because the electricity pole has been knocked down the chances of restoring power are low. I am going to start up my engine to fill up the water tank." Baba Ji replied, "Thank you kindly Bachittar Singh Ji. The sangat will have easy access to water."

Bachittar Singh took people with him (Master Harbhajan Singh of Dasuya, Master Amrit Singh of Behram and two others.). They all stood around the engine as Bachittar Singh started it up. It quickly became clear that the water pump was not drawing up water at all. The pump and engine were working but did not lift any water as it was supposed to do! The engine was speeded up but no water was drawn up. They changed the pulley to a larger one but still no water came up. One and all decided that the water pump was faulty. So, a new water pump was brought before nightfall from S Mani Singh of Gondpur village (he had recently purchased a new water pump for his own tube well). The water pump was swapped and everything that was humanly possible was tried but to no avail. Somehow, despite all the equipment working, water was not being drawn up from the ground. It was passed midnight and the members of the sangat now started to awaken to take a bath.

Water began to run low and no provision for extra water had yet been made. Everyone was worried and all were at their wits end as to what they could do.

The great Guru blessed an intuitive thought to master Harbhajan Singh Ji. He said, "We have tried all our methods and checked everything we could but without success. There is some thing mysterious here.

Let us all go to Baba Ji and ask him to help us." They all agreed and set off to see Baba Ji. Baba Ji was completing his nitnem when the Singhs approached him. Sardar Harbhajan Singh confessed, "Baba Ji we have tried our level best to try and draw up water from the pump. In fact, we have been trying for several hours to get the pump working but have not been able to do so. The pump works but it does not draw up water. The water tank is almost empty and members of the congregation have started to awaken, ready to take their morning bath. We are at a loss to know what else to do. Please guide and help us as all this seems to be beyond our understanding."

Baba Ji listened and said, "Where is Bachittar Singh?" Master Ji replied, "He is here, behind us." Baba Ji addressed him, "Brother! The other day you claimed that the water supply would not be interrupted for the whole eight days. What has happened now? Your engine does not lift water as you promised. The power cut has only last a few hours. What will happen if it continues for the remaining days of the Smagam? The great Guru has demolished your conceit because Gurbani tells us:

*The Vedas proclaim aloud that
The reverend lord does not like pride
har jee-o ahaNkaar na bhaav-ee vayd kook sunaaveh.
(Salok Mohalla 3rd Guru, page 1089)*

Bhai Gurdas Ji tells us that the path of Sikhism is finer and more abstract than the sharpest edge of a sword. The Guru does not accept even an iota of conceit or pride in a Sikh. When a gursikh makes a conceited or arrogant claim, understand that he or she has fallen under the sway of ego.

***Kabir, the heart burns when asserting claims
One without claim remains carefree***

***The man who makes no claims
He considers kings and paupers alike
kabeer daavai daajhan hot hai nirdaavai rahai nisank.
jo jan nirdaavai rahai so ganai indar so rank. ||169||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1373)***

Baba Ji asked the Singh's to sit beside him and with the rest of the sangat recited a path of Chaupai Sahib together. Baba Ji then prayed to Waheguru, "O Lord, we are worldly mortals, prone to err time and time again. Please forgive us, as it is your nature to forgive us all:

***The lord did not consider my deeds
In keeping with his forgiving nature
hamree ganat na ganee-aa kaa-ee apnaa birad pachhaan.
(Sorath 5th Guru, page 619)***

So please accept this petition of the sangat and fulfil the need for water." After the Ardas Baba Ji asked Master Harbhajan Singh to see that all members of the group recite mool mantar five times when they return to the tube well room. Afterwards they were to recite the following prayer five times:

***The lord shall accomplish your affairs
The true Guru bears true testimony to it.
By the company of the Saint
Thou shalt taste the treasure of the name nectar.
The merciful lord, the destroyer of dread,
Preserves the honour of his slave.
Nanak, sing thou the praises of God
And thou shalt see the invisible lord
keetaa lorhee-ai kamm so har peh aakhee-ai.
kaaraj day-ay savaar satgur sach saakhee-ai.
santaa sang niDhaan amrit chaakhee-ai.
bhai bhanjan miharvaan daas kee raakhee-ai.
naanak har gun gaa-ay alakh parabh laakhee-ai. ||20||
(Pauri 5th Guru, page 91)***

Baba Ji instructed that, "After saying the prayers start up the engine. The great Guru will shower his blessings." All the Singh's returned to where the water pump was and recited the prayers with devotion. They started the engine up. Lo and behold, the water pump started to draw up water immediately. Bachittar Singh was astonished and worriedly looked at the engine, then at the water pump. He climbed up on the water tank, checking time and again to see if it was about to fail or not. There was no fault in the engine or the water pump! The fault of ego was all that the Guru was trying to eradicate from the hearts of the Singh's. The great Guru wanted to vanquish ego from the hearts of his gursikhs. So, Guru Ji enacted this whole drama. If a gursikh comes with pride into the congregation and returns as such, then he or she will not benefit from coming into the congregation of the Guru. Anyhow, the engine and water pump worked for four hours. The water tank was filled and consequently all were able to bathe without any shortage of water.

In the afternoon Bhai AmarJit Singh and Bachittar Singh Ji met Baba Ji. He enquired about the water pump situation and AmarJit Singh Ji replied, "Baba Ji there wasn't a serious fault. A minor

joint in the water pump was faulty, that's all. We meddled around with it for four hours last night. It will be all right now." Baba Ji replied, "Bhai AmarJit Singh Ji! There was no defect in the machinery. The defect was within us and our ego." The great Guru enacted this play in order to rid us of the malady of pride. With these words Baba Ji returned to his hut.

Later in the afternoon, Bhai AmarJit Singh and Bachittar Singh started the pump up to fill the tank again. Yet again, the water pump failed to draw up water. After checking all the machinery for faults, the pump would refuse to draw water from the ground. By this time Master Harbhajan Singh came to the room and asked the water tank to be filled up. Bhai AmarJit Singh asked Master Ji to sit down. Master Ji asked them both why they looked so serious and worried. Bhai Bachittar Singh told Master Ji that the water pump had stopped drawing water. He explained that just as before all the equipment was functioning all right but failed to draw the water up. Master Ji enquired if they had talked to Baba Ji at all. Bhai AmarJit Singh said, "We were told by Baba Ji that there was no defect in the machinery, just in our pride." Master Ji cautioned AmarJit Singh, "Baba Ji told you what the problem was in clear and simple terms. He hid nothing from you.

***The Vedas proclaim aloud that
The revered Lord likes not pride.
har jee-o ahaNkaar na bhaav-ee vayd kook sunaaveh.
(Mohalla 3rd, page-1089)***

Yet, even now you hanker after your own intellect and lay claim to be able to solve the problem. We did not follow Baba Ji's advice. We did not take a hint and driven by our ego, still conceitedly believe in our ability to solve this problem with the water." Master Ji questioned AmarJit Singh, "I presume you have checked all the machinery." Bhai AmarJit Singh replied, "We have done so twice and tightened all the joints." Master Ji continued, "In that case it is your mental joints that are loose. They are allowing pride and vanity to leak into the intellect. Until these mental joints are not tightened, nothing will happen." Bhai Bachittar Singh pleaded, "Master Ji pray tell what can we do now?" Master Ji replied, "What else can we do now except:

***Abandon the minds intellect
Give up the love of another
ti-aagayN man kee mat-rhee visaarayN doojaa bhaa-o jee-o.
(Suhi 5th Guru, page 763)***

Let us take shelter of the Guru and leave aside our conceited intellect." Both of them agreed to Master Ji's counsel and recited a path of Jap Ji Sahib. They prayed devotedly to almighty Guru Ji with the words of Gurbani:

***By praying to Guru, no obstacle befalls man
God the king is the saviour
He saves the capital of his Saints.
bighan na ko-oo laagtaa gur peh ardaas.
rakhvaalaa gobind raa-ay bhagtan kee raas. ||1||
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 816)***

The engine was the restarted. The pump started to lift water as before and in no time the water tank was filled. Now Bhai AmarJit Singh and Bachittar Singh truly realised their mistake. They realised now that their pride was the real obstacle. They both realised that if pride can obstruct

the noble task of public service (Seva), then it can also be the greatest hindrance in the path to enlightenment. Master Ji addressed them both, "I do not know much either, neither do I have any insight but the Guru has said:

***The bride soul and groom God dwell together
But in between is the wall of ego
Dhan pir kaa ik hee sang vaasaa vich ha-umai bheet karaaree.
gur poorai ha-umai bheet toree jan naanak milay banvaaree.
(Malar 4th Guru, page 1263)***

The great Guru has called pride a disease:

***Ego is a chronic disease
Within it is enclosed the medicine
ha-umai deeragh rog hai daaroo bhee is maahi.
(Asa 1st Guru, page 466)***

How clearly does Guru Ji state that:

***Ego is at Vaariance with naam
The two dwell no in one place
In ego service cannot be performed
So, the soul goes empty handed
ha-umai naavai naal viroDh hai du-ay na vaseh ik thaa-ay.
ha-umai vich sayvaa na hova-ee taa man birthaa jaa-ay. ||1||
(Vadhans 3rd Guru, page 560)***

And

***In pride no one find one's lord
Straying away from the primal being
The mortal wastes away his life
ha-umai vich parabh ko-ay na paa-ay.
moolhu bhulaa janam gavaa-ay. ||2||
(Dhanasari 3rd Guru, page 664)***

"Let us pray so that we are rid of the malady of pride. Nothing will be accomplished by our personal effort alone." They all sat in the room, recited Chaupai Sahib and prayed to God almighty to save them from pride. They prayed to Guru Ji to bless them with humility and servitude instead of pride and conceit. Thus, a Gursikh must always abandon conceited claims and espouse servitude. The lord does everything. In adopting humility, the Guru is appeased because in doing so one has to forgo pride and vanity.

59 - MEETING SANT KARTAR SINGH JI KHALSA BHINDRANWALE

Every year Sant Kartar Singh Ji Khalsa Bhindranwale used to come to Nangal Salala (Hoshiarpur) to perform katha and kirtan. Sant Kartar Singh Ji had heard about Baba Ji and how this great Saint (Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji) was leading an extraordinary life as ordained by Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He had heard that Baba Ji was baptising devotees to become true Singhs of the Guru and inspiring them to be at one with the almighty. Sant Kartar Singh Ji had also heard how self effacing and humble Baba Ji was and that he did not stand for an iota of personal worship or gratification. So, for sometime now Sant Baba Kartar Singh Ji had wanted to meet this great personality, time permitting.

Baba Ji too held Sant Kartar Singh Ji in high esteem because he knew that Sant Kartar Singh preached gurmat and Sikhism to the masses with great vigour. So, when Baba Ji heard that Sant Kartar Singh Khalsa Ji was in the vicinity Baba Ji dispatched five singhs to invite him to perform kirtan and katha at gurdwara Rampur Khera during the Smagam. When the letter of invitation reached Khalsa Ji at the hands of the five singhs he touched the letter to his forehead as a sign of respect and said, "We already had it in our mind to see Rampur Khera and have an audience with Sant Baba Ji." So, Khalsa Ji sent a message back that they would come to gurdwara Rampur Khera that very afternoon, stay the night and do katha and kirtan the next day. The Singhs returned happily with the news and informed Baba Ji of Khalsa Ji's arrival. Baba Ji arranged board and lodging for Khalsa Ji and his jatha with great affection. At about 8.00 pm, Khalsa Ji arrived with his jatha at gurdwara Rampur Khera. After langar, Baba Ji and Khalsa Ji exchanged their mutual thoughts on gurmat. It seemed that these two personalities had known one another from time immemorial. Saint Tulsidas says that we can have common hopes, faith, ways of praying, eating or dressing but the greatest association is that of thoughts. In the case of Baba Ji and Khalsa Ji, everything was common. Bhai Gurdas Ji too applauds gursikhs who attune themselves and share gurmat thoughts.

The meeting was so sublime that Khalsa Ji expressed his inner thoughts, "I have come across many Saints who encourage self worship and gratification. Instead of joining the sangat to the Guru's feet, they attach the devotees to their own personality. But today I am happy that I have met a true Saint who enjoins the sangat to the true Guru. Now I am hopeful that even in kalyug the seed of Sikhism has not perished. We are thankful to almighty and consider ourselves lucky to have been blessed with the vision of such a great Saint."

It was late that night, everyone exchanged Gur-Fateh and retired. The next day everyone bathed, recited nitnem and practised naam meditation in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The jatha did kirtan of Asaa di Vaar and Khalsa Ji explained the meaning of the holy order of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji to the congregation. Baba Ji and the sangat enjoyed the katha immensely. In the end Baba Ji addressed the sangat, "We rarely go to diwans to listen to katha because most people who give discourses mould their message according to their surroundings. Never before have we come across such katha that is given according to the thoughts of Gurbani. This disappointment turned to joy when I listened to Khalsa Ji's discourse on Gurbani. The great Guru has blessed us this meeting with Khalsa Ji and I pray to the Almighty Lord that we meet always until our last breath." Baba Ji thanked Khalsa Ji and his jatha and honoured them by giving them siropaas. It was a beautiful and inspiring moment to observe. After receiving the Siropaa, Khalsa Ji addressed the sangat. "We find no difference between gurdwara Rampur Khera or gurdwara Gur Darshan Parkash Mehta. Only the names are different. The unseen threads of love unite them. We pray in the feet of the almighty that this love and cooperation lasts forever.

After thanking the congregation Khalsa Ji asked leave to depart and said, "All devotees should remain seated in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. No one should follow us out of the congregation to see us off no matter how great that personality may be." All devotees exchanged the Guru's Fateh. Khalsa Ji set off for village Nangal Salala.

At noon Baba Ji said that he missed Khalsa Ji and so he decided to go and hear Khalsa Ji's katha that very evening. Baba Ji arrived with a jatha at village Nangal Salala. Khalsa Ji was overjoyed to see Baba Ji. Baba Ji listened to katha and kirtan in the morning and the evening. During any free time Baba Ji exchanged gurmat views with Khalsa Ji. After this meeting, Khalsa Ji would come every year to Gurdwara Rampur Khera to attend Naam Abhyas Kammai Smagam.

60 - IT IS MORE BENEFICIAL TO DO PATH YOURSELF

Sant Baba Kartar Singh Ji and his jatha used to perform katha and kirtan throughout the whole naam abhyas kammam Smagam. In so doing Baba Ji's dream of trying to unite the sangat to the feet of the Guru was taking shape. Numerous devotees would now come, partaking in meditation and thus availing themselves of the golden opportunity to attune their minds in simran. One of these devotees was Bibi Gurdip Kaur Ji of Sarhali (Amritsar). She was an aged lady who had a very strong affection and yearning to commune with the great Guru. She used to provide the clothes and essential items for all the Singhs of the "Jatha." She came to Gurdwara Rampur Khera at the behest of Sant Baba Kartar Singh Ji and stayed throughout the Smagam.

One day before the camp was due to end, she requested to see Baba Ji Harnam Singh Ji on a matter of Gurmat. On meeting Baba Ji she said, "I have been in the company of the great Saint Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji who was the predecessor of Sant Kartar Singh Ji. In those days, I had vowed in the Guru's feet that one day I would have 101 akhand paths recited if possible. I requested the great Saint to help but my ambition was not fulfilled. Now I have repeatedly asked Sant Baba Kartar Singh Ji to organise this task, which I prayed to Guru Ji to be fulfilled. Khalsa Ji is extremely busy in his duty of gurmat preaching. When I have asked him, he has told me that this is a huge task and requires at least a complete month of free time. I am getting old and my physical health is not what it used to be. I am worried that my pledge to Guru Ji to have 101 akhand paths recited will go unfulfilled. Can you please help me with this problem?"

Baba Ji listened patiently to the old lady's request. He fell silent for a while and then replied, "O mother Khalsa Ji is indeed busy with preaching gurmat. However can you read path from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji?" The old lady replied, Baba Ji, I have learned to read Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (Santhiya) and can recite path well enough." Baba Ji replied happily, "Well dear mother, here is the solution to your problem. Leave all other solutions aside. Just do one Sehaj path at your own pace and leisure in one month. Recite Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with devotion and listen to what you are reading. Then you will see for yourself how much more beneficial it is to do path yourself rather than having someone else recite path for you." The old lady replied, "But I have prayed for an akhand path (uninterrupted recital) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji." Baba Ji reassured the old lady, "The great Guru knows all that is in our hearts. He knows our compulsions and shortfalls too. If you have an akhand path recited, often, one is unable to listen to the entire recital.

On the other hand, if you recite path slowly and with devotion, the great Guru will be appeased even more. So, do not have any sort of doubt about how you recite path. Just start reading with devotion and see how much more useful it is."

The old lady agreed with Baba Ji and returned to her village. She started doing her path immediately and she would complete a Sehaj path in less than a month. She had hardly finished 50 or so Sehaj paths in the fourth year when the great Guru blessed the old lady with a divine visitation. One could see even in the second year since she started doing the Sehaj paths that the old lady was bestowed with peace, poise, and bliss and other spiritual gains.

This humble servant (Sant Seva Singh) saw that the old lady often, in particular after she was blessed with Guru Ji's visitation. She radiated peace and tranquillity in all directions. Her face was always glowing, her consciousness always attuned inward in constant recitation upon the Guru's feet. She would come every year to the annual Smagam as a matter of routine and partake in God's blessings showered on the Smagam.

The good old lady remained in this elevated spiritual state for four years and one day she asked Baba Ji, "I have obtained all that I wanted by following the path that you guided me to. By the grace of almighty God, I have no wish for anything except one. Partly due to my age and partially due to the fact that continuous simran has started within my heart, I am now unable to read path for very long. I still have 45 Sehaj paths yet to be recited. So, what can I do now? Baba Ji please clear this doubt from my mind." Baba Ji listened to her patiently and said, "Don't worry if you yourself cannot do path. Ask Sant Kartar Singh Ji to enlist a pious Singh to recite path for you whilst you sit and listen to it. I will request Khalsa Ji to carry out this duty."

The gentle old lady liked this proposal. She replied, "You have guessed my innermost desire. I now feel more pleasure in listening to Gurbani than reading it. Any slackness in simran is compensated by listening to Gurbani and thus the current of naam is strengthened further."

Baba Ji replied, "There is no difference in reading Gurbani or listening to it with devotion. It is all a matter of attention and concentration. You know how much importance Guru Ji gives to listening to Gurbani with devotion and attention. Guru Ji has emphasised the importance of listening in Jap Ji Sahib and repeatedly tells us that those who listen devotedly are relieved of all woes and sorrows:

***Nanak says that the true Saints remain blissful
Hearing the name of God destroys disease and sins.
naanak bhagtaa sadaa vigaas.
suni-ai dookh paap kaa naas. ||10||
(Japji 1st Guru, page 3)***

And

***Hearing the Guru's word
My mind has become tender and infused with it.
This mind has returned to its own home
gurbaanee sunat mayraa man darvi-aa
man bheenaaj nij ghar aavaigo.
(Kanra 4th Guru, page 1308).***

And

***My sorrows pains and sufferings
Have left me on hearing the true words.
They who hear it are pure,
They who utter it are stainless
And the true Guru will occupy their hearts
dookh rog santaap utray sunee sachee bane.
suntay puneet kahtay pavit satgur rahi-aa bharpooray.
(Ramkali 3rd Guru, page 922)***

The devoted old lady obtained further spiritual advancement abiding by this advice. We should pay particular attention to the fact that only by reciting Gurbani devotedly and with attention can its full benefit be obtained. Merely reciting ritualistically and repeatedly, Gurbani will not be as beneficial. It is far more useful to read, understand and listen to Gurbani with devotion than to

mechanically recite path or have someone else read prayers for you. The true Guru has condemned this ritualistic act of reciting prayers to show others:

**Man reads holy texts and studies the Vedas
He practices inner washing and breath control.
But he escapes not from the company of the five evil passions
And is even more tied to haughty disposition.
My dear, by these methods
The lord is not met.
And I have performed many such rituals.
I have dropped down weary at the lord's door.
And pray for the grant of discerning intellect. Pause.
paath parhi-o ar bayd beechaari-o nival bhu-angam saaDhay.
panch janaa si-o sang na chhutki-o aDhik ahan-buDh baaDhay.
pi-aaray in biDh milan na jaa-ee mai kee-ay karam anaykaa.
haar pari-o su-aamee kai du-aarai deejai buDh bibaykaa.
rahaa-o.**

(Sorath 5th Guru, page 641)

And

**What avails it to read, what to reflect
And what to hear the Vedas and puranas?
What avail is reading and listening?
If divine knowledge is not gained with it.
ki-aa parhee-ai ki-aa gunee-ai.
ki-aa bayd puraanaaN sunee-ai.
parhay sunay ki-aa ho-ee.
ja-o sahj na mili-o so-ee. ||||**

(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 655)

Guru Nanak Dev Ji too condemns mere recitation and reading of prayers in Asa di Vaar:

**Man may read and study cartloads of books
And he may read the entire multitudes of books
He may read and study books and put them in boats
He may read and study books and put them in pits
He may read year on year
And may study for all the months that there are.
He may continue reading for his entire life
And may study with every breath of his,
Nanak, only one thing, God's name is of account
And all else is but to prate and prattle with pride.
parh parh gadee ladee-ah parh parh bharee-ah saath.
parh parh bayrhee paa-ee-ai parh parh gadee-ah khaat.
parhee-ah jaytay baras baras parhee-ah jaytay maas.
parhee-ai jaytee aarjaa parhee-ah jaytay saas.
naanak laykhai ik gal hor ha-umai jhakh-naa jhaakh. ||||**

(Asaa di Vaar Salok 1st Guru, page 467)

We need to read Gurbani so that we may hear and understand its message. We need to hear Gurbani so that we can act upon the message of Gurbani. Whosoever acts upon Gurbani is truly exalted and the state of mind of such a devotee is described in Jap Ji Sahib:

***One who obeys the lord cannot be described
One trying to describe it will have to repent afterwards.
There is neither the paper and pen nor the writer.
Who can sit described state of devotee
Who obeys God.
Such is the pure name of God
By obeying God realises the bliss
Given by such obedience in his mind
mannay kee gat kahee na jaa-ay.
jay ko kahai pichhai pachhuta-ay
kaagad kalam na likhanhaar.
mannay kaa bahi karan veechaar.
aisaa naam niranjan ho-ay.
jay ko man jaanai man ko-ay. ||12||
(JapJi Sahib 1st Guru, page 4)***

And

***They who hear God's name and believe in it
Obtain abode in their home.
jinee sun kai mani-aa tinaa nij ghar vaas.
(Sri Raag 3rd Guru, page 27)***

61 - TRUE GURU BESTOWS A LONGER LIFE

In June 1962, Baba Ji fell seriously ill with a very high fever and dysentery. The doctor tried to treat the dysentery but with no improvement in Baba Ji's health. The constant diarrhoea caused great loss of water and dehydration set in. This caused great weakness and Baba Ji's condition worsened by the hour. He was given an intravenous glucose drip and fluids but the deterioration in his health continued.

Different doctors were called and despite all the best efforts and intentions of all the devotees, his condition went from bad to worse. Most of the devotees had lost hope on this one night when Baba Ji's condition was touch and go. Everyone feared the worst, thinking that Baba Ji may not survive the night. So, everyone kept a vigil throughout the night, in this time Baba Ji slipped in and out of consciousness.

In the early morning, we read the *Nitnem* beside his bed. An *Ardas* was performed beseeching the Almighty to give Baba Ji good health. After the *Ardas*, Baba Ji suddenly opened his eyes and uttered in a enfeebled voice, "if you want me cured then go and fetch Dr Boota Singh, the physician from Bahle village (S.Boota Singh Ji,son of S.Ishar Singh Ji of village Bahla P.O. Garhdiwala District Hoshiarpur,was a Gursikh minded personality. He won laurels by serving in military in the British Regime.He had deep knowledge,keen understanding and speciality in the treatment regarding Herbal Medicines.He used to give medicines to the patients free of costs.Besides a well known physician,he was a good farmer, noble man having deep interest in the field of education. Due to this bent of mind his four sons; S.Bhagat Singh M.A.,Ph.D (History Scholar Pbi. Uni. Patiala now in U.S.A.), S. Piara Singh (Retd. D.P.I.(Schools) Pb.), S. Hari Singh (Retd. Principal), S.Ajit Singh Nannar (Canada) rose to the applaudable hights. He died on 10.6.1976).

He is to be given credit for curing me. A devotee went to village Bahle to fetch Dr Boota Singh and soon returned to Gurdwara with him. The physician asked Baba Ji about his health and took a history of his illness. He then gave Baba Ji four doses of medicine with sugar syrup and asked Baba Ji to have husk of esophagal afterwards. Then what was left to cure? The medicine was just an excuse for God's will to be enacted...

The medicine became effectual, When the Lord stood amidst it.

a-ukhad aa-ay raas vich aap khalo-i-aa.

(Funhay 5th Guru, page 1363)

By the same evening Baba Ji began to recover and within a few days he was walking around completely fit and healthy. After this illness, Baba Ji used to tell his near and dear devotees, that the illness was supposed to end his life. However, the true Guru had blessed him with some more years of life in order to serve the sangat. So, the remaining years of his life would be spent at the disposal of the sangat. It would now be up to the Almighty how long Baba Ji would serve the congregation.

On many occasions, this humble servant (Sant Seva Singh) and other close devotees of Baba Ji were given clear instructions by him about carrying out the last rites for his body. He would say, "Cremate my body and perform the rites according to gurmat. I ask you categorically and at no time to erect any monument, tomb, symbol or memorial of any description at my place of cremation. It would please me immensely if no such symbols are placed to commemorate my remains."

62 - MEETING WITH BHAI VIR SINGH

Though Baba Ji had heard a lot about Bhai Vir Singh Ji, he had not yet had the chance to meet him personally. These two great souls though, had met regularly (in unseen spiritual realms) in the abode of God Almighty with deep mutual respect and affection:

***By uniting outwardly, one is not truly united
He who meets inwardly in spirit is deemed united.
mili-ai mili-aa naa milai milai mili-aa jay ho-ay.
antar aatmai jo milai mili-aa kahee-ai so-ay. ||3||
(Salok 2nd Guru, page 791)***

In approximately 1950-51, some devotees told Baba Ji that they had read in the papers that Bhai Vir Singh Ji had been suffering from ill health. Upon hearing this news, Baba Ji resolved to go visit Bhai Sahib Vir Singh Ji in person, even though Baba Ji had met him on many occasions in heaven.

Considering it his duty to meet such a great soul and scholar of the Sikh nation, Baba Ji caught a bus and travelled to Amritsar. First, he paid homage at Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden temple), the abode of Sri Guru Ram Das Ji. After paying his respects at Sri Harmandir Sahib, he took a rickshaw to the house of Bhai Vir Singh Ji. Bhai Sahib Vir Singh Ji used to live on St Lawrence Road, Amritsar, in those days.

When he arrived, he saw that there were already seven or eight people waiting to see and pay their respects to Bhai Vir Singh Ji. There were benches laid out for people to sit on and Baba Ji took a seat as well.

One of the attendants arrived and announced that due to Bhai Vir Singh Ji being in poor health the doctors had advised him to have complete rest and forbidden him any visitors. However, any visitors who wished to leave their best wishes could do so by signing and leaving a message in the visitor's register. The attendant told everyone present that he would make sure that Bhai Sahib got their messages of good health in the evening. So, he asked everyone to leave their names and addresses, along with any messages, in the register. All those present signed the register and left one by one. The attendant asked Baba Ji to sign the register as well but Baba Ji refused and said, "There is no need to write my name as he already knows of my presence in his thoughts. If you don't mind, I will sit here for a little longer and recite some prayers for his good health, if I may. Please do not worry about me."

Baba Ji Recites Prayers For Bhai Sahib Ji

Baba Ji sat on the bench and recited the prayer of *Benati Chaupai* 5 times and then prayed in the feet of God Almighty, "O patron of the poor! Please accept the prayers that have been recited and bless Bhai Sahib Ji with good health and a speedy recovery, so that he may serve the nation for longer and with vigour."

Baba Ji used to tell us, "I was about to leave when Bhai Sahib Ji rang his bell and summoned the attendant. The attendant first went into the room where Bhai Sahib Ji was convalescing and then came out and asked me if my name was Bhai Harnam Singh. I told the attendant that I was Harnam Singh. The attendant replied, "In that case, Bhai Sahib Ji has called for you!" He then took me to Bhai Sahib Ji's rest room. I was overjoyed to hear this and thanked God for fulfilling my wish

to meet Bhai Sahib Ji in person. I went inside the room and wished Gur-Fateh, thus re-establishing a spiritual link in this mortal world with Bhai Sahib Ji.”

Bhai Vir Singh Ji asked Baba Ji, “You were about to leave without seeing me.” Baba Ji replied, “Your attendant had told us that your doctor had forbidden any visitors to meet you. So all I could do was pay my respects by praying for your health in the feet of God Almighty. I had just finished saying the prayer of *Benati Chaupai* and the rest you know already.” Bhai Sahib Ji replied, “Bhai Harnam Singh Ji, what of this illness. The true Guru has played a trick on me. It is as if a person has been to be taken out to sea in a boat, left without paddles and instructed to make it back to shore without getting his hands wet. Such is my dilemma. In the same way, the true Guru has asked me to write and elucidate the meanings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji into simple language, but instructed me not to make any mistakes in the translation of Gurbani. I bowed to his command and started the work. You know however, that Gurbani of the Almighty, formless Lord, is limitless. Who indeed can write or know of its fullest meanings for...

Wonderful, wonderful! Are the words (Bani)

Which are of the formless Lord

There is none other as great as he.

vaahu vaahu banee nirankaar hai tis jayvad avar na ko-ay.

(Salok 3rd Guru, page 515)

Mohammed Sahib is the founder of Islam. Bhrgu Rishi was a great Hindu Saint whose prophecies of the future are compiled in the book called Bhrgu Granth. Jesus Christ is the founder of Christianity.

As Guru Arjun Dev Ji has said:

Some rare person

Becomes resigned to the Guru's will

Reflecting over the Guru's word

This Gurbani is of the Supreme Being

Through it, one resides in the home of the inner being

banee birla-o beechaarsee jay ko gurmukh ho-ay.

ih banee mahaa purakh kees nij ghar vaasaa ho-ay. ||40||

(Ramkali Dakhni Onkar 5th Guru, page 935)

So, Gurbani is the spoken words of God. How can man who has finite, limited knowledge and intellect, elucidate the meanings of this infinite and limitless Bani? I began by writing the literal meanings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. When the consciousness flies to higher spiritual dimensions then the meanings change. As the consciousness rises into higher realms, newer and more profound meanings of Gurbani emerge.

My consciousness is now exhausted trying to elucidate the meanings of Gurbani. Otherwise, I have no physical ailment. The doctor has advised me to rest due physical exertion and fatigue. Now one is enjoying the meditation of naam by resting. This too is his will. Now the spiritual condition by his grace is like:

Every breath, memory of my beloved God remains

It has pierced deep into my being

***It resonates inside like celestial music
Giving rise to eternal song of the Lord
Intoxicating like the most sublime liquor
Shivering like the drops of mercury
Its attractive pangs are melodious
Even then it still gives pleasure.***

Almost 15-20 minutes passed in this exchange of deep and affectionate words. Then Baba asked leave of Bhai Sahib Bhai Vir Singh Ji. On departure, Bhai Sahib Ji asked Baba Ji to promise that whenever he visited Amritsar he would come and visit him. After that day, whenever Baba Ji went to Amritsar to pay respects at Sri Harmandir Sahib, he would always go to see Bhai Sahib Bhai Vir Singh Ji. The two souls would be greatly pleased when they met in the mortal and spiritual worlds.

63 - JESUS CHRIST, MOHAMED SAHIB AND BHRIGU RISHI JI APPEAR IN A VISION

One day Baba Ji was in deep meditation when Jesus Christ, Mohammed Sahib and Bhrigu Rishi Ji together, appeared before him. Their faces were radiant and had spiritually bright auras around their heads.

After blessing Baba Ji with this vision Hazrat Mohammed Sahib Ji spoke, "You are blessed and truly fortunate to whom Guru Nanak Dev Ji has shown the direct and easy method to attain enlightenment of Almighty God especially in this age of kalyug. The followers of the Great Guru Nanak Dev are not deriving the full benefit of his teachings."

After this, Bhrigu Rishi Ji spoke, "In our times, we had to undergo hard penance and rigorous spiritual austerities in order to achieve enlightenment. The whole life of a man was spent in meditation and making offerings to God and even then, union with God was hard to achieve. The true nectar of naam which great Guru Nanak Dev Ji has brought for his Sikhs is remarkable; even we could not obtain this boon of naam. No doubt we amassed great spiritual and miraculous powers through rigorous meditation and penance, including powers to curse or bless anyone, but we were still deprived of the nectar of naam."

Jesus Christ just said simply, "It is my inner desire that my followers one day adopt the path shown by great Guru Nanak Dev Ji." Saying these words, all three prophets disappeared.

64 - YOGI SEAL NATH TRIES TO FRIGHTEN BABA JI WITH HIS ASTRAL BODY

To the south of the present day Gurdwara Rampur Khera and Talwandi village lived a yogi called Seal Nath. He was a follower of Gorakh Nath (a group of ascetics who have mystical powers gained by penance and practice of yoga). He had created great influence in the area due to his miraculous powers. His followers would visit his hut with offerings of fine liquor, cooked meat and poultry, in order to please him. When his followers invited him to a house, they would sacrifice many animals and serve large quantities of alcohol with meat.

From the day Baba Ji came to this area, with his gurmat preaching, many people left this unholy practice of sacrificing animals and using alcohol. They started to join the fold of Sikhism and being baptised.

They stopped yielding to the yogi and his way of life. So, with time, his reputation began to decline and the yogi was acutely aware of the cause of his slipping reputation. He was agonised by the loss of his followers to Sikhism but often found himself helpless to do anything. Finally, to build up his miraculous and spiritual powers, he started exercising his yogic postures. He was so adept at yoga that he could separate his astral (conscious body and mind) from his physical body.

One summer evening, after finishing his evening prayer of *Rehras*, Baba Ji was sitting on his bed outside the hut, deeply engrossed in simran.

Baba Ji used to tell us that he heard the sound of Aulakh, Aulakh (a chant used by yogis) from a distance. When Baba Ji looked up to see the source of the sound, he saw a yogi with long iron tongs in his hand, advancing towards him. Baba Ji used to tell us, "My soul realised that the yogi Seal Nath has come to try and scare me with his astral body. Nonetheless, I continued with my simran, steadfast and fearlessly, mindful of his actions all the while. The yogi advanced, coming nearer. When he came quite close, he raised his iron tongs as if to strike me. The yogi said, "I will only rest after throwing you out of this place." The yogi went on to say, "You are giving the wrong doctrine to my followers, who are abandoning the yoga religion." The yogi shouted angrily, "You do not know how powerful I am. I will only rest after I have removed these sickles (derogatory name for the kirpan) from your necks. "When the yogi used these derogatory words for the kirpan, Baba Ji felt very hurt. Baba Ji said that while still sitting on the bed and only in a spiritual sense, he (not physically) slapped the yogi hard on the face. With this, his tongs fell on the ground and he was lying on the ground writhing. He rolled around on the ground two or three times as he fell. As soon as he came to his senses, the yogi walked away grumbling to Baba Ji, "I did not know you were so powerful. I misjudged your strength and made a mistake in trying to wrestle with you. I have lost my strength. I will not stay in the area any longer and set up somewhere else." With these words, the yogi left and never attacked again.

After a few days, out of curiosity Baba Ji sent a devotee to enquire about the yogi, as to whether he was still there at his hut or not. The farmer's ploughing the fields next to yogi Seal Nath's hut told the devotee that the yogi had gone to some unknown place abandoning his devotees without even saying farewell to them. His devotees had been searching for him for the past few days carrying bottles of liquor as offerings.

Baba Ji later came to find out that the yogi Seal Nath had set up his new home at Nangal Isher, Hoshiarpur. When that devotee came back and told Baba Ji, this humble servant (Sant Seva Singh)

was there. Baba Ji only said, "He was going to go." Later when Baba Ji was free, he told me, "No type of miraculous, mystical charm, forces of black magic, voodoo etc work on a gursikh. However, the gursikh should be a true Sikh in every sense. Then the great Guru shelters him or her. As Guru Arjan Dev Ji says:

***He whom the Lord protects
The formless Lord is besides him
jaa ka-o raakhai raakhanhaar.
tis kaa ang karay nirankaar. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Gond 5th Guru, page 868)***

And

***He, on whose side is the Guru
How can wealth make him proud?
He on whose side is the Guru
What harm can lakhs of arms do unto him?
jaam guroo ho-ay val dhaneh ki-aa gaarav dij-ay.
jaam guroo ho-ay val lakh baahay ki-aa kij-ay.
(Swaiyas 4th Guru, page 1399)***

Those persons who surrender their whole being to the Almighty, then God himself shelters them:

***They who seek refuge in the feet of the Lord of the world
Those he ferries across the dreadful world ocean.
God saves the honour of Saintly persons
O slave Nanak the Lord himself
Shows his benedictions on them.
jagdeesur charan saran jo aa-ay tay jan bhav niDh paar paray.
bhagat janaa kee paj har raakhai jan naanak aap har kirpaa karay. ||2||1||7||
(Kalyan Bhopali 4th Guru, page 1321)***

65 - DRASTIC CHANGE IN THE LIFE OF S. KABUL SINGH

The construction of the Gurdwara was underway, when one day, a man called Kabul Singh of village Dhoot Kalan turned up. This person had tried every type of addictive substance, from alcohol to hard drugs and now his physical health, mental balance and economic well-being were completely in tatters. Kabul Singh wished to stay at the Gurdwara and learn how to read path from Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Santhiya) under the tutelage of Baba Ji. Another member of the village by the name of Pritam Singh (Shah Ji) was at the gurdwara when Kabul Singh Ji made his request to Baba Ji. Pritam Singh would often help in the service of the gurdwara both monetarily and physically. Seeing Kabul Singh talking to Baba Ji, Pritam Singh came over too. Kabul Singh had just petitioned Baba Ji when Pritam Singh warned Baba Ji outright, "Be mind full! Don't keep this person here at the Gurdwara for Santhiya.

He is such a desperate addict that he will even sell your pots and pans to feed his addiction." Baba Ji replied, "Shah Ji, in your eyes is there anyone in this world who has never made a mistake? Is there anyone who is without personal faults? In this world...

***Everyone is prone to error except the creator
bhulan vich kee-aa sabh ko-ee kartaa aap na bhulai.***
(Parbhathi 1st Guru, page 1344)

And

***All are prone to make mistakes
The Guru and the creator alone are infallible.
bhulan andar sabh ko abhul guroo kartaar.***
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 61)

We all have faults and make mistakes. It is because we have faults that we are born into this life. When all our faults are resolved then one becomes the image of Almighty God. The house of our Waheguru is such that it even transforms thieves, robbers, cheats and murderers into Saints. If in your view he will sell off the utensils then so be it. Don't worry, Guru Ji will send some more."

S. Kabul Singh was given permission by Baba Ji to learn how to recite Gurbani. Baba Ji advised him to involve himself in service of the sangat at the Gurdwara during any free time that he had between Santhya. Whenever Baba Ji was free, Kabul Singh would take the opportunity to sit with him and learn how to recite Gurbani. In a short while, he had completed the training to read Gurbani from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

A few months had passed, he had recited two Sehaj paths as well. Now, Kabul Singh was not the man he was a short time before when he entered the Gurdwara as a destitute addict. The company of Baba Ji and constant exposure to Gurbani had transmuted Kabul Singh. The transforming power of Gurbani had dredged Kabul Singh from the depths of sin and immorality, and made him worthy of becoming a Sikh. Kabul Singh took amrit and began to walk on the path of gurmat. He began to partake in reciting Akhand path as a service to the sangat. Often, he would stay at the Gurdwara for the night and some times would not go home for days.

One day Kabul Singh Ji's wife came to the Gurdwara looking for him and complained bitterly to Baba Ji, "Send him home at least. He has become a new yogi, abandoning his home and family to

hide here at the Gurdwara. What income is there to run the household? He has even abandoned his children.” Baba Ji listened to all the lady’s complaints, patiently, and reassured her, Don’t be dejected Bibi Ji! Kabul Singh hasn’t abandoned his home. He is here for the benefit of the whole family. The house that you now say is penniless, will one day be rejoicing in good fortune because, no one ever loses out when they clutch the feet of the true Guru.” Hearing these words, the lady returned to Dhoot kalan. The next day, when Baba Ji went to pay his respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Kabul Singh Ji was with him. After taking the hukamnama, Baba Ji turned to Kabul Singh Ji, “You must now go to Delhi! There you will get a job.”

Kabul Singh was taken aback and replied, “Baba Ji, I am of advanced age and whatever health I had, has been destroyed by intoxicants. What job will I do and how? I won’t get work now.” Baba Ji replied, “This is not the kind of job that you are thinking of. This job will keep you close to Guru Ji and money will not be a problem either.” Baba Ji gave Kabul Singh some money for a rail ticket to Delhi and instructed him to go to Gurdwara Sis Ganj, the martyrdom place of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji:

***All arrangements the Lord himself takes care of
sagal saraNjaam karay parabh aapay.***
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 805)

Abiding by Baba Ji’s wishes, Kabul Singh Ji arrived at Gurdwara Sis Ganj Ji. After listening to kirtan, he had langar and then stayed the night in the Gurdwara rest home (An inn known as a Sraan where pilgrims can lodge for the night). Kabul Singh Ji tells us that when he was sat in the Gurdwara listening to kirtan the next morning, a person walked up to him and said, “You have been called by the Gurdwara president.” Kabul Singh bowed to Guru Ji and went to meet the president in his office.

The president asked, “Where have you come from?” Kabul Singh Ji told him about himself and gave a reference from Baba Ji. The president asked, “Can you recite Gurbani in an Akhand path?” Kabul Singh Ji replied in agreement. “Will you be able to perform the duty of Akhand path? After a while, you will be assigned to become the priest at Gurdwara Moti Bagh in Delhi. We will give you free board and lodgings. You can also call your family over here,” said the president of the Gurdwara.

Kabul Singh Ji was amazed and quickly said yes to the offer of service. He now recalled the prophetic words of Baba Ji that ‘the Lord himself makes all arrangements’. Soon, he was entrusted with the duties of Granthi Singh and in time called his family over to Delhi as well. He began to lead a happy and prosperous life. At the same time as serving Guru Ji, he had Saintly company of the congregation too.

Witness how nature changes everything around. Kabul Singh Ji had joined the Indian National Army founded by Subhash Chander Bose before the independence of India. Unbeknown to him, he was awarded a pension for being a freedom fighter and a healthy lump sum in pension arrears as well. In a matter of days, this penniless family on the brink of starvation now had a healthy income. All this was possible through taking the shelter of Gurbani and holy company of true Saints. Soon, the children had grown up and were able to stand on their own feet.

Looking at Kabul Singh today, no one could imagine from his appearance that once, he was such an addict to intoxicants. Whenever Kabul Singh Ji remembers the affectionate character of Baba Ji,

he admits, "Everyone is willing to trust and embrace a person of good character or stature. No one is willing to trust a person of immoral standing. Blessed and glorious was Baba Ji, who was willing to embrace the lowest people that society had abandoned. He would transform stone hearted characters into esteemed gursikhs of golden character through his pious affection." Sometimes, when Kabul Singh Ji narrates this tale, he weeps in gratitude to Baba Ji.

66 - ANOTHER INCIDENT OF TRANSFORMING A LIFE BY GURU'S GRACE

A particular devotee of Baba Ji who was a landlord (Sardar Ji, The name of the devotee is not written for the reason that every mortal has somany demerits. May God cover everybody's false deeds and guide us to show the better way) lived in Sargodha (present day Pakistan).

As drinking was the fashion in high society, he too, fell victim to alcohol abuse. Whenever Baba Ji met him, he would try to persuade him to stop drinking, advising him that not only was it addictive, but detrimental to one's spiritual well being. Baba Ji would often remind him, "When a mortal, in order to enjoy false and base pleasures of this material world drowns himself in intoxicants, he is defamed in this world and in the next. Liquor pollutes the intellect and creates an imbalance within one's mental state, where temporary insanity takes over. In a drunken stupor, one loses the ability to distinguish between good and evil, the self and another. Ego enters the heart and one forgets the Lord. As a result, one is punished in the Lord's house and is forsaken for his wrongdoings. One should avoid intoxicants at all times, as the cost would entail the loss of one's morality and place in society:

***By drinking which intellect departs,
Madness enters the brain,
Man cannot distinguish between yours and mine
And is buffeted by his master.
By drinking which the Lord is forgotten
And the mortal receives punishment in his court
Drink thou not, at all, the false wine,
As far as it lies in thy power
jit peetai mat door ho-ay baral pavai vich aa-ay.
aapnaa paraa-i-aa na pachhaan-ee
khasmahu Dhakay khaa-ay.
jit peetai khasam visrai dargeh milai sajaa-ay.
jhoothaa mad mool na peech-ee jay kaa paar vasaa-ay.***
(Vaar Bihagra 3rd Guru, page 554)

Guru Nanak Dev Ji has warned us that...

***By drinking this wine
O Nanak, the mortal earns multiple sins
it mad peetai naankaa bahutay khatee-ah bikaar.***
(Salok Mardana, page 553)

Guru Arjun Dev Ji clearly tells us in Gurbani that...

***The fool who drinks wine of evil understanding
Become husbands of concubines.
They who are imbued with the Lord's elixir
Are the true drunkards, O Nanak.
durmat mad jo peevtay bikhlee pat kamlee.
raam rasaa-in jo ratay naanak sach amlee. ||4||12||114||***
(Asa, 5th Guru, page 399)

Guru Ji tells us, Brother, if you wish to live a life of sin and excess, in a state of drunken stupor and insanity, then continue to indulge in intoxicants. But, if you wish to taste the ambrosial nectar, then drink the elixir of Naam. The decision is yours whether to follow the path of sin and accept evil. Or to embrace the Guru's path and taste the elixir of the divine word.

Prominent Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh Ji have written in their personal accounts about the true Sikh way of life. In these accounts called Rehatnamas, it is said, "A true sikh is one who is free from the evils of adultery, gambling, theft, liquor and telling lies (Rehatnama by Bhai Desa Singh Ji)."

Bhagat Kabir Ji tells us:

***Whosoever of the mortals,
Partake of meat, fish and wine,
Despite their pilgrimages, they all go to hell
kabeer bhaaNg maachhulee suraa paan jo jo paraanee khaaNhi.
tirath barat naym kee-ay tay sabhai rasaatal jaaNhi. ||233||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1377)***

Baba Ji was trying to make the devotee understand the evils of liquor by quoting examples from Gurbani. Unfortunately, it was to have no effect on the landlord. He would reply to Baba Ji, "I want to give up alcohol but my mind and willpower are weak. I give in and am helpless."

Baba Ji advised him, "If it is your heartfelt desire to give up alcohol, then I will tell you a method but you must adopt it yourself. You must daily recite one prayer of Jap Ji Sahib and in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji pray, 'O master of the poor, I want to give up alcohol but have no control over my mind. Please help me to shun this addiction and bring me to your pious feet'. In this way, go daily to the Gurdwara to pray. "

The devotee passed a long while without succumbing to drink, as he was engrossed in the daily routine of prayer. Due to bad company, he broke his vow and began to drink again. One day, Baba Ji sent one of his attendants to enquire about the aforementioned devotee. The attendant returned with a message from the landlord, "I sometimes drink alcohol but hate myself from within for having done so. The day I drink I still do my prayers but do not go to the Gurdwara to pray."

Listening to this description of Sardar Ji's plight, Baba Ji got the congregation at the gurdwara to recite five prayers of Chaupai Sahib and prayed to Guru Ji on his behalf. Baba Ji sent back a message to the landlord, "Now the idea of drink will not enter your mind. Even if you are tempted, then pray to Almighty God to give you control over your mind and save you from this habit. If despite this you still take alcohol then still pray but do not go inside the Gurdwara, just bow from outside the temple."

The Ardas of the sangat and Baba Ji had already affected Sardar Ji's mind. In taking the shelter of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, his resolve strengthened. The same person who was unable to give up alcohol is now baptised, having taken refuge at the feet of the great Guru. Besides reciting the Nitnem, he recites Sukhmani Sahib daily. After this incident, he helped many others to adopt the Sikh way of life. All his family members are baptised Sikhs. Only by associating with the congregation (sangat), performing Ardas (prayer) and reciting Gurbani are such blessings obtained.

Such was the philanthropic life of Baba Ji: he would help a person steeped in sin, pulling them out of the deep pit of demerits, transforming them into pious, devoted Sikhs, by applying the transmuting power of Gurbani. There are not hundreds but thousands of such incidents associated with the life of Baba Ji. Under the dynamic and affectionate guidance of Baba Ji, many families in the area adopted the Sikh way of life and were baptised. They left the path of atheism and became true believers of God and Sikhism. The words of Bhai Gurdas Ji ring true:

***In this whirlpool of the world,
A Sikh, an expert sailor, can save the lives of many thousands.***

67 - YOU LEAVE LIQUOR, POVERTY WILL LEAVE YOU

S. Gian Singh of Gurdaspur was a noble and honest gentleman, who worked hard to earn a livelihood for his family. He obtained a job working on the construction of the Bhakra dam (a dam built on the Sutlej river for the production of electricity). No doubt S Gian Singh was an honest worker but just as a thorn accompanies a rose, so too was the case with him. He was fond of drinking liquor and this addiction was eating away his hard earned money. He would visit his home once a month; give some of his wages to his wife for the upkeep of the family and the rest was used to fund his habit of drinking. His wife, a gentle and wise woman, would use the meagre amount of money for household expenses. This routine continued for a while. The dam was nearly completed, so S. Gian Singh finished his job and came back to Gurdaspur to set up a welding workshop. He had many customers and his business ran smoothly but his addiction to liquor ensured that a large part of his profits were wasted on alcohol. Many a time he had resolved to give up alcohol but would eventually succumb to drink. A dear friend said to him one day "O Gian Singh, you work so hard, with lots of customers visiting you but your family still remains quite poor. Your children are growing up fast, you should think of improving your house. Soon you will marry them off and have no decent house to live in. What will you do?"

S. Gian Singh explained his inner torment to his friend. "You know I have a good income from this workshop but this wretched addiction to alcohol will not leave me, no matter how much I shun it." The friend replied sympathetically, "I will tell you of a remedy. In district, Hoshiarpur, near Gardhiwala, lives a Sikh sadhu. You should seek his advice and follow whatever he says. He is a perfect Saint." S. Gian Singh said, "My dear friend, I have seen many so called sadhu's (Saints). All are concerned with their own good. That is their means of earning a fast buck. It is me who drinks alcohol, what can a Saint do? Snatch the bottle from my hand? No one can convince me to leave drinking unless my mind submits to giving up drink for good." His friend, who was a baptised Sikh, said to Gian Singh, "What's the harm in going though? You tell him the truth about your problem and beseech him to help you. If your inner being agrees then accept his advice and counsel, otherwise return home."

S Gian Singh was adamant. "The Saint will say the usual – that give up drinking. What will I say then? Should I lie and say I won't drink again? If I promise a Saint I will give up alcohol and then start to drink then I will be a sinner twice over. So my dear friend, don't try to persuade me to give up. If God wills it, he will persuade me to give up." The friend replied, "Gian Singh, as you have just said, the Saint won't snatch the wine glass from your hand. Do you want God to snatch the drink from your hand? If God snatches the drink from your hand, it will cost you dearly. So, do not make lame excuses. At least go visit the Saint once." S. Gian Singh said, "Alright then brother, I agree to your proposal. I shall go there on some Sunday. If that Saint helps me in giving up alcohol, it will benefit my family and me. If not then nothing is lost or changed."

That friend returned to his home but his words haunted S Gian Singh's thoughts. Sunday was approaching in a few days time, so he chalked out a programme to go visit the Sikh Saint. It was a summer day and Gian Singh rode his bicycle up to the river Beas at Nashehra Pattan. He crossed the river by boat, rode another 25 miles on his bicycle and reached Gurdwara Rampur Khera at noon. He washed his face, hands and feet at the water pump outside the Gurdwara and placed his bicycle in a corner. From a distance, he saw the sangat sat on the carpet and went into Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji's room. He bowed in reverence, sat down using a fan to dry his sweat and saw that Baba Ji was sitting amongst the sangat congregated there. As Baba Ji was wearing a small turban and dressed like the other Singh's it was difficult to recognise Baba Ji.

S. Gian Singh had an image that the Saint would be exquisitely dressed, sat on a lofty, elevated and ornate seat, with several attendants wafting a fan over him. A worldly Saint is easily recognised from a distance, but here it was the opposite. Everyone, including Baba Ji, sat on a carpet, so it was difficult to make out who was a Saint or not. His mind was lost in these thoughts when Bhai Amar Singh Ji arrived, gave him parshad and asked if he needed anything. S Gian Singh asked Bhai Amar Singh Ji, "Bhai Sahib, has the Saint gone out somewhere?" Bhai Amar Singh Ji replied, "No, he is sitting outside on the carpet with the sangat. Look over there, that fellow with the small turban and wearing a sword with the black strap, he is the Saint."

At the direction of Bhai Amar Singh Ji, S Gian Singh went up to Baba Ji and started to bow in front of him. Baba Ji immediately stopped what he was saying; putting his hands under Gian Singh's head, he forbid him to bow in front of him. He said, "Do you need to bow any further? You have already bowed and paid respect to one who was worthy of it (Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji); A gursikh must stand upon his feet; the great Guru has blessed us with the gift of saying Fateh. Whenever two Sikhs meet, we should greet each other by saying, "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh." Baba Ji then asked him, "Where have you come from?" Gian Singh replied "From Gurdaspur." "On a bus or on a bicycle?" enquired Baba Ji. Gian Singh replied "All the way on a bicycle." "You have undergone so much trouble, first have something to eat from the langar, then we shall talk," said Baba Ji. Gian Singh sat down to eat in the langar and was wondering, "What a surprisingly different Saint! If one does not bow or prostrate in front of other types of Saints, forget being asked to eat or drink something, even your presence is frowned upon. Even the attendants of worldly Saints frown upon you and taunt you for not knowing how to pay homage to their Saint. But here everything is different. A person who bows in front of a Saint is sweetly told not to do so. This is a new experience in my life," thought Gian Singh as he sat eating langar. After having something to eat, he sat amongst the sangat and listened intently to what was being discussed.

After sometime Baba Ji asked Gian Singh, "What brings you here? You have come a long way in this hot sun. What is your order for me?" S Gian Singh replied, "I wish to discuss something in private." Soon everyone had dispersed and Gian Singh continued, "Baba Ji, I was working before and now have a welding workshop. I get regular customers but have no money left over due to my addiction to alcohol. Poverty has afflicted my family and home. I do not even have a proper roof on my house. My children are all but grown up and will need to be settled." Baba Ji listened to him patiently. He paused awhile and then uttered, "Sardar Ji, what is your name?" "Gian Singh," he replied. "Bhai Gian Singh, if you agree to my counsel, you won't just be getting by but money will hanker after you," answered Baba Ji. Gian Singh was now caught in two minds. He thought for a while and said, "Baba Ji, I want to stop drinking but I can't." Baba Ji said, "This way liquor won't let go of you. The only way is for you to take refuge in the Guru's shelter. Before coming to the Guru's shelter, you must recite Jap Ji Sahib in the morning and Rehras in the evening. When you become committed to this daily routine, then, start reciting the daily Nitnem. Make up your mind firmly, that from today onwards you will go to the Gurdwara daily, and pray before Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji for divine help, in giving up your addiction. When one's own strength becomes ineffective, then all tasks are accomplished by taking the shelter of the Almighty. So, be brave, have firm resolve to never go near alcohol again."

S. Gian Singh went on listening and finally asked "Baba Ji, how does one take shelter of the great Guru?" Baba Ji replied, "When you start doing Nitnem of seven banis, leave liquor and become a baptised Sikh, this is the only way of taking shelter of the great Guru." Gian Singh fell silent and thought, "I will have to be bound down to do Nitnem daily when I give up alcohol. I will have to

adhere to a Sikh code of conduct. This is indeed a long method.” Drowned in such thoughts, he ventured, “Baba Ji, can I not give up drink without being baptised? As you request I will do Nitnem daily and try to leave alcohol.”

Baba Ji replied sternly, “Gian Singh! We want to reform your present life and the here after. By leaving liquor and reading Gurbani, your business will prosper. But for how long will you derive pleasure out of worldly things. After all, it is said :

**All shall go to their bridegroom
And all shall have a
Ceremonial departure, after marriage
sabhnaa saahurai vanj-naa sabh muklaavanhaar.
(Sri Raag, 5th Guru, page 50-51)**

**Whosoever has love, he shall depart and
All shall depart in turn
jo aa-i-aa so chalsee sabh ko-ee aa-ee vaaree-ai.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 474)**

**None of the kings and nobles
No one remains here forever.
raanaa raa-o na ko rahai rang na tung fakeer.
vaaree aapo aapnee ko-ay na bandhai Dheer.
(Ramkali 1st Guru, page 936).**

If we place our faith in the Guru then he will take care of us. If we go from this world without the protection of the Guru then:

**Without the Guru, there is no other Guru
And the one without a Guru has a bad name
satgur baajhahu gur nahee ko-ee niguray kaa hai naa-o bura.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 435)**

We may choose to understand or not, but great Guru has left no doubt in explaining to us, the need for a Guru. What else can be said more clearly than what Guru Nanak Dev Ji says?

**Without the true Guru
None has found the Lord
All have grown weary of performing rites
sathigur baajh n paaeiou subh thukee kurum kumaae jeeo
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 72)**

**Without the true Guru thou are found not
All others are enticed into the net of mammon
satgur baajh na paa-i-o sabh mohee maa-i-aa jaal jee-o. ||3||
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 71)**

If we become of the Guru then

He on whose side is the Guru
What enticement can riches offer him?
He on whose side is the Guru
What harm can thousands of arms do unto him?
He on whose side is the Guru
He depends on no other for spiritual vision.
He on whose side is the Guru
He contemplates the Guru's words
And abides in the true abode.
The slave minstrel supplicates
Whosoever recites the name of the true Guru
And ensrines the name of the Guru in his mind
He is absolved of birth and death
jaam guroo ho-ay val dhaneh ki-aa gaarav dijaam
guroo ho-ay val lakh baahay ki-aa kij-ay.
jaam guroo ho-ay val dhaneh ki-aa gaarav dij-ay.
jaam guroo ho-ay val sabad saakhee so sachah ghar.
jo guroo guroo ahinis japai daas bhat baynat kahai.
jo guroo naam rid meh Dharai so janam maran duh thay rahai.
 (Swaiyas 4th Guru, page 1399)

Therefore, if you adopt this path, you will taste the uniqueness of it. By the grace of God, the lowliest of the low, dirt trodden, tormented mind is transmuted into gold, when one takes the shelter of the great Guru. All these benefits are derived from baptism and by entering the sanctuary of the guru:

The body is a furnace
And the mind of iron,
Deep within, lie the five fires of passion heating it.
Sin is the charcoal placed there which burns the mind
And anxiety becomes the tongs.
The mind turned into dross is transmuted into gold
If the Guru resides within.
He blesses the man with name of the one Lord
And then his body and mind are healed.
kaa-i-aa aaran man vich lohaa panch agan tit laag rahee.
ko-ilay paap parhay tis oopar man jali-aa sanHee chint bha-ee.
bha-i-aa manoor kanchan fir hovai jay gur milai tinayhaa.
ayk naam amrit oh dayvai ta-o naanak taristas dayhaa. ||4||3||
 (Maroo, 1st Guru, page 990)

Those who have come to know about the Guru, realise the benefits of the blessings of the Guru when they read their Bani aloud:

Hearing the Guru's word
Glass is transformed into gold.
Uttering the true Guru's name
Poison is transformed into nectar.
When the true Guru casts his merciful glance

***Iron is transformed into a jewel.
When man utters and reflects upon the Guru's gifts
The stone is turned into an emerald.
The pangs of poverty are eradicated from those whom the
Guru has transformed into sandalwood.
Whosoever touches the true Guru's feet
Be it beast or ghost, all become angelic.
kachahu kanchan bha-i-a-o sabad gur sarvaneh suni-o.
bikh tay amrit hu-ya-o naam satgur mukh bhani-a-o.
loha-o ho-ya-o laal nadar satgur jad Dhaarai.
paahan maanak karai gi-aan gur kahi-a-o beechaarai.
kaathahu sareekhand satgur kee-a-o dukh daridar tin kay gai-a.
satguroo charan jinH parsi-aa say pas parayt sur nar bha-i-a.
(Swaiyas 4th Guru, page 1399)***

“Gian Singh Ji! Do not become confused, because our intellect is limited in its scope. Make the Guru’s path the basis of your life. You have travelled far today, if you do not abandon your old habits and adopt a positive one, and then you will have gained nothing in your journey. So be brave, your resolve is required and great Guru will render every means of assistance you need.”

Hearing these deeply moving words from Baba Ji, Gian Singh agreed to his request. He stayed the night at the Gurdwara, recited Nitnem with the sangat in the morning and returned home. Once home, he began to recite his prayers on a daily basis just as Baba Ji had requested. Sometimes, he would feel dejected and depressed in the evening. Then Baba Ji’s words “Forsake liquor and poverty will leave you” would overpower him. He would have a mental battle within, “If I start to drink again, then as Baba Ji said poverty will haunt me forever.” Then he would gain courage and think positively: “I should leave alcohol alone for a while, I will not die without it. If the words of the Saint do not come true in a few months, then I can always start drinking again.”

During the first few days, Gian Singh found it difficult, but with the continuous recitation of Gurbani, Ardas and regular visits to the Gurdwara, his mind became strong and his resolve strengthened. He began to visit Gurdwara Rampur Khera every 15-20 days to visit Baba Ji.

Meanwhile, his business began to expand, the finances began to flow and his family was now happier, as poverty became a thing of the past. Previously, the children were wary of their father when he was drunk. They would run and hide from him, but now, they were more cheerful and would run to greet him. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the house had changed from a living hell into heaven; fear and terror had transformed into happiness and poverty to riches.

For a time things remained this way. However, one may obtain the blessings of the great Guru by adopting his path, but due to our past karma, one may fall under the influence of bad company. So, Gian Singh, influenced by old company, began to drink again. The next day, when he awoke from his drunken stupor, Baba Ji’s prophetic words rang in his head, “Bad company is so powerful that if one has one foot in heaven and the other one in the door, if one falls under the influence of bad company, one will lose his or her foothold in heaven and fall into sin.” This is what happened to Gian Singh and he began to curse himself and thought about how he would face Baba Ji and confess his wrongdoing. How could he face Baba Ji to tell him of the broken promise and how he had faltered from the path of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji? The afternoon passed in this inner turmoil.

It was winter and suddenly Gian Singh decided to go to Rampur Khera on his bicycle. He reached the Gurdwara in the evening and asked the attendants about Baba Ji's whereabouts. He was told that Baba Ji had gone to a house in Talwara town to attend a bhog ceremony (completion of reciting Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji). On hearing this, he felt dejected and disappointed.

The attendants requested Gian Singh to have langar. After having Langar, he requested the attendants to tell him the address of the house in Talwara where Baba Ji was due to attend the ceremony. The attendants were illiterate and did not know whose house Baba Ji was visiting. They suggested that Gian Singh go to the Gurdwara in Talwara and ask about Baba Ji's whereabouts there.

Gian Singh rested for a while and at midnight set off on his bicycle for Talwara on a bitter winter's night. In the pitch black, he slowly rode his bicycle and reached Talwara at about 4am in the morning. The priest had just enthroned Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at the gurdwara, when Gian Singh arrived. He asked the priest about Baba Ji and was told, "There is one man called Bhagat Ji. I do not know his real name. In fact, not many know his name, so everyone calls him Bhagat Ji. He lives in sector 3; Baba Ji generally comes to see him. You can go to his place."

Gian Singh made his way towards Bhagat Ji's house, asking numerous people for directions on his way. Finally arriving at his destination, Gian Singh found Baba Ji. When Baba Ji saw him, he said, "Sardar Gian Singh, how are you? Where have you come from? Where have you been staying? Your hands are so cold." Gian Singh was offered tea and then he confessed. "I came to Gurdwara Rampur Khera yesterday evening. I started towards Talwara at midnight and after many enquiries found you here. Now my fatigue has vanished at the sight of you." Baba Ji said, "We have yet to complete our Nitnem. After that we will talk." Baba Ji did his daily Nitnem and then quietly said, "Gian Singh! You did not keep your promise. You have made a mistake." Gian Singh petitioned Baba Ji with folded hands, "Baba Ji! The bad company I keep compelled me to drink. I did not want to drink, since the day I stopped drinking I have been enjoying my new lifestyle. Money was in abundance, the family was happy and I was more healthy."

Baba Ji rebuked him in a very grave voice "If everything was going well, what compelled you to drink again? What forced you to back down from your promise and obtain the Guru's displeasure? The bad company or person's you are blaming did not wrestle you in an arm lock and force liquor down your throat. You willingly drank and it is your own weakness." Gian Singh with folded hands entreated Baba Ji, "Baba Ji! I have committed a blunder and broken my promise. That is why, since yesterday afternoon, I have been trying to find you to repent for my mistake and to beg forgiveness. I vow I will not drink again in the future. I will not allow anyone to sway me from my promise." Baba Ji said " Gian Singh! You must now prepare to be baptised and fulfil your promise. I feel pity for you because you have spent all night travelling at great discomfort to yourself. Now you must become a baptised Singh. Be Guru ward in your intellect. You will become a big contractor, but these gifts will be yours only if you abide by the Guru's code of conduct." After a few days, Mr. and Mrs. Gian Singh were blessed with Guru's Amrit. With God's blessing and a firm resolve, Gian Singh's business went from strength to strength and he received a large contract.

He soon had enough money to build a lovely house and land. A penniless worker was now transformed into a millionaire businessman. Gian Singh was now known as Contractor Gian Singh. By abandoning bad habits and attaining the Guru's grace he obtained all these boons. Slowly the

rest of the family came to the shelter of the Guru; they progressed spiritually and their wealth increased. This is borne witness by the grand house on Tibri road, Gurdaspur. Guru Ji tells us that...

***If someone is weak from the pangs of hunger and poverty,
And he has no money in his pocket
And there is none to console him
If none will gratify his wish and no work of, his is accomplished
If, in his heart he remembers the supreme Lord
He shall have permanent kingdom.
jay ko hovai dublaa nang bhukh kee peer.
damrhaa palai naa pavai naa ko dayvai Dheer.
su-aarath su-aa-o na ko karay naa kichh hovai kaaj.
chit aavai os paarbarahm taa nihchal hovai raaj. ||2||
(Sri Raag 5th Guru, page 70)***

Bhagat Farid Ji says...

***If thou o man, reform thyself
Thou shall meet me.
On meeting with me thou shall be at peace
O Farid, if thou belong to me
The whole world shall be yours
aap savaareh mai mileh mai mili-aa sukh ho-ay.
fareedaa jay too mayraa ho-ay raheh sabh jag tayraa ho-ay.
(Salok Farid Ji, page 1382)***

And

***Act upon the Guru's instructions
This is indeed the truest philosophy
satgur bachan kamaavnay sachaa ayhu veechaar.
(Sri Raag 5th Guru, page 52)***

And

***He who practices the words of the Saints
He is ferried across by the Guru's grace
jay ko bachan kamaavai santan kaa so gur parsaaadee taree-ai.
(Suhi 5th Guru, page 747)***

In Gauri Sukhmani, our fifth Guru tells us:

***The person whom God has caused to obey his order
O Nanak, he obtains all things
jis jan apnaa hukam manaa-i-aa.
sarab thok naanak tin paa-i-aa. ||1||
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 268)***

68 - THERE IS NO PARTICULAR TRADITION OF RECITING AN AKHAND PATH IN 48 HOURS

Preparations were being made for the annual gurmat meditation camp (Naam Abhyas Smagam). Traditionally, an akhand path would be recited over the last two days of the meditation camp. Giani Dyal Singh Ji of Patiala had arrived specifically to attend the annual camp. During an exchange of pleasantries with Baba Ji, Giani Ji ventured to ask, "At what time is the akhand path due to start and when will it be completed?"

Baba Ji replied politely, "We were thinking of starting the recitation at 8 am and finish the day after tomorrow at 10 am." Giani Ji was a highly religious and devout gursikh. He said, "By doing this, the tradition of akhand path will be altered. It has been traditional to complete the akhand path in exactly 48 hours." Baba Ji replied, "We take a little bit longer to complete the recitation."

Giani Ji again repeated his assertion that it was improper to take longer than the 48 hours to recite the akhand path. Baba Ji said, "Ok, tomorrow we will ask the true Guru to decide for us whether it is correct or not to take longer than 48 hours." Giani Ji agreed to this request and expressed a great deal of enthusiasm over this matter, thinking this to be the best way to solve the problem.

The next day, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned and the daily hukamnama (the holy edict or command read from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji) was read out aloud. Everyone present in the congregation spent some time in meditation in the holy presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Then, *Ardas* (prayer of supplication) was made, "True emperor! O master of the poor! Is it essential to complete recitation of akhand path in 48 hours? Is the tradition changed or tampered, if more or less time is taken? Please guide us as to your sweet will and allow us to follow your instructions."

After performing the *Ardas*, Baba Ji and the other Singh's sat in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. All sat with devotion and reverence in the congregation. All wanted a glimpse of the true Guru and thought that they would be best placed to do so in this holy congregation. Alas, only those who had the cleanest of minds saw a holy vision of the true Guru. Only Baba Ji, Giani Ji and one other Singh were blessed with a vision of the great Guru.

Baba Ji told the sangat what the true Guru had ordered. The true Guru had said, "There was no specific tradition in completing the Akhand path in 48 hours instituted by him. This tradition had been established by gursikhs themselves. The recitation of prayers should be done with devotion and the granthi Singh (priest) should recite the prayers attentively and with love. The congregation should listen attentively, with respect for Gurbani. There is no limit of 48 hours to complete the recitation of the whole of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The time taken to recite the prayers can be increased or decreased as required."

So, Baba Ji narrated these words of the true Guru to the whole sangat. It was a great relief that the Guru himself had lifted confusion over this matter. After this day, Baba Ji had akhand paths completed in 72 hours on occasion. The granthi Singh would recite the prayers aloud and the attending sangat would listen patiently. He would sometimes ask the congregation to inwardly recite "*Waheguru*" in their hearts, whilst simultaneously listening to the akhand path being recited. In such programme's Baba Ji would personally sit with the sangat himself.

69 - SIGNIFICANCE OF SALOK GURDEV MATA GURDEV PITA

Whenever Baba Ji would recite a Sehaj path or give Santhiya (teach pronunciation of Gurbani) to a new learner, he would come across a specific instruction written at the end of the prayer of "Bawan Akhri" in Raag Gauri by the fifth Guru. He would ponder over the Gurbani and its meaning and why Guru Ji's had found it necessary to write this instruction. This Gurbani comes on page 262, at the end of which is written a specific direction for the reader.

***The divine Guru is my mother,
The divine Guru father and
The divine Guru is my Lord and supreme God
gurdayv maataa gurdayv pitaa gurdayv su-aamee parmaysuraa.
(Salok- page 262)***

The above stanza of Gurbani appears twice, once at the start of "Bawan Akhri" and then at the end of this prayer. At the end of the Salok, the great Guru has clearly instructed, "Read this Salok at the beginning and at the end".

The motive of the great Guru regarding this Salok was not clear. Baba Ji asked many scholars of Gurbani about its meaning. Some said that instruction was applicable only for the prayer of "Bawan Akhri" and it meant that at the beginning and the end of reading this prayer, the reader must recite the above Salok twice. Baba Ji used to reply, "This Salok is written twice, first in the beginning and then at the end, so it is to be read twice, there is no doubt regarding that. Some would say, "This sentence is not Gurbani, it is just a written statement." Baba Ji would answer, "There are so many Salok's in Gurbani which appear twice in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, but none of them ends with this instruction to " Read this Salok at the beginning and at the end."

At last, when he was not satisfied, he prayed to the great Guru to give him counsel regarding the special instruction and its meaning. The tenth Guru, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared in front of Baba Ji and uttered, "Bhai Harnam Singh! Whenever a gursikh begins nitnem, either in the morning or in the evening, at the beginning and after completing their prayers, this Salok should be read. Before the start of Sri Akhand Path Sahib, or Sehaj Path, and after completing the recitation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, this Salok should also be read. This line is written only for the purpose to remind the Sikh to read the Salok twice. Any person who reads this Salok at the beginning and the end of their prayers will receive extra spiritual benefit."

Listening to the divine words of the Great Guru, Baba Ji was totally satisfied and overjoyed. From that day onward, all the devotees of Baba Ji read this Salok as per the order of the Great Guru.

SALOK

***The divine Guru is my mother
And the divine Guru the father
The divine Guru is my Lord and supreme God
The divine Guru is my companion
The dispeller of spiritual ignorance
The divine Guru is relative and brother
The divine Guru is the giver
And teacher of the God's name
And the divine Guru is my infallible spell***

*The divine Guru is the image of peace
Truth and wisdom, the divine Guru is
The philosopher's stone
By touching which the mortal is saved
The divine Guru is a place of pilgrimage
And a tank of nectar
By having a bath in Guru's divine knowledge
Man meets the illimitable master
The divine Guru is the creator
And destroyer of all the sins
The divine Guru is the purifier of the impure
The divine Guru is from the beginning
Of ages and in every age
The divine Guru is the spell of God's name
By repeating which the mortal is saved
My master, take pity and unite me*

SALOK

*gurdayv maataa gurdayv pitaa gurdayv su-aamee parmaysuraa.
gurdayv sakhaa agi-aan bhanjan gurdayv banDhip sahodaraa.
gurdayv daataa har naam updaysai gurdayv mant niroDharaa.
gurdayv saaNt sat buDh moorat gurdayv paaras paras paraa.
gurdayv tirath amrit sarovar gur gi-aan majan apramparaa.
gurdayv kartaa sabh paap hartaa gurdayv patit pavit karaa.
gurdayv aad jugaad jug jug gurdayv mant har jap uDhraa.
gurdayv sangat parabh mayl kar kirpaa ham moorh paapee jit
lag taraa.
gurdayv satgur paarbarahm parmaysar gurdayv naanak har
namaskaraa. ||1||
ayhu salok aad ant parh-naa.*

(Guru Bawan Akhri 5th Guru, page 263)

70 - REVERENCE FOR GURBANI

Baba Ji used to respect Gurbani, from the bottom of his heart. In actuality, we only truly respect and appreciate that which is of greatest value to us and is the mainstay of our existence. The life of Baba Ji was such that:

I have the support of the Guru's hymns.

I abide by being attached to Gurbani

mai gurbaanee aaDhaar hai gurbaanee laag rahaa-o. ||8||

(Suhī 4th Guru, page 759)

So, Baba Ji had the utmost reverence for Gurbani, which was the most valuable object of his existence.

When Baba Ji would train anyone to recite Gurbani, he would make him or her sit on a higher place than himself, placing a beautiful sheet beneath the person reading Gurbani. Baba Ji used to recite his daily *Nitnem* within a group of assembled Sikhs. Baba Ji would request those who could recite Gurbani to sit in front of the assembled congregation. If Baba Ji was reciting *Nitnem* whilst sitting on a bed he would spread a clean bedspread on it and make sure, that all other beds on which fellow Sikhs sat on were level with each other. Any Singh who read Gurbani from a gutka (compilation book of daily prayers) in the group would be made to sit on the higher bed, whilst the listeners sat on a lower level as a mark of respect for Gurbani. When Baba Ji would go for his evening walk, it was usual for him or one of the companions to be reciting prayers or hymns such as "*Benati Chaupai*" or "*Satte Balwand di Vaar.*" As such, the person who recited Gurbani would be asked by Baba Ji to walk ahead, leading the rest of the group of listeners.

Baba Ji would often sit near the stream that runs just south of the Gurdwara, listening to someone recite Gurbani. He would take off his *hazooria* (a small length of cloth, like a scarf, kept by a Sikh priest) and place it on the floor so that the person reciting hymns could sit on it.

Sometimes, a newcomer would be reluctant and hesitate to sit on the laid down scarf. Baba Ji would then tell the person, "Dear brother this scarf is not laid down for your sake but as a mark of respect for the Gurbani that you are reciting."

The more reverence we have for Gurbani the better, because Gurbani is the embodiment of the Almighty Lord. So much so, anyone who does not respect Gurbani can be considered to have missed the grace and blessings of the Almighty. We need to have reverence for Gurbani in order to obtain the Guru's pleasure and ultimately this is to our true benefit. We should not just revere Gurbani ritualistically but respect it from the core of our being. If Baba Ji saw a piece of paper with Gurbani lying on the floor, he would pick it up, reverently salute it and then dispose of the paper in a fire. He considered the smallest written word of Gurbani or a gutka, up to and including the entire Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, as the living embodiment of the great Guru. He often said that mortals in the age of kalyug have Gurbani as their Guru:

Gurbani is the embodiment of the Guru

And the Guru is the embodiment of Gurbani

In the whole of Gurbani is contained the nectar

If the attendant acts upon what Gurbani enjoins

The Guru in person saves him

***banee guroo guroo hai banee vich banee amrit saaray.
gur banee kahai sayvak jan maanai partakh guroo nistaaray.
(Natt 4th Guru, page 982)***

And

***The Gurbani of the true Guru
Is the embodiment of truth
Through Gurbani, mortal becomes perfect
satgur kee banee sat saroop hai gurbaanee banee-ai.
(Vaar Gauri 4th Guru, page 304)***

And

***The Guru is the word
And the word is the true Guru
The holy word shows the way to emancipation
satgur bachan bachan hai satgur paaDhar mukat janaavaigo.
(Kanra 4th Guru, page 1309)***

The great Guru's, during their lifetimes, showed us practically to have the utmost reverence for Gurbani. They left footsteps for us to follow, leading us by example. Baba Ji used to say this to the extent that, "He who respects Gurbani respects the great Guru and one who shows no reverence for Gurbani insults his Guru." If we don't respect Gurbani, how can we justify begging for emancipation and boons from the great Guru? Secondly, whereas it is important to act upon the message of Gurbani, it is equally important to revere the embodiment of the Guru, which is Gurbani. This alone is the true mark of respect, which we venerate the message of Gurbani, by acting upon it. We can only take action if we believe that Gurbani is indeed the true Guru.

Even in our worldly affairs, we only take action from somebody's advice if we love and respect that person in the first place. We will not believe or act upon the advice of someone, if we do not love and revere him or her. So, it is with Gurbani, that true devotion is to act upon the message of Gurbani and the inner respect we attach to it is manifested outwardly by our reverence for the written word

71 - GURBANI IS MORE BENEFICIAL IF WE LISTEN TO IT

S. Wadhawa Singh, who has been mentioned earlier, was one of Baba Ji's earliest companions. After obtaining a masters degree, he started working in the languages department at Punjab University, Patiala.

Whenever he had any spare time or a holiday, he would come to meet Baba Ji and benefit from his divine company. He had adopted the path of a true gursikh. Apart from reciting his daily *Nitnem*, he would do the prayers of *Sukhmani Sahib*, *Asa di Vaar* and 27 repetitions of *Benati Chaupai*.

One time, he questioned Baba Ji, saying that he recites the above mentioned prayers daily, without fail, but had not achieved the spiritual benefits that he wished for, what was the reason for this? Baba Ji didn't just satisfy a spiritual seeker by giving false and hollow counsel to their questions like a false prophet. He would only tell others to do that, which he had tried and verified himself. He preached only what he had practiced himself, or that which the true Guru had given him personal insight or guidance. Hearing the question by S. Wadhawa Singh, Baba Ji fell silent for a while and then said, "Let us go and pray in the feet of the true Guru Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Whatever order we get from him, you must to accept it." So the both of them went, in reverence, to the room where Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned. Baba Ji began reciting *Ardas* whilst S. Wadhawa Singh began to wave the Chaur Sahib (a fan). After *Ardas*, both of them concentrated their minds, in simran. Whilst in a deep meditative state, Baba Ji was granted a vision of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The true emperor said to Baba Ji, "Bhai Harnam Singh Ji, tell S. Wadhawa Singh Ji that he may do as many prayers as he wishes but, he must recite the prayers as if he is reading them out to me directly. He must recite them as if the prayers are for me to hear. It doesn't matter how many repetitions of *Benati Chaupai* he does, as long as he does them as if saying his prayers directly to me. It matters not, if he does 27 *Benati Chaupai* paths or just the one. If he utters just one *Benati Chaupai* with the knowledge that I am there in front of him, listening to his prayer recital, it will be more beneficial for him. Another thing, his *Nitnem* reaches us no doubt, but his *Ardas* never reaches us."

Doing Ardas After Simran And Nitnem Is A Must

Baba Ji narrated the order of the tenth master to S. Wadhawa Singh. Hearing these words he said, "Baba Ji, I do not get holy glimpses of the true Guru. How shall I read out Gurbani to him?"

Baba Ji conveyed this question to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The true Guru ordered, "Whatever Gurbani he reads, if he listens to that Gurbani himself with attention and concentration then understand that I, too, have heard the recited Gurbani. Any devotee, who simply recites Gurbani, without actually listening to the message of Gurbani and attuning to it does not read it so I can hear, that Gurbani does not reach my ears either. If he wants his recital of Gurbani to be heard by me, then, he should first listen to it himself. Meditation of *Gur-mantar* and *Mool mantar* must be carried out by listening to what is uttered, with concentration."

Regarding the *Ardas*, Bhai Wadhawa Singh confessed to Baba Ji that he did not do *Ardas* after his *Nitnem* because he believed that the Guru is all-knowing and did not need to be beseeched. It is clear that a devotee must perform an *Ardas* (make a supplication) after reciting prayers, meditation, simran, or completing any task. One must pray in the feet of the true Guru that, "O true Guru, by your grace and blessing *Nitnem* or simran has been accomplished.

Please accept these prayers in your trust and bless this humble servant with boons (any spiritual or temporal boons). Please forgive my faults, mistakes and transgressions.”

By doing an *Ardas*, the supreme Lord showers all manner of boons and secret powers, which would not have been obtained by simran or recitation of prayers alone. At the Lord’s door:

***If it pleases you O Lord
Hear my prayer and supplication
My minds yearning is that
You bless me with your vision o Lord
This soul of mine abides in your meditation.
binat kara-o ardaas sunhu jay thaakur bhaavai.
dayh daras man chaa-o bhagat ih man thehraavai.
(Swaiyas 5th Guru, page 1386)***

And

***Nanak makes a supplication,
O Lord if you will bless me
With abode in your name
That I may ever sing your praises
ik naanak kee ardaas jay tuDh bhaavsee.
mai deejai naam nivaas har gun gaavsee. ||8||1||3||
(Suhi 1st Guru, page 752)***

And

***Joining both hands
I make a supplication before you
O Lord if you will it
Then embellish me
Show your mercy upon me
O Lord bless me with your devotional remembrance
Servant Nanak ever contemplates the Lord.
du-ay kar jorh kara-o ardaas.
tuDh bhaavai taa aaneh raas.
kar kirpaa apnee bhagtee laa-ay.
jan naanak parabh sadaa Dhi-aa-ay. ||4||2||
(Suhi 5th Guru, page 737)***

So, we should try to hear with concentration, the simran or Gurbani that we read or recite. The significance of hearing Gurbani and the spiritual state achieved by the one who listens properly to Gurbani, is mentioned thus:

***Mortal becomes a perfect Saint
A religious guide, spiritual leader and great yogi
By hearing the name of the Lord
Reality of the earth or if a bull supports it or not
And of heaven becomes known***

*By hearing the name of the Lord
Knowledge of the world, continents
And other regions is gained by a mortal
Who listens to the name of God
Death cannot touch or come near the mortal
Who listens to name of the Lord
Nanak says that
Saints forever remain blissful
Diseases and sins are destroyed
By listening to the name of the Lord
The status of Shiva (destroyer),
Of Brahma (creator), and Indra (God of rain)
Are obtained by listening to the name of God
Even a sinner begins uttering the praises of the Lord
After listening to the name of God
By hearing the name of the Lord
The method of railing him
The secrets of the human body and yoga become known
Knowledge of the four books (the Vedas)
The six schools of philosophy (the shastras)
And twenty four ceremonial treatises (Simriti's) is
Attained by hearing the name of the Lord
Nanak says that
The Saints are forever blissful
Diseases and sins are destroyed
By hearing the name of God
Truthfulness, contentment and divine knowledge
Are obtained by hearing the name of the Lord
Spiritual benefits of bathing at
Sixty eight pilgrimages is obtained
By hearing the praises of the Lord.
One gets honours by hearing and reading
Again and again the name of the Lord
One is absorbed in meditation of God
Easily by hearing the name of the Lord
Nanak says that
The Saints always remain blissful
Diseases and sins are destroyed
By hearing the name of God.
One dives into the ocean of Virtues
And becomes an emperor by
Listening to the name of God
The blind man sees the way
By hearing the name of God
Unfathomable Lord becomes fathomable
By hearing the name of God
Nanak says that
The true Saints remain forever blissful
Diseases and sins are destroyed*

**By hearing the name of the Lord
suni-ai siDh peer sur naath.
suni-ai Dharat Dhaval aakaas.
suni-ai deep lo-a paataal.
suni-ai pahi na sakai kaal.
naanak bhagtaa sadaa vigaas.
suni-ai dookh paap kaa naas. ||8||
suni-ai eesar barmaa ind.
suni-ai mukh saalaahan mand.
suni-ai jog jugat tan bhayd.
suni-ai saasat simrit vayd.
naanak bhagtaa sadaa vigaas.
suni-ai dookh paap kaa naas. ||9||
suni-ai sat santokh gi-aan.
suni-ai athsath kaa isnaan.
suni-ai parh parh paavahi maan.
suni-ai laagai sahj Dhi-aan.
naanak bhagtaa sadaa vigaas.
suni-ai dookh paap kaa naas. ||10||
suni-ai saraa gunaa kay gaah.
suni-ai saykh peer paatisaah.
suni-ai anDhay paavahi raahu.
suni-ai haath hovai asgaahu.
naanak bhagtaa sadaa vigaas.
suni-ai dookh paap kaa naas. ||11||
(JapJi 1st Guru, page 2)**

And

**Sing and hear the praises of God
And keep love for him in the heart
Then you will obtain joy in your mind
And discard all your pain
gaavee-ai sunee-ai man rakhee-ai bhaa-o.
dukh parhar sukh ghar lai jaa-ay.
(JapJi 1st Guru, page 2)**

And

**O fortunate friends
Hear the prayer of bliss
It will fulfil all objectives and desires
God the creator is realized
And all manner of grief's vanish
Sorrows, pains and diseases
Leave on hearing the true word
The pious and their friends get joy, hearing the true word
When they realize this truth from the true Guru
Pure are those who listen to the true word**

***Stainless are those who utter the word
The true Guru is all pervasive and permeating
Nanak prays touching the Guru's feet
Then unstruck sound of celestial music resounds
anad sunhu vadbhaageeho sagal manorath pooray.
paarbarahm parabh paa-i-aa utray sagal visooray.
dookh rog santaap utray sunee sachee banee.
sant saajan bha-ay sarsay pooray gur tay jaanee.
suntay puneet kahtay pavit satgur rahi-aa bharpooray.
binvant naanak gur charan laagay vaajay anhad tooray. ||40||1||
(Ramkali Anand 3rd Guru, page 922)***

Besides all this, Sikh history bears witness to the importance of listening to Gurbani with attention. When Guru Nanak Dev Ji submerged in the river at Sultanpur Lodhi and emerged three days later, he declared the message of the Almighty: there is no Hindu or Muslim in the eyes of God. He brought back the true word of God in the form of *Mool mantar*, meditation of which would bring universal peace to all mankind.

The local Muslim priest questioned Guru Nanak Dev Ji angrily, "If no one is a Hindu or Muslim and all are equal then, why don't you come to pray (Namaaz – the Muslim prayer) in the mosque with us." Guru Nanak Dev Ji agreed and went to the mosque to read namaaz. Guru Ji sat beside the congregation but did not read the namaaz. At the end of the prayers, the priest asked Guru Ji angrily, "You were smiling and mocking us but did not pray yourself."

Guru Ji replied, "Kazi (a Muslim priest) you too did not pray either. You were reciting your prayers and bowing outwardly but in your mind, you were not paying attention to your prayers. You were thinking about buying and selling Arabian horses in far off lands. Reading namaaz, absent mindedness is not accepted by God Almighty and does not reach Allah."

If the great Guru preaches to the followers of other faiths to pray wholeheartedly, with devotion and concentration then what high hopes will he have of his followers? Obviously, he would expect us to follow his teachings and read Gurbani with presence of mind and deep concentration.

From that day onwards, S.Wadhawa Singh Ji began to practice what the true Guru had ordered and soon attained great spiritual heights and benefits.

72 - GURBANI, AN APPARENT MEDICINE

Baba Ji had immense faith in Gurbani. This was not just blind faith, it was instead based on practical application of Gurbani to every endeavour in his life, thus inspiring others to follow his example. His thinking was that Gurbani is the embodiment of the Guru and a teaching for us to practice in our daily lives. By following these teachings, a mortal becomes an image of the celestial being. One obtains emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths and becomes a permanent resident of the blissful city of our Lord's kingdom. Such fortunate persons spend the time gifted to them in this life, in a state of blissful remembrance. Finally, the mortal attains the state:

He O Nanak blends with the world Lord

As water mingles with water

naanak leen bha-i-o gobind si-o ji-o paanee sang paanee. ||3||

(Sorath 9th Guru, page 634)

Gurbani is not only a mere teaching but is as powerful as the Guru. Gurbani is not at fault if we fail to experience its power. Our faith and belief in Gurbani are lacking. Gurbani carries miraculous power; it is a true medicine, nectar, a chemical panacea, mother of naam and a tangible proof of the existence of the formless Lord. Gurbani is the Guru, which reforms this world and the afterlife of a gursikh.

It was around 1960 when this humble servant (Seva Singh) caught a fever. Due to some reason, Baba Ji was out of town for a few days. The doctor diagnosed my fever due to typhoid. Administering the relevant medicine in the form of capsules, he reassured me that I would be well in a few days. I took the medicine as prescribed for a number of days but there was no remission in my fever. In fact, my fever raged on causing bodily weakness too.

On the eighth day, Baba Ji returned to the gurdwara and came straight to see me, enquiring about my health. Whilst lying down, I related all my symptoms to him. Baba Ji took hold of my arm and said, "You still have a high fever but don't take anymore medicines now. Get rid of the medicine in your pocket too." I was already fed up taking so many capsules and tablets, so I threw the medicines aside. I was feeling uplifted, now that Baba Ji had returned and was sure that I would be cured. Baba Ji hadn't even eaten anything yet. He ordered a devotee to fetch an iron bowl and clean it. Baba Ji himself went to get clean water in a steel glass. The devotee returned with the iron bowl. Baba Ji poured the water into the bowl, placed the bowl on a clean sheet he had spread on the ground and sat cross-legged beside it. Baba Ji asked me to sit beside him and told me that if I felt tired, I could lie down but should carry on reciting *Waheguru, Waheguru* all the time. He took out his sword, washed it and started to stir the water in the bowl in the same way amrit is prepared in the baptism ceremony. All the while, he was stirring the water Baba Ji was reciting the five prayers of the daily *Nitnem*. Once the *Nitnem* was complete, he performed an *Ardas* while sitting and then asked me to drink the blessed water. He then asked what I desired to eat. I asked to have some Masur Daal (yellow lentil soup) and chapattis. Then, lo and behold within a night, my fever broke. As Guru Ji says in *Sukhmani Sahib*

Lord's name is the panacea of all ills

Disease cannot visit, even in a dream to this mortal

Whose heart is attuned to the name

sarab rog kaa a-ukhad naam.

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 274)

By dawn next day, I took a bath but was forbidden to walk. By the evening, Baba Ji took me for a walk as well. So, in this way, without taking worldly medicine, my body was cured with just a single dose of Gurbani. This incident is not hearsay but actually happened to me, and those devotees, around at the time, witnessed this cure. I feel one more incident is worth narrating so that the great Guru may bless us with firm faith in the transformative power of Gurbani.

73 - ANOTHER INCIDENCE OF GURBANI AS MEDICINE

This humble servant (Seva Singh) witnessed the following incident first hand. S. Baldev Singh of Machhian village was an alcoholic, who spent his days and night under the influence of alcohol. Naturally, alcohol had affected his health and his liver and stomach were both damaged.

He belonged to a wealthy family and was treated by a host of eminent doctors but to no avail. At last, he was taken to the Christian Medical College in Ludhiana. He was bedridden by this stage and his bed was placed on a truck in order to take him to the hospital in Ludhiana. There, the doctors told him that apart from liver damage, his stomach and kidneys were damaged too. He was told further, that medicines could now only provide palliative relief of his symptoms and that no cure would occur. When the specialists declared their helplessness then what hope was there left, all worldly hopes were shattered. There wasn't a single ray of hope to survive. All that could be done was to look after him in his final days. However, his wife used to recite her *Nitnem* daily and would occasionally come to visit Baba Ji and the congregation.

As a last resort, she came to petition Baba Ji with S. Mohinder Singh of Machhian, who also happened to be Baba Ji's jeep driver. She told Baba Ji, "You know my husband is seriously ill. Doctor's have given him a limited chance of survival because his liver has been badly damaged. His kidneys are on the verge of failing. His days are truly numbered. For the sake of our young children, I implore you to help him." Baba Ji listened quietly and replied, "He has broken his promise not to drink several times over the past two and a half years. What can we do?" Mohinder Singh also petitioned Baba Ji to intervene in trying to save the life of S. Baldev Singh. Baba Ji replied angrily, "If you are recommending I intervene in this matter then you should shoulder some of the burden and responsibility too. Go ask him if he is ready to leave alcohol. Yes, if he leaves liquor, starts doing his *Nitnem*, becomes baptised and leads the life of a God-fearing gursikh, then he too can be cured without the need for medicine. If he agrees to these conditions then go and bring him to me."

As the lady and S. Mohinder Singh were leaving, Baba Ji again said, "Mind that he does not back out of his promise. Moreover, if he starts to drink after he is baptised or breaks his vows, he will not survive for long."

Both of them took leave of Baba Ji and went straight to the hospital in Ludhiana. S. Baldev Singh was discharged from the hospital and arrived back in his village the same evening. Baba Ji sent him some consecrated holy water and said, "Give this water to him two or three times daily. As long as he cannot do his *Nitnem*, someone in the family should read the *Nitnem* to him daily. When he is well enough, do not hesitate and get him to take baptism as soon as possible.

Hearing Gurbani daily and drinking holy water, his kidneys and liver began to recover. Soon, he was able to walk and move about. He took baptism with his family and became an amritdhari Sikh. He began to do his *Nitnem* and his body became well. He was now able to look after his transport business.

Almost two years had passed and one day he said to his wife, "The doctor gave me some advice. He told me to eat an egg daily in order to speed my recovery. You go to Baba Ji and ask him if I can eat eggs." His wife reluctantly, under compulsion, came to see Baba Ji with her husband's request. Baba Ji heard the lady out and angrily replied, "Where was the doctor when all of them had given up on his treatment before? Go and tell him not to make lame excuses and stick to his promise. So

long as he keeps his vows, he will be healthy. If he backs out of his promise, he will fall ill. Then don't come here." The lady returned to her husband and related what Baba Ji had said. However, his mind had already yielded to temptation. A few days later, he broke his vows and he started to drink again. In next to no time, he fell ill again, from which he did not recover, ultimately leaving this world forever. This incident is narrated to make the point that when all medicines become ineffective then Gurbani is the only medicine, which can cure. Moreover, the power of amrit is supreme. When a man keeps his promise, God helps him and if he backs down, then the great Guru has given his verdict that...

***He who pledges the word and backs out
All that he says is false
The false one is hollow from within
And is engrossed in falsehood
bachan karay tai khisak jaa-ay bolay sabh kachaa.
andrahu thothaa koorhi-aar koorhee sabh khachaa.
(Maru 5th Guru, page 1099)***

A false man gets no shelter in the Guru's feet. At the Lord's door, the followers of his divine order are blessed. When falsehood of the egotistical mind interferes with obeying the Guru's order, then the mortal is deprived of his grace:

***He who submits to the Lord's order
Is consigned to his treasury
The counterfeit finds no place
They mix with the tainted ones
hukam rajaa-ee jo chalai so pavai khajaanai.
khotay thavar na paa-inee ralay joothaanai. ||4||
(Asa 1st Guru, page 421)***

Baba Ji used to emphatically state that, "All the diseases of the body are cured by Gurbani, the Lord's name. The soul takes a longer while to be cured but a gursikh must keep on trying with deep faith and resolve in Gurbani.

74 - THE IMPORTANCE OF AMRIT: ESSENTIAL TO BEING GURU WARD

The only mission of Baba Ji was to reconnect mortals of this world to the Guru, this was done by focusing their attention towards Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. God can be met only through the Guru and since the inception of this world, who so ever has achieved any spiritual insight, has done so through the grace of the Guru. Gurbani gives us this unshakeable edict...

***Without the Guru, none has obtained the Lord,
Without the Guru, none will obtain the Lord.
In the true Guru, the Lord has placed himself,
And I openly declare and proclaim it.
bin satgur kinai na paa-i-o bin satgur kinai na paa-i-aa.
satgur vich aap rakhi-on kar pargat aakh sunaa-i-aa.
(Pauri, Asa di Vaar, 1st Guru, page 466)***

The fourth Guru orders us that...

***O divine, without the Guru,
The devotional service cannot be performed
As the unbleached cloth assumes not dye ever,
However much all may desire it. Pause.
gi-aanee gur bin bhagat na ho-ee.
korai rang kaday na charhai jay lochai sabh ko-ee. ||||
(Suhri 4th Guru, page 732)***

And the third Guru too tells us that:

***The perverse worship the Lord without the true Guru
How can devotional service be performed without the Guru?
manmukh bhagat karahi bin satgur vin satgur bhagat na hoee raam.
(Suhri 3rd Guru, page 768)***

So O mortal, if you want to purify your mind, wash away your evil sins of Maya, which have tainted the mind's canvas, then come to the shelter of the true Guru

***O my mind! If you seek the shelter of the Guru,
Then you shall become filth less
The perverse has gone weary
Of repeating God's name,
But their dirt could not be washed off. Pause.
man mayray gur saran aavai taa nirmal ho-ay.
manmukh har har kar thakay mail na sakee Dho-ay. ||1||
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 39)***

In Gurbani, it is stated that he alone is bad who has not taken the refuge of the Guru:

***Within the true Guru, there is not another Guru, and one without the Guru has a bad name.
satgur baajhahu gur nahee ko-ee niguray kaa hai naa-o buraa.
(Asa 3rd Guru, page 435)***

Guru Arjun Dev Ji has also described the attributes of the Guruless person:

***The mortal who is without the Guru's instruction
Accursed and contaminated is his life.
He the blockhead is equal to a dog,
A swine, an ass, a crow and a snake.
gur mantar heensa-y jo paraanee Dharigant janam bharsatnah.
kookrah sookrah garaDh-bheh kaakah sarapneh tul khalah.
(Salok Sahaskriti 5th Guru, page 356)***

The great Guru proclaims solemnly and warns that, no mortal in this world should remain in doubt that they will receive emancipation from this life without the Guru's blessing.

***No one should stray in doubt, in this world
Know that without the Guru,
No one can cross the world ocean. Pause.
mat ko bharam bhulai sansaar.
gur bin ko-ay na utras paar. |||| rahaa-o.
(Gond 5th Guru, page 864)***

This mind, which has been tainted with the filth of sins from many past lives, can only be washed with the blessing of "naam" and Grace of the Guru (Gurparsad). There is no other way. With the Guru's direction, the mortal washes the stain of past sins and the mind becomes pure. Thus, a Guru ward person can be emancipated from the cycle of rebirth and saved from wandering through all manner of life forms:

***The scum of so many births
Is attached to the soul
And it has become pitch black.
The oilman's rag turns not white by washing
Even though it be washed a hundred times
By the Guru's grace man remains dead in life
And his nature is altered
And turns away from the world.
Nanak, no impurity attaches to him then
And he falls not into the womb again.
janam janamkee is man ka-o mal laagee kaalaa ho-aa si aahu.
khanlee Dhotee ujlee na hova-ee jay sa-o Dhovan paahu.
gur parsadee jeevat marai ultee hovai mat badlaahu.
naanak mail na lag-ee naa fir jonee paahu. ||||
(Vaar Sorath 5th Guru, page 651)***

The grace of the Guru can be obtained by becoming Guru ward. The method to become Guru ward was proclaimed openly to the world by Guru Gobind Singh Ji at the congregation that gathered on Baisakhi of 1699 at Takhat Keshgarh Sahib (Anandpur Sahib). The authority of initiating people to become Guru ward was vested in the five beloved ones by Guru Ji himself. Previously the great Guru himself initiated the congregation to baptism.

First, the great Guru prepared the nectar (amrit) and then baptised the five beloved ones. He himself then asked to be baptised by the five beloved ones, so that no one could ever question the need to be baptised in the future. If the great Guru had not separated himself from the tradition of amrit then how can we dare to do so and still expect the Guru's grace to fall upon us without taking amrit? Never From Dalla To Bhai Dal Singh

Baba Ji used to give an example from Sikh history to stress the importance of being baptised. It was the story of Bhai Dalla Ji, who was a very near and dear devotee of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He had great faith in Guru Ji. After winning the battle of Muktsar, Guru Ji was preparing to leave for Southern India. On his way there, he stayed with Bhai Dalla Ji. He served the great Guru with his mind, body and wealth, at which Guru Gobind Singh Ji was very pleased. Guru Ji called Dalla and said, "You have served us well and pleased us. Ask for whatever you wish for." Bhai Dalla replied with folded hands, "Guru Ji with your grace, I have all that I need." Guru Ji again asked Bhai Dalla, "Dalla ask for any boon that you wish." Bhai Dalla again thanked the great Guru for his grace. Guru Gobind Singh Ji asked him a third time. Then, Bhai Dalla, with utmost humility and folded hands beseeched, "If you are to give me a boon then, bless me with a place the size of this stool beside you in heaven. I require nothing else sire." The great Guru replied, "Then take the boon of amrit to become Bhai Dal Singh and earn the name of faith."

Dalla replied, "I have taken amrit many times." The great Guru asked, "Where did you take amrit?" Bhai Dalla replied, "Guru Ji, I have taken left over food from your plate which is consecrated by your touch." Guru Ji again ordered, "Bhai Dalla Ji take the amrit prepared by the weapon." Dalla again replied, "Guru Ji we have been taking deg parshad, which is blessed by having a sword passed through it. I have taken parshad considering it to be nectar blessed by your sword." On hearing this Guru Ji smiled and said, "Have amrit of the khanda and batta."

Dalla bowed his head and with tears in his eyes said, "My emperor, I will do as you bid." The next day Dalla along with many of his clansmen took amrit and was transformed into Bhai Dal Singh. After taking amrit, Guru Ji blessed Bhai Dal Singh with a *Siro-pao* (highest honour that is symbolized by being given a turban and literally means a covering from head (siro-) to feet (-pao)). He also bestowed a large sword, a shield, one pair of diamond-studded bangles and Guru Ji's very own turbans (two), long shirts (two chola's) and two pairs of trousers (two pyjama's). He was showered with many boons, and was blessed with the ultimate place of rest beside the feet of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, in the Lord's kingdom.

Think for a moment of Dalla, who obtained Guru's pleasure through great service and was directly blessed by him. If he could not get a small resting place in heaven without being baptised, then how can we hope or expect to obtain the Lord's grace without being baptised. To obtain his grace, we will have to adopt the Guru's tradition of amrit.

***First, know this, adopt the tradition of amrit prepared by khanda
He alone is the prime Singh who takes initiation from none other.
(Rehatnama Bhai Desa Singh)***

Besides this historical reference Baba Ji used to narrate an anecdote related to Baba Kaladhari Ji, who was the eighth descendant of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, in order to emphasize the importance of baptism (also known as Khande ki pauhul - literally initiation by the nectar prepared by the double edged sword (khanda).)

Tale of Baba Kaladhari Ji

Soon after the tradition of amrit was started by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the direct descendant of Guru Nanak Dev Ji called Baba Kaladhari Ji came to visit Guru Ji. He was received with many honours and reverence by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, as he was the family of the great Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The great Guru asked Baba Ji the reason for his visit. Baba Kaladhari Ji replied politely, "I have come to you with a humble request." Guru Ji replied affectionately, "Please give your order, as you are family of the esteemed, eldest Guru." Baba Kaladhari Ji replied humbly, the growth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's family has ceased. Please grant a boon that I be blessed with a grandson."

Hearing these words, the great Guru fell silent. After sometime in serious thought he replied, "Baba Ji, have you taken amrit?" Baba Ji replied, "O Lord of the poor! I have not, because of my advanced age." The great Guru uttered, "Have your son baptised. Your family will then grow." Baba Kaladhari Ji accepted and was presented by Guru Ji with his own sword (That sword which was blessed to Baba Ajit Singh Ji by the Great Guru Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji can even now be seen in their family of Bedis. The humble servant (Sant Sewa Singh) has seen that sword in the gatra of Baba Sarbjot Singh Ji Bedi, who is at present on the throne of Hazoor Baba Sahib Singh Ji Bedi of Una Sahib(H.P.)).

Baba Kaladhari Ji got his son Baba Ajit Singh Ji, to take amrit and presented him before the great Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Guru Ji showered many blessings upon him, prophesising that, "A great warrior will be born into your family. He will be a kingmaker. Kings and emperors will bow to him. He will have canons, horse and elephant cavalry and wield much power. He will preach the message of Sikhism with fervour." After sometime Baba Sahib Singh Ji Bedi was born and gave credence to the prophecy. It is historical fact that Baba Sahib Singh Ji was indeed the kingmaker enthroning Maharaja Ranjit Singh Ji.

If the family of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's can stop growing without the boon of amrit then, what chance do we ordinary mortal's stand of spiritual growth. How can we expect to receive the Guru's blessing? So let us be rid of our doubts and gain worldly and spiritual boons by taking amrit.

The Words Of Bhai Vir Singh Ji

Baba Ji used to tell us the thoughts of Bhai Vir Singh Ji, "In this world, if a person is destined only to have one meal a day and he were to get baptised, adopting a Sikh way of life, he is then blessed with two meals a day. Guru Ji makes sure his Sikh is not left wanting and his worldly affairs are not interrupted. This much difference is realised in this world alone; The rest of the spiritual blessings and treasure we receive in the afterlife cannot be described easily in mere words."

Baba Ji used to tell of his personal experience, "A mortal who receives the amrit of khanda and batta, does *Nitnem* of seven prayers, refrains from the four bad sins (*kurehat* literally means misdemeanours) and adopts the five *rehats*, is then never taken by the angels of death (*yamraj*). His soul reaches the feet of the Guru straight after death and his consciousness...

O Nanak, he blends with the Lord,

As water mingles with water

naanak leen bha-i-o gobind si-o ji-o paanee sang paanee. ||3||

(Sorath 9th Guru, page 633)

Then, the great Guru merges that soul with himself and if need be, that devotee is given rebirth in the house of a devout Sikh family, in order to further rejoice in meditation. We can say that whosoever comes to the Guru's refuge seeking shelter is totally disconnected from dharamraj...

The righteous judge in his court

Has torn up my papers

And slave Nanak has settled his account

Dharam raa-ay dar kaagad faaray jan naanak laykhaa samjhaa. ||4||5||

(Jaitsari 4th Guru, page 698)

A gursikh should never be doubtful or insecure. No God, Goddess, evil spirit, ghost, witch, demon, black magic, voodoo or miraculous powers of jantar, mantar, tantar can affect a truly baptised Sikh." Whatever Baba Ji 's achievements of spirituality were, came to pass only after he accepted, amrit of khanda and batta, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as his living Guru and earning the wealth of naam through meditation. So, if we have taken amrit and accepted Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as our true living Guru then, we are to be congratulated but if we still have not accepted the Guru's refuge and taken amrit then, it is in our own interest that we waste no further time. The fifth Guru advises us that in doing a righteous deed one should not delay and when about to commit a sinful act, one should delay as much as possible...

Delay (tarry) not in practicing righteousness.

Delay (tarry) thou only when committing sins.

nah bilamb DharmaN bilamb paapaN.

(Salok Sahaskriti, 5th Guru, page 1354)

75 - RESPECT FOR SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

- 1) To do *Ardas* Sikhs of spiritual achievement are required or the Guru also hears Singh's who have a pious lifestyle.
- 2) It is essential to have *hazooria* around the neck. (Hazooria is almost two meters long white piece of cloth worn by a Gursikh around his neck.)

Sometimes well off people have such busy lifestyles that they are unable to go to the gurdwara regularly to visit Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, though they still have faith in the Guru. To this end, some people install Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in their houses and pay their respects daily at home, morning and evening. Sometimes it is seen that devotees themselves live in large mansions in which there are several lavish bedrooms, kitchens, drawing rooms and bathrooms located in large grounds. The room, in which Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is installed, is the smallest one in the house or which had been left as a storeroom with poor ventilation and no windows. People even use the space under the stairs to make rooms for the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. This is not good practice

Inspiration For Respect Of Guru Granth Sahib Ji

If Baba Ji saw that Guru Granth Sahib Ji was installed in such conditions, the home owners were advised in strongest possible terms, "O dear fellow, this is the great Guru, who has given you this huge house to live in, luxurious cars to drive, money to spend, material gains. You beg for progress with folded hands daily. Was this small room the only one you could find to place Guru Ji in? If an ordinary guest comes to your house you welcome them to stay in your best-decorated rooms but the authority that is the emperor of both worlds, donor of salvation, living light of the ten Guru's, is not even afforded the respect given to an ordinary guest. This lack of respect does not affect the Guru but we suffer a great spiritual loss."

If in any gurdwara or home, the small bed (manji Sahib) or the wardrobe were used to place Guru Granth Sahib Ji to rest at night then Baba Ji would emphatically condemn this practice. He would give whatever money was required to get a fine bed upon which to place the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at night. The gurdwara management was warned against this practice.

Baba Ji once went to the house of a devotee in Patiala. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was installed with due care and reverence, not in the manner already described. The whole family was devotedly serving Guru Ji, considering it their living Guru. In their beautiful mansion, the great Guru was enthroned in a well-decorated room on the first floor. The adjoining room was furnished so that Sri Guru Granth Sahib could be placed in the room at night. Baba Ji was pleased to see this respect and reverence afforded to Guru Ji. He gathered the family together in front of Guru Granth Sahib Ji, applauded their service and graced them with many blessings.

Baba Ji was to stay for a couple of days in the house. As devotees came to know of his presence, they began to throng to the house for his divine company. Meanwhile, some devotees arrived from Bathinda at gurdwara Rampur Khera but found out from the attendants that Baba Ji had gone to Patiala. They started their car and left for Patiala. After lots of enquiries, they reached the house where Baba Ji was staying. They somehow decided to stay the night and were put up in the house that Baba Ji was staying at. In the morning they petitioned Baba Ji, "Our daughter is seriously ill. Doctors have expressed their helplessness. Please help us to get her well." Baba Ji replied sternly, "I am not here to cure people. I neither give curses or boons. If you want to ask some thing about spiritual matters, do so."

The devotee was an intelligent, experienced and seasoned officer. He somehow managed to work out an acquaintance with the family with which Baba Ji was staying and persuaded them to intervene on his behalf and request Baba Ji to help. In the morning, other people came to visit Baba Ji and the hosts, finding a suitable time, requested Baba Ji to do *Ardas* for the devotee's daughter. Baba Ji said, "Let's take the order of the great Guru. If he orders it, then we shall all ask for an *Ardas* to be performed by five Singh's."

All had congregated in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Two orders were taken, first for the holy vision of the great Guru and the second for permission to do *Ardas* by Singh's. The great Guru granted permission to do so. A discussion started, the sangat wondered if a holy Sikh of high spiritual standing should do *Ardas* or would the great Guru heed the prayers of baptised Sikhs who follow the code of the Khalsa (*Rehatwan* Sikhs- literally those who adhere to the code of conduct)?

Finally, Baba Ji decided, "The whole sangat should sit in meditation for fifteen minutes and the decision will be left up to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Let the great Guru answer whether only spiritually supreme Sikhs are heard in their prayers or is the *Ardas* of regular but rehatwan Sikhs heard by the Guru."

So, Baba Ji sat in meditation along with the rest of the sangat. Then everyone stood up, prayed to the great Guru, asking the above question about the *Ardas*, said Fateh and sat down. There was pin drop silence and everyone was in a peaceful mood, hoping to get a vision or hear the words of the great Guru himself.

Guru Hears The *Ardas* Of Rehatvan Sikhs

At this moment, the tenth Guru Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared behind the palanquin where the priest stands and the whole room was flooded with light. Around the room there were Singh's of all ages, their faces were radiant and beside each gursikh was standing the physical form of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The form of Guru Ji who was standing behind Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji spoke, "Bhai Harnam Singh! These gursikhs here have reached the highest spiritual state of param padh. Some of the others are rehatwan Sikhs." Baba Ji replied, "You alone know this my Lord."

The emperor of emperor's replied, "all of them who have not obtained param padh but are stalwart in their code of conduct I am with them too, as you can see. I hear the *Ardas* of everyone but give only that boon which is beneficial to the devotee. There is no difference between a rehatwan Sikh and a Sikh who has achieved param padh to me. Moreover, ask the devotee who has come with prayers for his daughter's health to have a rehatwan Sikh recite the whole of Guru Granth Sahib Ji out aloud. As long as he recites Gurbani, their daughter should listen to Gurbani either sitting or lying down. The Singh should be offered five hundred rupees for this service. As long as our form stay's in their house, no one should eat meat or drink liquor and neither should anyone come into the house after having used them. It is best not to have meat and liquor ever. Our form of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji should be put to rest at night on a large bed. If the family has the prayers recited with devotion, following this advice, then their daughter will get well. If they are negligent in following this advice then, they are responsible for their own actions."

The Importance Of *Hazooria*

The great Guru then ordered Baba Ji to tell the sangat on his behalf that, "Whenever someone comes to pay their respects to Guru Granth Sahib Ji, then that person should have a *hazooria* around their neck. The old gursikhs used to keep a *hazooria* with them. If one is doing *Ardas* with the *hazooria* around their neck I listen to them with great care and attention. A *hazooria* is a

symbol of humility and servitude to the Lord Almighty. If a gursikh cannot keep a *hazooria* all day then he should wear it at least when coming to pay respects in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. This pleases us.” Baba Ji related both these orders from the great Guru to the assembled congregation. The doubt about who can perform *Ardas* and whose prayer is heard was dispelled.

76 - INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENTHRONING SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

Baba Ji regarded Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the living embodiment of the ten Guru's and accorded great respect when in service of Guru Ji. He would encourage others to pay similar reverence to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. When the form of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji would be installed, he would place a beautiful clean bed spread first, upon which a properly washed and dried *Takhat posh* (an elevated wooden divan bed) would be placed. A canopy (called a *Chaanani*) would be tied above the elevated divan bed. Next, a quilted mattress would be placed on the divan bed upon which would be placed another bed sheet. Over the sheet, a small bed would be placed (called a Manji Sahib – literally small bed). A small soft mattress was placed on the manji, over which another a bedspread was placed. Small pillows were then placed on three sides and a large ornate cover known as a *rumala* went over the whole manji Sahib. It was now ready to install Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

At the time of enthroning Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Baba Ji would stretch out the enhanced book-cover across the side and never fold this length of the front cover under the rest of the Guru's form. Some people fold this extended length of the front cover and tuck it under the rest of the pages.

After seating the form of the Guru on the three pillows and straightening the extended right front cover, he would cover the scriptures with double layers of small cloth matching the *rumala*, over which the main cover spread or *rumala* would be placed.

Once a devotee asked why is there a need for a Takhat-posh to install the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Baba Ji replied, "When we perform *Ardas* before our Guru we say '*Takhat chaur de malak*' (which means the master of the throne and ornate fan). We wave this fan around the Guru but where is the throne or Takhat? Although we cannot make a Takhat worthy of the Guru, we should try our best to construct the best throne we can afford for the Guru.

Negligence In Service Of Guru

Once, Baba Ji had to go away on urgent business for a night. At this time, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was usually enthroned in the large thatched hut, as the gurdwara had not been built yet. Before leaving, Baba Ji entrusted one of the attendants to recite the evening prayer of *Rehras* and then place Guru Ji to rest (a ceremony called *Sukhasan*).

The next day Baba Ji came back, washed his feet, hands and face and went to pay his respects in front of the great Guru. After bowing, he respectfully read the daily order (hukamnama).

As was usual, he would sit for a while after covering the true Guru with the *rumala* to meditate. Baba Ji once told us, "After a few minutes of simran, the fifth Guru, Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji appeared in front of me. I noticed that Guru Ji's eyes looked red and tired. I endeavoured to ask Guru Ji for the reason his eyes appeared this way." The great Guru replied, "Bhai Harnam Singh Ji, in future you yourself must perform the service of sukhasan. Yesterday, the devotee you entrusted with our service hurriedly covered our form of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with the rumala, leaving folds and crinkles in it. The creased and untidy rumala's pinched our eyes all night. So, our eyes are red today. In future, instruct the devotees how to perform the service with due care and attention."

From that day onwards, Baba Ji started doing the service of Guru Granth Sahib Ji himself. In his old age, he would stand nearby and remove any folds or creases, as the form of the Guru was being installed or laid to rest.

At night, the great Guru would be put to rest auspiciously on a big ornate bed and covered with a warm blanket or quilt depending on the season. A quilt would be placed over Sri Guru Granth Sahib in the winter and cotton sheets would be used in the summer. Baba Ji would place a fan near the Guru's bed in the summer and would always spray perfume in the immediate vicinity of the great Guru. Before entering the Guru's room, he would wash his hands, face and feet carefully, wrap a *hazooria* around his neck and always wear a double dastaar. The rest of the sangat was advised to do the same too. These days granthi Singhs (priests) commit negligence when serving Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. We should all be alert about this malpractice. When reading Gurbani, we should use the *hazooria* to cover our mouth when coughing and conducting such actions in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Another habit people have when reading path is to place their elbows on the manji Sahib whilst reading. This should to be discouraged, as it is impolite and disrespectful. The scriptures of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji should be turned over slowly and reverently. Lastly, we pray that the great Guru bless us all with intellect and insight to perform service of the great Guru with devotion and faith.

77 - HOW TO TAKE THE HUKAMNAMA FROM SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

Many a time it is seen that when people have a recital of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the granthi Singh opens the scriptures deliberately at a selected verse that will suit the event or please the devotees. They have usually already opened the appropriate ang and placed the rumala over the Guru Ji's form. After *Ardas*, they merely read a pre-selected verse that will please the devotees but in fact is not really the order of the great Guru himself. Some devotees take a handful of scriptures from the left and right side and then reopen the ang wherever and read the verse in front of their eyes. Some devotees read the verse from the left page if it is before noon or the right page if in the afternoon. In fact, different people have adopted different ways of reading the Guru Ji's order.

Divine Visitation By Baba Buddha Ji.

The sangat once asked Baba Ji about the above-mentioned matter of how to correctly read the holy order of the day and what in fact is the age-old tradition of doing so. He told the sangat the way he normally takes the hukamnama as per the Guru's tradition (*Guru maryada*) and then asked the sangat to congregate in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and ask for the Guru's seal of approval too. All stood with folded hands and performed *Ardas*, "O Lord of the poor, please tell us the correct way to take the hukamnama." After doing *Ardas*, all the congregation and Baba Ji sat down.

All were reciting simran in a peaceful, concentrated state of mind when Baba Buddha Ji appeared in front of Baba Ji. Baba Buddha Ji was sat behind the Manji Sahib where the priest usually sits. He spoke, "The day when Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji enthroned Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar, I was given special guidance in taking the hukamnama. This is the correct way to take the hukamnama."

Baba Buddha Ji explained further, "It is against the tradition to take the hukam from wherever we like or be mind full of the time of day or when devotees grab hold of ang from the left and right to open up the page again. This does not attract the Guru's happiness. After performing *Ardas* and before taking the hukamnama, one should recite the *Mool mantar* five times or recite the four *manglacharan* (Manglacharan is:-1.Ik onkar Sat Nam Karta Purkh Nirbhau Nirvair Akal Murat Ajuni Soibhang Gurpsad. 2.Ik Onkar Satgur Parsad. 3.Ik Onkar Satnam).

Then, the verses related to the vision of the Guru are read as we fold and remove the rumala. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is the embodiment of the great Guru so no doubt should arise regarding the time of the day etc. Reading the verses of devotion, one should turn a handful of page to the left or right without deliberation. The verse that starts at the left page is the Guru's true hukamnama. If the verse starts from the previous page then follow it over by turning the page over to the right. If the verse is a Salok, a Pauri will often follow it and this should be read as well. In this way the true hukamnama is read and the great Guru's affection is earned."

Baba Ji was very pleased because he used to take the hukamnamas like this already. Now the great Guru had put his seal of approval on it. The assembled congregation was told of how to take the daily hukamnama. All his life Baba Ji counselled others to take the hukamnamas in the same manner and thus obtain the Guru's pleasure.

Some devotees when reading path from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji rest their elbows on the manji Sahib. This is disrespectful and should not be done. It is also disrespectful to scratch your eyes, ears or body and then soil the scriptures by touching them. A *hazooria* can be used for this, if required. So, we must pay utmost respect and act with great care and reverence when conducting

ourselves in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The more we respect the form of the great Guru the better. If we disrespect Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, it is to our disadvantage and we will suffer the consequences. We must show respect for our ultimate benefit and not as a favour to the Guru.

78 - WE ARE SONS OF THE LORD, OUR FATHER

Baba Ji did not just preach Gurbani but practically lived by the example of Gurbani. One time Baba Ji, this servant and Baba Ji's jeep driver S. Mohinder Singh were travelling to Amritsar. Baba Ji started to get a headache and near a town called Raiya, asked for the jeep to be pulled over. Baba Ji asked Bhai Mohinder Singh to go across the road to get three cups of tea from the café and make sure the cups were washed with warm water.

Bhai Mohinder Singh Ji returned with three cups of tea as directed. We all started to drink tea and Bhai Mohinder Singh had only taken a few sips of tea when, he put his cup aside and went over to check the jeep engine and tyre's. He returned after a few moments and resumed drinking his tea when Baba Ji turned to him and said, "Oh I forgot to take my headache tablet. Young man, just wait, give me a sip from your cup so I can take my tablet." Mohinder Singh Ji was taken aback and replied, "Baba Ji! I will fetch another cup for you. This one has been tasted by me." Baba Ji said, "Why spend some more money on a whole cup of tea. You are not going to be at a loss for one sip of tea. Don't worry I will only take one sip."

Baba Ji caught hold of Bhai Mohinder Singh's cup, took a sip of tea and swallowed his tablet, despite the protest from Bhai Mohinder Singh. He was protesting because in Indian culture, a food already tasted by someone else is considered soiled especially if a person of a lower caste has touched or tasted the food. Because of this thought, he did not want a holy person like Baba Ji taking a sip from his half finished tea. Baba Ji then said, "If after being baptised, the distinction of caste, contamination of food by low caste people touching your food and other such prejudices do not get eliminated then what difference is there between ordinary people and an amritdhari Sikh? All baptised Sikhs are equal and all these doubts and prejudices should be discarded after taking amrit." We should adopt the doctrine of our Guru that:

One Lord, our father, We all are his children

eaek pithaa eaekus kae hum baarik thoo maeraa gur haee

(Dhanasari 5th Guru)

79 - HELPING NEEDY STUDENTS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Although Baba Ji could not get a worldly education at school, he wholeheartedly supported the role of education in uplifting our society. He encouraged students to acquire proficiency in as many languages and different subjects as possible. He used to say, "There are two aspects of human life, one worldly and the other spiritual. Every Gursikh must be complete in both these fields because the mission of our Guru is to achieve the highest spiritual level whilst living in this world. If we become lazy in our worldly education then we will remain illiterate and lag behind the rest of society. Every gursikh must live their life to its maximum potential. He or she must not depend on others for food, shelter or clothing. A gursikh must get a good job, flourish at business, be a good farmer and earn an honest living to support his family. If he has money, only then can he fulfil the needs of those who are poor and thus obtain the Guru's grace."

Our great Guru's left examples in their lifetimes for later generations to follow in their footsteps. The tenth master, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji employed 52 eminent scholarly poets, who translated large volumes of classical literature into simpler language so that the masses too could access this knowledge. Guru Ji gifted them with elephants, horses and wealth for their efforts. Guru Ji himself spoke six languages and wrote a large amount of Gurbani. He also sent five Sikhs in the disguise of pundits to the holy city of Kanshi. Here they trained under Brahmins to learn Sanskrit, old Hindu manuscripts and religious testaments like the Vedas, Simriti's and Upanishads. To this day descendants of these Sikhs survive and are known as *Nirmala sadhus*. These Sikhs were entrusted with the duty of imparting education to Sikh masses.

Help For Needy Students

At every annual Smagam Baba Ji would have it announced that any child unable to attend school due to financial reasons, no matter of what religion, caste, creed or race, will be helped to study at school by the sangat of gurdwara Rampur Khera. He would allow poor students to lodge at the gurdwara, bear their expenses like clothes, books, food, fees and the like, Baba Ji would encourage them to study further. With his help and encouragement, many people studied up to degree level and later went on to get good jobs and support their own families and lift them out of poverty. Some students flourished in business here and abroad, living a Sikh way of life and distributing the fragrance of Sikhism far and wide.

The same service is still carried out to this day at gurdwara Rampur Khera. The words of Baba Ji calling on the needy to come forth for help are repeated at every Smagam, every year. Numerous students are receiving help to educate themselves and stay at the gurdwara, whilst receiving help from the congregation.

In their spare time, students who received worldly education on one hand received spiritual guidance and training in reading Gurbani on the other. Baba Ji thus helped these children to develop their spiritual being and develop as fully productive members of society.

An Attempt To Preach Sikhism In Schools

In order to inspire the students in the field of religion, Baba Ji used to distribute religious books and grant scholarships to them. Any money that remained unspent after religious functions was used to help construct school buildings. The local schools and colleges at Gardhiwala and Dasuya were helped financially, on many occasions to construct better buildings. These institutions are:

1. Khalsa college, Gardhiwala
2. Khalsa senior secondary school, Gardhiwala
3. Sangla hills Guru Nanak senior secondary school for girls, Gardhiwala (the foundation stone was laid by Baba Harnam Singh Ji. It is now completed with a fine modern building of a gurdwara within its compound)
4. Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa college for women, Dasuya

Even now, besides the education of poor students, these educational establishments get financial help from time to time. May God help us to walk in the footsteps laid by that great soul Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji, so that the projects that were initiated or planned during his time may be accomplished.

On the spiritual side, in order to inspire the sangat, the life history of gursikhs and true devotees (Bhagats) was compiled by and published in the form of a 340 page book called "Gurmat de Pandhi", this was distributed free to the sangat. A rare, ancient book called "RagMala Mandan Parbodh" was also published and distributed free of cost. Many books on Gurbani, Sikh history, Sikh thought and gurmat were purchased by Baba Ji and then distributed free to the sangat. Not only this, if Baba Ji saw a poor family in need of financial help or requiring food, shelter or clothing, he would help them discretely. If a poor devotee needed to marry his daughter, Baba Ji would help fund her marriage. If a poor devotee were unable to stock his shop Baba Ji would help him fund the stock purchase. Numerous unemployed people were set up in shops by Baba Ji's grace and are now doing well financially, helping others in their endeavours to lead prosperous lives as well.

Helping the Needy

Once, this humble servant was sitting with Baba Ji, when a Gursikh from a nearby village came to the gurdwara. The sangat was assembled around Baba Ji and gurmat discussion was underway. The gursikh had three children who came with him too. Whilst he was sitting in the congregation, instinctively, his children ran up to their father in their torn clothes and called out to him. That gursikh, feeling ashamed of their dirty and torn clothes, did not acknowledge the children and ignored them. Baba Ji sensed the shame that this gursikh felt at his children's appearance. Baba Ji got up at once, walked towards his hut and gestured the gursikh to follow him into the hut. In the hut, Baba Ji gave the gursikh all the money he had and instructed him, "Have new clothes made for the children. Poverty and riches are in the great Guru's hands. Look after the children, considering them the children of the Guru. Serve the children to your capability and pray to the great Guru, "O Lord please remove the burden and curse of poverty from my neck. Please shower your grace so I may carry this burden."

Tears welled up in the eyes of that gursikh. Baba Ji affectionately embraced him and encouragingly said, "Do not consider this money a burden, the great Guru has ordered me to help needy persons. To that end, you are being helped. When the great Guru blesses you in the future with capacity to help others, serve them as much as you can."

80 - SHARING WOES OF THE POOR AND DOWN TRODDEN

Baba Ji was always ready to help the poor and the down trodden. With this in mind, Baba Ji arranged medical camps, where eye surgery was carried out free for those who could not afford to have treatment. The medical camp was held annually at gurdwara Rampur Khera under the supervision of expert surgeons and physicians. All the patients received free medicines and every year 200-300 free eye operations were carried out on people, regardless of their caste, colour or creed. Some people would be so impressed by the service and hospitality of the attendants and Baba Ji that they would remain at the gurdwara for several days after the eye camp had finished. A majority of them, witnessing the noble deeds of Baba Ji, would come to the Guru's shelter and become baptised. Those who needed cataract operations would be provided with superior quality spectacles and glasses given free (the eye camp is still held in September and now people are fitted with lenses during the operation rather than having spectacles made). I mean to write that Baba Ji used to serve every poor person in the community, how ever much he could. Who so ever was needy and came to him for help, Baba Ji would help them, considering them to have the divine spark of the Guru within them. He inspired the sangat to uphold this noble sentiment too. He was of the thought that blessings of our Guru can be obtained through helping the poor and needy because...

***The light is contained in all creatures
And the creation is contained in the light
Thou, o mighty inconceivable Lord are filling all.
jaat meh jot jot meh jaataa akal kalaa bharpoor rahi-aa.
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 469)***

And

***Amongst all there is light and that light is but you
sabh meh jot jot hai so-ay.
(Dhanasari 1st Guru, page 663)***

And

***Farid the creator abides in the creation
And the creation abides in the creator
Whom should we call bad
When there is none without him?
fareedaa khaalak khalak meh khalak vasai rab maahi.
mandaa kis no aakhee-ai jaaN tis bin ko-ee naahi. ||75||
(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, page 1381)***

And

***Firstly God created light and then
By his omnipotence made al the mortals
From the one light has welled up the entire universe
Then who is good and who is bad?
O people, my brethren forget ye not or be in doubt
Creation is the creator and the creator is the creation.***

*He is fully occupying all places. Pause.
 Clay to fashion the mortal is the same but
 The potter (God) has fashioned them into Vaarious shapes.
 There is no fault with the vessel of clay,
 Nor is there any fault with the potter.
 He, the one, true Lord, is amidst all,
 And it is his will that everything is done.
 Whosoever realises the Lord's will
 He alone knows the Lord's will.
 And he alone is said to be the Lord's slave.
 The Lord is invisible and cannot be seen
 The Guru has blessed me
 With sweet molasses of his name
 Says Kabir my doubt has been dispelled
 And I now see the immaculate Lord everywhere.
 aval alah noor upaa-i-aa kudrat kay sabh banday.
 ayk noor tay sabh jag upji-aa ka-un bhalay ko manday. ||1||
 logaa bharam na bhoolahu bhaa-ee.
 khaalik khalak khalak meh khaalik poor rahi-o sarab thaaN-ee.
 maatee ayk anayk bhaaNt kar saajee saajanhaarai.
 naa kachh poch maatee kay bhaaNday naa kachh poch kumbhaarai. ||2||
 sabh meh sachaa ayko so-ee tis kaa kee-aa sabh kachh ho-ee.
 hukam pachhaanai so ayko jaanai bandaa kahee-ai so-ee. ||3||
 alhu alakh na jaa-ee lakhi-aa gur gurh deenaa meethaa.
 kahi kabeer mayree sankaa naasee sarab niranjan deethaa. ||4||3||
 (Parbhati Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1349)*

If one wants to attract the grace of the Almighty then one must deal with the Lord's creation with compassion as the Lord resides within his creation. Those gurmukhs (pious Sikhs) who had the company of Baba Ji know that he had a total benevolent, impartial and unprejudiced view of all humanity. The tenth Guru has written in 'Akal Ustat'

*Some are totally clean shaven
 Some are yogis. Some think of themselves
 Men of celibacy and an ascetic.
 Some body is Hindu others Muslim,
 But they are all forms of our Lord God.
 He is the only creator,
 The preserver and the food donor.
 None equals him, none can surpass him,
 He is one and one only.
 All other species are his forms
 And all contain the one divine light.*

And

*In high or low there is only one light He is omnipresent.
 ooch neech meh jot samaanee ghat ghat maaDha-o jee-aa. ||1||
 (Sorath 5th Guru, page 617)*

So, Baba Ji treated everyone equally and considered all to contain the divine light within him or her. Rich or poor, high or low caste, Sikh or non-Sikh, all were treated alike with compassion and affection. The sphere of Baba Ji's affection was so wide that once a person experienced his character they would come into the sphere of his all embracing affection. Each person who met Baba Ji would feel that they were the most special to him. Ask any one in Baba Ji's circle and they will say, "The great Saint loved me the most."

Gursikhs had undoubtedly great affection for Baba Ji but people of all faiths had just as much regard for him. Baba Ji had no sense of discrimination or prejudice for people of other faiths. Whereas he would visit homes of gursikhs, he would just as easily visit homes of people of other faiths who invited him with affection to dine or stay with them. Baba Ji would say, "Hatred is such a poison that it decays the plant of God's love in man's heart from its very roots. The heart without love is empty, hollow and horrific. Where there is love, there dwells God and where there is hatred dwells evil. The woes and tribulation of all should be considered as if they were your own and dealt with compassion by providing assistance financially, physically or mentally."

Keeping in mind the principle of philanthropic service of humanity, Baba Ji had a large bridge built across the stream between the village of Bahle and Talwandi. At a cost of one million rupees, the bridge was completed and now provides road access for traffic from many surrounding villages. People would have great difficulty in getting across the stream during the monsoon season.

A beautifully designed inn of 72, well-ventilated rooms with attached bathrooms, hot and cold water, wardrobes, beds and the like were built with the help of the congregation. This has increased to over 275 rooms in recent years. The initial expenditure was between 7-8 million rupees. With the passage of time, a new Langar hall along with a new kitchen and enlarged darbar hall has been constructed.

81 - MAKE SERVICE YOUR ONLY DEVOTION

Around the year 1968, land consolidation and allotment was finalised around the village Gondpur. The path that led to village Bahle and Talwandi from gurdwara Rampur Khera was dusty, uneven bushy and unkempt. After completing his daily routine of *Nitnem* and meditation, in the afternoon Baba Ji would pick up a spade and sickle on his shoulder and start clearing and levelling the unkempt path. Sometimes one or two people would join him in this task before he would come back to resume his meditation. Often devotees would ask him to stop and allow them to do the manual work but Baba Ji would decline saying, "As you sow, so shall you reap. The service, which I render, will benefit me and your service will benefit you, spiritually. The human body is at its best when utilised in service to others." *Bhai Gurdas Ji says that...*

Accursed are the hands and feet, which don't serve the Lord.

All other actions are useless.

vin saevaa dhrig huth pair hor nihuful kurunee

peer mureedhaa pirehuree sukh sathigur surunee

And

We can have a seat in the Lord's abode

If we serve with our hands in this world

vich dunee-aa sayv kamaa-ee-ai.

taa dargeh baisan paa-ee-ai.

(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 26)

Baba Ji was of the view that passers by would be pleased at the easy access on the cleared path and would give heartfelt blessings spontaneously. Service to others is very beneficial for our internal spiritual progress. In a short while the path was cleared of, thorny bushes and access improved. However, the seasonal stream posed difficulty in passing through it, particularly during the summer monsoon, when it would flood easily and quickly become impassable. Farmers with bullock carts would cause misery for their animals, which struggled to carry their loads across and up the steep banks of the stream. The animals would be beaten as they struggled across the muddy stream and Baba Ji made up his mind to stop this misery for animals and people alike.

For such an elevated soul, only a thought was needed, that was all. The money came in torrents and within six months, there was a bridge over the stream. After the bridge was completed, under the guidance of Baba Ji, a link road was built over the bridge that connected the various villages Gondpur, Bahle, Talwandi with the gurdwara.

Hands Engrossed In Work, Mind Attuned To The Lord

Following the allotment of land in 1968, some devotees donated approximately two acres of land to the Gurdwara Sahib. A boundary wall, first of thorny bushes and then of bricks, was constructed in due course. Now this land was used as a small farm for the Gurdwara.

Whenever Baba Ji was free from his daily meditation, he would hoe and weed out the crops, pruning the almond and mango trees. He would water, plant and look after the vegetable crops. He would generally walk around the fields at least once a day. If any vessel, utensil or tools were left lying about, he would bring them indoors.

Sometimes devotees would say that he paid too much attention to such insignificant things. Baba Ji would reply, "These things, however small, belong to the Gurdwara Sahib and considering them the Guru's things, I look after them. Weeding the crops and plants is done, knowing that the plants and crops belong to the Guru as well. So the Guru's job must be done properly."

"If a servant wants to please his master then he looks after the house as if it is his own house. He decorates it, cleans it, saves it from damage, cares for things lying about and works in the field with dedication. The master is pleased with such a servant, not with the servant, who eats too much, sleeps too much, wanders aimlessly, and idles. I do everything to please my master, at any cost to myself." *Baba Ji's life had become like:*

He who in his thought word and deed contemplates

The one Lord that man obtains all the fruits

man bach karam parabh ayk Dhi-aa-ay.

sarab falaa so-ee jan paa-ay. ||6||

(Raag Suhi 5th Guru, page 760)

His mind was always focused on the Almighty. If a gurmukh came to visit Baba Ji, the topic of discussion would inevitably turn to union with the Almighty, omnipotent Lord:

Come O Saints, my brothers, meeting together

Let us recite the Lord's discourses.

In the dark age the Lord's name is the boat,

And the Guru the boatman.

Through the Guru's word,

Swim thou across the world ocean

aavhu sant milhu mayray bhaa-ee mil har har katha karahu.

har har naam bohith hai kaljug khayvat gur sabad tarahu. ||1||

(Raag Bilawal 4th Guru page 799)

And

O brother Saints, come and meet me,

So that getting together,

We may utter the Lord God's name.

Bless ye me with the bounty of the Lord's name,

And instruct me as to by what means,

And how can I attain unto my Lord

aavhu sant milhu mayray bhaa-ee mil har har naam vakhaan.

kit biDh ki-o paa-ee-ai parabh apunaa mo ka-o karahu updays har daan. ||2||

(Raag Parbhathi 4th Guru, page 1335)

We can say that, Baba Ji had placed his physical, mental and spiritual being at the disposal of the great Guru. Nothing of his self remained:

I am nothing, everything is yours O Lord,

Here thou are the absolute Lord

And there the related one

They pray O my Lord. Pause

**mai naahee parabh sabh kichh tayraa.
eeghai nirgun ooghai sargun kayl karat bich su-aamee mayraa.
(Raag Bilawal 5th Guru, page 827)**

In this manner, his mind was constantly attuned and focused in the Lord's feet. Thus, all that he did became the worship of God too:

**Blessed, blessed, blessed is the advent of the Lord's serf,
By whose grace, the entire world is saved
Dhan Dhan Dhan jan aa-i-aa
jis parsaad sabh jagat taraa-i-aa.
(Raag Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, p294)**

It is acutely difficult to write the eulogy of such a great Saint as Baba Harnam Singh Ji, for such a Saint it is true that:

**Says Kabir, the sublimity of a Saint cannot be described
It has to be seen to be realized
kabeer charan kamal kee ma-uj ko kahi kaisay unmaan.
kahibay ka-o sobhaa nahee daykhaa hee parvaan. ||121||
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1370)**

Only the lucky few, who experienced his company, were fortunate enough to realise his greatness.

82 - KABIR TAKE NO COMPANIONS WHEN GOING TO MEET A SAINT

S.Swaran Singh is a building contractor in central town Jalandhar. His ancestral village is called Bhattian near Khudda district Hoshiarpur. Some time in 1975, he was visiting his village on business. His wife was travelling with him as well. She was a deeply religious person; On their journey, she informed her husband, "I have heard that near the village Gondpur a Saint has been meditating at the barren, haunted mound, where no one dare go in the day let alone stay the night. His meditation at the mound, which was haunted, has led to a Gurdwara being built at that place. We are near that place, so why don't we return to Jalandhar via Hoshiarpur and visit the Gurdwara on our way home? It won't make much difference to the length of our journey."

S.Swaran Singh retorted, "Why don't you go see the Saint at the Gurdwara and I'll stay at the village. You're always hankering to meet holy Saints; well I don't go bowing to Saints."

Hearing her husband's quick refusal, she replied, "Who will accompany me then? Listen, why don't you come with me, you can sit in the room where Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is enthroned and you don't have to meet the Saint."

At the insistence of his wife, Swaran Singh Ji set off from his village towards the Gurdwara in his car. Swaran Singh Ji narrated his experience that, "When I had just turned the car onto the road at Gondpur village towards the Gurdwara, my mind, which had been intolerant, swayed and was overcome with a feeling of affection towards the Saint. It was the month of September and the surrounding fields were swaying with yellow flowered crops of mustard, smiling in the sunlight.

Suddenly, my mind was overtaken with an urge to eat "Saag" (a dish made from mustard leaves), I thought that if the Saint gives us saag to eat with chapattis then I will consider him to be a true Saint".

As they were nearing the Gurdwara, Swaran Singh Ji saw another field, with corn swaying in it. He thought that on the way back from the Gurdwara to stop over and somehow buy some corncobs for the family at home. With these thoughts churning around in his mind, the couple arrived at Gurdwara Rampur Khera.

It was afternoon and Baba Ji was sat with the rest of the sangat on the carpet, listening to Sukhmani Sahib. As the couple approached the sangat, Baba Ji asked them, from a distance, to first go and pay their respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and then come back to take a seat with the rest of the sangat. Both husband and wife went to pay their respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and returned a short while later to the place where Baba Ji was sitting. They were just about to bow in front of Baba Ji when he replied, "The true Guru has ordered his gursikh to bow in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji only and no one else. That you have done already. A Sikh should not rub his forehead in submission to any living Guru. Instead, greet one another with Gur-Fateh (Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh). The Gur-Fateh is above all other salutations. By greeting this way, we firstly recite Waheguru four times and secondly, receive the Guru's pleasure for having followed his command to greet one another in this manner." Mr and Mrs Swaran Singh now replied with a Gur-Fateh and sat down with the rest of the congregation.

As Swaran Singh Ji often tells us that, "Half my mind was already satisfied that Baba Ji was a true Saint when he ordered us not to bow to him". However, the thought about having saag was still wandering inside Swaran Singh Ji's head. As the chapter (asthpad) of Sukhmani Sahib ended, Baba

Ji called Amar Singh Ji who was the head cook (called Langri) and said, "Amar Singh Ji can you take Sardar Ji and serve him langar as he has come from afar. Please warm up the "saag" and chapattis that Bibi Charan Kaur brought this morning and serve them to Sardar Ji."

Swaran Singh Ji felt ashamed and yet reassured that this Saint was not only telepathic and perceptive, but also extols the true worship of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Gurbani is the main stay and haven of this Saint. At the request of Baba Ji, S Swaran Singh Ji and his wife sat in the langar hall enjoying the saag that was served and the mind's thirst was now quenched. After having langar, they returned to listen to the rest of Sukhmani Sahib path. After this, Baba Ji asked one of the Singh's to read Kalgidhar Chamatkar (biography of Guru Gobind Singh Ji compiled by Bhai Sahib Vir Singh Ji). After listening to a couple of chapters, S Swaran Singh Ji asked permission to leave. At this time a devotee arrived with 20 or 30 corncobs wrapped in a cloth and placed them in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as he paid his respects. The devotee was about to come towards Baba Ji when Baba Ji called out aloud to him, asking him to bring the corncobs over. The devotee brought the corncobs over and wished Gur-Fateh to Baba Ji. Baba Ji greeted the devotee with Gur-Fateh too and asked him politely to put the cobs in Sardar Ji's car.

Baba Ji put his hand on S.Swaran Singh's shoulder and said, "When coming into sangat one should not entertain idle or worldly thoughts, especially when coming to pay respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Secondly, never come with the intention of testing another person's spiritual attainments. One can only derive the full benefit of attending the congregation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and Gurbani if we abandon useless, worldly thoughts. Amidst the congregation we should harbour esteemed thoughts of seeing the true Guru and listening to his Gurbani. If the mind is racked with idle and useless thoughts, it gets little or no benefit of attending the congregation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. With what state of mind should one attend the congregation? Bhagat Kabir Ji guides us that...

Kabir take along no companions

When going to meet a Saint

kabeer saaDhoo ka-o milnay jaa-ee-ai saath na leejai ko-ay.

(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1370)

Hearing these words, all baseless thoughts and excuses in Swaran Singh Ji's mind fell silent. His mind was full of remorse and questioned why he had even thought to test the spiritual and telepathic abilities of such a completely pious, perfect Saint who had unstinting faith and unwavering devotion to God? Before departing S. Swaran Singh Ji asked Baba Ji, "Can I be of any service to you?" Baba Ji replied, "I will tell you the next time you come." These words echoed in S. Swaran Singh Ji's mind as he returned home. He returned a few days later with the rest of his family to Gurdwara Rampur Khera. After having langar, this time he reminded Baba Ji, "Baba Ji you said last time that when I visit again you will tell me if I am worthy of any service. Please tell what is your command?" Baba Ji replied, "The greatest service you can do is to become baptised, do your Nitnem and become a devout gursikh. In this the Great Guru will be pleased with you." With the encouragement of Baba Ji and the inspirational meeting with him, the whole family took amrit, thus receiving the blessing of the Great Guru.

83 - CONSIDER HONOUR OR DISHONOUR EQUALLY

To celebrate the Baisakhi of 1975 at Anandpur Sahib, an appeal for mass attendance was sent out to the whole Khalsa nation. To join in the panthic celebrations, Baba Ji too, reached Anandpur Sahib with a few fellow Singh's. At Anandpur Sahib, Baba Ji discussed their journey with the Singhs and decided "An eminent Saint, who knows me has a huge dera (large residence belonging to a Saint) nearby. Let us go to his dera. We will get an audience with the Saint and if there is space available we will stay the night there too."

With this in mind, they all made their way to the dera on foot. In those days, the above-mentioned Saint was not on good terms with the political party of Akali Dal. On reaching the dera, Baba Ji went to visit the Saint in his rest room. Baba Ji wished him *Guru-Fateh* but the Saint did not reply, as he was busy quarrelling with his attendant driver about a bar of soap. The Saint was cursing and shouting at the poor fellow, rebuking him for using the soap without consent, whilst the driver continuously apologised for his mistake. In this tussle, the Saint forgot to greet Baba Ji with the Guru's Fateh.

Baba Ji and the Singh's sat down on the floor and waited patiently. The Saint momentarily looked up and said angrily, "Go away and have langar." The sangat and Baba Ji remained seated and then the Saint rebuked them again, "Why are you still here, I asked you to go and have langar."

Baba Ji and the Singh's went to have langar. The entire congregation felt very awkward and embarrassed at the rather rude behaviour of the Saint. The sangat had come from a long way to see the Saint and he was so busy quarrelling over a bar of soap that he did not even greet Baba Ji.

Out of all of us S. Bageecha Singh Ji was the most upset. He was of the view that the Saint knew Baba Ji, was younger than Baba Ji and likely of lower spiritual standing than Baba Ji, yet he behaved most discourteously. He may not have shown respect for the sangat but at least should have had the civility to greet Baba Ji.

As we were walking, with such turbulent thoughts in the mind of S. Bageecha Singh, Baba Ji suddenly stopped walking and addressed S. Bageecha Singh, "Look how gracious our great Guru is upon us. On the one hand, we have met a holy Saint and paid our respects and on the other hand, the Saint offered langar as well. This is truly pleasurable.

In the future, when you go to meet someone, never expect him or her to show reverence towards you. Such respect is often false, creates vanity in you and inflames the ego. Desire to be respected arises and when the desire is not fulfilled then anger, hatred and dejection enter the mind. This tarnishes the mind. Always be mindful of the need for adulation. The order of our Guru is, "the person is not an attendant who yearns for fame and has fear on infamy."

Hearing such words from Baba Ji's sweet tongue soothed the hearts of all that were present. Bhai Bageecha Singh, who was most affected by this incident replied, "Baba Ji, I had a grudge in my mind regarding the Saint's behaviour but you are totally unaffected by the disrespect shown to you."

Baba Ji said, "Whatever the Guru does is always beneficial. If that great Saint had shown us respect and offered to put us up for the night then would have been deprived of the *katha*, *Kirtan* and discourses in Gurbani that are taking place at Takhat Keshgarh Sahib Ji. We will try to get a

room at the inn, if not, then we will spend the night in the Guru's presence, enjoying the whole programme. This way we will be near the Guru, else we would have had to make the trek tomorrow specially to see the programme."

In a peaceful, contented state of mind, we all had langar after which we set off for fort Anandgarh Sahib. Here we met the manager of the gurdwara who knew Baba Ji well and offered us two rooms in which we could spend the night, The whole sangat enjoyed three days at the feet of our Guru and partook in the panthic (national) celebration of Baisakhi.

The incident is written to demonstrate that Baba Ji was never was carried away by his emotions. If someone gave him respect, he was not elated or bowled over by adulation. Neither was he dejected nor angry if someone showed him disrespect. He always remained in a balanced state of mind:

The impartial seer of reality

Such a Saint! Is a rare one amongst a million

tat samadrasee santahu ko-ee kot manDhaahee. ||2||

(Sri Raag 5th Guru, page 51)

84 - CONSIDER OTHERS BETTER THAN YOURSELF

Many rooms with concrete roofs had been erected for the congregation to be housed in by now. However, Baba Ji still preferred to stay in the old, thatched hut that had been constructed many years ago. As the number of visitors increased day-by-day, Baba Ji had a special hut erected over the langar hall in which two or three woven beds were placed, two for visitors and one for Baba Ji to sit on. Whoever came to visit was greeted warmly and seated on these beds. He never discriminated against anyone. All were treated equally. He remained firm on one principle throughout his life, that we are all children of the same Almighty father. In the 35-40 years accompanying Baba Ji, this humble servant (Sant Seva Singh) never once saw Baba Ji sit on a bed whilst the congregation sat on the floor. Either the sangat would sit on the beds at the same level or everybody would sit on a carpet on the floor, including Baba Ji himself. Yes, if a Singh was to recite Gurbani, narrate Guru Ji's history or give a religious sermon, then, he would be given an elevated seat or bedstead to sit on, whilst the sangat including Baba Ji, would sit at a lower level in respect for Gurbani.

It was during the winter season, one-day Baba Ji Ji was sitting outside the hut in the sun, meditating deep in simran. Two Akali political leaders from district Hoshiarpur namely Vaid Kartar Singh Ji and S Jasjit Singh Thiara were on their way to Gurdwara Garna Sahib for a meeting. Discussing political issues, they were passing through Machhian village near Gurdwara Rampur Khera when Vaid Kartar Singh interrupted the talk and said, "I've heard that a Sikh sadh (short for sadhu or ascetic) has settled in the area. He has initiated many Sikhs too. You can see there are many amritdhari (baptised Sikhs) men and women on the roads. In just the last 15 or so miles, I have spotted numerous baptised Sikhs myself. Sikhism was nowhere to be seen in this area a few years ago. In fact, people openly professed to be atheists.

Even the local Member of Parliament and councillors were communists. The whole area worshipped Lenin." Whilst driving the car S Jasjit Singh replied, "I too have heard about the Sikh Saint but have not met him personally." Vaid Ji immediately suggested that they were quite fortunate in that they had the time and means of transport, so why not meet the Saint and check out if he was a true Saint or not. "We'll be able to see for ourselves if he is a Saint only to earn a good livelihood or a Saint with true belief in God." (There is a little respect for the saints in the minds of Akali jathedars (Leaders). No doubt Sant Samaj (Society of saints) has played a significant role in the preaching of sikh-religion and these jathedars reap their political fruit but they hate the word "sant". No doubt also, that so many false, virtual and hypocrites have entered in the disguise of "sants" and they have their say also, but to measure everybody with a same yard stick is neither wisdom nor far sightedness.)

The road junction for the Gurdwara came up. They turned the car into the road that leads up to Rampur Khera. S Jasjit Singh asked Vaid Ji, "How will you know if he is a genuine Saint or a false one?" Vaid Ji replied, "Just watch my tactics. I don't have white hair in my beard by sitting in the sun. I have years of experience. I am a politician and can figure out a person from the way he walks. Moreover, I will test him openly in front of your eyes. Watch the drama unfold."

S Jasjit Singh told us that with these jovial remarks they reached the gurdwara, went in, bowed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and asked an old attendant about the whereabouts of Baba Ji. He pointed them to the hut above the langar hall. So, they both went over to the hut and found no one inside.

There were three beds with mats laid upon them. One bed had a pillow on it. Vaid Ji thought that this must be the Saint's bed. So, he sat at the head of the bed quietly. S Jasjit Singh indicated that the bed looked like the Saints bed and asked Vaid Ji to sit with him on the other bed (it is considered rude to sit at the head of a bed especially if it is a venerated person). Vaid Ji replied, "Even if the Sant Ji was sitting on the bed, I would still have sat on it and at the head of the bed in particular. If the Saint is fond of self praise, gratification and self important worship then he will be annoyed to see me sitting at the head of his special bed. Instead of offering us refreshments, he will be angry and not even talk to us but if he is a true Saint then the whole play will unfold in front of your eyes, as..."

***Whatever is in the mind comes forth uttered as mere words
through the mouth***

jo jee-ay ho-ay so ugvai muh kaa kahi-aa vaa-o.

beejae bikh mungai anmrith vaekhuhu eaehu niaao

(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 474)

Whilst talking in such a light mood both Vaid Kartar Singh and S Jasjit Singh took up seats on the beds. The old attendant informed Baba Ji that two devotees had come to see him and had just gone up to the hut. Baba Ji asked the attendant to prepare and serve the guests refreshments and he would be along in a few minutes to greet them.

Baba Ji completed his chapter of Sukhmani Sahib; meanwhile, the old attendant went to prepare the sweet water. After a few minutes Baba, Ji went up to the hut and greeted the two gentlemen with "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh" Vaid Ji and S Jasjit Singh stood up to wish Gur-Fateh to Baba Ji. Upon seeing Baba Ji, Vaid Ji started to move from the bed he was sitting on to elsewhere. Baba Ji held his arm and compelled him to remain seated where he was saying, "You have graced me with the pleasure of your company, coming such a long distance, and moreover, the great Guru has blessed us with equality. We all are his sons and being gursikhs, are all brothers. We are doubly related, so do not hesitate to sit where you are." Inwardly, Vaid Ji felt remorse and repented, trying to get up from the bed several times, but Baba Ji kept insisting that he remain seated where he was. The old attendant brought over sweetened water and something to eat whilst Baba Ji served both visitors with his own hands. After an exchange of pleasantries Baba Ji asked them, "where have you come from and where are you going?" Vaid Ji introduced himself and S. Jasjit Singh.

Baba Ji said, "I'll have some beds placed for you to rest whilst I just complete Sukhmani Sahib. If you have time and the inclination to stay please come and listen to the paath."

Vaid Ji made an excuse of prior business and begged leave of Baba Ji. On the way back, Vaid Ji told S Jasjit Singh, "I have made, the blunder of my life. I have earned the greatest sin by sitting on the bed higher than the Saint, who himself was indeed a completely pious Saint. Worse still, I tried to test his genuine Sainthood. He did not have an iota of ill will at my sitting on the head of his bed. To the contrary, he showed respect and affection above and beyond what was called for.

During the time I sat with him, I felt free of stray thoughts, my mind was completely peaceful and full of bliss. I felt a sense of peace as I entered the hut. This was a unique experience in my life. Generally, if you do not worship a particular Saint properly then his attendants sort out your attitude. The Saint himself sorts you out if there is any other let up in venerating him. The Saint's attendants chastise you if you greet him with a Gur-Fateh and do not prostrate or bow to their

Saint. S Jasjit Singh! This is the first instance in my life that I have glimpsed a true Sikh Saint, who gives the honour of a gursikh brother even to an ordinary fellow like me. The great Guru has said:

***The Saints are few and not many.
The rest is but a show and wrangling in this world.
Only the lucky few get glimpses of such holy Saints
hain virlay naahee ghanay fail fakarh sansaar. ||12||***
(page 1411).

Such Saints are few and hard to find without good destiny." So, Vaid Ji was deeply impressed by Baba Ji's politeness and the aura of his spiritual treasure of the word of God (naam). From that day onwards, whenever Vaid Ji passed through the area, he would specially come to see Baba Ji and considered it his good fortune to attend the religious programmes at the Gurdwara.

Baba Ji had so much humility and politeness that even when talking to a child, he would show them respect by addressing them with the word "Ji." He never addressed another person impolitely, by calling them "Oi." He would always say, "We belong to the one family of God. In a family, some members are older whilst others are younger. Nonetheless, all are members of the family. Even though by age some may be older whilst others are younger, the youngest person may have a greater soul, having greater spiritual attainment. So we should respect everyone, considering them a part of the Almighty. Bhagat Farid Ji says...

***Farid, the creator abides in creation
And the creation abides in the creator
fareedaa khaalak khalak meh khalak vasai rab maahi.
mandaa kis no aakhee-ai jaaN tis bin ko-ee naahi. ||75||***
(Salok Farid Ji, page 1381)

In order to please the Almighty, the words of Bhagat Kabir Ji must be emphasised...

***Kabir, I am the worst of all;
Except me everyone else is good
kabeer sabh tay ham buray ham taj bhalo sabh ko-ay.***
(Salok Kabir Ji, page 1364)

And

***The lowest of all I deem my own self
And this way I install peace within my mind
sabh tay neech aatam kar maan-o man meh ih sukh Dhaara-o.***
(Dev Gandhari 5th Guru, page 532)

And

***Think yourself the worst of all in the world.
Secondly, nobody knows, on whom and at what time,
The Almighty will to shower his blessings; So hate no one
mandaa jaanai aap ka-o avar bhalaa sansaar. ||4||7||***
(Maru 1st Guru, page 991)

And

The Guru's home is for...

He who deems himself low is counted

The highest of all

aapas ka-o jo jaanai neechaa.so-oo ganee-ai sabh tay oochaa.

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 266)

And

Deem all others to be above yourself,

Then shall thou obtain peace in the lord's court

aapas tay oopar sabh jaanhu ta-o dargeh sukh paavhu. ||I||

(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 883)

They who consider themselves good, we find are mentioned in Sukhmani Sahib:

He who calls himself good,

Goodness does not draw near him.

Says Nanak, pure is the celebrity of him,

Whose mind is rendered the dust of all men's feet.

aapas ka-o jo bhalaa kahaavai.

tiseh bhalaa-ee nikat na aavai.

sarab kee rayn jaa kaa man ho-ay.

kaho naanak taa kee nirmal so-ay.

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 278)

The purity of one's mind is not achieved through talk alone. It is obtained through the Guru's grace, by recitation of naam (simran).

85 - HEAR THE TRUE TALE OF THE SAINTS

They Say Only What They See With Their Eyes

(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 894)

One summer day, as was Baba Ji's daily routine, after completing his meditation and prayers, he came and sat with the congregation. Many people had come from near and far to catch a glimpse of Baba Ji. Whilst sitting, a devotee ventured to ask, "Baba Ji, please tell, does one pay for one's good and bad deeds in this life or do we have to repay for our deeds in the lord's court after we die?"

Baba Ji's Answer

Baba Ji listened to the devotee's question and asked, "Do you read Gurbani at all?" The devotee replied, "I do my daily nitnem and have done several Sehaj paths from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at home Baba Ji." Baba Ji replied, "Guru Ji has written a great deal explaining in detail about the account we pay for our sins. He has left no room for doubt or misconception." The devotee said, "Baba Ji we have read a lot about this too. However, in Gurbani where we are told that dharamraj (angel of death) gives punishments because of our bad deeds and mention is made of hell etc, Sikh intellectuals often describe this Gurbani as "fearsome Bani." They say, it is only written by Guru Ji to scare people so that they do not commit sinful deeds."

After listening to the devotee, Baba Ji fell silent for a while and then said, "These intellectuals can be described as:

***The more one writes and reads, The more one burns
likh likh parhi-aa.taytaa karhi-aa.***

(Salok 1st Guru page 467)

And

***Reading extensively they quarrel and enter into controversy
And attached to mammon they lose their divine onsciousness
parh parh loojheh baad vakaaneh mil maa-i-aa surat gavaa-ee.***

(Bhairon 3rd Guru, page 1131)

"This is exactly what Guru Ji has said of these so-called intellectuals. These false scholars, who have no practical, spiritual experience, are responsible for misguiding the masses astray. They lead people onto the wrong path of atheism, chanting their motto "eat drink and make merry, which has seen the after life." As if this was not enough, on any given day, these people won't hesitate to question the authenticity of Gurbani. First, one must decide whether the intellect of the so-called educated scholars is higher or the intellect of our Guru. Are we to take our spiritual guidance from these false scholars and prophets or take our guidance from the Guru, considering his to be of supreme intellect. If we accept Guru Ji to be the supreme prophet of the Almighty then, the Guru has given irrevocable reassurance to us in Gurbani, and told us to walk along the guidelines given by him. He has ordered us "O gursikhs! Consider Gurbani as the true word, yes the true words of the Almighty timeless lord. The lord has merely caused us to utter these words of his."

***O the disciples of the Guru,
Know that the sat Guru's hymns are perfectly true.
God the creator himself Cause
the Guru to utter them with his mouth
satgur kee banee sat sat kar jaanhu gursikhahu har kartaa
aap muhhu kadhaa-ay.
(Salok 4th Guru, page 308)***

In raag Ramkali Guru Arjun Dev Ji tells us that "O spiritual seeker! Listen to the truth filled guidance of Saints because they only say that which they have witnessed with their own eyes.

***Hear thou the true tale of the Saints
santan kee sun saachee saakhee.
so boleh jo paykheh aakhee.
(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 894)***

So all Gurbani in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is true word for word, for all ages to come. In Gurbani, there is no exaggeration of any description. Whatever deeds a mortal commits in this life, he is held to account for all of them in the lord's court after death. One then gets reborn into another life according to the past deeds and actions. It is as Guru Nanak Dev Ji states

***Mortal obtains human body as a result of good deeds
But the reaches the gate of salvation with God's kind grace
karmee aavai kaprhaa nadree mokh du-aar.
(Japji 1st Guru, page 2)***

Dubbing men by mere words of mouth does not make them virtuous or sinful. Often repeated actions are engraved on the soul and will be read in God's court thus...

***Whatever one sows he reaps
(Satgur) Nanak says man takes birth and dies by God's orders
punnee paapee aakhan naahi.
kar kar karnaa likh lai jaahu.
aapay beej aapay hee khaahu
naanak hukmee aavhu jaahu. ||20||
(Japji Sahib 1st Guru, page 13)***

The lord has appointed the king of the angels of death (called dharamraj) to take account of the actions of every mortal thus Guru Amar Das Ji writes:

***The righteous judge under God's command
Sits and administers even handed justice,
The evil souls imbued with love for duality
Are subject to your command
Dharam raa-ay no hukam hai bahi sachaa Dharam beechaar.
doojai bhaa-ay dusat aatmaa oh tayree sarkaar.
(Sri Raag 3rd Guru, page 38)***

How clearly Guru Nanak dev Ji tells us about actions of the mortal in Asa di Vaar:

Creating the beings

God has installed the righteous judge

To record their account.

There only truth is judged true

And the sinners are picked up and separated out.

The false find no place there

And they go to hell with a blackened face

naanak jee-a upaa-ay kai likh naavai Dharam bahaali-aa.

othai sachay hee sach nibrhai chun vakh kadhay jajmaali-aa.

thaa-o na paa-in koorhi-aar muh kaalHai dojak chaali-aa.

tayrai naa-ay ratay say jin ga-ay haar ga-ay se thagan vaali-aa.

likh naavai Dharam bahaali-aa. ||2||

(Asa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 463)

Those who are imbued with God's name win. They who cheat, lose on the day. God has certainly installed dharamraj to record our every action and deed. The great Guru Nanak Dev Ji tells us further:

Enjoying sensual pleasures

Man himself becomes a heap of ashes

And his soul passes away.

When the worldly man dies,

A chain is thrown around his neck

And he is led away there,

His good and bad deeds are read out to him

And seeing him his account is explained to him.

When thrashed, he finds no place of shelter

And no one hears his cries now.

The blind man has wasted away his life.

aapeenHai bhog bhog kai ho-ay bhasmarh bha-ur siDhaiaa.

vadaa ho-aa duneedaar gal sangal ghat chala-i-aa.

agai karnee keerat vaachee-ai bahi laykhaa kar samjhaa-i-aa.

thaa-o na hovee pa-udee-ee hun sunee-ai ki-aa roo-aa-i-aa.

man anDhai janam gavaa-i-aa. ||3||

(Salok 1st Guru, page 464)

Guru Arjan Dev Ji has elaborated this truth about how our actions are being accounted for in the after life:

The sinners commits evil deeds

And then bemoan and bewail Nanak,

As the churning staff churns the curd

So, the righteous judge churns them

paapee karam kamaavday karday haa-ay haa-ay.

naanak ji-o mathan maaDhaanee-aa

ti-o mathay Dharam raa-ay.

(5th Guru, page 1425)

Bhagat Ravi Das Ji tells us that in the afterlife the most secret of misdeeds committed and hidden by mortals are exposed and taken into account.

**Says Ravi Das Ji, when the account is taken
Whatsoever the mortal has done
All that he beholds
kaho ravidas bha-i-o jab laykho.
jo-ee jo-ee keeno so-ee so-ee daykhi-o.
(Malhar Ravi Das Ji, page 1293)**

**Good and bad actions will be narrated before the God of justice
chungiaaeaa buriaaeaa vaachai dhurum hudhoo
(1st Guru Japji, page 8)**

Regarding the punishment one receives for bad deeds, there are ample explanations and references about it in Gurbani. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji tells us about the punishments we receive according to our misdeeds:

**Says Nanak, hear O man the true instruction.
Seated in judgment and taking his ledger
God shall call you to account.
The rebels of the Lord's with accounts
Outstanding against them shall be called out.
The death's courier, Azrail
Shall be appointed to punish thou.
Entangled in the narrow lane, they go.
Falsehood shall come to an end,
O Nanak and truth shall ultimately prevail
naanak aakhai ray manaa sunee-ai sikh sahee.
laykhaa rab mangaysee-aa baithaa kadh vahee.
talbaa pa-usan aakee-aa baakee jinaa rahee.
ajraa-eel faraystaa hosee aa-ay ta-ee.
aavan jaan na sujh-ee bheerhee galee fahee.
koorh nikhutay naankaa orhak sach rahee.
(Ramkali 1st Guru, page 953)**

Guru Arjun Dev Ji gives the same account of punishments in the afterlife:

**Under the tree of the world
All beings have gathered.
Some are hot headed and some speak sweetly.
When the sun which had set rises
They get up and march off when their life ends.
They who commit sins are surely plundered.
Azrail the angel of death,
Seizes and tortures them to death.
They are cast into the well by the creator
And the righteous judge calls them to account.
No brother or sister accompanies them.**

Leaving behind their property, youth and wealth, they march off.
 They know not their kind and beneficent creator lord
 And shall be oppressed like the basketful of sesame.
 Happily, happily snatches thou other's goods
 But God, who is with thee, sees and hears thee.
 Through worldly aVaarice, you have fallen into a pit
 And know not the thing of the future.
 You shall be repeatedly born
 And die and be born again.
 You shalt suffer much punishment
 On the way to the distant country.
 The blind mortal not him who made him,
 Wherefore he shall suffer pain.
 Forgetting his creator man is ruined.
 The play of the world is bad.
 The mortal is sometimes sad and sometimes happy.
 To learn from him the lesson of faith and contentment,
 The mortal meets not the Saint and wanders as it pleases him.
 Of himself, the lord stages the whole play.
 Some he takes out and some he casts into the waves.
 As God makes men dance, so do they dance.
 Everyone passes his life according to his past deeds.
 If the lord showers his grace,
 Then alone meditate I upon the lord.
 Associating with the Saints one falls not into hell.
 O lord bless thou Nanak,
 With the gift of your nectar-name.
 He ever sings the songs of your praise
 birkhai hayth sabh jant ikthay.
 ik tatay ik bolan mithay.
 asat udot bha-i-aa uth chalay
 ji-o ji-o a-oDh vihaanee-aa. ||1||
 paap karaydarh sarpar muthay.
 ajraa-eel farhay farh kuthay.
 dojak paa-ay sirjanhaarai laykhaa mangai baanee-aa. ||2||
 sang na ko-ee bha-ee-aa baybaa.
 maal joban Dhan chhod vanjaysaa.
 karan kareem na jaato kartaa til peerhay ji-o ghaanee-aa. ||3||
 khus khus laidaa vasat paraa-ee.
 vaykhai sunay tayrai naal khudaa-ee.
 dunee-aa lab pa-i-aa khaat andar aglee gal na jaanee-aa. ||4||
 jam jam marai marai fir jammai.
 bahut sajaa-ay pa-i-aa days lammai.
 jin keetaa tisai na jaanee anDhaa taa dukh sahai paraanee-aa.
 khaalak thaavhu bhulaa muthaa.
 dunee-aa khayl buraa ruth tuthaa.
 sidak sabooree sant na mili-o vatai aapan bhaanee-aa. ||6||
 ma-ulaa khayl karay sabh aapay. ik kadhay ik lahar vi-aapay.
 ji-o nachaa-ay ti-o ti-o nachan sir sir kirat vihaanee-aa. ||7||

***mihar karay taa khasam Dhi-aa-ee.
santaa sangat narak na paa-ee.
amrit naam daan naanak ka-o gun geetaa nit vakhaanee-aa.
(Maru 5th Guru, page 1019)***

“So, we should have complete and unflinching faith in Gurbani, as it is the essence of the Almighty Lord. Furthermore, I have seen the city of dharamraj myself. I have witnessed myself the punishments suffered by mortals for their sins in the city of dharamraj. The pain suffered by these souls cannot be described easily in words.” During this conversation, Baba Ji described some punishments whereby the soul had to pass through infinitely small places and suffer intolerable heat after being bound to red-hot pillars. Baba Ji said that for every bad deed there were distinct punishments that were suffered by mortals.

Baba Ji confessed that he had seen this sight not once but many times. Baba Ji explained further that in contrast to bad deeds, the mortal who takes refuge in the shelter of the great Guru by being baptised and follows the path of true teachings, is not tormented by dharamraj. Gurbani states:

***They to whom lord, the life of the world shows his mercy
Enshrine him in their heart and place in their mind.
The righteous judge in his court has torn up
My papers and slave Nanak has settled his account
jin ka-o kirpaa karee jagjeevan har ur Dhaari-o man maajhaa.
Dharam raa-ay dar kaagad faaray jan naanak laykhaa samjhaa.
(Jaitsari 4th Guru, page 698)***

Dharamraj has given strict orders to his ambassadors (angels of death), “do not go near wherever the Saints of the lord, devotees of the God are meditating or praising the Almighty. If you do wander there by mistake then you will be eternally trapped. Neither you or myself (Dharamraj) or the city of death (Jampuri) will get salvation.” It is stated in Gurbani that:

***O Nanak where the Saints
Ever repeat the lord of the worlds name and praise.
The righteous judge says
Draw not near that place of couriers,
Otherwise neither you nor I shall escape
Jah saaDhoo gobid bhajan keertan naanak neet.
naa ha-o naa tooN nah chhuteh nikat na jaa-ee-ahu doot. |||||
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 256).***

On the contrary, if the Saints and great souls devoted to the almighty venture into the city of dharamraj, they are respected and revered by the angels of death, as described in Gurbani.

***They who contemplate the lord's name, O friend, win the treasure of human life.
Nanak, the righteous judge addresses them thus, My mansion thou have rendered holy
naam Dhi-aa-in saajnaa janam padaarath jeet.
naanak Dharam aisay chaveh keeto bhavan puneet. ||10||
(Salok 5th Guru, page 1424)***

86 - PILGRIMAGE TO RELIGIOUS PLACES

As Guru Ram das Ji says:

***Wherever my true Guru goes and sits
Beautiful is that place o lord king
The Guru's disciples search out that place
Take the dust and apply it to their face
jithai jaa-ay bahai mayraa satguroo so thaan suhaavaa raam raajay.
gusikheeN so thaan bhaali-aa lai Dhoor mukh laavaa.
(Asa 4th Guru, page 450)***

And

***That land where my true Guru comes to sit upon grows green
saa Dhartee bha-ee haree-aavalee jithai mayraa satgur baithaa aa-ay.
(Mohalla 4th Guru, page 310)***

To pay their respects to holy places that were related to the lives of our Guru's, the sangat requested Baba Ji to organise a pilgrimage. Even though Baba Ji had seen these places of historical interest many times before, the sangat requested that buses be hired to tour the shrines which had been blessed by the presence of our Guru's in the past. Baba Ji counselled the sangat, "To go on a pilgrimage to these historical shrines is only of use if the time is spent in meditation and recitation of Gurbani. Before going to visit these shrines, we should cultivate piety and affection for our Guru within our hearts and minds.

When affection wells up in our mind then pilgrimage to places that have been graced by the touch of the Guru's feet will deepen our love for the Guru. This love, when seated in the mind, starts to cleanse us from within and brings one nearer to the Guru. If by the grace of the Guru this love becomes eternal, then doubt is cleared and the disciple becomes at one with God. So, an attempt must be made to cultivate affection in our being before going on a pilgrimage and this effort must be made throughout the journey itself. If on the other hand one is going just to see the sights and picnic instead of having true reverence for holy places then it is better to stay at home and continue with our jobs." Hearing these words, the sangat begged Baba Ji, "We will do whatever you order, but please accompany us on the tour." Even though Baba Ji was quite old by now and had been to these places of worship before, he agreed, and chalked out a programme for the religious tour, thus abiding by the wishes of the congregation.

Conditions For Going On *Yatra* (Pilgrimage)

Baba Ji agreed to go on the pilgrimage as long as certain rules were agreed upon. These rules were to invoke greater affection for our Guru's and were meant to guide the sangat on how to obtain maximum benefit from visiting these historical shrines.

The first request was that whosoever was to go on the *Yatra* (Pilgrimage or journey) would have to recite the Mool mantar 11000 times before the actual day the tour started. If anyone could do more recitation of Mool mantar than this would be even better. The congregation agreed to this rule with the view that recitation of Mool mantar is spiritually uplifting and is indeed a fruitful way to spend the days preceding the actual tour.

Secondly, any person wishing to go on the tour should be a baptised Sikh. If one was not baptised then they must take amrit before they went on the pilgrimage. Besides these two conditions, a list of other rules was compiled and distributed to the congregation in the form of a leaflet.

The rules were as follows: -

1. All devotees will wear a kirpan over their regular clothes and men will adorn their beards open.
2. Every devotee must recite Waheguru Gur-mantar for two hours once they boarded the tour bus.
3. After simran, all would recite Benati Chaupai 21 times.
4. Upon arriving at the Gurdwara, everyone will recite the hymns below with reverence and devotion, bow to Guru Granth Sahib Ji, before taking a seat in the hall. The hymns to be recited were:

There is but on God

By the grace of true Guru is he known

By what virtues can I meet the lord of my life, O mother? Pause

Without beauty or understanding or might am I

I, a weary stranger have come from afar

I have no wealth nor youth, and am an orphan

Merge me with you just as I am O lord

Searching and searching I have become weary

I thirst for the sight of the lord

Merciful to the meek, compassionate master of Nanak.

In the Saints, company has my burning slaked

kavan gun paraanpat mila-o mayree maa-ee. |||| rahaa-o.

roop heen buDh bal heenee mohi pardaysan door tay aa-ee. ||||

naahin darab na joban maatee mohi anaath kee karahu samaaee.

khajat khajat bha-ee bairaagan parabh darsan ka-o ha-o firat tisaa-ee.

deen da-i-aal kirpaal parabh naanak saaDhsang mayree jalan bujhaa-ee.

(Gauri Purbi 5th Guru, page 204)

5. Once seated, everyone will recite gurmantar for 5 minutes and silently recite the following hymn....

After wandering and wandering O lord

I have come to enter your sanctuary

O master Nanak's prayer is

Apply me to your meditation

firat firat parabh aa-i-aa pari-aa ta-o sarnaa-ay.

naanak kee parabh bayntee apnee bhagtee laa-ay. ||||

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 289)

6. No one should indulge in gossip or idle chitchat and go quietly to be reseated back in the buses.
7. Administrators for each bus will be appointed and all must follow their directions.

8. Every devotee should be seated back in the tour bus five minutes before the journey recommences.

9. After an overnight stay, the luggage will be loaded onto the buses and then the sangat will collectively say Ardas at the Gurdwara before leaving.

With these rules set in place Baba Ji took such tours with the congregation on three occasions. The first of these tours started on 14th February 1972 and had the following itinerary...

14.2.72

At about 6 am the whole sangat assembled in the Gurdwara hall at Rampur Khera, did Ardas, listened to the hukamnama and then set off on the journey. On the way, they visited Fatehgarh Sahib – the place where the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and Guru Ji's mother were martyred. By nightfall the tour party had reached Paonta Sahib.

15.2.72

At Paonta Sahib, the sangat paid homage to the place where Guru Gobind Singh Ji spent 41/2 years in peaceful yet beautiful surroundings on the banks of the Yamuna River. Here he composed many sacred texts and revealed a large amount of Gurbani to the world. His eminent scholars compiled and translated many Sanskrit texts into *Brij* language (a dialect spoken in northern India). His appointed scholars also compiled and scribed a large amount of literature related to the Sikh religion. After some rest at this place, the sangat set off for Rishi kesh.

16.2.72

From Rishi kesh, surrounding areas like Hardwar were visited arriving at night at Gorakhmata. The name of this place was changed to Nanakmata when Guru Nanak Dev Ji addressed and peeled away the ignorance of Gorakh Nath yogi and his followers. The congregation spent the night here.

17.2.72

The day was spent visiting all the local sights that were visited by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and where he had discourses and sermons with the followers of Gorakh Nath yogi. His sermons emphasised the importance of meditating on naam rather than the acquisition of miraculous powers as the way to salvation.

18.2.72

From Gorakhmata the tour party arrived at Lukhnow at night and spent the night there.

19.2.72

The sangat set off from Lukhnow after having langar on the banks of the river surju, where Guru Nanak Dev Ji once stayed. The tour party arrived at Benares where Guru Nanak Dev Ji had dialogues with pundit Dyal Dass uttering Gurbani in Sanskrit and preaching the gospel of naam meditation.

20.2.72

Visiting the places of importance in Benares and marched forward to Patna where Guru Gobind Singh Ji was born. At arrival, the sangat respectfully bowed at Takhat Patna Sahib a most sacred place for the Khalsa. All the places concerned with Guru Gobind Singh Ji were visited spending two nights and one day here.

22.2.72

Attending the Morning Prayer at Takhat Patna Sahib the group left for Rajgir and Bodhgaya. At night the congregation rested at the place of a most loyal Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh Ji called Faghu Mull Ji.

23.2.72

Set off from Sasa Ram and spent the night in Riwa

24.2.72

The tour set off towards Marhattal in Jabalpur. This is the place where Guru Nanak Dev Ji transformed the cannibal Kauda demon into a fine gursikh by his grace.

25.2.72

From Marhattal Gurdwara the tour moved onto Guru Nanak darbar Gurdwara in Nagpur, arriving at nightfall.

26.2.72

Attended the Morning Prayer, did Ardas and set off for the most cherished place for which this tour was conceived - Takhat Hazoor Sahib the final resting place of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Guru Ji came to this place and handed over the Khalsa to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji the everlasting Guru for remaining time. Here he disappeared physically from the realm of mortals and the body of five elements. The sangat arrived here at nightfall and rested

27.2.72

After paying respects at Takhat Hazoor Sahib, the sangat went to visit Gurdwara Nanak jheera in Bidar. Here they paid respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and witnessed the place where Guru Nanak Dev Ji with his pious feet touched the ground and a spring welled up from the barren, rocky mountainside.

28.2.72

After staying the night, the sangat bid farewell to this site and returned to Hazoor Sahib.

29.2.72

The sangat visited local Gurdwara's, which had been blessed, by our Guru's feet. These were Gurdwara's Nagina ghat, Hira ghat, Shikar ghat, G. Mata Sahib deva, Banda ghat, Sangat Sahib, G.Maal Takri, G. Rattan Garh Sahib and G. Nanaksar etc.

3.3.72

The whole sangat listened to the morning session of kirtan at Sri Hazoor Sahib until 8 am. After Ardas, they set off Gurdwara Gupt sar Sahib in Man marh where they spent a night.

4.3.72

From Man marh the sangat left for Bombay arriving at Gurdwara Singh Sabha Dadar (Bombay).

5.3.72

The sangat enjoyed sight seeing in Bombay. The zoo, the sea and the collection of fish all provided insight into the way of life of coastal people.

6.3.72

The tour group set off from Bombay, arrived at Gurdwara Singh Sabha Dholia, and spent the night there.

7.3.72

The sangat set off from Dholia arriving in Nasik and then stopping the night at Gurdwara Imli Sahib, Indore, where Guru Nanak Dev Ji once stayed. Here the group listened to the historical background of the place and spent the night.

8.3.72

The sangat then set off from Indore and arrived late at night at Gurdwara Singh Sabha Guna.

9.3.72

From Guna the tour moved on to Gwalior and reached Gurdwara Bandi Chhor where Jahangir imprisoned Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. The sangat rested here for the night.

10.3.72

They then took leave from the Gurdwara of sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji and set off for Agra. Here after some sight seeing the tour party arrived in Delhi at Gurdwara Sis Ganj, the historical shrine related to the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

11.3.72

The congregation visited all the historical shrines in Delhi like Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, Gurdwara Majnu ka Tilla and came back to Sis Ganj Sahib to spend the night.

12.3.72

This was the last day of the pilgrimage and the sangat set off early from Delhi arriving first at Gurdwara Dookh Niwaran in Patiala. Here they paid homage at this shrine related to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and then set off for Gurdwara Alam gir Sahib in Ludhiana where Guru Gobind Singh Ji had passed through. The sangat arrived back at Gurdwara Rampur Khera that evening making the whole pilgrimage a success by having touched the dust of pious shrines once visited by our Guru's.

Similar programmes were followed in subsequent pilgrimages later in 1976 and 1979. The sangat not only went to the above-mentioned pilgrimages but also from time to time went on tour to historical shrines in Punjab. On August 20th, 1975 Baba Ji showered his blessings and accompanied the sangat to visit the historical place where Guru Gobind Singh Ji meditated in his past life, Sri Hemkunt Sahib.

On all these tours, the congregation gained great spiritual upliftment from the constant meditation and recital of Gurbani quite apart from the benefit of treasured pilgrimage to reverential shrines visited by our Guru's. Time and again this humble servant heard from disciples who went on the pilgrimages saying, "We don't know if our time was used fruitfully before but the time we spent in meditation during the trip was definitely invaluable. Apart from the simran, reciting Gurbani throughout the trip left no time to gossip and waste in idle chatter. No time was spent dwelling on worldly thoughts and neither did we remain in touch with the world around us. So much so, even thoughts of our families and businesses did not disturb our pilgrimage."

The deep affection between devotees was worth seeing at the end of such trips. Everyone was tearful with affection and yet sadness at the end of such an epic pilgrimage. No body wanted to part company and everyone felt as if they had gained a great deal of spiritual benefit.

All left with the knowledge that these gems of spirituality would remain and they would cherish the treasured trip in their memories treasured long after.

87 - VISITS ABROAD

The devotees of Baba Ji, who lived in foreign countries, would often beseech him to visit them abroad, so that they too could enjoy his divine company and get the chance to receive his blessings. Others would write to Baba Ji asking him to visit them and bless the rest of their families living abroad.

Affection and love is so powerful that it holds influence even thousands of miles away. The pull of this attraction took Baba Ji abroad three times. On his travels, he visited America, England and Canada. He travelled from gurdwara to gurdwara, house-to-house, city-to-city, preaching the mission of Sikhism and persuading the sangat to adopt the Sikh way of living.

In 1981, Baba Ji took this humble servant with him on his trip to America, Canada and England. The doubts of many devotees regarding the Sikh way of life and Gurbani were dispelled, either by his personal experience or by example of Gurbani. Whichever home Baba Ji stepped into was tinged with the fragrance of "gursikhi" in a short space of time. Many devotees took amrit because of the missionary work of Baba Ji and witnessing his pious way of life, many turned to the Guru's fold.

88 - THE LORD GRANTS WHATEVER HOLY MEN WISH FOR

In 1981 at the affectionate invitation of the sangat, Baba Ji was touring Canada. S. Dalwinder Singh of Gardhiwala, who was at that time living in Vancouver, Canada heard about Baba Ji's visit; He had been married for almost 11-12 years to Bibi Paramjit Kaur but, as was the will of God, they did not have any children. As is the desire of every couple, they too wished for a child so that their family would be complete.

This desire was haunting their minds and with time, hope was turning to despair. They tried many medical treatments but to no avail. Mr and Mrs Dalwinder Singh decided to invite Baba Ji over for langar with the motive of obtaining divine blessings for a child. Baba Ji accepted the invitation and on the appointed day arrived at their house with some other devotees. After langar, he addressed the assembled congregation and gave a discourse on the Guru's gospel. He also narrated tales from the lives of our Guru's to illustrate practical living based on the principles of Gurbani. An old lady, who was a relation of Dalwinder Singh, stood up at the end of the discussion and petitioned, "Baba Ji, this couple have been married for 10-12 years but, have had no children. Please bless them and pray for them so that their family may become complete with a child. This is their one desire and is the bane of their life." Hearing the old lady's request Baba Ji replied, "Bibi Ji these blessings are in the hands of the true Guru. You should pray in the Guru's feet. The Guru is kind and benevolent for..."

Whatever you ask from God

He will provide accordingly

jo maageh thaakur apunay tay so-ee so-ee dayvai.

naanak daas mukh tay jo bolai eeaa oohaa sach hovai.

(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 681)

"With deep felt emotion, whatever you beg from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Waheguru will provide." The old lady listened and then repeated her request to Baba Ji. Baba Ji could not hear the old lady and said,

"Please speak a bit louder as I'm a bit hard of hearing in my left ear. I couldn't catch what you were saying properly." The old lady repeated her request to Baba Ji, asking him to pray and bless the childless couple with children. Baba Ji replied to the old lady, "Bibi Ji if it was destined then the couple would have been blessed with children. Furthermore, one cannot be forced to do Ardas. In the Lord's palace, only humble prayer is accepted – even this is only if your prayer is heartfelt. Moreover, I have not come to this country to bless people with children. I have come to preach the message of naam meditation. I have not amassed miraculous powers to bless people with boons. For me the Guru is be all and end all. We pray in the feet of our Guru so should you." With these words, Baba Ji bid farewell and arrived back at the house of S. Fera Singh Ji, where he rested for the night.

S. Dalwinder Singh did not lose heart. The next day he arrived at the home of S. Fera Singh Ji. S. Fera Singh Ji's wife, Bibi Jit Kaur was a God loving and gentle lady who looked after the couple when they arrived. After serving them food and refreshments, the couple expressed their desire to meet Baba Ji. Baba Ji was resting upstairs on the first floor. Bibi Jit Kaur said that you may see Baba Ji if you wish and so the couple went upstairs.

Both of them greeted Baba Ji and sat down. Baba Ji asked them the reason for their visit. Dalwinder Singh beseeched Baba Ji with folded hands, "Baba Ji I have arranged an appointment for you at the doctor who will check your ear and test your hearing. As the doctor advises, he will then fit a hearing aid in your ear. It is hoped this will improve your hearing.

Baba Ji listened to his request, paused a while and said, "Why do you need to spend and waste money. I have heard enough throughout my life. Even now, I can hear what I need to by the grace of God. Please do not burden yourself; I have heard medical treatment is expensive in Canada. So spend the money on another worthy cause like helping the needy or give it to some religious place of worship." Dalwinder Singh repeated his petition once again, "Baba Ji it is not very expensive. Moreover, it is my earnest desire. I have felt that whenever you listen to paath or exchange words with someone, you have to strain to pay attention. This little gadget is a very small item that fits in your ear easily. Further, the volume of the device can be lowered or increased as desired. As it is a small device, no one can tell if you are wearing it or not. It is a discrete little device. So please accept my humble request. I will pick you up at 11 am day after tomorrow. The appointment has been arranged for 11.30 with the doctor." After much persuasion, Baba Ji agreed to accompany Dalwinder Singh Ji.

On the day of the appointment, Baba Ji was taken to see the doctor and he checked Baba Ji's hearing and ear thoroughly. The doctor measured the size of Baba Ji's ear after conducting numerous tests. The doctor told Baba Ji that his hearing problem was due to a small defect in his ear and could be corrected by placing a small hearing aid in the ear. He asked Baba Ji to return in a week to have the hearing aid fitted in the ear and at this stage would make any final adjustments to the hearing aid if necessary.

Dalwinder Singh's house was nearby and he then took Baba Ji to his house. At his house, he served Baba Ji with tea and refreshments. Without saying anything, he then dropped Baba Ji off back at Fera Singh Ji's house. After a week, on the day of the appointment, Dalwinder Singh took Baba Ji to the doctor again to have the hearing aid fitted. The doctor fitted the device and explained in detail how to operate the hearing aid. After the appointment, Dalwinder Singh again took Baba Ji to his house. At home, he devotedly and affectionately served tea and refreshments. Whilst at the house of Dalwinder Singh, Baba Ji listened to path of Sukhmani Sahib. With the hearing aid, Baba Ji could easily hear everything, without having to strain his attention. With the volume of the hearing aid turned up, Baba Ji exclaimed, "Young man! I can hear much better than before the hearing aid was put in. Dalwinder Singh, your humble service is accepted graciously. Now I shall hear Gurbani with even greater pleasure. Previously I had to request people to recite Gurbani loudly in order to hear them. This is a great blessing of the Guru indeed. How much did it cost you?" Dalwinder Singh refused to say how much the treatment cost and requested, "Baba Ji this money all belongs to the Guru. I consider myself lucky that in spending this God given wealth I have been able to gain your pleasure."

Baba Ji was very pleased to hear his polite, humble words and said, "I will pray in the feet of the dear Guru to thank him for your devoted service. If you want some thing then please ask without hesitation." Dalwinder Singh fell silent but his wife Paramjit Kaur who was sitting nearby, requested politely, "The almighty has blessed us with every possible comfort and material pleasure but our family is incomplete without a child. Please grace us with this boon so we too may become connected with the world through our children." Baba Ji smiled and said, "Bibi Ji, of course we will beg the Almighty for every boon..."

***I ask for glory, power & bless me with riches, property & sons
But the best thing I ask forever to sing your glory almighty
maan maaNga-o taan maaNga-o Dhan lakhmee sut dayh. ||1||
mukath jugath bhugath poorun purumaanundh purum nidhaan
(Kanra 5th Guru, page 1307)***

And

***Of all the prayers the best boon to pray for
Is the boon of singing God's praise
maagnaa maagan neekaa har jas gur tay maagnaa. ||4||
(Maru 5th Guru, page 1018)***

Though one should desire only God's praise but as you desire a child then we will pray on your behalf to Guru Ji. The Great Guru will heed your Ardas and grant you with a boon."

Baba Ji recited Mool mantar five times and humbly recited the Ardas, "O Great Guru please accept the service of your servants and fulfil their desire for having a son".

Baba Ji stayed for a while and instructed the couple to recite their nitnem daily, after which they were to do Ardas daily in the feet of the Guru asking for his blessing. The couple started doing their nitnem daily and after one year Guru Ji had blessed them with a son... a year later they were once again blessed with another son. Guru Arjun Dev Ji says:

***The prayer of God's men
Have not gone in vain
Nanak has the strength of the perfect Lord
Who is the treasure of all excellences
birthee kaday na hova-ee jan kee ardaas.
naanak jor govind kaa pooran guntaas. ||2||13||77||
(Bilawal 5th Guru, page 819)***

The need is to be humble and become the Lord's servant. Then God himself says:

***My Saints can release those bound by me
But I cannot release those bound by a Saint
If at any time a Saint seizes me and binds me
Then even I cannot raise any objection
mayree baaNDhee bhagat chhadaavai baaNDhai bhagat na chhootai mohi.
ayk samai mo ka-o geh baaNDhai ta-o fun mo pai jabaab na ho-ay.
mai gun banDh sagal kee jeevan mayree jeevan mayray daas.
naamdayv jaa kay jee-a aisee taiso taa kai paraym pargaas.
(Sarang Bhagat Namdev Ji, page 1252)***

A true Saint is carefree, unfettered, independent and yet very rare. If one is lucky to meet a true Saint then, it is for us to appease him. If we succeed in pleasing him then we can have all our desires fulfilled. A true Saint can only be pleased when we serve him in humility and abandon our ego. One has to abandon the claim to prestige and power. The Saint's pleasure is the Lord's

pleasure. In a state of joy, whatever he asks of the Lord is granted by the almighty. Whatever the Saint proclaims from his mouth comes to pass in this world and the next. Guru Arjun Dev Ji tell us:

Whatever I ask of my Lord

He blessed me with that exactly

Whatever the Lord's slave Nanak utters

Comes true in this world and the hereafter

jo maageh thaakur apunay tay so-ee so-ee dayvai.

naanak daas mukh tay jo bolai eehee oohaa sach hovai.

(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 681)

89 - MEDICINE AS WELL AS PREVENTION IS NECESSARY

On his way back from America Baba Ji visited England for about two months. At the invitation of many Sikh families, he visited several Gurdwara's. He attached the sangat and many other devotees to the feet of the Great Guru. During this tour, he was staying at the house of S. Surjit Singh Ji in Hounslow, London. In the evening, many devotees would arrive after *Rehras* and listen to the discourse on Gurbani given by Baba Ji. Thus, people availed themselves to learning the principles of gurmat and were awakened to the importance of Gurbani. Baba Ji would stress, "The Great Guru has showered upon us many blessings in Gurbani. It shows us the easy and practical way of achieving union with the almighty. We should read and study Gurbani and put it into practice in our daily lives. When we listen to Gurbani attentively, we come to know the real order of our Guru. We can then use the Guru's intellect to distinguish between good and bad deeds. On the contrary, if we don't listen to Gurbani, we achieve nothing. If after listening to Gurbani we practice what it enjoins us to do in our daily lives, we reach our life aim and gain the Guru's pleasure. Whoever listens and agrees to the Lord's command Guru Nanak Dev Ji tells us that...

***The state of mind of he who obeys
Cannot be described in words
mannay kee gat kahee na jaa-ay.
(Japji 1st Guru, page 3)***

And

***By faithfully fearing, believing and
Loving the name of God, salvation is obtained.
This amounts to taking a pilgrimage
In the true srine of the soul
suni-aa mani-aa man keetaa bhaa-o.
antargat tirath mal naa-o.
(Japji 1st Guru, page 4)***

Therefore, the Great Guru has ordered his Sikhs to read Gurbani. Reciting our Nitnem daily, we are slowly cleansed and rinsed from within and the unseen dirt of our sins begins to wash off our souls because...

***Hymns wash off filth and spontaneously enshrine
The Lord's name in the mind. Pause.
gurbaanee sun mail gavaa-ay.
sehjay har naam man vasaa-ay. |||| rahaa-o.
(Dhanasari 3rd Guru, page 665)
Hearing the Guru's word
My mind has become tender and imbued with it
This mind has returned to its own home
gurbaanee sunat mayraa man darvi-aa man bheenaaj nij ghar aavaigo.
(Kanra 4th Guru, page 1308)***

With the passage of time, the soul is purified and naam begins to reside in the heart. The straying mind comes to its home, drenching itself in naam and the mortal becomes attuned to the Almighty. Further, by reciting Gurbani daily, we get new guidance every day from the Guru.

Through Gurbani, the way to achieve union with the Almighty is shorter and our mind obtains eternal peace. In our worldly affairs, many hurdles are removed spontaneously. No evil, black magic, evil spirits, jantar, mantar, tantar affect the place where Gurbani is recited. Gurbani reforms our present world and the hereafter. Those who read it are praiseworthy. Those who are deprived of this ambrosial gift must seek to recite it.”

After a short recital of gurmantar, those assembled had langar and dispersed slowly. An old lady called Harnam Kaur stayed after every one had departed. She requested Baba Ji, “You explained the importance of reading Gurbani well enough. I too, do path daily. I read prayers from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at Akhand paths without taking money in return for the service. However, I have a big problem in my house with which we are fed up.”

Baba Ji asked, “What seems to be the problem? There should be no problem that is insurmountable to a person who reads Gurbani.” Bibi Harnam Kaur explained, “Whenever we bring new clothes into the house, they are either spoiled by burn marks or by cuts. Even the children’s clothes are not spared. The whole family is in a panic. A lot of the clothes have been damaged and we are all extremely worried that there is some supernatural force behind this problem.”

Baba Ji asked, “Bibi Ji you say you recite Nitnem and read Gurbani. The house in which Gurbani is recited regularly should have no incidents of supernatural or evil spirits.”

The lady said, “Baba Ji I have had an Akhand path recited in the house with advice from some Saints, but with no effect.” Baba Ji listened to her intently and after some deep thought said, “O good lady there is something amiss here. Evil spirits cannot haunt the place where Gurbani is recited.” The lady insisted that despite all efforts, these occurrences did not stop. Baba Ji fell silent and after some thought said, “Bibi Ji, your children don’t drink alcohol or eat meat in the house do they?” The lady replied, “My son’s do eat meat and drink alcohol but I do not.”

Baba Ji said, “This is the problem. If your family want to get rid of this problem, then ask your children not to drink or eat meat. If they all agree to this proposal then come and see me tomorrow. I am here for another three days. Be mindful, it must not be that your children give up meat and alcohol now under duress, but start eating and drinking outside the house, only to return to the house under the influence of alcohol. If they continue to do so, damage done to your clothes will continue. So please ask them properly.”

The lady went home, consulted with her family and told them what Baba Ji had said. The sons hesitated at giving up meat and alcohol at first, but the lady reminded them of Baba Ji’s words, that the damage would not stop unless everyone agreed never to drink alcohol or eat meat again, inside or outside the house. The desperate family agreed and told the old lady that they would no longer consume alcohol and meat. With the old lady’s persuasion, the sons threw out any bottles of alcohol that were lying in the house.

The next evening, the old lady came to see Baba Ji and said, “As you requested, all my family members have agreed to your proposal happily and have thrown away the bottles of liquor. Now please tell us what to do?”

Baba Ji said, "We will come to your house tomorrow morning. We will do Nitnem in your house and all your family must sit and listen to it. After that, you must do Nitnem daily in a loud voice. The Great Guru will then give you his blessings."

Next day, Baba Ji arrived at the old lady's house in the early morning, recited Nitnem aloud with great love and devotion. Whilst all the family members listened to the Nitnem, Baba Ji did Ardas and took a promise from the family members to read Gurbani, shun alcohol and meat. He told them that if they stayed steadfast in their vows, nothing would happen to the family. "If we drink alcohol and eat meat then Gurbani that is recited has no effect. Evil spirits gravitate towards unclean surroundings where alcohol and meat are used." The family agreed to abide by all the conditions happily, in order to save themselves from this misery. They started reciting and listening to Nitnem daily.

From that day onward, no other supernatural incidents like torn or burnt clothes occurred. The old lady narrated this story to me (Sant Seva Singh) when I was visiting England in August 1992. I was in Hounslow to meet some devotees when the lady heard of my visit and came over to see me. In her words, "Now we have unshakeable faith in Gurbani as it contains immense power." Whatever you ask from Gurbani, considering it the embodiment of the Guru, with deep devotion, that wish always comes to pass. Gurbani is capable of fulfilling all our desires. If there is any fault or need, it is on our part that we lack faith and devotion in Gurbani. It is clear from Gurbani that...

***Within whom abides the Guru's word
All his pangs and pains flee away
gur kee banee jis man vasai.
dookh darad sabh taa kaa nasai. |||||***
(Parbhathi 5th Guru, page 1340)

And

***Hearing true Gurbani, I am rid of
The troubles, maladies and suffering
dookh rog santaap utray sunee sachee banee.***
(Anand Sahib, 3rd Guru, page 922)

These are not imaginary tales or hearsay. These one hundred percent true incidents actually happened and now serve as "light house" beacons in the Dark Age for our guidance. When we recite Gurbani, it acts as a medicine to cure our ailments- physical, mental and spiritual.

We also need to practice prevention and abstinence from evil deeds for Gurbani to affect a cure. If you continue to take medicine without prevention and abstinence then, Gurbani will not bring about a cure to your problem. On the other hand, if we use abstinence from bad deeds but don't use the medicine of Gurbani we will fail to get a cure too. Medicine and abstinence from excess (that is things we should not do) are both essential. Bhai Gurdas Ji tells us that taking medicine and abstaining from things directed by the doctor will not affect a cure.

The messages of Gurbani must be applied with attention to our inner as well as outer lives. If we slacken our attention in any aspect, then we will meet with failure. This is why Guru Ji has told us that...

True, true, true is the Guru GuruJi has told us to accept Gurbani as being true, as it is the Almighty Lord's command. The omnipotent, omnipresent Lord has caused GuruJi to utter Gurbani from his mouth, these are the Lord's words. In obeying Gurbani, one obeys the Lord and benefits greatly by obtaining the Lord's pleasure:

O the disciple of the Guru, Know that the Guru's hymns are perfectly true.

God the creator himself causes, The Guru to utter them with his mouth

satgur kee banee sat sat kar jaanhu gursikhahu har kartaa aap muhhu kadhaa-ay.

(page 308)

90 - DEG PARSHAD MUST BE COOLED BEFORE IT IS CONSECRATED

Once, on the eve of the birth of the Khalsa, at Baisakhi celebrations, parshad was brought into the Guru's presence in two containers and placed before Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The hasty preparation by the attendants meant that the parshad was still hot when placed in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. At the end of the programme, *Ardas* was performed and as per the tradition, parshad was offered to Guru Ji so that it could be consecrated. The *hukamnama* was read, following which, the attendants distributed the deg parshad, to the sangat. The sangat was reciting simran of *Satnam-Waheguru* and Baba Ji was standing behind Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji waving the fan (chaur Sahib).

At this time the tenth master Guru Gobind Singh Ji appeared before Baba Ji and said, "Bhai Harnam Singh! Today the deg was very hot. Just look, the attendants can't even serve it properly with their hands. How can we have such hot parshad? So in the future, deg should be prepared with sanctity and allowed to cool down before it is offered for *bhog* (consecration or blessing of the parshad by the Guru)." After the parshad was distributed, Baba Ji told the sangat about the order of the great Guru. After this incident, Baba Ji would personally check the vessel and parshad to see if it was too hot, before it was offered for *bhog*. If it was too hot, then a fan would be placed over the vessel and the parshad stirred to cool it down before being offered for consecration.

So, we should always be careful about offering hot deg parshad to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji for *bhog* and make sure the parshad is warm or cool before the *Ardas* and *bhog*.

91 - TERCENTENARY MARTYRDOM OF SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI

As mentioned earlier, Sant Kartar Singh Ji Khalsa had immense love for Baba Ji. Khalsa Ji suggested to Baba Ji that there was a great need to preach the message of Sikhi amongst the community. The sangat, though highly devoted and fervent, required only that the message of the great Guru be spread further amongst the community at large. Keeping these words in mind Khalsa Ji informed Baba Ji of the desire to have a mass programme with over ten days of gurmat teachings, discourses and *kirtan* followed by a large procession through that area. All these programmes would culminate with the procession dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the martyrdom of the ninth master Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, who had sacrificed his life for the cause of religious freedom.

Baba Ji was extremely happy after listening to Khalsa Ji's plan and assured him of all possible assistance. Khalsa Ji thanked Baba Ji for his co-operation and blessings and launched himself with great enthusiasm into the missionary work. His group consisted of Gurbani singers and bards (called dhadhi's), preachers and poets. In many of these processions, Baba Ji himself accompanied the Singh's from Damdami Taksaal. Under the programme chalked out, a procession would start from gurdwara Rampur Khera on 17th October 1976. The route of the procession was fixed via Gardhiwala, Ambala jattan, Tanda Urmur, Dasuya, Sikri, Bhunga and then back to gurdwara Rampur Khera after covering nearly fifty miles.

Preparations were started a month before. Duties were assigned to the sangat. All the nearby villages were informed through the media and advertisements. All the sangat accepted their duties with glad hearts. Sant Kartar Singh Khalsa Ji reached gurdwara Rampur Khera on 14th October with his jatha in high spirits. The assembled sangat was informed and educated regarding the great sacrifice of the ninth Guru. Numerous gatherings took place at many places. The sangat started to assemble on the eve of 16th October 1976. Trucks, cars, scooters, buses and tractor trailers assembled far beyond the expected numbers.

The next day at 7 am, *Ardas* was performed before Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The minibus belonging to Khalsa Ji was decorated to carry the palanquin with Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji enthroned in it. The palanquin was decorated with flowers and garlands were hung around the coach as well. At 7.15, the huge procession set off from Gurdwara Rampur Khera.

The procession was planned in advance. At the front, in two pick up trucks, were dhadhi's, poets and singers who would go on ahead, recite *kirtan* and give discourses to assembled masses, until the rest of the convoy arrived. As the cavalcade arrived, this group would move on to the next venue followed slowly by the procession. The front of the procession had 70-80 scooters and motorcycles adorned with saffron flags. In the next open top truck stood the five beloved ones with swords and wearing distinctive saffron robes. The next vehicle was the decorated mini bus carrying the palanquin of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Khalsa Ji stood waving an ornate fan over the palanquin. Then there was a convoy of 20 or so cars followed by 15 buses, 85 or so trucks and some 150-tractor trailers. It was like an ocean of devotees remembering the sacrifice of their great Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. It was a unique experience that had to be seen to be believed.

The procession was so long that the front of the convoy reached Dasuya and the back end had barely moved from Tanda Harsi pind road. An aircraft showered flowers on the procession. The sangat of Miani and Choudhri Lakhi Singh served langar to the procession at midday. Khalsa Ji was truly blessed on this day. He started waving the fan over Guru Ji's palanquin at 7 am that morning

and every stop awakened all to the great sacrifice made by our ninth Guru. He emphasised to the sangat the importance of reciting Gurbani, keeping our hair unshorn, abandoning drugs/alcohol, taking amrit and following the path of true Sikhism. At every stop, with great emotion he loudly sang the hymns of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and roused the sangat to sing with him. He was singing the slogans with the assembled masses:

***Thus spoke Guru Tegh Bahadur,
We must never leave our faith under any condition
When we give a helping arm to another
We never back down even if we sacrifice our lives***

And

***I may lose my head
May I never lose my faith***

In the end, the procession arrived back at gurdwara Rampur Khera at 8.30pm. After performing *Ardas*, Khalsa Ji finally had something to eat and drink.

Through all the villages that the procession passed, devotees had erected beautiful gates to welcome the great Guru. Even the devotees whose villages were not on the route had come to erect decorated arches through which the procession passed. At various places, children, ladies, singers were singing hymns whilst they awaited the arrival of the convoy. It is ironic that Indira Gandhi had declared an emergency in all of India yet Khalsa Ji held 37 such processions to awaken the masses to their religion. Though Baba Ji was old in age, he helped in the preaching of Sikhism in this programme in every possible way.

92 - PROPHECIES OF BABA JI

The sangat was getting ready to assemble for the annual meditation camp in 1975. Some devotees arrived at the gurdwara a day before the camp was due to start in order to share on the organisation and help setting up of the camp facilities. In the evening, after the prayer of *Sodar Rehras*, some devotees went to the langar. Six or seven devotees, along with the humble servant remained behind with Baba Ji. Baba Ji told us all to spend some time in meditation instead of talking, whilst langar was being served. All the Singh's started to recite simran and after about 15 minutes Baba Ji spoke in a solemn voice, "Oh Singh's! The future years to come are horrific for the nation." Saying this he fell silent again. After a few minutes he spoke again, "a time will come of such severity that once a person leaves home his family members will not know if he will return alive or not. His family will fear for his safety until he returns home." Again Baba Ji fell silent.

He continued his solemn but serious words, "If a person is robbed or someone robs your properties by force, you will not be able to stop them. No one will hear your plea, neither the government nor the courts nor the police. Even then, circumstances will not improve. They will get from bad to worse and a time will come when your honour is in the hands of enemies. The conditions will worsen further. The bloodshed and destruction that is visible is terrifying and horrid and the soul trembles at the vision. The earth seems to be dyed with blood. In this horrific time, you will be saved neither by worldly men of influence or the government. Only the unseen yet miraculous hand of the Almighty will save the true devotee who meditates on the name of the Lord. As the grains clinging to the central pivot survive in the grindstone so shall those survive who take the shelter of the Lord's name and have simran as their pivot. What is more even small gutka's will not be available to the people; So, Singh's try to learn Gurbani by heart.

After uttering these fateful words Baba Ji recited five paths of *Benati Chaupai* as a group and performed *Ardas* in front of the great Guru, "O Lord, master of the poor, the scene, which you have shown us of the future, is unbearable. Please bless us with the pivot of your name, give us shelter and security to the sangat in the forthcoming horrific times."

After the *Ardas*, the rest of us sat in langar with the overpowering and prophetic words of Baba Ji hanging heavily in our hearts and minds. Ironically, it is well known that in 1975 many Singh's were murdered near the golden temple. It is matter of historical fact, how in 1984, operation blue star and the subsequent genocide of the Sikhs across Punjab and India was orchestrated. Baba Ji's prophesies proved to come true word for word.

93 - BABA JI RECITES PRAYERS FOR THE KHALSA PANTH

On the eve of Baisakhi 1976 Baba Ji began a programme of 'simran' to uplift the morale of the Khalsa panth. He cancelled all visits away from the gurdwara and if he did have to go, then he would first complete the rigorous programme of simran before leaving. On Baisakhi 1979 he completed his prayers for the panth and prayed at the feet of the great Guru, "O great Guru! Whatever naam has been recited with your grace over the past three years, please dedicate the benefit of this simran for the entire Khalsa panth. Save the panth from the impending crisis with your guidance and blessing. Have mercy on your disciples."

The Daily Programme

In those days, he would get up at 2 am and after bathing, engaged himself in simran for an hour. At about 3 am, the remaining sangat would be woken up and whilst the sangat got ready, Baba Ji would engross himself in simran. Next, *Nitnem* in groups followed by *Sukhmani Sahib* was recited. *Ardas* was done in the presence of the entire sangat and the daily hukamnama was taken. After light refreshment, he would return to his simran for another three hours and recite several rosaries of various hymns until 1 pm, when he would come and sit with the sangat to have langar. He would exchange words with the sangat and see to any essential work or meet any outside visitors. Sometimes he would order a devotee to read a historical tale from the texts written by Bhai Vir Singh. At about 2.30 pm, he would return to his hut and complete the daily routine of meditation of various hymns. At about 6pm he would come out for a while and go for an evening walk. Even during his walk, he would either recite himself or ask a devotee to recite the prayer of '*Benati Chaupai*' or '*Satte*' Balwand ki Vaar'. On his return, the evening prayer of *Rehras* and *Arti* was recited in the presence of the great Guru. Then Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji would be put rest. He would take a cup of milk after this. After the sangat had taken langar, everyone would sit around Baba Ji, historical tales of the Guru's lives were read and discussion of Gurbani would take place. After reciting the bedtime prayer of *Sohila*, he would retire to bed, where he would engross himself in simran and sleep for a while.

Of course, he spent all his life in a similar routine of meditation but between Baisakhi of 1976 and 1979, he did not deviate even a few minutes from his daily schedule.

On the Baisakhi of 1978, he heard of the brutal murder by Nirankari's of the Singh's in Amritsar. He went immediately to pay homage and see the dead Singh's for himself. Deeply pained by the whole incident, he remained to cremate the Singh's and joined the funeral procession to mourn the loss of the Singh's with the whole nation. He met with various leaders and returned to the gurdwara with a heavy heart.

94 - ONLY SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI HAS THE RIGHT TO BE WORSHIPPED AND BOWED TO

Whenever a devotee came to see Baba Ji, he would first ask them, "Have you paid your respects and bowed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji?" The sangat was given strict orders that before coming to see him, they should first pay their respects and homage to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. No devotee was allowed to bow or kneel down to Baba Ji in respect. He would always greet another Sikh by saying....*Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*.

He would tell the devotee not to kneel down. Some times new comers would come to see him and would be told if possible by attendants not to kneel or bow down to Baba Ji and greet him with a Guru-Fateh. Baba Ji would tell them to bow and kneel in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji only, because the great Guru is the only one who is capable of granting all our wishes and blessing us.

Baba Ji used to say, "A gursikh should stand on his own two feet and not abandon his principles. The one who abandons his principles gets nothing. The great Guru has ordered us that whenever two gursikhs meet they greet one another by saying *Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*. By wishing Gur-Fateh, firstly we repeat the name of God four times and secondly the pleasure of the great Guru is received." In the sangat, Baba Ji would tell us that, often by not exchanging Guru-Fateh we miss out on both the above benefits of greeting another Sikh. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is the supreme authority of this age and by not bowing to the Guru, we still hold fast to our inner desire to revere a physical entity of the Guru. We are thus reinforcing our belief in the physical Guru by bowing to living people. The physical, living being that we bow to is incapable of giving us our desires and we miss the true, transformative, blessing of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Whenever a devotee came to Baba Ji with a spiritual or worldly problem, he would listen to them carefully. He would then take them straight to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, where he would ask the devotee to pray in front of Guru Ji asking for the Lord's guidance, whilst Baba Ji would stand behind Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji waving the fan. After *Ardas*, he would take the hukamnama and advise the devotee to recite a particular hymn or prayer and then do an *Ardas* daily at the feet of the great Guru. When their task or problem was solved, he would advise them to join the fold of the great Guru by taking amrit and thus reform their present life and the hereafter.

95 - METHOD TO CONCENTRATE THE MIND

Almost every follower of spirituality has the same dilemma: "We read Gurbani and try to meditate, but our mind does not stay focussed on Gurbani. It wanders in thought." Many devotees would enquire about this issue frequently. Time and again, they would ask Baba Ji whether there was any method to prevent the mind from wandering. He would first listen to their query and then say, "Do you take time out or attempt to quieten your mind about which you are so anxious? Do you take any time or make a special effort to try to stop the mind from wandering in idle thought? So brother, if you try to do this you are praiseworthy. If you do not take time to meditate or make such a special effort, then you know, even the most simple of tasks in daily life cannot be accomplished without effort let alone focusing the mind".

***Conquering your mind conquer the world
man jeetai jag jeet.***

(Japji 1st Guru, page 6)

There is not an iota of doubt that all spiritual achievements are accomplished through mental concentration. Without proper focus of the mind, to read Gurbani or sit in meditation (simran) of naam will not bear proper fruit. The nature of our mind is to look outwardly to the world, hankering after material objects and our effort should be to make the mind introspective by taking refuge in the shelter of Guru. Bhai Gurdas Ji hails those gursikhs who have checked and controlled their minds from wandering outside:

***May I be a sacrifice unto those gursikhs who
In accordance with gurmat,
Concentrate their mind on the feet of the Guru
ho sudhukae thin gurasikhaa baahur jaadhaa vuruje rehaayaa***
(Bhai Gurdas Vaar 12 Pauri 6)

And

***The mind wanders out because
The scum (dirt) of so many births is attached to the soul
And it has become pitch black
janam janam kee is man ka-o
mal laagee kaalaa ho-aa si-aahu.***
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 651)

The accumulation of numerous sins over many past lives, has caused the mind to wander from its true centre and become tarnished with the filth of these sins. It runs and hankers after those material things, which it desires and appeases it. One must use Gurbani, which represents the Guru's intellect, to logically discern whether these material things are good or bad. The reason why the mind wanders must be sought and the stimulus that causes the mind to lose focus must be addressed. Taking refuge in Gurbani and thereby accessing the highest intellect of our Guru, one obtains greater logic to prevent and check the mind from wandering around in thought:

***With his mind he contends
With his mind he parleys
And with his mind, he engages in contest.***

**With the love of the true word,
Man obtains that what he desires
man hee naal jhagrhaa man hee naal sath
man hee manjh samaa-ay.
man jo ichhay so lahai sachai sabad subhaa-ay.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 87)**

With continuous effort, checking the mind from indulging in stray thoughts:

**Their mind is satiated (cooled down)
By the mind itself
Through the peerless hymns of Gurbani
man hee tay man maani-aa gur kai sabad apaar.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 587)**

The waves coming out of the mind are called thoughts. These thoughts are the outcome of our nature or temperament. A person's nature or temperament is created by repeated actions that one undertakes. These actions or deeds are a direct outcome of our surrounding environment or the company that we keep because...

**As the deeds man does so would he become
jayhay karam kamaa-ay tayhaa ho-isee.
(Suhi 1st Guru, page 730)**

Whatever company one keeps dictates what deeds and actions, he or she will commit. By taking a particular action time and again, it becomes a habit or our temperament. Our nature or temperament now will give rise to waves of thoughts that are directly related to our actions and the company we keep.

So, to make the mind stable, first we need to remove the stimulus that is to change the company that we keep. By changing sangat from bad to that of good people or gursikhs, our mind will become engaged in listening to the Guru's teaching. By repeatedly listening to the Guru's words, one's mind will find it easier to meditate on God. As Guru Nanak Dev Ji says in Japji Sahib, listening to praises of God one becomes absorbed in contemplation/meditation easily (*sunī-ai laagai sahj Dhiaan.*).

Guru Ji has described the importance of listening with focus in these four stanzas of Japji Sahib. These verses describe the height of spirituality that is gained just by listening to God's name. One must now judge how much Gurbani does one listen to as we recite it. We can hear Gurbani only if our mind is stable and not wandering in other thoughts. If we recite gurmantar "Waheguru," then we should hear it with our ears attentively. Repeat this action again and again, tuning our mind to the tone of our voice as we say Waheguru. Soon our mind will start to focus more deeply and then our task will be accomplished with ease:

**In the Lord's love is spiritual vision and through the spiritual vision the Lord is comprehended
By Guru's grace, this ineffable discourse is known
Dhun meh Dhi-aan Dhi-aan meh jaani-aa
gurmukh akath kahaanee. ||3||
(Ramkali 1st Guru, page 879)**

Baba Ji used to describe one more method to quieten the mind of thoughts. When sitting down to do Mool mantar, say for 27 times, then only count the repetition of Mool mantar that was recited and listened to without other thoughts in the mind. If, when reciting Mool mantar, one had thoughts, then do not count this as having done the Mool mantar. Very quickly, the mind will realise that to complete 27 repetitions of Mool mantar, thoughts will have to be held down and focus in meditation will be required. You will at first find the mind goes astray a few times but, by counting only those repetitions as complete, when the mind was free of thought it will slowly begin to remain in focus longer. The intensity of concentration increases with time and pleasure is gained as the mind becomes used to meditating on naam. As concentration increases so does the pleasure so much so that...

***If you taste the sweetness of God elixir
You shall be taken by surprise at tasting it.
You need not kill the mind nor can it be killed
No one has ever killed the mind thus far
The only way is to divert its attention
To some other constructive direction
With the grace of God
har ras kaa tooN chaakhahi saad.
chaakhat ho-ay raheh bismaad. |||||
(Gauri Guareri 5th Guru, page 180)***

It is clear from Gurbani that desires attract the attention of the mind to material objects and prevent it from concentrating on God consciousness:

***Without controlling the desires of the mind
Mammon cannot be conquered
The Lord who has created this universe
He alone understands the mysteries of it
Contemplating on the Guru's word
One is ferried across the dreadful world ocean
naa man marai na maa-i-aa marai.
jin kichh kee-aa so-ee jaanai sabad veechaar bha-o saagar tarai.
(Parbhati 1st Guru, page 1342)***

In a nutshell, one's mental energy must be focused and channelled in one direction only. The flow of thought needs to be diverted. Once, a great Sufi mystic enquired of his teacher the method to concentrate his mind. His Guru was busy planting onions and whilst working with his hands, he replied, "Bulleh shah what is there to achieve of God consciousness? Dig up the plant from here (i.e. divert the mind's attention from the world) and replant it over there (i.e. refocus your mind in meditation of God).

Simply put, we need to divert our mind from worldly thoughts, anxieties and bad thoughts into Gurbani, kirtan, and meditation of naam (simran). At first a great deal of effort will be needed, labouring to achieve quietness from thoughts, but, the rewards of bliss will be proportional to the effort we put into meditation. Furthermore, along with our personal effort, we should beseech the Guru in Ardas. Ask Waheguru Ji as a humble servant, "Dear Guru Ji, we are incapable of controlling our mind, please have mercy and help us to control this strong willed mind. Make it seek pleasure

in Gurbani.” Praying (or Ardas) in front of our Guru is in itself a further noble effort that will help immensely.

To devotees seeking spiritual bliss, Baba Ji often used to say, “In this world self-restraint or self-control is a great quality. Every Gursikh must inculcate this quality in their daily life. It is essential because it enables spiritual benefits to be obtained more easily. Just as in our daily lives we try to save time by performing a task as efficiently as possible, so we should endeavour to gain maximum spiritual benefit in the least amount of time. By restraining the thoughts, we are able to understand Gurbani and concentrate more easily. To get maximum benefit in the least amount of time we should listen to Gurbani with all our focus and attention. If we do not listen to Gurbani with full inner attention then we miss the message of Gurbani. So, our effort is wasted, not to mention the inefficient use of our time. Absent minded recitation of Gurbani takes a long time to bear fruit whereas meditating on Gurbani with complete attention is accepted by the Guru readily. Counting the number of hymns or repetitions of Mool mantar is all but fruitless as Guru Ji says:

***Man may read and study cart loads of books
He may read and study multitudes of books
He may study boatloads of books
He may study as many books to fill deep pits
He may read years upon years
Study through all the months of the years
He may continue reading all his life
He may study with all his breath
Nanak there is only the name of God of merit
All else is pursuit of pride and prattle of no merit
parh parh gadee ladee-ah parh parh bharee-ah saath.
parh parhee-ai jaytee aarjaa parhee-ah jaytay saas.
parh bayrhee paa-ee-ai parh parh gadee-ah khaat.
parhee-ah jaytay baras baras parhee-ah jaytay maas.
naanak laykhai ik gal hor ha-umai jhakh-naa jhaakh. |||||***
(Asa 1st Guru, page 467)

Bhagat Kabir Ji also say...

***Of what avail is reading and reflection
Of what value is listening to Vedas and puranas?
Of what value is listening or reading scriptures
If equipoise does not arise within
ki-aa parhee-ai ki-aa gunee-ai.
ki-aa bayd puraanaaN sunee-ai.
parhay sunay ki-aa ho-ee.
ja-o sahj na mili-o so-ee. |||||***
(Sorath Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 655)

Guru Arjun Dev Ji also warns us that...

***Man reads Holy Scriptures and Vedas
He practices ablutions and breath control
But he escapes not from***

***The company of five evil passions.
He is tied even more to a haughty disposition
My dear, the Lord is not met through these measures
As I have performed many such rituals
I have dropped wearily at the Lord's door
And pray for the boon of a discerning intellect
paath parhi-o ar bayd beechaari-o nival bhu-angam saaDhay.
panch janaa si-o sang na chhutki-o aDhik ahaN-buDh baaDhay.
pi-aaray in biDh milan na jaa-ee mai kee-ay karam anaykaa.
(Dhanasari 5th Guru, p641)***

If a passenger needs to cover a long journey, he first has to travel to a station before boarding a train or bus. His real journey begins only when the bus or train moves. Similarly, when the tongue recites Gurbani, it is akin to the journey from home to the bus or train station. The real spiritual journey starts when we hear, understand and practice the message of Gurbani with the constant awareness that almighty God is always in and around us, listening to our every word. There is only one aim of our life because...

***This is your once in a lifetime chance to meet the Lord of this world
gobind milan kee ih tayree baree-aa.
(Asa 5th Guru, page 12)***

And to fulfil that aim Guru Ji has guided us to adopt the society of holy Saints:

***Joining the society of Saints
Contemplate the name of the Lord
mil saaDhsangat bhaj kayval naam |
(Asa 5th Guru, page 12)***

***Contemplate the name of one Lord
All other jobs are fruitless
japahu ta ayko naamaa.
avar niraafal kaamaa. |||| rahaa-o.
(Suhi 1st Guru, page 728)***

***Contemplate the one name of almighty
O mortal seek the one Lord's asylum
kayval naam japahu ray paraanee parahu ayk kee sarnaaN.
(Dhanasari Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 692)***

And

***O mortals utter the name of one Lord
Then alone will you be ferried across the world ocean
kayval naam japahu ray paraanee tab hee nihchai tarnaa.
(Parbhati Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 1349)***

The most helpful act in contemplating the name of the Lord is to keep Saintly company. We should strive to keep such company daily. The best company to keep is that of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Every gursikh must read attentively and analyse at least two angas from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji daily. In doing so, we keep the company of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and receive deeper and newer insight into spiritual matters, daily.

According to the ancient text called 'Gurbilas Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji', whoever wishes a vision of the Guru should first glimpse the form of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with devotion and faith. To glimpse Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is to have an audience with the Guru himself.

Who ever wants to talk with the Guru should listen attentively and read Gurbani with love and devotion. Bhai Nand Lal Ji who was the devoted poet of Guru Gobind Singh Ji says the same in his writings...

***The Sikh who wants to see the Guru
Should glimpse upon Sri Granth Guru
Bathe in the ambrosial hour before dawn
Circumambulate the Guru three times attentively
He who wants to talk to the Guru
Should read, listen and practice Gurbani
He who wants to listen to my voice
Read the words of Guru Granth with concentration
Consider the Granth my embodiment
Doubt not the unity of Guru and Granth
(Rehatnama Bhai Nand Lal Ji)***

Furthermore, by keeping good company of gursikhs or Sainly persons, one is inspired and aspires to meet with the almighty:

***Beholding them ambition wells up in my mind too
As to when shall I obtain the treasure of virtues?
tinaa daykh man chaa-o uthandaa ha-o kad paa-ee guntaasaa.
(Jaitsari 5th Guru, page 703)***

Moreover, by coming into the company of pious people, one is able to discriminate between good and bad deeds. One is inspired to adopt merits and shun misdeeds in the company of pious people. Eventually, the balance of our karma is tipped in favour of good deeds:

***During the seven watches
It is good to speak the truth and sit with the wise
In such company vice and virtue can be discerned
The capital of falsehood is reduced Super intellect develops
Among the company of gursikhs who love God
satee pahree sat bhalaa bahee-ai parhi-aa paas.
othai paap punn beechaaree-ai koorhai ghatai raas.
(Salok 2nd Guru, page 146)***

***By meeting Saints society
My understanding becomes acute.
saaDhsangat mil buDh bibayk. ||3||
(Asa 5th Guru, page 377)***

If for some reason a gursikh cannot get the company of other gursikhs then he or she should try to enjoy the company of religious and holy texts. One is inspired to walk in the footsteps of great Saints, gursikhs and God loving personalities by reading their biographies and tales of achievement. In order to control their mind, every devotee should try to avail him or herself of the above-mentioned methods of pious, Godly company.

96 - A GURSIKH IS TESTED EVERY DAY

Baba Ji used to say, "A gursikh, who reads Gurbani's order at night and follows its message during the day by reading *Nitnem*, the great Guru examines him daily to test whether in his daily life he practices what was read in *Nitnem* or not. If the gursikh has passed the day as Gurbani directs us then, he passes the test and the Guru grants his approval gladly. If on the other hand he has not conducted his affairs according to what Gurbani teaches us then he fails his test in the eyes of the Guru. We should be mindful that we accept the path shown by Gurbani and live our daily lives according to these teachings of the Guru, abandoning deeds that are prohibited in Gurbani.

A gursikh, who meditates on God in his word and deed, is blessed with every boon. But one, who listens to the Guru's words but does not act upon them, is deprived of the Guru's happiness. Only that person is accepted...

***Whom in his thought, word and deed
Contemplates the one Lord,
That man obtains all the fruits
man bach karam parabh ayk Dhi-aa-ay.
sarab falaa so-ee jan paa-ay. ||6||
(Raag Suhi 5th Guru, page 760)***

And

***He who in thought, word and deed,
Remembers you master, obtains all the fruits
man bachan karam je tuDh araaDheh say sabhay fal paavhay.
(Raag Gauri 5th Guru, page 248)***

And he who adopts the path...

***By thought, word and deed, contemplate I, the Lord's name.
Very arduous is the great whirlpool of the world.
It is by the Guru's grace that
I have ferried across the world ocean, o Nanak. Pause.
ghooman ghayr mahaa at bikh-rhee gurmukh naanak paar utaaree. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Raag Ramkali 5th Guru, page 916)***

So, gursikhs can swim across the whirlpool of the desires of this world, which would otherwise be hard to cross.

***He who meditates on his creator Lord
Through thought, word and deed,
Suffers not punishment ever
man bach karam araaDhay kartaa tis naahee kaday sajaa-ee hay. ||6||
(Maru sohila 5th Guru, page 1071)***

So, absolute approval and pleasure of the Lord can only be obtained if we contemplate on the message of Gurbani in thought, word and deed.

97 - IT IS COMPULSORY TO INTROSPECT OUR DAILY ROUTINE

Baba Ji used to say, "Every gursikh should ponder over his or her daily actions for a short while before going to sleep. If some bad deed has been committed or a lie told or someone's feelings hurt or someone has been wronged or swallowed another's right, at the instigation of the mind, then a prayer should be done at the feet of the great Guru begging for forgiveness and remain vigilant in the future.

On the other hand, if a good deed or benevolent action has been taken due to God's grace through you, then, thanks should be offered to the Almighty Lord, so that this body is assigned to some other noble or pious purpose in the future.

One must not become proud of one's good deeds. As a trader keeps an account of his income and expenditure but always keeps his expenses lower than his income thus acquiring profits and becoming prosperous by keeping daily accounts, so we should also try to keep an account of our good and bad deeds. Soon our good deeds will out number our bad deeds and the Guru's grace will rain upon.

98 - ONE MUST DONATE A TENTH OF OUR INCOME

The great Guru has ordered every gursikh to donate at least one tenth of his or her income to religious and philanthropic causes. Guru Ji blesses the Sikh, who puts aside their honestly earned and genuine income for charitable purposes. His earnings become fruitful in this world, and in the next world, he or she does not fall short of money. The tradition of dasvandh (which means one tenth) is a concept that is described by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in Bachittar Natak. Guru Ji emphatically states that whosoever does not donate a tenth of their income will lose out to the forces of corrupt power in this world and mammon will extract this income in a less favourable way. Bhai Gurdas Ji too has mentioned the tradition of dasvandh in his Vaar's, as has Bhai Nand laal Ji in his writings called Tankhah namah. As we know, Bhai Gurdas Ji was the esteemed Sikh of Guru Arjun Dev Ji, who helped to compile the Adi Granth under the direct supervision of Guru Arjun Dev Ji. Bhai Nand laal Ji was an esteemed Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Dasvandh is also mentioned in the later writings of kavi Santokh Singh's Suraj Parkash and the Rehatnamas of Bhai Desa Singh. The great Guru instituted the tradition of dasvandh so that the earnings of a Sikh could be used to help the needy and to proliferate the teachings of the Lord. In this way, the earnings of a Sikh are rendered profitable in this world and the next. By giving dasvandh, we obtain spiritual profit as well as the Guru's pleasure.

The tradition of donation has been around for time immemorial. However, when donating for a good cause the donor can develop a sense of pride and wrongly thinks "I have donated money to a good cause." This pride leads to vanity and a haughty attitude, which tarnishes the mind. The word of God i.e. naam does not take root in such a mind. Therefore, money donated with a sense of pride is ultimately useless. The ninth Guru tells us that...

***Who-so-ever, while going on pilgrimage,
Fasting and giving alms, takes pride in his mind,
Nanak those deeds of his go in vain
Like an elephant sprinkles dust on itself after bathing
tirath barat ar daan kar man mai Dharai gumaan.
naanak nihfal jaat tih ji-o kunchar isnaan. ||46||
(Salok 9th Guru, page 1428)***

So, in order to save Sikhs from the demerit of ego and vanity, Guru Ji has bound Sikhs in the duty of dasvandh. A gursikh must hand over one part out of ten of his or her income to the Guru with the thought in mind that it is the Guru's possession. The gursikh must be mindful that dasvandh is the Guru's portion and one is just the custodian of this income. This money should be spent for religious or philanthropic causes. By giving dasvandh with this attitude of servitude, we follow the words of Bhagat Kabir Ji....

***What do I lose in handing over what was yours already?
tayraa tujh ka-o sa-upatay ki-aa laagai mayraa.
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1375)***

When giving dasvandh, a gursikh's mind is filled with humility and tenderness as he is freed from the Guru's possession because...

Why should man keep another's possession in trust?

***Returning it, he surely attains peace
paraa-ee amaan ki-o rakhee-ai ditee hee sukh ho-ay.
(Salok 3rd Guru, page 1249)***

Thus, we can relinquish our pride and vanity in returning the Guru's dasvandh and in the process earn spiritual profits. Although everything that we receive in life is given to us by the Almighty himself, it is beneficial to regard all our income to be but a boon from the Lord. We are just giving back one tenth of the income that the Lord gave us in the first place. In this manner, we learn to relinquish greed as well as attachment to material wealth. Guru Arjun Dev Ji warn us in *Sukhmani Sahib*, "O mortal, God gives you ten things, you should return one at least as a token of thanks". What if the Almighty takes back all he has given you, what will you be able to do then? One must contemplate the words of Guru Arjun sahib:

***The mortal obtains ten things and puts them behind them.
For the sake of one thing,
He forfeits his confidence.
If the Lord gives not even one thing
And takes away the ten,
Then say, what can this fool do?
das bastoo lay paachhai paavai.
ayk basat kaaran bikhot gavaavai.
ayk bhee na day-ay das bhee hir lay-ay.
ta-o moorhaa kaho kaha karay-i.
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 268)***

So, in order to thank God and to obtain his pleasure, one must surrender at least one tenth of all the Guru's boons back to him. In thanking him for all his blessings and donating dasvandh, you become free from the burden of the Guru's possession. A gursikh who donates dasvandh, neither suffers loss nor does he have to pay worldly fines. A gursikh thus profits materially and spiritually in this life and the next.

99 - ONE MUST FOLD BOTH HANDS DURING ARDAS

It is often noted that when we stand for *Ardas* before the great Guru many people unknowingly just lock or intertwine their fingers together instead of folding their hands properly. Baba Ji often used to remark in the congregation that a gursikh should stand in front of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji with both hands folded, palms to fingers, close to the chest, facing Guru Ji in respectful prayer and reverence. Guru Arjun Dev Ji tells us that...

***Joining both the hands,
I make a supplication before thee,
O my Lord if thy wills it,
Then alone thou can embellish me
du-ay kar jorh kara-o ardaas.
tuDh bhaavai taa aaneh raas.
(Raag Suhi 5th Guru, page 737)***

And

***Joining both hands, I supplicate the Lord.
I wash his feet and utter his praise
du-ay kar jorh karee ardaas.
charan pakhaar kahaaN guntaas.
(Dhanasari 5th Guru, page 676)***

The importance of joining our hands together is given in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji several times:

***Clasping both hands, I make a supplication o Lord!
Show mercy onto me and save this sinking stone
du-ay kar jorh ik bin-o kareejai.
kar kirpaa dubdaa pathar leejai.
(Maajh 5th Guru, page 103)***

And

***O Saints, my venerable beloveds
Let us get together with joined hands,
Adore the imperishable, omnipotent Lord
kar jorhihu sant ikatar ho-ay mayray laal jee-o abhinaasee
purakh poojayhaa raam.
(Bihagra 5th Guru, page 542)***

Moreover, the true Guru has ordered gursikhs in Gurbani several times to join and fold both hands in praying to the Almighty with utmost humility. So, we should all be mindful to fold our hands during *Ardas* and not make this error when standing in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

100 - ARDAS IN SANGAT IS A MUST FOR A GURSIKH

Although Baba Ji was now old and physically not as strong, he would make every effort to attend religious functions to which he was invited. Drawn by the affection of the sangat and without caring for his health, he would attend religious programmes and feel great spiritual elation at having been blessed the opportunity to meet the sangat. Baba Ji believed that...

The Lord abides in the Saints congregation

vich sangat har parabh varatdaa bujhahu sabad veechaar.

(Salok 4th Guru, page 1314)

The Lord dwells amongst the congregation. By sitting in the sangat and participating in an audience with Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, one obtains immense spiritual benefit.

Once, Bhai Sarwan Singh from Behram village (near Bhogpur) arranged an akhand path ceremony, at his home. He duly invited Baba Ji to attend the akhand path and asked him to come on the very first day that the prayers were due to start. Baba Ji along with some other people from the gurdwara arrived at the home of Bhai Sarwan Singh in the afternoon. After paying homage and bowing to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Baba Ji partook in langar. In the evening Baba Ji sat with the congregation to recite the evening prayer of Rehras and sat for a long while in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, listening to the recital of the prayers. After some nourishment, Baba Ji retired until the next morning. As per his usual routine, he sat with sangat to recite the morning prayers, meditate (simran) on the *Gur-mantar* and finally listened to the path of *Sukhmani Sahib* amidst the congregation. Baba Ji then left to stroll and rest for a while, after having bowed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

As is customary when reciting the uninterrupted recitation of prayers from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at the halfway stage the priests took a few minutes to offer thanks to Guru Ji in the form of an *Ardas*. Baba Ji however, was resting and the priests performed the *Ardas* without informing any family members or for that matter anyone in the congregation. After a short rest Baba Ji stood to attention, got dressed and asked his companions to adorn their turbans in readiness to attend the ceremony of *Ardas* (called *Madh di Ardas*) so that all could ask for the great Guru to bless us with faith in Sikhism and the fruit of naam.

Baba Ji and the rest of the sangat were about to leave towards the room where the recital of prayers was being performed when S.Sarwan Singh arrived at Baba Ji's room, along with the two Sikh priests. S. Sarwan Singh told Baba Ji that the Singh has already performed the *Ardas* without telling anyone about it. Baba Ji sat down on the bed and rebuked the priests, "O dear fellows! You are the Guru's ministers. It was your duty to inform and advise, not only the family, who devotedly arranged this akhand path, but the sangat that came from near and afar to attend this sublime event. You should have called on all present here, to congregate in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and participate in the *Ardas*, thus receiving the Guru's blessings. In this way, you would have fulfilled your duty and the family along with the sangat would have had their chance to pay homage to the great Guru. So much so, you didn't even inform us people, who arrived yesterday, from Gurdwara Rampur Khera as part of the congregation to attend this ceremony specifically. We were just lying in the adjoining room after having recited our *Nitnem* and you forgot to invite us thinking that this person is a Saint, what need is there for him to attend the *Ardas* in front of the Guru.

Bhai Sahib Ji! You are gravely mistaken! One is not a Saint but a humble Sikh of the great Guru. We always yearn to be Sikhs of the Guru and with this sentiment arrived here to be part of the congregation. With this in mind, we were hoping to participate in the *Ardas* and beg for the Guru's blessing by listening to Gurbani as part of the sangat. You neither told us nor advised the family to attend the *Ardas*. In this, you have made a grave mistake. Being the Guru's ministers it is your duty to recognise your responsibility. In doing so you would have informed the family and *Ardas* performed by the entire congregation would have firstly added to the glory of the great Guru. Secondly and most importantly, *Ardas* done collectively by sangat is many times more beneficial than individual prayer. Unfortunately, you have left us bereft of this advantageous opportunity. In future, I plead with you to gather the sangat and family together at the start, middle and end of the akhand path to collectively offer *Ardas*. In this way you dispense your duty correctly, benefiting the sangat and the family present."

After hearing Baba Ji out the granthi Singh's begged pardon for their mistake and vowed to amend their shortcoming. Baba Ji, along with the family went to the room where Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned, said a silent prayer after which Baba Ji quietly listened to the recitation of prayers for a while. Wherever he attended an Akhand path and even at gurdwara Rampur Khera, Baba Ji would drop all he was doing, no matter how important, even if it was his *Nitnem*, to stand amidst the sangat during the *Ardas*. He would always say that *Ardas* performed collectively by the congregation has its own esteemed merit and importance. We too must always remain vigilant in this aspect of our Sikh tradition. It is seen many a time that only one or two family members gather at the start and mid point *Ardas* of the akhand path. Usually, family members are busy attending to the sangat, guests or engrossed in some other activity whilst others are roaming and wandering about. Though we must attend to all these duties and no doubt, all these jobs are important but to attend the *Ardas* for a few minutes in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is ultimately why we organise the recital of akhand path. Surely, a few minutes to attend *Ardas* are not going to disrupt the various activities and jobs to any great extent.

Ardas is the only means a gursikh has in order to address the Almighty. This is the only haven we have in our life. If we do not join the congregation in *Ardas* or become indifferent to the importance of *Ardas* then what greater loss is there that we can suffer.

101 - THANKS GIVING ARDAS

God's boons and blessings that are heaped upon this mortal are too numerous to count. We must thank the Almighty Lord for his favours upon us as...

*He who created you out of this drop of water
He who gathered the dust to create the temple of thy body
He who infused in you the divine light, which can reason
Discriminate with wisdom and
He who preserved you, in the mother's womb.
O man, remember your protector Lord,
Give up all your other thoughts, o man. Pause.
He who gave you a father and mother,
Gave you charming brothers and sons.
He, who gave you a wife and friends,
Enshrine that Lord in your mind.
He who gave you invaluable air
Who blessed you with priceless water?
And who gave you fire to burn
O man remains under that Lord's protection.
He who gave you thirty-six types of ambrosial food,
Who made a place within you to contain them?
And who blessed you with the earth
And the goods within it to use
Place those Lord's feet in your mind.
He who gave you eyes to see and ears to hear
Who gave you hands to work and nose to smell?
And a tongue to taste,
Blessed you with feet to walk and
Who made your head to crown it all?
O men worship the feet of that Lord.
He who made you pure from impure being
And placed you above all other species
Now you may chasten or not chasten yourself
O, man your affairs shall be arranged
By reflecting on the Lord.
Here and there, there is but one Lord
Where so ever I see there I find you O Lord
My soul is sluggish to serve him,
Forgetting him will not do even for a moment.
I am a Virtue less sinner my Lord
I serve you not, nor do I do good deeds.
By great good fortune, I have found the great Guru's boat
Slave Nanak, a stone has crossed
The world ocean by associating with the Saints
raamakalee mehalaa
is paanee tay jin too ghari-aa.
maatee kaa lay dayhuraa kari-aa.
ukat jot lai surat pareekhi-aa.*

maat garabh meh jin too raakhi-aa. ||1||
 raakhanhaar samHaar janaa.
 saglay chhod beechaar manaa. ||1|| rahaa-o.
 jin dee-ay tuDh baap mehtaaree.
 jindee- ay bharaat put haaree.
 jin dee-ay tuDh banitaa ar meetaa.
 tis thaakur ka-o rakh layho cheetaa. ||2||
 jin dee-aa tuDh pavan amolaa.
 jin dee-aa tuDh neer nirmola.
 jin dee-aa tuDh paavak balnaa.
 tis thaakur kee rahu man sarnaa. ||3||
 chhateeh amrit jin bhojan dee-ay.
 antar thaan thehraavan ka-o kee-ay.
 basuDhaa dee-o bartan balnaa.
 tis thaakur kay chit rakh charnaa. ||4||
 paykhan ka-o naytar sunan ka-o karnaa.
 hasat kamaavan baasan rasnaa.
 charan chalan ka-o sir keeno mayraa.
 man tis thaakur kay poojahu pairaa. ||5||
 apvitar pavitar jin too kari-aa.
 sagal jon meh too sir Dhari-aa.
 ab too seejh bhaavai nahee seejhai.
 kaaraj savrai man parabh Dhi-aa-eejai. ||6||
 eehee oohaa aykai ohee.
 jat kat daykhee-ai tat tat tohee.
 tis sayvat man aalas karai.
 jis visri-ai ik nimakh na sarai. ||7||
 ham apraaDhee nirgunee-aaray.
 naa kichh sayvaa naa karmaaray.
 gur bohith vadbhaagee mili-aa.
 naanak daas sang paathar tari-aa. ||8||2||
 (Ramkali 5th Guru, page 913)

And

By whose grace you reside in comfort on this earth.
 You laugh with your sons, brother's friends and wife.
 By whose favour you drink cool water
 Have soothing wind and warm fire.
 By whose grace you enjoy all pleasures
 Live with all the necessities of life.
 He who gave you hands, feet, ears eyes and tongue.
 You forsake him and attach yourself to others.
 Such sins are clung to the blind foolish man
 Nanak saves him thyself o Lord
 jih parsaad Dhar oopar sukh baseh.
 sut bharaat meet banitaa sang haseh.
 jih parsaad peeveh seetal jalaa.
 sukh-daa-ee pavan paavak amulaa.

***jih psagal samagree sang saath basaa.
sagal samagree sang saath basaa.
deenay hasat paav karan naytar rasnaa.
tiseh ti-aag avar sang rachnaa.
aisay dokh moorh anDh bi-aapay.
naanak kaadh layho parabh aapay. ||2||
(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru, page 267)***

So all the numerous boons mentioned above are beyond count and these favours cannot be repaid. We can only recompense these boons by thanking the Almighty through *Ardas*. The mortal who fulfils his or her duty by thanking the Lord for his numerous gifts, attracts the Guru's pleasure. The mortal who is thankless and forgets the gift given by the Almighty, is branded ungrateful. In the eyes of Bhai Gurdas Ji, an ungrateful person is the greatest sinner in the world, whose status as a sinner he describes in his 35th Vaar....

***Neither does the earth feel burden of mountains that touch the sky
Neither does it feel the burden of millions of forts and high houses visible
Neither does it feel the burden of great oceans or numerous rivers that flow
Neither does it feel the burden of the biggest trees laden, bountiful with fruit
Neither does it feel the burden of the countless species roaming the planet
The heaviest burden felt is of the ungrateful one
Who is the worst of the sinners?
naa this bhaarae purubuthaa asumaan khehundhae
naa this bhaarae kott gurru ghur baar dhisundhae
naa this bhaarae saaeiraa nudh vaah vehundhae
naa this bhaarae thuruvuraa ful suful fulundhae
naa this bhaarae jeea junth anugunuth firundhae
bhaarae bhuee akiruthughun mundhee hoo mundhae
(Bhai Gurdas Ji Vaar 35 Pauri 8)***

So, whenever we enjoy and revel in the gifts and boons received from the Almighty Lord we should thank the Lord in the form of an *Ardas* (prayer).

Whenever Baba Ji took anything to eat or wear a new item of clothing, he would thank the Lord for his boons by saying a prayer and reciting the words of Gurbani...

***He who has given us what we eat
Let us say, "All hail the Lord"
Nanak command succeeds not with the Lord
Only supplication (Ardas) works with the Lord
jis daa ditaa khaavnaa tis kahee-ai saabaas.
naanak hukam na chal-ee naal khasam chalai ardaas. ||22||
(Asaa di Vaar 1st Guru, page 474)***

102 - ARREST IN THE RELIGIOUS CRUSADE

Baba Ji had immense love for the Khalsa panth and always yearned for it's betterment and to uplift it's morale. To realise his dream, he would daily recite twenty-one Benati Chaupai paths for the Khalsa panth. He would encourage any gursikhs he met to do at least one path of Benati Chaupai over and above their daily nitnem for the sake of the Khalsa panth. Whenever, from time to time, religious crusades were started from Sri Akal Takhat Sahib to uplift the glory and fame of the panth, Baba Ji participated with maximum effort and discharged his duty as a Khalsa Saint. In 1982, the panthic (sikh) leaders launched a peaceful struggle to solve religious and political discrimination and to stop and check injustices against Sikhs of Punjab. In this crusade, tens of thousands of Sikhs courted arrest. Baba Ji too organised many groups (Jathas) from the area to court arrest in this holy crusade.

It was at the beginning of the crusade (Morcha) when the Sikh leaders called a Sant Sammelan (a congress of Saints who would participate in and bless the crusade). Baba Ji attended this congress with the sangat and this humble servant was accompanying him at the time. After the Sant Sammelan had finished, following long discussions, Baba Ji decided to meet the coordinator of the crusade, Sant Harchand Singh Longowal in a separate room. When Baba Ji met the leader, he requested him to start daily "Jaap" (recitation) of a shabad (hymn):

Sit steadily at home, o dear slaves of God.

The true Guru has arranged your affairs. Pause.

The Lord has smitten the wicked and the evil.

His slave's honour,

The creator has preserved

The kings and emperors

The Lord has also subjected to his sale.

He has quaffed the great essence of the ambrosial name.

Fearlessly meditate on the fortune Lord

Meet the society of Saints and

Give this gift of Lord's meditation to others.

Nanak has entered the sanctuary

Of the Lord, the inner knower and grasped

The support of the Lord master

gourree mehalaa 5

thir ghar baishu har jan pi-aaray.

satgur tumray kaaj savaaray. ||1|| rahaa-o.

dusat doot parmaysar maaray.

jan kee paj rakhee kartaaray. ||1||

baadisaah saah sabh vas kar deenay.

amrit naam mahaa ras peenay. ||2||

nirbha-o hsaaDhsangat mil keeno daan. ||3||

saaDhsangat mil keeno daan. ||3||

saran paray parabh antarjaamee.

naanak ot pakree parabh su-aamee. ||4||108||

(Gauri 5th Guru, page 201)

Baba Ji told him that, "With the continuous, uninterrupted recital of this prayer, Almighty Waheguru will bless us with success sooner, because we his gursikhs only have Gurbani as our biggest ally and shelter".

Sant Longowal remained silent for a while and then said, "We do not have a "Singh" to carry out the duty of constant "Jaap". You can entrust this duty to Sant Baba Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa. We shall give him any other help that is necessary."

Baba Ji wished Gur-Fateh to Sant Longowal Ji and came to Guru Nanak Niwas to meet Sant Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa. Baba Ji again asked Khalsa Ji regarding the continuous "Jaap." Khalsa Ji replied, "We have arranged Akhand path to be recited and another will be read after the crusade is completed." Baba Ji said, "You have done well by having an Akhand path recited. Whatever order I was given by the tenth Guru, I have informed you accordingly. The rest is up to you. You may do whatever you like." After staying there for a while, Baba Ji returned to Gurdwara Rampur Khera.

The Decision To Court Arrest In The Religious Crusade

On October 2nd 1982 when Baba Ji had a little free time from his daily nitnem and simran, he called me (Sant Seva Singh) to his room and said, "We have decided to court arrest in this crusade. So, please go to Sri Amritsar and obtain a date on which to court arrest."

I was astonished at Baba Ji's decision because, all of a sudden he decided to court arrest, when until now he had not mentioned this at all. Now I was to go to Amritsar to obtain details regarding the arrest dates. So I requested of Baba Ji, "Sir today we will gather all the near and dear Singh's and consult them, then we should proceed as you order." Baba Ji said, "You may consult anybody you like, I have taken my decision."

By the evening, seven or eight Singh's were called and informed about Baba Ji's programme. All were surprised to learn of Baba Ji's decision. After a long discussion, we collectively requested Baba Ji, "Sir, your health is not well enough to go to jail. We will go in a jatha on your behalf."

Baba Ji said, "I have surrendered myself completely: mind, body, soul and wealth to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Now the panth of our Guru needs my body, so it will be entrusted to the Khalsa panth. Whosoever wants to come, can accompany me." Nobody dared to answer in the face of his firm determination.

The Date Of The Arrest

The next day S. Sarwan Singh and I reached Sri Amritsar Sahib along with three other Singh's at about 10 am. We bathed in the holy lake, bowed at Sri Harmandir Sahib. Then we went to Guru Nanak Niwas to meet Sant Jarnail Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale who was lodged there, conveying Baba Ji's message to him. Hearing Baba Ji's programme, he fell silent and then said, "You should have told the great Saint to send a jatha on his behalf, as his age is advanced. In his advanced age, he will suffer physically in jail. His blessings are more than sufficient."

We told Khalsa Ji how Baba Ji was adamant to participate in the crusade. Hearing this he asked to see Sant Longowal Ji in order to obtain a date for arrest. Khalsa Ji asked us to convey his request to Baba Ji so as not to go to jail due his advanced old age. Khalsa Ji sent his personal assistant Bhai Rachpal Singh and Bhai Ram Singh with us to see Sant Harchand Singh Longowal. He too was surprised to hear all this. He said, "On our behalf, please request the great Saint with folded hands, that he send a jatha with his blessings but not to go himself. This is very urgent."

We replied, "Baba Ji has taken a firm decision to court arrest but we will still convey your concerns to him." October 19th 1982 was the date that was fixed when Baba Ji and the jatha could court arrest.

After obtaining a due date, we arrived back at Gurdwara Rampur Khera in the evening and told Baba Ji in detail the concerns expressed by Khalsa Ji and Sant Longowal Ji. Baba Ji however, remained adamant and firm in his resolve.

Within a few days, a programme was chalked out. The sangat was informed through newspapers and pamphlets that on 18 October 1982, a jatha under the leadership of Baba Ji would set off to court arrest in the religious crusade. The sangat of the area was contacted by any means possible. There was great zeal in the sangat to participate under the leadership of Baba Ji and court arrest.

On the political side, the Chief Minister of Punjab at that time was S Darbara Singh. He was a follower of Baba Ji and he came twice with his wife to Gurdwara Rampur Khera in order to convince Baba Ji not to participate in the religious crusade. Baba Ji did not agree and replied, "Instead of trying to stop us, it would be better if you tell the Delhi government about the genuine and just demands of the Singh's and compel the government to accept those demands. We still have ten days before our arrest date. If your government accedes to these demands, the whole of the country will benefit. If the talks fail we are firm in our decision."

The local Akali leader S Jasjit Singh Thiara of Ahran village, Hoshiarpur was also the general secretary of the Akali Dal. He was due to court arrest on the 18 October. He sought permission from Sant Longowal and decided to court arrest the following day as part of Baba Ji's jatha.

Departure Of Jatha From The Gurdwara

By 17th October 1982, all preparations were complete. Baba Ji withdrew whatever money was in the bank, which came to about RS 25,000. He wanted to donate this money to the crusade. By the evening, the sangat started to congregate in the gurdwara. By the morning, almost 50 trucks, 5 buses, 15 cars and jeeps had assembled. On October 18th at about 10 am, an Ardas was said by Baba Ji and sangat in front of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji seeking the blessings of the almighty. Baba Ji led this huge procession to Sri Amritsar Sahib. As devotees came to know of the procession route, they had erected beautiful arches and gates along the way to greet the procession. Many devotees made donations along the way for the holy cause.

Tea stalls, refreshments and food was arranged on the way for the sangat. Baba Ji had such grace and radiance on his face that it cannot be described in words. Those who saw can only know of it.

Exactly six years earlier, on October 17th Baba Ji, in the company of Sant Kartar Singh Ji Khalsa Bhindranwale, passed on this very route, in connection with processions arranged at that time to awaken the masses to the sacrifices of Great Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Then the slogan, "Religion cannot survive without the sacrifice of one's head" resounded in the air and the same atmosphere took shape. The air resounded with the same slogan and now Baba Ji was practically showing the masses by giving his mind, body and wealth in sacrifice for the sanctity of the Khalsa panth. After having stopped at many places, the procession reached Gurdwara Central town, Jalandhar, at about 2pm. The sangat was served langar and tea with great esteem and fondness. In the evening, this procession reached Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar and rested the night in the feet of Sri Guru Ramdas Sahib Ji. The love and affection with which the jatha was received by the sangat on the way was beyond description. Besides the donations collected from the villages, passers by who

witnessed the procession, gave all the money they had with joyous but tearful eyes, to attendants of the procession so that their money could be used in helping the crusade.

Baba Ji was lodged for the night at Akal rest house. The attendants counted donations, which amounted to about Rs 50,000. Together with the Rs 25,000 Baba Ji had withdrawn from the bank, the sum of Rs 75,000 was tied up in a bundle ready to be donated to the religious crusade.

On 19th October, early in the morning, the sangat bathed in the sarovar at Sri Harmandir Sahib Ji. After some light refreshments, the sangat then congregated at Teja Singh Samundri hall. Baba Ji had aching knees because of his advanced age, so he sat downstairs in a rest room. As soon as Sant Longowal Ji heard about Baba Ji's arrival, he came down and requested, "Baba Ji your age is advanced and it does not allow you to go to jail. So, it would be better for you to send the jatha on your behalf." Baba Ji listened patiently and replied, "With Guru's inspiration we have done Ardas and decided to court arrest in the crusade. It is now better if you do Ardas at the feet of the Great Guru to bless the panth with speedy victory in this mission." Taking leave from him, Baba Ji went to Guru Nanak Niwas.

When Sant Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa Bhindranwale heard of his arrival, he too came down to greet him. He wished Gur-Fateh respectfully and choked with emotion said, "Baba Ji it does not look nice that the son is sitting on the side and the father is going to jail." Baba Ji embraced Khalsa Ji and said, "You are entrusted with some other duty, and you must complete that." After these words, a short while later, he came out of Akal rest house. At noon, Baba Ji had langar and after resting a while he offered parshad at Sri Harmandir Sahib. He was then bestowed with a Siropao (highest honour in the sikh religion) from sri Akal Takhat Sahib, where a huge congregation had gathered. Sant Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa and Sant Longowal Ji had already arrived there with their jathas already. At the end of the session, Ardas was performed. The jatha consisted of 1500 men and women.

Jathedar Harcharan Singh Mohalon (Singh Sahib of Takhat Keshgarh Sahib) had arrived especially to see Baba Ji off. After lectures from many eminent Sikh personalities and politicians, Baba Ji stood up, thanked the sangat and offered the bag of Rs 75,000 to Sant Longowal and Sant Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa.

The jatha then started its march in a unique way to court arrest. No other slogan was raised on this day except "Bole so Nihal, Sat Sri Akal" and only Jaap of "Satnam, Waheguru" was heard from the Jatha as it headed off towards the police station. People stood along the roads and on their rooftops to witness the unique procession, marching under the patronage of Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji. People watched with curiosity the great Saint, who was heading this huge procession without any political slogans or affiliations. Only the resounding chant of "Satnam, Waheguru" echoed in the air. At this spectacle, those who had come to see off the jatha got ready to court arrest too. They forgot to go back to their houses. As Guru Ji says...

***Long and yearn for the next world
And turn not your face backward
aagaahaa koo taraagh pichhaa fayr na muhadrhaa.
(Dakhnay 5th Guru, page 1096)***

They thought, if Baba Ji can court arrest in his old age and with feeble health, why can't we younger and stronger ones do so too? The jatha reached the police station in the evening. The

government employees began to prepare warrants for everyone. At about 9 pm the Singh's took langar inside the police station, which had been brought over from the langar of Sri Guru Ram Das Ji. The jatha was in the police station whilst Baba Ji was in a small room with four or five other Singh's, where he recited *Rehras* and took langar. The whole process of arrest was completed by 10pm. The jathedar's (main attendants) of the procession told Baba Ji that all details would be completed soon and the jatha will leave for Bathinda jail. Baba Ji replied, "They can take us wherever they like, please ask the sangat to board the buses, continue to recite Benati Chaupai and simran of Satnam - Waheguru en route to Bathinda jail. No one should indulge in idle gossiping."

Baba Ji's message was conveyed to the sangat. The sangat boarded the buses and sat reciting "Satnam Waheguru." Baba Ji and I took a seat on the buses as well. As it was hot, I was using a hand held fan to cool Baba Ji down. At this time, S Jasjit Singh Thiara and Bageecha Singh Tanooli came up and asked Baba Ji to change to another bus, because they had just seen the bus driver mixing opium with some tobacco and chewing it. They were worried the driver might cause an accident. Baba Ji replied, "Do not delay and let's set off so that we may reach our destination before morning nitnem. Secondly, do not worry about the driver; his benefit is to drive this bus for us."

Amidst thunderous chants of "Bole so Nihal Sat Sri Akal" the sangat started from Amritsar passing via Taran Taran, Hari ke Pattan, Moga and arriving at the town of Bhai Bhagta. Here, the procession stopped at a roadblock with oil drums and wooden logs. Everywhere one looked, you could only see policemen of CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force). Baba Ji asked the reason for this stoppage. I told him we did not know the reason for the stoppage but said we were besieged by a swarm of police. Baba Ji asked me to enquire as to what they wanted. By this time, some Singh's, accompanied by police officers, came up to Baba Ji and said, "We have no place in the jail to accommodate you, so we cannot take you in for arrest. If you want to go back then these buses will take you wherever you want to, but if you do not return then vacate them immediately."

Baba Ji listened to everything carefully and said, "We have done Ardas before the Great Guru in the presence of the entire sangat, so we will not vacate these buses until you take us to jail. This is our firm decision." Those officers went back. Baba Ji deputed some Singh's, telling them not to vacate the buses and asked the sangat to continue simran of Satnam - Waheguru. Some of the Singh's climbed on top of the buses and shouted slogans loudly.

Tension

By now, because of the delay, it was nearly 4am. The sangat unanimously decided not to vacate the buses, even if the police used force. News spread like wild fire in neighbouring villages that the Jatha that had set off from Amritsar to court arrest and on march to Bathinda jail, had been stopped by the police and tension was mounting at the checkpoint. The echo of slogans being chanted was audible in the surrounding villages.

Utmost Devotion Of The People Of That Area

As the area of Malwa is generally known for its Sikh minded people, the Great Guru inspired them in such a way, that they descended upon the parked buses, with containers of milk and tea for the sangat. Some Singh's brought bread from Kesar Singh Walla (nearby town) to serve the sangat of the jatha. Even the milkmen, who were on their milk round taking milk into cities, stopped and poured their milk load into that of the langar. By 5.30am, the entire sangat had had their fill of bread, tea and milk.

Middle School Ground Turns Into A Bus Stand

As the day was dawning, Baba Ji called some leading Singh's to enquire about and assess the situation. The Singh's told Baba Ji that the officers were stubborn and adamant that the buses be vacated or everyone had to go back. After a short consultation, it was decided collectively (this decision making is called gurmata) that all the buses be taken off the road and parked in the premises of the middle school nearby. Whilst the buses were in the sangat's possession, kirtan and katha diwan would be laid out for the sangat. After this gurmata, the drivers of the front buses were informed of Baba Ji's decision and the rest of the bus drivers were asked to follow the convoy into the grounds of the school. The police suddenly stood alert since the jatha was on the march again. Instead, they saw the reverse. The Singh's chanting slogans began to park the buses one by one in the school campus. The police tried to halt them but the triple wall of Singh's of the sangat firmly blocked their way.

Prominent Personalities Of The Area Come To Baba Ji

By this time, a large number of local people joined the jatha in the school compound. Prominent local dignitaries came to see Baba Ji and affirmed, "Baba Ji do not worry. The whole area and the sangat are behind you. Whatever you order, we shall fulfil your demands in a short time. Langar will be cooked in the nearby villages, brought here and served to the sangat within a couple of hours. Just give the order if you need anything and we will do our best to get it."

Baba Ji, in consultation with jathedar's of the procession, decided that Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji should be brought from a neighbouring village. An Akhand path would be started, as soon as possible, in one of the school classrooms, after it was cleaned thoroughly. In the school ground, a stage was to be erected from which katha, kirtan and speeches could be made to those who had gathered. In this way, Baba Ji thought that gurmat preaching would be disseminated and prevent idle chitchat or gossip. Baba Ji asked the local dignitaries to furnish the school classrooms with necessary articles to commence the Akhand path. The sangat was informed of this plan as well. Hearing the plan, the congregation and local dignitaries were overjoyed and thought themselves lucky to be of service to the jatha. Some of the Singh's went to the village to bring Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, whilst others started to clear and decorate the classrooms. In one corner of the school, where the caretaker lived, was used to allow Baba Ji to rest.

Beginning Of Akhand Path

Some of the sangat got involved in cleaning and decorating the school. In due time some other devotees from the neighbouring villages arrived with Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji; The sangat welcomed Guru Ji amid chants of "Bole so Nihal" and slogans. The sangat arranged for loud speakers and amplifiers to broadcast the kirtan and recital of prayers. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned in the large classroom and the sangat was informed of the programme. The Ardas to begin the recital of Akhand path was performed at 10.30 am. When the names of volunteers to recite prayers were collected, it was found that there were far more volunteers than were required. Baba Ji was informed of the extra people who wished to recite prayers and he advised an adjoining room to be opened up, where, continuous recitation of Benati Chaupai and Mool mantar could be started. In a short while, another room was cleaned up and decorated for the purpose of prayer recital.

The sangat from neighbouring villages began to arrive, bringing langar, chapattis, vegetables and pulses. Containers of milk were brought in plenty. Other devotees brought trailer loads of dry firewood for fuel, large cauldrons, pans, and utensils for cooking, along with any other items required for the langar. Milk was heated up in these cauldrons and served to the sangat. It would

not be an exaggeration to say that so plentiful was the milk that to quench their thirst milk instead of water was consumed.

The children started to arrive at the school by now, only to find that their school had been transformed overnight. Their classrooms were being used for an Akhand path, whilst their playground was full of rows of sangat. The children were wonderstruck at how the appearance of their school had been transformed during the night. They were overjoyed of course, that they had a holiday from school quite unexpectedly.

The cooking materials, food and utensils brought by the villagers were now stored in a separate room because all commodities were in surplus. For five days at a stretch, no langar needed to be cooked because local people had brought enough langar already. Witness how the true Guru had caused different foods and unseen help to arrive from all directions to help the sangat.

Divan Held In Playground

At noon, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned in the playground, under a canopy. Many dhadi Singh's (bards) and kirtan groups came and performed their hymns, giving discourses from the stage that had been erected. Straw was placed on the floor so that the sangat could sit comfortably. Everyone was amazed to witness at how nice the arrangement of food, shelter and help was. What was more amazing was the fact that it had all materialised without effort, by some unseen divine force. Every task or job was completed without hitch or flaw. The jatha stayed here for six days, few if any drank water, mostly people drank milk. The more milk the sangat consumed, the more freely it flowed from outside. At night, security persons, formed from local men and boys, armed with sticks, swords and kirpans, guarded the jatha. Thus Singh's of the jatha, rested carefree at night.

103 - MIRACLE OF AN ESTEEMED LIFE

After the Akhand path had started, the sangat went to nearby tube wells to bathe. Baba Ji retired to a separate room to rest for a while. Some of the devotees were attending the diwan (assembly for prayer) whilst others were resting on the soft straw that was laid out on the floor. I took my towel and clothes and headed to the tube well to have a bath. I was nearing the tube well when I glimpsed the driver of the bus who had taken opium earlier. He was about to wash his clothes when, he got up, walked over, and said, "Dear brother, I want to ask you something, would you agree to my request?" I replied, "Speak freely dear brother. What is it we can do for you?" The driver replied, "I want to get baptised! I asked you separately because the other bus drivers know my life style and will only mock my decision. There is not a drug or intoxicant that I have not tried. I am a drunkard and class A drug abuser. My family is fed up with my addiction and me. They have tried all means to try to stop me from my addiction to alcohol and opium. I am now helpless. I don't know what has happened to me but in the company of this great Saint, my mind has changed and now I loathe intoxicants."

I was silent and listened to the driver, wonderstruck. It was hard to believe what he was saying. Seeing me silent he said, "I must become a baptised Singh. Please write my name down. I'm Surinder Singh. I am from village Dharde near Baba Bakala (Amritsar). " When he made his request a second time, I replied, "You know that the government has stopped our buses in this unknown area. We do not know anyone in the area. How can we arrange a baptismal ceremony?"

The driver replied, "I know an Akhand path has been initiated and that there are two days before the prayer recital will finish. You are very close to Baba Ji, please convey my request to him at least." I replied, "I will pass on your request to Baba Ji. Whatever he says, I will inform you of his decision this evening." Hearing this response, Surinder Singh went to take a bath.

The deep-felt enthusiasm of the local sangat for service was overwhelming. Whenever the jatha members went for a bath, the local sangat would put out soap, shampoo, oil and other necessary things for them to use. After all this service, they would offer the jatha member's tea as well.

Amrit Sanchaar

After taking a bath, I came back to tell Baba Ji about the driver Surinder Singh and his request. Baba Ji fell silent for a while and then replied, "It is a very good request indeed. In the evening session, have it announced to the sangat that after the Akhand path is finished, an amrit Sanchaar (baptism ceremony) will be held. Anyone wishing to become a Sikh of the Guru should come forward and put their names down. This human life is precious and we do not get an opportunity to become Guru ward time and again."

The stage secretary was informed, and he had the announcement made in the evening assembly. Nearly 35 people from the local area put their names forward. Now other people were inspired too; The next day Baba Ji discussed the importance of being baptised in the diwan. Another 400 or so people came forth to be baptised. During this time, a few leading Singh's were sent to Amritsar to bring the necessary items for the ceremony and the kakaars (the five symbols adorned by a baptised sikh). Due to a shortage of kakaars, only 350 people could be baptised and one of these was the bus driver Surinder Singh.

After the bhog of the Akhand path, the baptismal ceremony was held in a second room. A second Akhand path was commenced simultaneously. Now, the devotees arrived from further and further

away, in trucks, buses on tractors or trailers. They would attend the diwan, pay respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and listen to the discourses given by Baba Ji. After the sangat had dispersed, they had donated nearly 15000 rupees. This was just the money donated when paying their respects to Baba Ji, not the money that was offered to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Baba Ji gave this money to the administrators of the jatha. He ordered that at the end of the Akhand path, delicious sweets and tasty deserts be made and distributed to the sangat as thanks for their service, followed by fruits and parshad made from clarified butter. Obeying these orders, clarified butter was purchased from local shops in the town of Bhai Bhagta. Peas, vegetables, pulses, rice pudding with almonds, dry fruit etc were prepared and distributed to the sangat. At the end of the second Akhand path, another 250 people were baptised at a second amrit ceremony.

Government Officials Visit Baba Ji

After the bhog of the second Akhand path preparations were being made for a third Akhand path when, government officials along with prominent dignitaries arrived to see Baba Ji. They beseeched Baba Ji, "Please do not start another Akhand path. Please tell us what you want; we are at your disposal." Baba Ji gave his decision in two lines, "Look brothers, we have done Ardas before the Great Guru and set off on a crusade. Now you must arrest us and send us to jail." The officials discussed something at a short distance away and came back, replying, "Ok! We will send your jatha to Ferozpur jail but please do not start another Akhand path."

This news spread throughout the sangat. The Singh's of the Jatha were already preparing to go to jail. The sangat of the locality requested Baba Ji to stay another few days. They pleaded that they're still some surrounding villages that did not have the opportunity to serve the jatha. Baba Ji replied with folded hands, "We thank you deeply gentlemen. You all served the jatha and sangat beyond your call of duty. We can only thank you but the Great Guru himself will give the reward for your service. Our programme is in the hands of the Almighty:

The nose string is in the Guru's hand

Mans actions drive him on

Where ever is mans food

There he goes to obtain it

O Nanak this is the truth

nak nath khasam hath kirat Dhakay day.

jahaa daanay tahaan khaanay naankaa sach hay. ||2||

(Salok 2nd Guru, page 653)

The Jatha Is Sent To Ferozpur Jail

The bhog ceremony for Akhand Jaap and Benati Chaupai was completed. At the end of the baptism ceremony and diwan, the sangat was informed of the next programme. At 4 pm, the entire jatha boarded the buses. The local sangat loaded the unused flour, pulses, ghee etc onto the buses and with the consent of Baba Ji, the langar commodities were sent to Sri Harmandir Sahib. In a deeply moving, emotional and affectionate atmosphere, our jatha took leave of the sangat of that area.

We set off for Ferozpur jail amid resounding echoes of "Bole so Nihal, Sat Sri Akal". At about 7 pm, the jatha had arrived at Ghullan canal when the police stopped the jatha convoy again. They ordered that the jatha could not court arrest and that those who wanted, could turn back. Furthermore, if anyone still wanted to go to jail then, they would have to take off their kirpans. Baba Ji refused to accept both orders. S Jasjit Singh Thiara and other prominent leaders of the

jatha told the police officials that this is no ordinary jatha and is headed by a great Saint. Whatever Baba Ji had decided could not be taken back. The situation grew more and more tense amid discussions with the officials. By about 10pm, the police agreed to allow the jatha to proceed to Ferozpur jail. By the time, the jatha arrived at Ferozpur jail and their names clerked in, it was 2 am.

Now in jail, the sangat completed their daily nitnem and went to pay respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Then, tea was served to the Singh's. After this, everyone toured the inside of Ferozpur jail. By 10 am, the sangat formed small groups and recited Sukhmani Sahib. In the evening, *Rehras* was recited followed by langar. This turned out to be the daily routine in the jail. Any money that Baba Ji had was spent buying fruit for the sangat.

Only those who accompanied the jatha will ever know how joyous and blissful those 10 days were. In describing those days as heavenly, there is no exaggeration. The sangat forgot their homes and jobs. Some devotees went as far as to say that those ten days in jail, under the leadership of Baba Ji, were the most memorable and golden episode of their entire lives. The entire jatha behaved impeccably and courteously with one another. After spending three days in jail, the authorities announced the release of the jatha on 30/10/82. At the order of Baba Ji, the jatha got ready to go back. The buses were ready and waiting outside for the sangat. Some of the devotees went back to Sri Harmandir Sahib, whilst others returned home to their villages.

104 - MY SPORTING FRIEND HAS GONE TO SLEEP

Due to his advanced age and physical exertion in a busy schedule, day and night, Baba Ji developed a fever on October 21st 1982. Baba Ji didn't care for his health or his fever and continued moving about in the sangat as usual. This resulted in further deterioration, and along with his fever, he developed a cough too. By the time he arrived at Ferozpur jail on 26th October 1982, he had an acute fever and high blood pressure.

The jail superintendent arranged for a surgeon and expert doctors to dispense medicine for Baba Ji. However, after three days, no improvement occurred in his health. As Baba Ji was strong willed, he did not care about his physical ailment and continued to lead the jatha as before.

Having been released from jail, Baba Ji reached Sri Harmandir Sahib with the jatha. He sat on the ground floor of Teja Singh Samundri hall after paying respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Sant Harchand Singh Longowal and Sant Jarnail Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale came specifically to see Baba Ji. They stayed for a while and begged leave of Baba Ji, as he was not well.

In the evening, Baba Ji, S. Jasjit Singh Thiara, Bhai Bageecha Singh, Numberdaar Charan Singh, Bhai Swaran Singh and I reached central town Jalandhar. We rested for the night at S.Swaran Singh Ji's house. The next morning after breakfast, we set off for village Ahran to S.Jasjit Singh Ji's house. After resting there, we arrived back at Gurdwara Rampur Khera by the evening. A great deal of sangat had gathered to see Baba Ji. During these days, Dr Pritam Singh of Dasuya looked after Baba Ji very attentively and with devotion. With rest, his health improved a little.

Baba Ji Became Ill Again

On the evening of November 8th 1982, after having langar, Baba Ji had just entered his room, when he suffered bleeding from his intestine. A great deal of treatment was given but his bleeding got worse during the night. At dawn, Baba Ji's nephew, Principal Tarsem Singh Dhugga was called from Dhugga village. After consultation with the devotees and attendants present, it was decided that Baba Ji should be admitted to hospital for treatment. We picked up Dr Pritam Singh on the way and arrived by 10 am at the residence of Dr Harcharan Singh in Amritsar.

At the time, he was the principal of the medical college at Amritsar and very close to Baba Ji. Along with the other specialists, he decided to admit Baba Ji to the Waryam Singh memorial nursing home, Amritsar.

At Manji Sahib Gurdwara, Amritsar, sangat and the gathered, Saints said prayers for Baba Ji's speedy recovery. An Akhand path was started for Baba Ji's health. With the grace of Guru Ji and the persistent hard work of Dr Harcharan Singh Ji, Baba Ji's health started to improve.

Within 10 days, he started to walk. His previous ailment improved but a new infection of the urinary tract and prostate developed. Treatment was carried out for a month at a stretch. The doctors said that due to Baba Ji's weak physical health, a major operation was not advisable and that he should under go a procedure called T.U.R. for urinary disorders. This procedure was available in Chandigarh at the Postgraduate Institute for medicine or in Delhi at the All India Medical Institute (AIIMS). The urinary specialist in Chandigarh was away on leave. After consultation with the immediate sangat, a programme to transfer Baba Ji to Delhi was chalked out. There he would undergo immediate surgery.

When Baba Ji learned of this programme he was angry and said, "You would be better off making plans to take me back to Gurdwara Rampur Khera. Don't make plans to take me to Delhi." Although Baba Ji did not agree to go to Delhi, his physical discomfort was intolerable for the sangat to bear. The devotees wanted immediate relief for Baba Ji by getting him the best treatment they could think of.

So on 16th December 1982, Baba Ji was transferred to AIIMS (New Delhi) into a private ward. The doctors started the treatment after studying his previous records. During the treatment, his blood urea increased greatly. When this was controlled, a new problem developed in his stomach. Despite the best possible treatment, it seemed....

Man wishes for one thing

Yet, something opposite happens

nar chaahat kachh a-or a-urai kee a-urai bha-ee.

(Salok 9th Guru, page 1428)

Complication after complication occurred. The Singh's were in constant service of Baba Ji. Sukhmani Sahib was recited beside his bedside constantly in Amritsar and Delhi. Baba Ji would feel immense relief during these prayers. It can be said that no medicine except prayer was effective.

Baba Ji's Preparation For Sach Khand (Heaven)

After 16-17 days of treatment, there was no improvement in Baba Ji's health. On 3rd Jan 1983 he began to say, "Please take me to the see Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji." We all beseeched Baba Ji that his physical condition did not allow him to leave hospital. Despite this, he was adamant and forcibly tried to get up from his bed. He kept saying, "My end is near. Take me to see Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji." But we were helpless. By the evening, he had slipped into a semi conscious state.

By dawn next day, Baba Harbhans Singh Ji was asked to approach the health minister to intervene and see if he could get any better treatment for Baba Ji. The health minister assured us that he would visit that evening and ask the doctors concerned, to try their best. Some Singh's and I were standing outside the main gate of the hospital to see the health minister when S.Mohinder Singh Ji came from room 23 of the private ward on the fourth floor. He was choked, and with tears in his eyes he told us that Baba Ji had departed for his heavenly abode at 2.10 pm. The great soul had merged with the supreme soul of the Almighty just as water merges with water. A part fused into the whole. In disbelief, we asked S.Mohinder Singh again, "Is it true?" He burst into tears and told us that he had just come from the fourth floor only to convey this news.

Then what was left? All thoughts collapsed and the mind was stunned into silence. My mind and body were helpless to bear all this. I could not control myself and the pangs of separation were hard to tolerate. Perhaps it was the first time that the most beloved person in the entire world was separated from me. All hopes came crashing down to the ground.

For a while, the intellect failed to work. There seemed to be darkness all around. After some time, the Guru granted me strength and we went upstairs. Principal Tarsem Singh Ji was stood beside Baba Ji's body, eyes full of tears. We too stood near Baba Ji's feet and witnessed his departed but lifeless form. With a heavy heart and trembling lips, we wished "Gur Fateh" to him but this time there was no response. My mind was asking...

**O father where has gone the soul
Which used to speak and dwell in the body?
Which used to dance, explain and preach
baabaa boltay tay kahaa ga-ay dayhee kay sang rahtay.
surat maahi jo nirtay kartay kathaa baartaa kahtay. |||||**
(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, page 480)

After glimpsing the form of Baba Ji, the mind was consoled that...

**My sporting friend has gone to sleep in the graveyard
Double minded I too shall depart
And weep with a feeble voice.
sajan mayray rangulay jaa-ay sutay jaaraan.
haN bhee vanjaa dumnee rovaa jheenee baan. ||2||**
(Sri Raag 1st Guru, page 23)

We consoled one another for the Guru had taken this service from us that he wished us to perform. We had served him according to our maximum capacity. It is true that...

**This being belongs to the Lord
He takes it away when he wills it
ih ta-o basat gupaal kee jab bhaavai lay-ay khas. ||79||**
(Salok Bhagat Kabir, page 1368)

We all felt helpless in front of God's will. We had to endure his will and arrange for Baba Ji's funeral. I was given the task of phoning all the Saints in Amritsar and all the devotees abroad. I took S.Swaran Singh Ji to Inderpuri, New Delhi, to the home of S. Harbhagat Singh Sandher of Machhian village (retired superintendent of police and close devotee of Baba Ji). We informed the various Saints and devotees of Baba Ji's departure by phone and also advised them of the programme for his cremation rites. As a mark of respect, the offices of Shiromani Gurdwara parbandak committee were closed for two days, following the departure of Baba Ji. Sant Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa Bhindranwale was informed too, of Baba Ji passing away. He was on the top floor of Guru Nanak Niwas, Amritsar, at the time. He immediately sent some Singh's from the jatha with a shawl, to be given at the rites for cremation of Baba Ji. We later came to know from Singh's in the jatha that Sant Jarnail Singh Ji was distraught at the leaving of Baba Ji. He bolted himself in his room, laid down with a blanket over himself, without eating or drinking anything; he did not come out until after Baba Ji's funeral was over.

Baba Ji Is Brought Back To Gurdwara Rampur Khera.

Wherever we could inform devotees by phone, we tried to do so. After that, we went to see Sant Harbhans Singh Ji Karseva wale in New Delhi. He was deeply saddened to hear that Baba Ji had passed away. He immediately sent one of the attendants to fetch a garland from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at the historical Gurdwara Bangla Sahib Ji, where the feet of the eighth Guru had once consecrated the ground.

He gave a shawl along with the garland from the feet of Sri Guru Harkishan Sahib Ji, to be placed upon the great Saint as a mark of respect. He also sent his own 4x4 jeep, decorated with fine linens and flowers to transfer Baba Ji's body from Delhi to Gurdwara Rampur Khera. By this time, the devotees in Delhi had heard the news and rushed to the AIIMS hospital to catch a glimpse of

Baba Ji. Principal Tarsem Singh Dhugga had by now completed all the official paperwork to claim the body of Baba Ji. At about 7pm, Baba Ji's body was placed in the decorated jeep and we set off for Gurdwara Rampur Khera. On the journey, Singh's took turns to continuously recite path of Sukhmani Sahib. It was terribly cold and foggy, so we progressed slowly but steadily, through the night. Finally, we arrived at the Gurdwara from where we had set off one month and 24 days earlier, in an attempt to cure Baba Ji's ailment. News of Baba Ji's departure for his heavenly abode spread like wildfire throughout Punjab and beyond. All India radio and television broadcast the news in their bulletins. So, devotees with tears in their eyes, choked with grief, assembled in their thousands at Gurdwara Rampur Khera to have a final glimpse of their beloved and venerable Saint.

105 - THE LAST JOURNEY

The body of Baba Ji was taken out of the jeep and was placed on a big bed in the langar hall for the sangat to have a final vision of Baba Ji. The sangat followed the orders of Gurbani:

***Let no one weep for me, after I am gone,
That is not at all pleasing to me
mat mai pichhai ko-ee rovsee so mai mool na bhaa-i-aa.
(Suhi Chant 3rd Guru, page 923)***

And

***After me, sing the praises of the pure Lord alone
...mai pichhai keertan kari-ahu nirbaan jee-o.
(Ramkali Sadh 3rd Guru, p923)***

Sangat Came In Large Numbers For The Last Rites

Hymns were sung next to the body of Baba Ji after it was placed on a large raised platform and continued until the afternoon of 6th January 1983. Like a flood of water, the sangat came from near and far. In short, the number of people was so large that the crowds were difficult to control by the attendants of the gurdwara. Bamboo poles were tied and rooted in the floor so that people could be sectioned into orderly queues and file past the body of Baba Ji and catch a final glimpse of him. The mass of people was allowed to file in one way and out the other only and still they thronged to pay their final respects throughout the day. In a sombre and mournful mood, people exchanged their affectionate memories with one another. Some described how they met Baba Ji whilst others described how he transformed their lives. They all had one thing in common to discuss as Guru Amar das Ji says...

***He, who is dear to God, is dear to all.
Good many others continue coming and going
jo har kaa pi-aaraa so sabhnaa kaa pi-aaraa hor kaytee jhakh jhakh aavai jaavai. ||17||
(Mohalla 3rd Guru, page 555)***

And

***Blessed are the mothers who bore them
And profitable is their advent in this world
tin Dhan janaydee maa-o aa-ay safal say. ||2||
(Asa Sheikh Farid, page 488)***

The whole day, the congregation continued to pour in from the furthest reaches of the land for a final glimpse up until the afternoon of 6th January 1983. The number of people was so large that it was difficult to accommodate them in the campus of the gurdwara and there was not even place to stand up. The jathedar's (head chieftains) of Akal Takhat and Keshgarh Sahib arrived with the head of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak (the central Sikh organisation that manages all historic Gurdwara's) Committee jathedar GurCharan Singh Tohra. The head priests of the other Takhats arrived too but Sant Jarnail Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale and Sant Harchand Singh Longowal could not come due to unavoidable circumstances. They sent their representatives in Baba Thakur Singh Ji and Ujjagger Singh Sekhwan, respectively who presented commemorative shawls to Baba Ji. The

chiefs of other Sikh institutions, various Saints and personalities of the Sikh nation had arrived too. Baba Nihal Singh of Harriaan wailaan arrived the previous day representing the nihang Singh's.

At about 11am, the programme to conduct the last rites was chalked out but due to the rush of people who still had not managed to catch a glimpse of Baba Ji, it was delayed for two hours further. At about 12.30 Baba Ji's body was bathed and dressed in the final garments. The sangat then carried the body of their beloved Saint, with utmost affection to the resounding chants of "*Satnam Waheguru*" and placed it on the raised earthen platform in the courtyard in front of the gurdwara. Next the prayer of Japji Sahib was started. There were devotees everywhere.

The verandas, balconies, the rooftops and even the domes of the gurdwara were crammed with devotees waiting and wanting to catch a glimpse of their beloved Saint before the cremation took place. The body which housed the great soul, which remained constantly attuned to the word (shabad) of God and had guided others throughout his life to meditate on the supreme Lord was finally about to disappear from our very eyes.

Baba Ji's Last Funeral Rites

It was a deeply sad and mournful atmosphere. The chants of "*Satnam Waheguru*" arose from everywhere to fill the sky. The prayer of Japji Sahib was completed. Around the body of Baba Ji, the sangat had collected and piled sandalwood and collected clarified butter (ghee) and other articles for cremation. Singh Sahib Giani Kirpal Singh Ji uttered the last *Ardas* and Baba Ji's younger brother Bhai Thakur Singh Ji ignited the funeral pyre at exactly 1pm. Within moments the flames rose higher and higher...

The breath merges with the air

In fire does fire mingle

The dust becomes one with the dust

pavnai meh pavan samaa-i-aa.

jotemaatee maatee ho-ee ayk.

maatee maatee ho-ee ayk.

(Ramkali 5th Guru, page 885)

Everyone was attuned to one thought, which was that this true gurmukh personality had reached the supreme Lord's court and attained its rightful position, by Lord's side.

The entire sangat then retired to the shelter of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji remembering the great Saints life and sacrifice. The prayer of Alhaniaan (Ramkali Sudh) was recited in the congregation and Deg parshad distributed. Langar was served and one by one, the sangat bid farewell. Slowly, they dispersed to their homes, with heavy hearts and tear filled eyes at the departure of their beloved Saint. Singh's from nearby villages stayed to recite evening prayers of Rehras beside Baba Ji's funeral pyre and numerous people were blessed with visions of Baba Ji uttering words of comfort and encouragement to uplift their morale.

Now, daily the congregation would come to the gurdwara, attending the morning and evening sessions of prayer and *kirtan*. After *Kirtan* Bhai pundit Baksheesh Singh of Bhindranwala jatha (who was specially deputed by Sant Jarnail Singh Ji Bhindranwale to recite prayers for this task until Dushehra) recited the prayers of Salok Sahaskriti and Jaitsari ki Vaar every day with great devotion and affection. Every heart was filled with pangs of separation and only had memories to

remind them of their association with the great Saint Baba Harnam Singh Ji. As Bhai Vir Singh Ji writes:

*This tongue recites only one name
That of my beloved friend who departed
These eyes were fixed in attention
On the lesson of divine will when remembered
Hand me over to the pangs of separation
O friend! If you are happy, I will bear it
Memories of you leave not my mind
But I shall remain engrossed in your tune*

106 - DUSSEHRA

Dussehra:-In the Sikh World,Dussehra is the tenth day after the death of the mortal.In Hindus,this is a festival concerned with victory of Lord Rama over Ravana.

On The 8th of January 1983, the congregation collected the ashes of Baba Ji after saying the *Ardas*. Baba Ji had given very clear instructions that as...

I have the support of the Guru's hymns.

Attached to Gurbani do I abide

mai gurbaanee aaDhaar hai gurbaanee laag rahaa-o. ||8||

(Suhi 5th Guru, page 759)

“When this body is unable to hear or utter Gurbani then the dust of my body should be buried under the great Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in a deep pit, so that even my ashes are not separated from Gurbani.” ordered Babaji. Obeying these wishes of Baba Ji, a big brass box was constructed, into which his ashes were placed. It was placed in a deep hole dug into the ground and sealed over with a marble slab. Above this spot, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was enthroned on an elevated stage, decorated with a palanquin in the main hall of the gurdwara. January 16th was fixed, as the Dussehra celebration, as on the 13 and 14th it was the festival of *Maghi*, which is celebrated throughout India. Consequently, many eminent people were busy on these two days. Sehaj path had already been commenced on the 6th of January after the cremation. An akhand path recital was commenced on the 11th of January and the second akhand path was started on 14th January.

The bhog ceremony was held in the adjoining field, which had been decorated with a stage and converted into an open-air stadium. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was placed on the erected stage and mats on the ground laid for the congregation to sit upon and listen to the *Kirtan* that followed the bhog. Although this humble servant was incapable of shouldering the burden and responsibilities as the chief attendant of this holy place and Baba Ji had asked me so many times to serve on this position in his lifetime, I always requested Baba Ji that I am not capable of discharging the duties of this sacred place. He would reply, “You will not have to exert much, as we have done everything for you while on this physical body. You will be looked after my departure.” Even with these reassuring words, I would not be convinced, then Baba Ji would say, “If you don’t agree now then after me the sangat will decide when the time comes.”

From time to time Baba Ji blessed me with so many boons that it is hard to describe them in words. The near and dear devotees of Baba Ji know this. I did not have the desire to serve in this pivotal role but had to bow to the will of the sangat and the pressure from prominent personalities of the panth. The ceremony of *dastaar bandhi* (literally tying a turban to signify the bestowing of leadership) was carried out by Singh Sahib Giani Kirpal Singh on behalf of Takhat Keshgarh Sahib. S. Gurcharan Singh Tohra on behalf of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak Committee and Sri Harmandir Sahib, Baba Thakur Singh Ji of Damdami Taksaal, Baba Uttam Singh for the Kaar Seva Saints, mahant Seva Das Ji Bahadarpur for the Udasi institutions and Baba Nihal Singh Ji on behalf of the nihang institutions, collectively, tied a *dastaar* to show their will for me to take up the responsibility as chief attendant of Gurdwara Rampur Khera. Bhai Ram Singh Ji from akhand *kirtani* jatha, other Saints, members of parliament and prominent political dignitaries presented me with turbans to signify their blessing in my new role as the attendant of the gurdwara. Chief dignitaries present like jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi, headmasters and headmistresses of various Khalsa institutions presented me with *Siropaos*. For nearly half an hour, these *Siropaos*

were placed on my head, reinforcing the responsibility that Baba Ji had told me I would one day have to accept at the insistence of the sangat. Rich and emotional tributes continued to be paid to Baba Ji by prestigious personalities and at the end of the ceremony, Baba Ji was declared as a great martyr of the nation.

To keep alive the memory of Baba Harnam Singh Ji, S.Gurcharan Singh Ji Tohra announced that a fixed portrait would be placed in the gallery of the central Sikh museum in Amritsar. On this day, it was difficult to count the number of people who attended. A flood of people amassed in and around the countryside surrounding the gurdwara. After *Ardas*, Deg parshad was distributed and the session ended. Langar was served and without any trouble, the whole programme ended. Slowly, the sangat departed bearing the sweet memories of the great Saint Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji.

107 - SOME OTHER PERSONAL INCIDENTS

S. Amrik Singh Dhugga, who works as an electronics engineer in the United States navy, is a grandson of Baba Ji. He has sent a few personal incidents relating to his time with Baba Ji and asked them to be published in the new edition. For the benefit of the congregation, I am publishing his letter, as it was sent, in the book. I hope the devotees will take due advantage of these incidents. His letter starts with Gur-Fateh and continues:

"I received the biography "Say Kinehiya " of Baba Ji, which you sent to me. After reading the book, a constant thought was encircling my mind that "Consider them not different from the primordial Lord." As this piece of Gurbani says, it is indeed true that there was no difference between the Lord and our Baba Ji. The door of Guru Nanak Dev Ji is great, whose grace allowed me the chance to live with such a great Baba Ji as ours. Your endeavour to write the biography of Baba Ji is praiseworthy. The evening I got this biography I had something to eat, recited my prayers, did sukhasan of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and sat down to read the book. I was so engrossed in the book, I continued reading it until I finished it. When I checked the time it was 2 am and yet I felt wide-awake, not sleepy. Baba Ji's faith in Gurbani was overwhelming. He had based his life on Gurbani, by virtue of which he became one with the Almighty. I felt as if Baba Ji was near me after reading the book.

The next day my mother and younger brother Iqbal Singh got ready to return to Livingston. She asked me, "Amrik Singh! Can I take this biography with me?" I said, "You can take it as I finished reading it last night." My mother took the book and was about to leave. Somehow, I felt that Baba Ji had stayed the night with me and was now leaving. My eyes filled up and I took the book from my mother, told her that I needed to read it once more, and would definitely bring it with me next time I visited her. Thus, I told a lie. I read the many incidents time and again with great pleasure.

My Childhood With Baba Ji

Importance of Nitnem :I was in close contact with Baba Ji during my school days. In the summer vacation I would be put up at village Bahle and during the day would learn to do path from Baba Ji at the Gurdwara.

I would come at about 6 to 7pm. In the evening, after the prayers of Rehras, I would return to my maternal uncle's home in Bahle village. Baba Ji had an acute sense of intuition and insight. He used to love us a lot. He would often say, "Kaka Ji (young boy), first do your *Nitnem* in the morning and then come to the Gurdwara in the morning. If you do your *Nitnem* daily then you are marked as present in the court of our beloved father, the Guru. Moreover you become good at studying."

One day arising late, I couldn't do my *Nitnem*. I came to the Gurdwara in a hurry. In my mind I thought, "So what if I didn't do my *Nitnem* for one day. Baba Ji will not come to know of it." With these thoughts, I went to Rampur Khera Sahib and wished Baba Ji GurFateh. He was drinking tea at that moment. He gave me his cup of tea and asked me to sit beside him. He placed his hand on my shoulder and said, "If for some reason you could not do your *Nitnem* on one day then do it the next day. Thus you are not marked absent from the Guru's house."

After listening to his words of encouragement, I repented deeply and from that day onwards if for some reason I could not do *Nitnem* one day, I would do it the next day. The mind becomes uneasy and despondent due to lack of *Nitnem*. If *Nitnem* is not completed then, for some reason, my mind will not engage in my work. Baba Ji gave utmost importance to *Nitnem*.

Prophecy Of My Job

It was the summer vacation and the schools were closed. During these days Baba Ji chalked out a programme to go to Kashmir. He took me with him and I sat beside him in the jeep on the journey. It was a two-week programme. Kashmir is known for its beautiful landscape worldwide. I didn't want to come back. My heart was filled with pleasure to see the scenery of Kashmir. Similarly, I visited other places like Talwara with him. A thought came to my mind, "I get lots of time to roam about while staying with Baba Ji. When schools start again I may not get this opportunity." In the morning, after doing *Nitnem* I was eating my food while sitting near Baba Ji deep in the above mentioned thoughts. Baba Ji stopped his meal and took hold of my arm and said, "The mind runs after many thoughts. It should be checked from running around in thoughts. You are to roam a lot in the days to come."

These days with the grace of the great Guru I am serving as an electronics engineer in the U.S. navy. There is enormous wandering and roaming. During the service I have visited Japan, Korea, Scotland, Spain, Philippines, Hawaii, Thailand and all the important cities of the USA like Washington DC, New York, Los Angeles, San Diego and the like many times. Whenever I sit in an aircraft recall the prophetic words of Baba Ji, "Kaka Ji! You are to roam a lot." He was a great soul who had foresight of the future 10 or twelve years ahead.

Miracle Of The School Examination

On Monday, there was a test in English and I had to stay through Saturday and Sunday to help at Rampur Khera Sahib for some programme. The essays in English had to be memorised a few days before the exam or the whole year's labour went to waste if not revised properly. Two days passed and I could not get enough time to revise. By the evening, the thought of doing badly in the forthcoming test loomed large in my mind. I thought, "It would have been better if I stayed at home and not come to Rampur Khera." These thoughts made me sad and Baba Ji perceived my thoughts. He called me over and said, "Recite the *pehli Pauri* (first verse) of *Japji Sahib* five times and open the book wherever you wish. Whatever page it opens on, memorise it for the exam.

Don't be sad." I did exactly that. The page, which I had crammed, was there in the examination and I got 97 % marks. After the exam, I went straight to Baba Ji. He began to smile on seeing me and said, "There is no loss of any kind in the Guru's house. When you come to the Guru's home you cannot suffer a loss on the contrary you make a gain." These are not merely tall tales but the truth.

Baba Ji's Blessings In The U.S.A

When I first came to the USA, it was generally regarded that a turbaned man cannot get a good job. Baba Ji wrote a letter to me a short time after I arrived in the USA. It said that, "Be brave, the turban will uplift you." That letter is still with me as a treasured possession. After that letter, I had firm belief that the turban would be my asset. Wherever I applied for a job, I would get a phone call back the next day inviting me to come to work. My compatriots were all surprised and said, "Amrik Singh gets a job very easily." This was due to the blessing of Baba Ji. One more point is to be noted here. Some people who had cut their hair and discarded their turbans would go to the same interviews with me. But just witness the grace of Guru Ji, they would return jobless and I would prevail with my turban. I always got the offer for a job. I remained in high spirits ever. Personal shortcomings of mine notwithstanding but true to Baba Ji's words the turban always stood aloft.

I would like to pen down here another incident. One of my relatives who didn't tie a turban came to California from another state in the summer of 1983. He stayed with the uncle of my wife Mrs.

Gurdish Kaur. He tried hard to get a job for 7-8 months but with no success, in spite of having a master's degree in computing. One day, this uncle taunted that person, "O brother what is the matter, our son in law Amrik Singh gets a job he wants, the very next day and you have wasted 8 months." At the time I was studying for a full time degree in engineering and for pocket money had a job during the vacation. He replied, "Jobs were easily available before, now it is harder. Now ask him to get a job if he can. Times are harder now with greater unemployment." Uncle told me all this when I visited him. I replied, "Uncle, don't worry. If I got a job before I will get one now too.

I had full faith in God and Baba Ji's words. The next day a vacancy for a job arose in the company. I had experience of that job. I filled an application and asked the secretary for an interview. She told me that they would inform me over the phone next week because the manager was in a meeting at that time. In a disappointed mood, I returned to my car to look for another vacancy in the paper. When I opened the car, I couldn't find the paper. I looked in the car and thought that I must have left it at the company office. So I returned to the office to find the secretary was on the phone. She said, "Mr. Dhugga! The manager has just come out of the meeting and he has agreed to interview you today."

I went for the interview and the manager gave me a good job with a handsome salary. It was 2 pm. He said, "You can start your job right away or else come tomorrow at 7 am. It's your choice." I was overjoyed and thanked *Waheguru* (God). When I entered my car the newspaper was right there. The reason for not seeing the paper was that the supreme power wanted me to go back to the office of the company. I phoned my uncle to inform him that I had got the job and to tell that person that I will start work tomorrow. Uncle was overjoyed. My eyes were filled with tears in thankful gratitude to God Almighty and Baba Ji. Baba Ji was really great. He cared for me even when I was in a foreign country. He was so affectionate that words fail to express the depth of his affection.

One more point that I would like to stress is, if any person who in order to get a job in these foreign lands takes off his turban, will get a better job if he maintains a turban with dignity and pride on his head. The need is to have faith. These were some of the incidents concerned with my life.

108 - THE TRUE GURU HAS ARRANGED YOUR AFFAIRS

S. Gobind Parsad Singh Ji write in his letter....

"I got a job as a technical officer of the 32nd squadron in the Indian air force, stationed at Ambala cantt having completed my degree in engineering at Ludhiana. Once I had to go to Adampur to inquire about an air crash with other members of the inquiry committee. After the inquiry, I went to Gurdwara Rampur Khera especially to meet Baba Ji Harnam Singh Ji. Luckily, I got the golden chance to exchange gurmat thoughts with Baba Ji. While on the way back, I gave him my address in Ambala cantt and requested Baba Ji to visit my house.

In November 1969, a plane that India had bought from Russia piloted by myself crashed due to my negligence. At that time, the estimated loss of that plane came to about Rs100, 000. An inquiry was launched against me and I was deeply lamenting my fate. Anything could happen. I could be ordered to have a court marshal and thus be imprisoned. I was facing a difficult time. Two days after the crash suddenly Baba Ji came to visit my home. I came home for lunch and my wife told me that Baba Ji had arrived earlier that morning with one other Singh. Hearing this, I was pleased and some clouds of despondency lifted from my mind. I exchanged Guru-Fateh with Baba Ji and he told me that they were on their way to Yammuna nagar and would stay the night with us.

After lunch, the thought that I should tell Baba Ji about the crash was haunting me but I dare not tell him. I went back to work/and returned in the evening. That evening I sat near this pious soul, deeply worried about the consequences of the crash. Baba Ji turned to me and said, "Gobind Parsad Singh Ji, tell us without hesitation whatever your problem is. The great Guru will deliver you. Nothing bad will happen to you."

On hearing this, I got immense relief. I then told Baba Ji of the crash, the on going inquiry and likely consequences of any adverse findings. Baba Ji listened to me carefully and told me to recite the shabad as much as possible...

***Sit steadfast at home o dear slave of God
The true Guru has arranged your affairs
thir ghar baishu har jan pi-aaray.
satgur tumray kaaj savaaray. ||1|| rahaa-o.
(Gauri 5th Guru, page 201)***

He also advised me to pray in the feet of the Almighty and assured that God will help me. I learnt the shabad off by heart and started to recite it daily. I was sure now that nothing wrong would happen to me now.

In the meantime, I confessed to the inquiry committee that it was my fault. The officer in charge of the inquiry was much impressed with my honesty ordered me released with just a warning. The station commander too agreed to it and a report was sent to command headquarters. The command head quarters accepted the report's finding and sent the report further to air force headquarters.

There, two directorates were to give their final verdict on the whole incident. One of them was of the same opinion as the previous officers but the other one did not agree. He was of the view that in previous incidents like this, hard punishment had been given, so this officer must be punished

too. Anyhow, due to the difference in the verdict of both directorates, my file kept being passed between departments. As time went by, I was growing more and more tense. At last, I contacted one of my friends at the air headquarters and requested him to find out what was happening about the report. My friend told me he would need a few hours to find out. My friend phoned a few hours later and what he told me, seemed unbelievable. To my great surprise, my file had been missing for some time. This is unheard of because these inquiries and the reports are top secret and meticulously guarded.

If a file is lost and falls into the wrong hands then it could be disastrous. My friend told me that they were trying their level best to find the file and until they did not find the file, they could take no further action. This happened in 1969. After that, I remained in service for a further 17years. I took early retirement due to domestic problems. At the time of the crash, I was a flight lieutenant and in 1986, at retirement, I left as wing commander. With the shelter of Gurbani and prayer of that great soul (Baba Ji), my file remained missing for 17 years.

During my service, I was promoted from time to time. Neither officer superseded me nor did I get any punishment. If I relate this experience to anyone, no one believes me. I myself find it hard to believe, sangat knows from personal experience how immensely powerful Gurbani is. Baba Ji possessed supreme heights of spiritual knowledge. How great he was! He had full faith in the Almighty. He himself led the life of a true gursikh of the Guru. He made our wavering minds peaceful with the support of the pillars of Gurbani Humble servant

Gobind Parsad Singh Grewal
Wing commander (Retired)
Chandigarh

109 - LAST REQUEST

In every aspect of his life, Baba Ji had a very modest and reserved lifestyle. Baba Ji always hesitated from undue expansion of the gurdwara yet due to his selfless, extensive service of the Khalsa panth and his efforts to spread the fragrance of Gurbani in this country and abroad any follower of Guru Nanak Dev Ji will not have failed to be impressed by his towering personality. Now those people who had not met Baba Ji when he was alive yearned to touch the dust of the very place where Baba Ji had meditated endlessly on the Lord's name. The meditation of naam had transformed the lives of countless others and the fragrance of Sikhism was spread to the corners of the world by Baba Ji when meditating at this sacred place. People wished to attend the sessions that Baba Ji organized to attune devotees to the frequency of the Lord's name. So, in time the number of devotees increased at these annual gurmat camps even after he passed away. With the help and blessings of the Guru and the sangat, the 60' by 40' main hall and the 20 or so rooms that were erected during the time when Baba Ji was alive now started to increase as well. In a little while there were now in excess of 42 rooms and increasing every year. Another hall 27' by 52' was erected for baptism ceremonies. This has now been converted too into the 'Sant Baba Harnam Singh memorial library and museum. To accommodate the sangat during the gurmat camps a separate complex of rooms with en suite washrooms and hot water facilities has been built. This has been called the Guru Ram Das saran, which is three storeys high and has over 300 rooms to date. The approach road from the main Dasuya to Hoshiarpur road leading up to the gurdwara has been named as the Sant Baba Harnam Singh road (marg) and has 35 street lamps along it leading up to the gurdwara. This road leads right up to Bahle' and Talwandi jattan village.

To compensate for any electricity cuts, a couple of generators have been installed. The sangat has been inspired to donate many cows and buffalo so that milk can be utilized in langar and tea for the sangat. To house the livestock three sheds and barns have been erected. About 0.5 of an acre of land in front of the gurdwara has been purchased and registered under the trust of the Langar of Gurdwara Rampur Khera Sahib. Last year, the land registry and allotment of land was finalized in village Bahle'. The sangat felt that there was need to grow fodder for the cattle, so another 5.5 acres of land was donated and entrusted to the Langar of Gurdwara Rampur Khera Sahib. These boons are all due to the recitation of naam at this place. As Guru Arjun dev Ji has said:

***Where the name of the beloved Lord is repeated
Those uninhabited places are replaced with golden mansions
jithai naam japee-ai parabh pi-aaray.
say asthal so-in cha-ubaaray.
(Maajh 5th Guru, page 104)***

With the divine blessings of the great Guru, the supreme and pious programme of gurmat teachings, baptism and meditation on naam, which had been commenced by Baba Ji was nearly halted due to the extreme efforts by the government of the day and some atheistic non-believers.

To maintain the continuity of this mission work, this humble servant was imprisoned and endured torture on several occasions. However, the extreme grace of the great Guru and the sheltering hand of Baba Ji over my head protected me even through the most difficult of trials. The Lord protected me in every place and in every way by being there himself to watch over me. Whereas before there were only amrit ceremonies at special days like the gurmat camps and gurpurabs, now there is an amrit Sanchaar every Sangrand (first day of the lunar month) at 11 am when numerous people attend to take amrit and join the fold of the Khalsa panth. Further, wherever any

one expresses a desire to be baptized in places that are far away or cannot come due to lack of transport etc, then a team of panj pyara's (five beloved Singh's who administer baptism) is sent specifically to hold an amrit ceremony to administer the amrit of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Some times on the same day 5 or 6 groups of panj pyara's are sent to as many places to hold baptism ceremonies. To ferry the panj pyara's, a special van has been brought too. Now days a special effort is made to educate the people about Sikhism. To this end, a new bus has been bought and carries preachers, eminent scholars, dhadhi's and *kirtan* groups to far off villages, to hold religious programmes and awaken the masses to the dangers of alcohol and drugs and at the same time to listen to the message of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

Apart from the annual gurmat Smagam (camp) that was initiated by Baba Ji, other annual Smagams have been initiated too. The death anniversary of the great Saint is celebrated with great enthusiasm and affection. Four days before the anniversary, the gurmat Smagam begins and culminates on the evening of 3rd January, when a continuous session of *kirtan* (Raen *sabai*) is conducted through the night, until 4th January, which is the anniversary of Baba Ji. A bhog ceremony of the Akhand and Sehaj path that had started a couple of days earlier then takes place.

On 4th of January, a vast number of devotees come to pay their respects, listen to *kirtan*, *katha*, discourses by eminent scholars and tributes by international personalities, all held in the decorated campus of the gurdwara. The day ends in a vast langar for tens of thousands of devotees and sweets are distributed freely to all the sangat and those who pass by the gurdwara. Thus, the duty described by Guru Ji towards our forefathers is followed at this session...

***The narratives of the fore fathers, Make their descendants good children
baabaanee-aa kahaanee-aa put saput karayn.***
(*Salok 3rd Guru, page 951*)

At the Smagam, the next generation gets guidance to follow in the footsteps of the great soul, uplifting their souls to higher spiritual heights. Attending these Smagams, we all are able to reform our present lives and our after life too.

Another Smagam is now held yearly starting on the first Sunday of April and is similarly well attended by sangat nationally and internationally. Again, an amrit ceremony is held at the end of the Smagam and the same program of meditation as the October Gurmat Smagam is followed.

So, this was the story of the gifted, blessed soul who had immense spiritual powers, who was intoxicated and overwhelmed with the Lord and his name and showed us how to embrace that Almighty Lord In the end this humble servant prays to the Lord that," The moments, the days are fleeting away. May these moments bear the imprint of the memory of the Lord. I bow and surrender myself unconditionally to you. I finally request in earnest to merge me with you O Almighty Lord"

***Give me your blessing, O friend!
That I may attain union with my master
dayh sajan aseeshee-aa ji-o hovai saahib si-o mayl. ||3||***

The servant of the sangat

Seva Singh (Sant)

Gurdwara Rampur Khera Sahib, P.O. Ghardiwala, District Hoshiarpur, Punjab

SALOK

*The Divine Guru is my mother,
The divine Guru the father,
The divine Guru is my Lord and Supreme God
The divine Guru is my companion.
The dispeller of spiritual ignorance.
And the divine Guru is my relative and brother
The divine Guru is the giver and teacher of God's Name
The divine Guru is my Infallible spell
The divine Guru is the image, of peace truth and wisdom.
The Divine Guru is the philosophers stone
By touching which the mortal is saved
The divine Guru is the place of pilgrimage and a tank of nectar.
By having a bath in Guru's Divine
Knowledge, man meets the illimitable master.
The divine Guru is the creator and destroyer of all the sins
And the divine Guru is the purifier of the impure.
The divine Guru is from the beginning,
The beginning of ages and in every age
The divine Guru is the spell of God's name
By repeating which the mortal is saved.
My master, take pity and unite me,
A fool and a sinner with the society of the Guru,
By clinging to which,
I may swim across the sea of life.
The divine Guru, the true Guru,
Is himself the exalted Lord and the
Great Lord. Unto the, gold divine Guru,
Nanak makes an obeisance.
Read this Salok in the beginning and at the end.*

*gurdayv maataa gurdayv pitaa
gurdayv su-aamee parmaysuraa.
gurdayv sakhaa agi-aan bhanjan
gurdayv banDhip sahodaraa.
gurdayv daataa har naam updaysai
gurdayv mant niroDharaa.
gurdayv saaNt sat buDh moorat
gurdayv paaras paras paraa.
gurdayv tirath amrit sarovar
gur gi-aan majan apramparaa.
gurdayv kartaa sabh paap hartaa
gurdayv patit pavit karaa.
gurdayv aad jugaad jug jug
gurdayv mant har jap uDharaa.
gurdayv sangat parabh mayl kar kirpaa
ham moorh paapee jit lag taraa.
gurdayv satgur paarbarahm parmaysar
gurdayv naanak har namaskaraa. |||||*

(Gauri Bawan Akhri Fifth Guru, page-262)

110 - ANCIENT HISTORY OF RAMPUR KHERA (MOUND)

Geography

The Rampur Khera mound is located on the Hoshiarpur Dasuya, Mukerian & Pathankot (Tahsil headquarter in Gurdaspur District, situated on the Amritsar Kangra Road. It was the capital of the Pathania Rajputs, and has a strategic importance, being, located on the G.T.Road from Delhi to Jammu & Kashmir and has military cantonment) road, 18 miles north from Hoshiarpur, about a mile west from village of Machhian (Had-bast No.44, P.S.Haryana, total land area 105 hectares), falls under sub-tahsil and police station of Bhunga. Before the partition of India, in 1947, this village was under the tahsil of Dasuya. This ancient-mound can be located in the world map at 32° 5' north and 72° 52' east.

This old village (mound) is surrounded by village Machhian from the east, Gondpur (Had-bast No.42, P.S.Haryana, total land area 363 hectares) from the north, Bahle (Had-bast No.47, P.S.Haryana, total land area 172 hectares) and village Talwandi Jattan (Had-bast No.46, P.S.Haryana, total land area 181 hectares) in east.

Actually, the mound, according to the Government revenue records, is the part of Gondpur village, owned by the Kalkat Jatts. The British Government, in the first Bandobast, fixed the limits of all these villages in 1853 A.D. Todarmal (Todarmal was Khatri of Lahore, Revenue minister and Diwan. Mughal King- Akbar appointed him Governor of Bengal. He was the first man who measured the whole land of India, divided among the people of their respective localities and made them the owners, on regular Sarkari-Lagan. He also had built the Fort of The Rohtas, on the river Jhelum), the revenue minister of Mughal emperor Akbar, based these boundaries on revenue records. In the revenue record Rampur Khera is shown as "Bechiragh" a deserted village or a village without population.

Local History Rampur Khera

History of Rampur Khera (mound) is as old as the other ancient mounds of India. They are the stores of Indian civilization, culture, religions, architecture & arts.

The archaeologists, by excavating the old mounds of India, had dug out a regular and chronological history. In fact, every thing remained buried in these mounds, keeping every material intact. In the same way, I expect, if a thorough excavation could be done on this mound, we could get many clues for linking it to the past. Being a far off situation from Delhi and also its smaller size, no body gave a serious thought for its excavation. It can be said with confidence that this mound must be spread into more than 300 to 500 acres. The indications are there, streams in the east and other to the west were running throughout the year.

These streams of enough clean water now disappeared on account' of the consolidation of the area, because right up to foot of Shivalik hills, the land has been brought under cultivation. These two streams were the main source for the people and their animals to be fed upon. Ravaging changes, made by nature, from time of immemorial times certainly changed the topography and geography of the earth, not only in India but also all over the world.

In the British government records, this mound is named as "KUHNA", a word of the Persian language, means the old and it is evident that the Rampur Khera mound is very old and its remains exhibit its antiquity.

The Mounds of Hoshiarpur District

This is the spiritual book, so I like to be concise brief and only the mounds of this districts should briefly be accounted for. Among prominent and ancient, the mounds of Dholwaha (Had-bast No.240. Total area of land-938 hectares. P .S. Thanasar, District Hoshiarpur, situated in the south of Kahri Sahri Villages and in the east of Gharial Village) and Ajram (Had-bast No.269. Total area of land-1118 hectares. P .S. Thana Sadar, District Hoshiarpur, situated on the road leading from Hoshiarpur-Phagwara road to Hoshiarpur Pathankot road. Before the partition of India in 1947,the owners were the Nauru Muslim Rajputs, who were formerly Hindu) are very old.

Next to them are the mounds of Dasuya, Rampur Khera and Zahura (Had-bast no. 2. Total area of land 1315 hectares. P.S. Thana Tanda Tehsil Dasuya, Distt. Hoshiarpur. Situated at a distance of about 2 miles towards north on Jalandhar Pahtankot G. T. Road), though Zahura mound is not very old. Janauri mound is equally very old. Excavations done at the mounds of Dholwaha and Janauri have brought out very good results. Seals, stamps, tools, coins, statues and stupas are found which throw sufficient light on the daily life of the people, from 300 B.C. to the modern times. If excavation could be extended to this ancient mound, much more Vaaried results could be expected. However, I wish myself to do that, though it will he on a minor scale. From Ajram mound, no archaeological excavation has been done so far but during the heavy rains, the seals, coins, tools, statues caracusas of men and animals are found belonging to the Mauryan, Guptas, and Greek kings. Zahura mound comparatively seems not 'to be very old.

Rampur Khera (Mound)

This mound has a separate story. Among all the ancient mounds of the Punjab, this particular mound, is known as "cursed mound" Under some calamity of nature the place suddenly disappeared perhaps like Mahenjo-daro (One of the biggest mounds in the World, is situated in Distt. Larkana, Suba Sindh (Pakistan). Excavation of this mound was started in 1922 AD, which is still going on. Most of things excavated are still in their orginal form) and never rehabilitated.

A curse from heaven could only be removed by a holy soul. The place has been blessed, after many centuries, due to Surgvasi Sant Harnam Singh Ji who worshipped here for half a century. During his austerities many cursed souls, challenged the Saint to disturb him while he was fully absorbed in true Naam. But, by the Grace of Waheguru Baba Harnam Singh Ji ultimately succeeded. All the accursed souls left this mound. The place once again became a Sach-Khand an immortal place by Baba Ji and its name got changed from theh (deserted place) to Khera (a spiritually blissful place).

It was great unfortunate that all the old Indian records, preserved, in temples, palaces of the Hindu Rajas, were destroyed under the staunch Muslim Vandalism. Had not been this happened, certainly, we could find about the past of this mound. However, the records of the Muslim period are fully available. The Muslims are more historic minded than the Hindus. Akbar, the great has been the first ruler of India who got prepared and preserved the first Gazetteer of India in the form of Ain- I-Akbari by Abul Fazal (Sheik Abul Fazal "Alaami" was born in the family of Sheikh Mubarak Nagori. He was the lovable minister of King Akbar. He was a great master of Arabic and Persian Languages. He was a great historian of that time, who wrote the history of his times. Akbar-Naama and Ain-i-Akbari were his famous works). The English Government continued the same structure with minor modifications.

Invent of the British Rule:

The Punjab was annexed by the British, in 1849 A.D, but the regular reforms were started in 1852. Hoshiarpur District was the first one to start with. The English were intelligent, experienced in every trade. They did an excellent work to make the Punjab more modern.

The revenue officers, while limiting the boundaries of every village or town, they called the elders of the place, on bases of their matured experiences for inquiring as how the place (village) was founded, named.

Information was entered in the revenue records. The information they gave on religion, prevalent social tradition of that particular place and also noted the historical events, ever happened. They also entered the sub castes of the residents, names of their religious places. In this way today every village & town of India feels rich, by the preservation of his or her heritage. Even the pedigrees were entered in the revenue records.

For the first time we learn from the revenue records of Hoshiarpur District about Rampur Khera (mound) from information provided by the elders at the formation of the limits of village Talwandi (Jattan - Had -bast No. 46, total land was 181, hectares, P.S & sub tehsil Bhunga), who stated to the revenue officers, "On the west of this village, at the distance of four hundred karmas (one = 66) is a "theh" (mound)", which is very means haunted by the cursed souls and is lying in ruins.

The village of Talwandi (Jattan) was inhabited by Potte Jattan (Sub Caste of Sikh Jatt in Hoshiarpur Distt. They relate their inherience with the Sybian Kings who came to Punjab in 100 AD. There are some villages in Pakistan inhibited by Potte Jatts).

The Traditions.

According to the local tradition, Rampur Khera was well populated, before the 300 B.C before the advent of the Scythians, Bactrians & Kushan rulers. There were four important Hindu principalities, ruling the District of Hoshiarpur: Nanda Chaur (Had-bast no. 121. Total area 453 Hectares. P. S. Hariana, Distt. Hoshiarpur. It happened to be the Capital of Hindu Chander Vanshi Rulers. Later it was ruled by Muslim Naru Rajputs), Ala Chaur (Had-bast no. 193. Total area 1723 Hectares. P.S. and Tehsil Balachaur), Bala Chaur (Had-bast no. 12. Total area 772 Hectares. P. S. Mahilpur, Tehsil Garh Shankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur is inhibited by Rajputs) and Guna Chaur, the last is now in district Jalandhar. Chaur, means canopy, or the crown. They were the contemporaries and very popular rulers during the Mahabharata war.

After the defeat, the Pandavs had settled in this district, during their exile and they spent most of the time in Dasuya, Gardhiwala Rampur (Khera), Dholwaha, Nanda Chaur, Bham and Lasarha (Had-bast no. 383. Total Area 430 Hectares. P. S. and Tehsil Garh Shankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur).

The Pandavs spent 13 years at Dasuya, when Virat was the ruler of Dasuya, Mukerian and the adjoining areas. Raja Virat was n very religious, the savior of his subjects and a great warrior. Dasuya, up till today is known by the name of Virat-Ki Nagari and by the way of respect the residents of Dasuya remember him as Devta Raja till this day. The people do not eat or drink. They would Say Dasuya "Virat-Ki-Nagri" in honour of Raja Virat.

Even during the Mughal period, this area commanded a great respect. Till the times of Akbar, Hoshiarpur (Headquarters of Distt. Hoshiarpur. There are two accounts of the foundation of Hoshiarpur. One is that about 683 years before, in the time of emperor Muhammad Tughlak alias

Alaf Khan's two Diwans Hargobind and Ramchand, with great endeavours, had founded it. According to the other version, Hoshiar Khan, the resident of Bajwara, had founded it after his name. The British Government in 1852-53 by making an embankment, on the north side of the town had protected it from the floods of the seasonal torrents emerging from the foot of the Shivalik hills, which used to destroy every thing of this place. For this thirty thousand rupees' were spent. In 1809 AD. it was part of Maharaja RanJit Singh's Territory. Misr, Rup Lal was the Governor, who made Hoshiarpur the capital of this area) and Bajwarha (Had-bast no. 355. Total area 923 Hectares. P. S. Sadar, Tehsil and Distt. Hoshiarpur. A small town situated at a distance of around two and a half miles on the Hoshiarpur Una Road. In the times of Mahmud Gazanavi, a famous Muslim Bajoo Bora founded a city in his name. The city was spread over 12 to 18 miles. It was a big business centre. Todarmal, one of the ministers of Akbar, divided this city into small parts. After the anexation of English, Bajwarha was replaced by Hoshiarpur. According to Ain-i-Akbari, part 2, page 320, total area of this city was 12363 Veegga, having 24,25,813 as Government Tax, 30 Horse Riders and 300 pedestrian army. Most of the residents were Khera Jatts.) had not come into existence.

Till the invasions of Babar this area remained under reigns of Chander Bansi Rajput Rulers, who retained their respected cheifships till 1947.

Muslim Times

Though the muslim reign started in 800 AD but before the battle of Panipat in 1526 AD, this area was ruled by Chander Vanshi Rajputs. But slowly the control over this area started increasing as it was in the remaining Punjab and India.

Invasion of Amir Timur-1398 A.D.

Amir Timur, styled Sahib-I-Quran, was born at Kush in ancient Sagdanuin. He conquered Persia. Baghdad, Qandhar and northern India including Sindh and Afghanistan. In 1398 AD. After the conquest of Delhi and its neighboring provinces he advanced with his troops, through the valley of Jaswan to capture the fort of Kangra. It was at this time that this area including Rampur Khera, Dholwaha were greatly affected by Timur's troops, who freely looted, slaughtered the Hindu population.

Many men, women and children were enslaved. At Kangra Fort all Hindu temples were looted dismantled burnt, then he left for Jammu, after capturing cash, jewellery and other valuable property. He died on February 18, 1402 AD in his own country. After Timur, the Khokhars appear to be the dominant tribe of this area and in 1421, Jasrath, their chief revolted against the Saiyed Dynasty, but in 1428, Khokhar chief was himself defeated near langar. At this time several Pathan Military colonies sprang up round about Rampur Mound and on the base of the Shivaliks, just like Bajwara and the Fort of Malot, three miles to the east of Haryana (31.0 38' north and 72.0 52' east) founded in the reign of Bahlol Lodhi, by a Pathan ruler of that area, was Daulat Khan Lodhi's strong hold which certainly played a great role, during the Mughal emperor Babar's invasion. In this connection Rampur Khera became one of the most important places of Indian history. Hence Babar selected Rampur mound as an echelon place, being strategic.

Babar 1520-1530

Babar was the first invader who followed a different way to capture Delhi: Before him all the invaders advanced on Delhi via, Dipalpur Pakpattan, Sunam, Samana and Hansi but Babar Invaded India by having the protection of the Shivalik hills.

Babar wrote himself in Tuzek-i-Babari (biography), as under: -

A person came on October 18, 1526 to Sialkot from the Lahore begs to say they would arrive early next morning to wait on me. (Dec. 30th) Marching early next day (Rabi I. 15th), we dismounted at parsrur⁹. There Muh. 'Ali Jang-jang, Khwaja Hussein and several braves waited on me. As the enemy's camp seemed to be on Lahore side of the Ravi, we sent men out under Bujka for news. Near the third watch of the night they brought word that the enemy, on hearing of us had fled, no man looking to another. (Dec. 31st) Getting early to horse and leaving baggage and train in the charge of Shah Mir Hussein and Jan Beg, we bestirred ourselves. We reached Kalanaur in Gurdaspur District in the afternoon and there dismounted. Muhammad Sultan Mirza and Adil Sultan came to wait on me there, together with some of the begs. (Jan. 1st 1526 Ad.) We marched early from Kalanur¹⁰. On the road people gave us almost certain news of Gazi Khan¹¹ and other fugitives.

Accordingly we sent, flying after those fliers, the commanders Muhammad, Ahmadi, Qutluq-qadam, Treasurer Wali and most of those begs who, in Kabul, had recently bent the knee for their beg ship. So far it was settled. That it would be good indeed if they could overtake and capture the fugitives; and that, if they were not able to do this, they were to keep careful watch round the fort of (Malot), so as to prevent those inside from getting out and away. Ghazi Khan was the object of this watch.

Capture of Malot

(Jan 2nd and 3rd) After starting those begs ahead, we crossed the Bias-water (Be as) opposite Kanwahin and dismounted. From there we marched to the foot of the valley of Fort Malot, making two nighthalts on the way. From Tuzek-i-Babari and other contemporary accounts, evidently Rampur Khera mound was selected as his echelon to array his troops to fight against Afghan confederacy to defeat Babar. Rampur Khera mound was the most protected place, where his horses took water and enough fodder, and a resting place as well as safe. From here the troops had advanced to capture the fort of Malot. The begs who had arrived before us, and also those of Hindustani were ordered to dismount in such a way as to besiege the place closely. A grandson of Daulat Khan, son of his eldest son 'Ali Khan, Ismail Khan by name, came out of Malot to see me; he took back promise mingled with threat, kindness with menace.

(Jan. 5th) On Friday (Rabi'l. 21st) I moved camp forward to within a mile of the fort, went myself to examine the place, posted right, left and center, then returned to camp. Daulat Khan sent to represent to me that Ghazi Khan had fled into the hills and that, if his own faults were pardoned, he would take service with me and surrender Malot. Khwaja Mir-i-miran was sent to chase fear from his heart and to escort him out; he came, and with him his son 'Ali Khan. I had ordered that the two swords he had girt to his waist to fight me with, should be hung from his neck. Was such a rustic blockhead possible? With things as they were, he still made pretensions. When he was brought a little forward, I ordered the swords to be removed from his neck. At the time of our seeing one another he hesitated to kneel; I ordered them to pull his leg and make him do so. I had him seated quite in front, and ordered a person well acquainted with Hindustani to interpret my words to him, one after, another. Said I "Thus speak: I called thee Father. I showed thee more honour and respect than thou couldst have asked. Thee and thy sons. I saved from door to door life amongst the Baluchis. Thy family and thy harem freed from Ibrahims's prison-house. Three krors I gave thee on Tatar Khan's lands. What ill sayest thou I have done thee, that thus thou should hang a sword on thy either side. Lead an army out, fall on lands of ours, and stir strife and

trouble?" Dumb founded, the old man stuttered a few words, but he gave no answer, nor indeed could answer be given to words so silencing. He was ordered to remain with Khwaja Mir-miran.

(Jan. 6th) On Saturday the 22nd of the first Rabi, I went myself to safeguard the exit of the families and harems from the fort, dismounting on a rise opposite the Gate for the purpose of preserving the honour Of the Afghans and by so doing, enabled the families, in the fort to get out of it safely. To me there came Ali Khan and made offering of a few ashrafis. People began to bring out the families just before the Other Prayer. Though Ghazi Khan was reported to have got away, there were who said they had seen him in the fort. For this reason several of the household and braves were posted at the Gate, in order to prevent his escape by a ruse, for to get away was his full intention. Moreover if jewels and other valuables were being taken away by stealth, they were to be confiscated. I spent that night in a tent pitched on the rise in front of the Gate.

(Jan. 7th) Early next morning, Muhammad-i-Ali, Ahmadi, Sultan Junaid, Abdul-Aziz Ali-Jang-jang and Qutluqqadam were ordered to enter the fort and take possession of all effects. As there was much disturbance at the Gate. I shot off a few arrows by way of chastisement. Humayuns story-teller (qissa-khwan) was struck by the arrow of his destiny and at once surrendered his life.

(Jan. 7th and 8th) After spending two nights on the rise, inspected the fort of Malot near Hariana. I went into Ghazi Khan's book-room. Who was a learned and a poet, some of the precious things found in it, I gave to Humayun, some sent to Kamran (in Qandhar). There were many books of learned contents, but not so many valuable ones as had at first appeared. I passed that night in the fort; next morning I went back to camp, the Rampur mound. (Jan. 9th) It had been in our minds that Ghazi Khan was in the fort, but he, a man devoid of nice sense of honour, had escape in the hills, abandoning other, brethren and sisters in Malot fort

(Jan. 10th) Leaving that camp on Wednesday, we moved towards the Shivalik hills to which Ghazi Khan had fled. When we dismounted in the valley-bottom two miles from the camp, Dilawar Khan came and waited on me Daulat Khan, Ali Khan and. Ismail Khan, with other chiefs, were given into Kitta Beg's charge who was to convey them to the Bhin fort of Malot on the Salt Range in 320 42' north and 710 X 50'; east and there keep guard over them. In agreement with Dilawar Khan, blood-ransom was fixed for some who had been made over each to one man; some gave security, some were kept prisoner. Daulat Khan died when Kitta Beg reached Sultanpur with the prisoners. Daulat Khan died in the town, which he had made himself. Malot was given into the charge of Muh. Ali Jang-jang who, pledging his own life for it, left his elder brother Arghun and a party of braves in it. A body of from 200 to 250 Afghans was told off to reinforce him." After defeating the Afghans at the fort of Malot, he hurriedly consolidated the affairs, of this part of India. He sent the library, Books, jewellery and other valuable articles, laden on horses, camels and mules to his son Mirza Kamran whom he had also appointed the governor of Lahore province. The Fort of Malot was given to his youngest son, Mirza Askari, and he advanced towards Delhi: through the Don valley of the Shivalik hills, reached Roper and began preparation of capture Delhi.

Rampur (Khera), an Echelon

Two regiments of Mughal troops stationed, at Rampur Khera before the attack on the fort of Malot as reinforcement, later accompanied Mirza Kaman to Lahore. It was here at Rampur Khera that all the local Muslim chiefs greeted Mirza Kaman to congratulate him for the Mughal victory. Later all these Muslim Naru Rajput chiefs of Hariana, Dholwaha Sham Chourasi, Nanda chour, Urmur Tanda Chautala and others, accompanied Mirza Kamran to see him off and went with his retinue up to the river of Beas. When Bairam Khan, the prime minister of Akbar revolted against

his master, the troops fought against the rival, who surrendered to the Royal forces at Talwara. According to the tradition and contemporary records. Bairam Khan stationed at Rampur Khera mound, and through prayers, he morally prepared himself to beg pardon from Akbar. A land of soldiers, took Bairam Khan, from this mound to present him to emperor Akbar, who was stationed at Haryana. Akbar pardoned him and treated him respectfully & affectionately.

Sikander Khan, who had revolted against Akbar, was in the vicinity of Pathankot. He was also defeated, near here, when Akbar with his troops had followed the fugitive, from Pathankot having a short stay at Rampur Khera, reached Haryana. Where Akbar heard the sad news of his father's death. Akbar was crowned at Haryana, from where, he advanced to Lahore and on the way at Kalanaur official, coronation of Akbar took place.

Emperor Jahangir at Rampur (Khera)

When Jahangir's military was busy to dismantle the Hindus temple at Kangra the emperor had started on his tour of Jammu and Kashmir, in 1613 A.D. The Royal camp reached Haryana but he in camped at Rampur Khera mound. It was here that local Muslim chiefs others met him with some complaints. They were greeted with graced and well redressed with full justice. The emperor increased the endowments for the Muslims here. Jahangir had his camp here at Rampur Khera when many sarkari patches were given to many people, making them masters of their land. Among them the Kalkat Jats of village Gondpur were also granted the patta.

The Sikh Rule 1734-1849

During the Misls period, 1734-1799 the Sikh chiefs with their soldiers and horses frequented Rampur Khera where they often encamped for the rationing and for -preparation of battles. All around it there was much fodder for the horses, clean water flowing in the torrential streams.

This was the place where the enemy could not have an easy access; during this period Sardar Mansa Singh Sahota of Gardhiwala had established him as a chieftain of this area. In this period Faizalpuria Sardar had given a crushing defeat to the Muslim Chief of Patti, who was chastising the Sikh, Sardar Karora Singh of the Karora Singhia misl possessed Haryana and Sham Chorasi. Sardar Mehtab Singh grandson of Sardar Mansa Singh Sahota of Gardhiwala joined. The Ahluwalia Misl and became an influential Sardar of this area. But died fighting bravely against Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, in the battle of Daroli kalan, P.S. Adampur. Sansar Chand had to run away from thefield.

The original residents of village Bahle left the village due to famine poverty and settled somewhere else. This deserted village was given land by a Sardar of Gardhiwala to Nanar Jatts, who are now the owners of the village Bapu Boota Singh; a pensioner from the British Indian Army of this village was Hakim of great reputation, who was the permanent physician of Sant Baba Harnam Singh Ji, the founder of Gurdwara of Rampur Khera. "Anar-Allah. Barhamna."

Sardar Baghel Singh, for a considerable period made Rampur Khera his cantonment. During the Misal period, the Muslims of the surrounding area supplied rations to the Sikh soldiers, who camped here and also fodder to their horses.

British Period 1849-1947

During the British Period Rampur Khera mound was popular in this area Mr. Thomas Beale travelled in 1829 AD. From Delhi to Srinagar, passing through Panipat, Karnal, Ambala Banur, Ropar, Garhshankar, Hoshiarpur, Haryana, Gardhiwala, Dasuya, Mukerian and Pathankot. He submitted comprehensive reports of his journey to the Governor General at Delhi. Which at the

time was kept as top secret, but later after the annexation of Punjab by the British Government, it was made public. One copy of the manuscript is also available at the Punjab state.

Archive, Patiala. Mr. Beales has described every place in a detail. About Rampur Khera he wrote, "Rampur mound is a small place situated on the left side of the main road between Haryana and Gardhiwala. It is very picturesque covered with full green grass and mango trees and running streams of fresh water to the east and the west. The people say it is a 'Sagta theh', where the people do not generally go, being afraid of unclean souls, who remain there. The people do not and cannot stay there, during the night, but it remained often the military camping ground, since the time immemorial. It was a very high mound but due to the many camping ground, from time to time had reduced it in size and height."

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