



Nanak

IK JYOT

IN HONOUR OF THE
550TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF
SIRI GURU NANAK DEV JI



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NANAK - IK JYOT

Published in Kenya in 2019 by
Surjit Singh Malkit Singh Pandhal
and Family

D E S I G N

Khalsa Lakhvir-Singh
www.kenyankalasingha.com

Great care has been taken to ensure details and references are as correct as possible. We humbly apologise in case anything may have been overlooked.



Handle and store this publication with respect as it contains revered verses from Siri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and makes references to the Sikh Gurus.

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Nanak

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IN HONOUR OF THE
550TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF
GURU NANAK



MOOL
MANTAR

One Universal Creator God

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The Name Is Truth

ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ

Creative Being Personified

ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ

No Fear

ਨਿਰਭਉ

No Hatred

ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

Image Of The Undying

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ

Beyond Birth

ਅਜੂਨੀ

Self-Existent

ਸੈਭੰ

By Guru's Grace

ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ

Chant And Meditate:

॥ ਜਪੁ ॥

True In The Primal Beginning

ਆਦਿਸਚੁ

True Throughout The Ages

ਜੁਗਾਦਿਸਚ

True Here And Now

ਹੈਭੀਸਚੁ

O Nanak, Forever And Ever True

ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀਭੀਸਚੁ

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ ਮਿਟੀ ਧੁੰਧੁ ਜਗਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਆ

With the emergence of the true Guru Nanak, the mist cleared and the light scattered all around.

The Trustees, Chairman, and Managing Committee of
SIRI GURU SINGH SABHA, KISUMU

cordially invites all Sadh Sangat
to participate in the
550th PRAKASH UTSAV GURPURB
of

DHAN DHAN
SIRI GURU NANAK DEV JI

SUNDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2019

8.30am Kirtan
9.30am Arambh
Siri Akhand Paath
12.30pm Guru Ka Langar
5.00pm Evening Tea

6.30pm Rehraas Sahib
7.00pm Kirtan and Katha
8.00pm Guru Ka Langar

MONDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2019

Continuation of
Siri Akhand Paath

7.30am Morning Tea
12.30pm Guru Ka Langar
5.00pm Evening Tea

6.30pm Rehraas Sahib
7.00pm Kirtan and Katha
8.00pm Guru Ka Langar

TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2019

9.30am Bhog of
Siri Akhand Paath
9.30am Kirtan, Ardas
and Samapathi
11.00am Sewa of
Nishan Sahib
12.30pm Guru Ka Langar

SEWA BY

Surjit Singh Malkit Singh Pandhal and Family

FOREWORD

It is a humbling honour to be living in an era that is marking such a massive milestone in Sikh history - the **550th Birth Anniversary of Siri Guru Nanak Dev Ji** - the Divine Light that revealed itself to illumine the path of Sikhi with a message for all humanity.

Guru Nanak remains as relevant as he was over half a millennia ago when the darkness of ingorance had engulfed mankind, and had misled them away from their spiritual roots and values of love, compassion, tolerance and service.

We take this opporunity to leave a little footprint in the sands of time with this offering at the feet of the Guru – a collection of gems of glimpses on his life and teachings.

Guru Nanak was born in an age that required a bridge between differences in men of faith, and it is the great fortune of

Sikhs that he continues to be the bridge of peace and love in the form of the **Kartarpur Corridor** that today connects two Punjabs - of India and of Pakistan – the two countries that share the heritage linked to the history of the 10 Sikh Gurus. We owe our sincerest gratitude to the Governments of the two countries for working together in the spirit of and love for Guru Nanak.

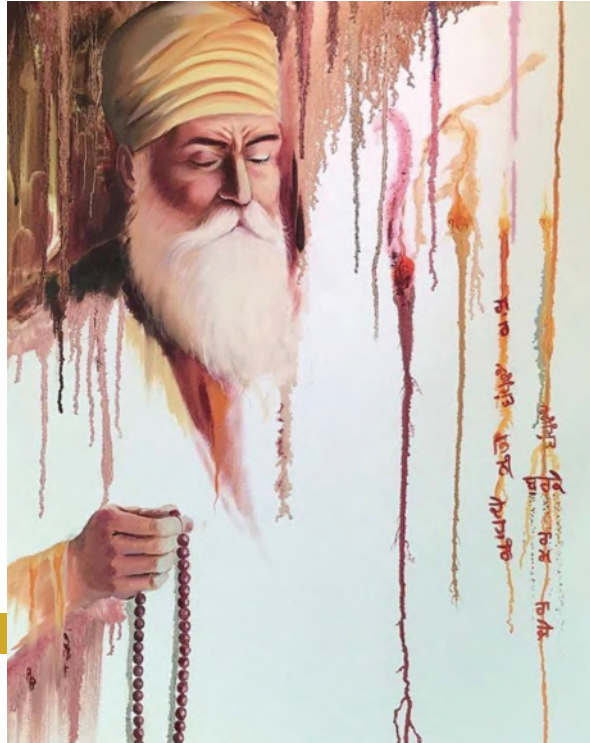
Let us all embrace Guru Nanak's core principles of *Kirt Karni*, *Vand Shakna* and *Naam Japna* in the spirit of *Sarbat da Bhalla*.

We hope our dear friends treasure this beautiful souvenir that they will preserve for generations to come.

**Surjit Singh Malkit Singh Pandhal
and Family**

Kisumu, Kenya

November, 2019



ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ
ਮਿਟੀ ਧੁੰਧੁ ਜਗਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਆ

With the emergence of the true Guru Nanak,
the mist cleared and the light scattered all around.



INTRODUCTION

Siri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was the founder of Sikh Dharam, one of the world's youngest religions. He became the first Sikh Guru and his spiritual teachings laid the foundation on which Sikhi was formed. Considered a religious reformist, Guru Nanak travelled across South Asia and Middle East to share his teachings. He advocated the existence of One God and taught his followers that every human being can reach out to God through contemplation and pious deeds.

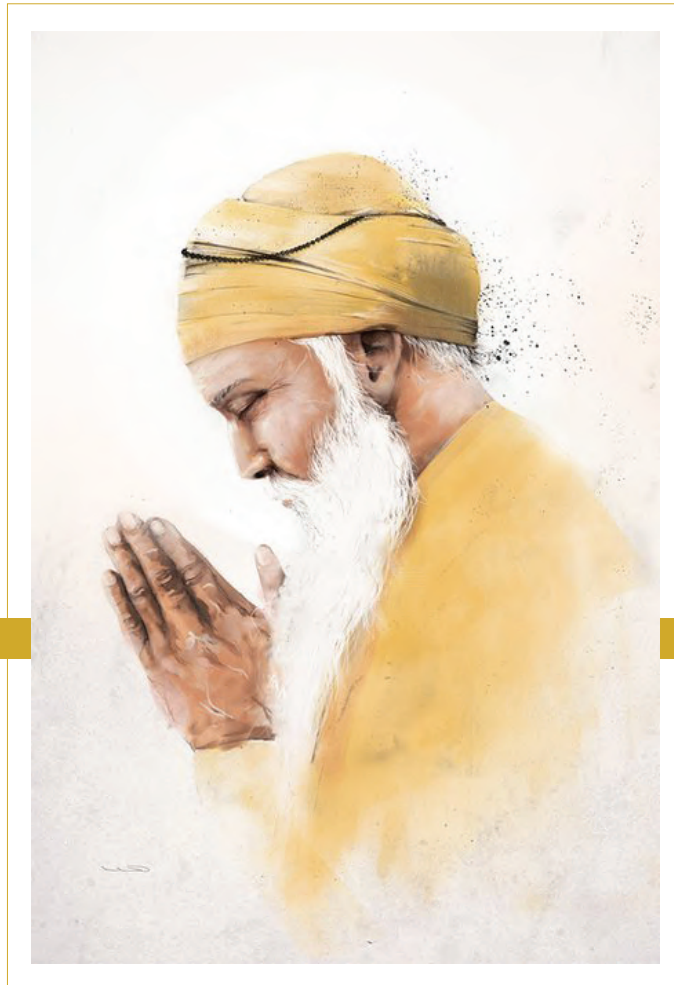
His teachings emphasised on simplicity and on the importance of worship of One God. Guru Nanak did not support monasticism and asked his followers to lead the life of honest householder.

He insisted that caste, creed and gender were irrelevant for attaining liberation. His idea of liberation was not only of a state of inert bliss but rather the pursuit of an active

life with a strong sense of social commitment. He used terms *Naam*, *Daan* and *Ishnaan* for the essence of his teachings, which actually meant right worship, welfare of others and purity of conduct. His teachings also include honest living and helping the needy. Thus, Guru Nanak's teachings contained the idea of social and political equality.

His teachings were immortalized in the form of 974 hymns, which came to be known as **Siri Guru Granth Sahib Ji**, the holy scriptures of Sikh Dharam. With more than 30 million followers, Sikh Dharam is one of the newest, fifth largest and important religions in the world – but as per capita income, it makes Sikhs the richest people in the world.





*Let no man in the world
live in delusion. Without
the Guru, none can cross
over to the other shore.*

GURU NANAK

The first Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Nanak was born in Punjab, in what is now known as Nankana Sahib, situated in modern day Pakistan. From a young age, he deeply contemplated on God and in adulthood he set out to fulfill his divine purpose on earth.

Already trained as a trader, he travelled and traded, all the while spreading the essential teachings of Sikhi.



ADI GURU

The First Guru



Gurudwara Nankana Sahib, Punjab-Pakistan

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak was born in 1469





*Speak only that which
will bring you honour.*

GURU NANAK

The birth of Guru Nanak was a blessing to the world. Guru Sahib came to the earth to dispel the darkness of falsehood and guide mankind towards the Light of Truth.

He taught that world is full of suffering, which can only be dispelled by following the light of truthful living.



MITTI DHUND

Veil of Ignorance was lifted





Gurudwara Sacha Sauda, Punjab-Pakistan

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak served Langar to hungry Hindu ascetics





*The world is a drama,
staged in a dream.*

GURU NANAK



NANAK DUKHIA SABH SANSAR

The Suffering of All



Those who pay attention to the process of life, realize that everyone suffers in this process.

Life is full of meaningless suffering.

Guru Nanak taught that liberation from suffering can only happen when one becomes truthful - and when one realizes the Truth and speaks it - and acts on it.

In Japji Sahib, Guru Sahib says that in order to speak and embody the Truth, one must learn to walk in the way of The Order of God.

By walking in the way of God's Order, one learns about the Truth and gains the strength to act out the Truth.





Gurudwara Ber Sahib

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak contemplated on Shabad Guru under a beri tree



*Dwell in the peace in the
home of your own being,
and the Messenger of
Death will not be able to
touch you.*

GURU NANAK



HUKAM

The Order of God

Guru Nanak explains that the Order of God cannot be stated, you can only be with it. He says that it is in the Order of God in which things take form, in which living beings come to life, in which greatness is obtained, in which one becomes high or low, and in which pleasure and pain is received. Everything happens within the Order of God, there is nothing outside of it.

He adds that those who recognize that everything happens according to the Order of God, transcend their worldly identity.

In modern terms, we can say that the Order of God, or the presence of God, is the present moment. By aligning ourselves with the present moment, we come to realize the Truth.



Gurudwara Sri Sant Ghat Sahib

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak revealed the 'Mool Mantar' to humanity



*Burn worldly love, rub the
ashes and make ink of it,
make the heart the pen,
the intellect the writer,
write that which has no
end or limit.*

GURU NANAK



DUNIA MUKAME FANI

The Transitory World

The truth is that the world is impermanent – it is constantly changing. Our environment constantly changes from moment to moment. Now we might be faced with the birth of a new baby, in the next moment we might be faced with the death of a loved one.

Ourself, who we think we are, constantly changes from moment to moment. With some people, we behave one way, with other we behave in a different way. Our actions, our thoughts, our understanding changes all the time.

Guru Nanak taught that those who cling to things that change all the time, they suffer meaninglessly.

Clinging to our worldly identity, the story of our lives, is the cause of our meaningless suffering.



Gurudwara Panja Sahib

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak stopped a rock hurled at him, leaving his handprint on it



*Those who have truth as
their fast, contentment as
their sacred shrine of
pilgrimage, spiritual wisdom
and meditation as their
cleansing bath, kindness as
their deity, and forgiveness
as their chanting beads -
they are the most excellent
people.*

GURU NANAK



APNA MOOL

An identity beyond



When Guru Nanak emerged from the river and claimed, Na koi Hindu, na koi Musalman – that no one is a Hindu or a Muslim – he wanted us to rise to the eternal Truth of the oneness of mankind.

He wanted us to recognize that the true self transcends the worldly identities. The world is a play of God. He has created it so that the mind creates identities for itself and other minds, for many reasons.

We identify ourselves through relationships, such as mother, father, sister or brother. We also identify ourselves as the Sikhs of Guru Nanak.

These Identities are very helpful in a practical way. However we must also follow Guru Sahib's teaching and transcend these worldly identities and realize the eternal Truth, which is beyond identification.





Guru Nanak Shrine in Iraq

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak met Pir Bahlol from Baghdad





*You are the River,
All-knowing and
All-seeing. I am just a
fish-how can I find Your
limit? Wherever I look, You
are there. Outside of You, I
would burst and die.*

GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak always said everyone follows religions blindly without understanding. So he tried to instill Understanding in everyone.

To Guru Sahib, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs, everybody was the same, they were all ignorant of God.

To Guru Sahib, religion was not a hurdle. It was ignorance of God that was the hurdle.

That's why Guru Sahib focused on deepening the understanding of religions that people followed. He focused on deepening their understanding of God.



JAAG LEHO
Ignorance is the hurdle





Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib, Pakistan

This is the place in history where Guru Nanak's Light merged with the Divine Light in 1539



*Only the good deeds
which you have done
shall remain with you, O
my soul. This opportunity
shall not come again!*

GURU NANAK



VICHAAR GYAAN

Deepen your faith



Guru Nanak deepened the understanding of religion and shed light into the rituals that people performed. He was not against any particular rituals. He wanted people to bring the Order of God into their awareness when performing their religious rituals and ceremonies. When speaking about the path of an ascetic, Guru Sahib said:

Contemplation is my Cup. Spiritual Knowledge is my walking stick. Dwelling in the present moment is the ashes that I apply to my body. Praising the Lord is my tradition. To live as a Gurmukh, facing my Guru, is my religious path.
- Guru Granth Sahib, 360

He says that the way an ascetic covers himself with ash, he must also cover himself with the present moment, meaning he must align his mind towards the Order of God.



Imprint of Guru Nanak's hand at Gurudwara Panja Sahib, Punjab-Pakistan



ESSENTIAL TEACHINGS

of Guru Nanak





When we live in the Order of God, we start to become Truthful.

When we become truthful, then we overcome our ignorance and transcend our worldly identity.

When our ignorance is transformed into understanding, then we stop suffering meaninglessly.

When we stop suffering meaninglessly, then our faith deepens.

When our faith deepens, our rituals become more meaningful.

When our rituals become more meaningful, life becomes more meaningful, and thus more enjoyable.





WHO WAS NANAK?





BIRTH

1469

*Rai Bhai ki Talvandi
(Nanakana Sahib, Punjab-Pakistan)*

JYOTI JYOT

1539

Kartarpur (Punjab-Pakistan)

FAMILY

Mehta Kalu

Father

Mata Tripta

Mother

Bebe Nanaki

Sister

Mata Sulakhni

Wife

**Sri Chand
Lakhmi Das**

Sons

The benefactor God listened to the cries of (humanity) human beings and descended Guru Nanak to this world. Washing his feet and praising God, he got his Sikhs to drink the ambrosial nectar (of humility).

In this dark age, he showed all God's to be just one. The four feet of Dharma, the four castes were converted into one. Equality of the king and the beggar, he spread the custom of being humble. Reversed is the game of the beloved: the egoist high heads bowed to the feet. Baba Nanak rescued this Dark age; read Satnam and recited the mantar. Guru Nanak came to redeem this dark age of Kaljug.

– Bhai Gurdas, 1:23





He Himself acts; unto whom should we complain? No one else does anything. Go ahead and complain to Him, if He makes a mistake. If He makes a mistake, go ahead and complain to Him; but how can the Creator Himself make a mistake? He sees, He hears, and without our asking, without our begging, He gives His gifts.

GURU NANAK

With the emergence of the true Guru, the mist cleared and the light scattered all around. As if at the rise of the sun, the stars disappeared and the darkness dispels. Wherever the Guru put his feet a religious place was established.

Guru Nanak was born on (Kattak full moon night) October 20, 1469 at Talwandi Rai Bhoi in district Shekhpora, forty miles to the south-west of Lahore.

The village Talwandi later on came to be known as Nankana Sahib, now in Punjab-Pakistan.

Guru Nanak was born into a middle-class family and raised by his parents, Mehta Kalu and Mata Tripta. On birth the midwife Daultan said a beam of light flashed across the room and strange sweet voices were heard as welcoming the child. The child was no ordinary child, instead of weeping he smiled.





On seeing the child, Pandit Hardyal paid homage to the child with folded hands and said,

“He would be a great divine king. Both Muslims and Hindus will reverence him. He will be king of kings. He will believe and worship only one formless, omnipotent and graceful God. He will consider every creature as the creation of God. He will lead a new unique sect which will be eternal.”

At the age of six years old he was admitted in the village school, whose incharge was pandit Gopal Das. The Guru showed keen interest in his studies and quickly learnt everything the pandit could teach him. Guru Nanak’s genius for poetry was acknowledged by pandit Gopal Das. Guru Sahib became proficient in Punjabi, Hindi and Sanskrit. He then got admitted in Maktab (Persian and Arabic school) maintained by Maulvi Qutab-ud-Din, to learn persian.

He spent most of his childhood with his older sister, Bebe Nanaki, as he was fond of her.



The beggar loves to receive charity from the wealthy landlord. The hungry person loves to eat food. The GurSikh loves to find satisfaction by meeting the Guru.

GURU NANAK





DIVINE SUBJECTS



As a child, Guru Nanak went on to astound many with his intelligence and his interest towards divine subjects.



For his *upanayana* ritual, he was asked to wear the sacred thread, but Guru Nanak simply refused to wear the thread. When the priest insisted, the young Guru Sahib took everyone by surprise by asking for a thread that is sacred in every sense of the word. He wanted the thread to be made of mercy and contentment, and wanted continence and truth to hold the three sacred threads together.

Let mercy be the cotton, contentment the thread, continence the knot and truth the twist. Oh priest if you have such a thread, do give it to me. It will not wear out, nor get soiled, nor be burnt, nor lost. Says Nanak, blessed are those who go about wearing such a thread.

Rai bular was going through that area with his attendants, when he saw the strange scene, he was convinced that Guru Nanak is not an ordinary person. God had sent him to this world. Rai bular then touched his feet in great reverence and became his disciple.



By His Power we see, by His Power we hear; by His Power we have fear, and the essence of happiness. By His Power the nether worlds exist, and the Akaashic ethers; by His Power the entire creation exists. By His Power the Vedas and the Puraanas exist, and the Holy Scriptures of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions. By His Power all deliberations exist.

GURU NANAK





*He is the King, the King
of kings, the Supreme
Lord and Master of
kings. Nanak remains
subject to His Will.*

GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak took his friend Bhai Baala with him to Choocharkaana, as his father had given him twenty silver rupees to go and invest it usefully and wisely, on the way he came across sages and sadhus who had been in deep meditation but had not eaten anything for many days. So he went to the market and brought back food items and prepared langaar using his own hands. This business that he undertook is known as *Sacha Sauda*.

After sometime Guru Sahib remained silent, in deep contemplation and becoming immersed in his own thoughts, Hardaas the village physician was brought, as he started diagnosing the Guru looked keenly at the face of the physician and smiled,

O physician, what are you seeing, I am quite healthy the sickness which you are searching with your fingers is not of the body. You cannot diagnose it. It is beyond your knowledge.



In 1475, Guru Nanak's sister married Jai Ram and moved to Sultanpur. Guru Nanak wanted to stay with his sister for a few days and hence went to Sultanpur and started working under the employer of his brother-in-law. Guru Nanak was 18 when his marriage took place, fixed on 24 Jeth 1544. Guru Sahib brought Mata Sulakhani to Sultanpur Lodhi. Guru Nanak's sons were born here. The elder son Siri Chand in 1494, and Laxmi Chand in 1496.

In singing his hymns Guru Sahib needed a musical instrument. Bhai Pharinda (Phera Rababi) was attending his *satsang* (holy assembly). Guru Sahib asked Bhai Parinda to prepare a beautiful rabab for him which he later handed over to Bhai Mardana and requested Bhai Mardana to stay with him. He later became a lifelong companion of Guru Sahib.

Guru Nanak received many distinguished visitors but always refused material gifts, believing that spirituality should be given freely and not dependent on financial payment.



*The Shabad is the Guru,
upon whom I lovingly
focus my consciousness; I
am the chaylaa, the
disciple.*

GURU NANAK





THE ENLIGHTENED ONE



During his stay in Sultanpur, Guru Nanak would go to a nearby river every morning in order to bathe and meditate. He would sit under a Beri tree. There now stands Gurudwara Ber Sahib.



One fine day, he went to the black river (Kali Bein) as usual but did not return for three days. People believed that Guru Sahib had drowned after he did not return. When he emerged out of the river, he looked like a man possessed, spiritually reawakened, completely enlightened and did not utter a word. When he finally spoke, he said, *There is no Hindu and no Musalman*. These words were the beginning of his teachings which would culminate in the formation of a new religion. And he gave the *Mool Mantar* to the world. At the spot where he emerged from the river, which is a few meters from Gurudwara Beri Sahib, is Gurudwara Sri Sant Ghat Sahib.

Nanak then came to be known as Guru Nanak (teacher) as he travelled far and wide to spread his teachings. He founded, Sikh Dharam, one of the youngest religions through his teachings.



*The understanding of
Your Way, Lord, is horses,
saddles and bags of gold
for me.*

GURU NANAK





The religion emphasizes on the importance of leading a spiritual life without embracing monasticism. It teaches its followers to escape the clutches of ordinary human traits, such as lust, rage, greed, attachment and conceit (collectively known as the 'five thieves'). Sikh Dharam is a monotheistic religion, which believes that God is shapeless, timeless and invisible. It also teaches the concepts of worldly illusion (maya), karma, and liberation. Some of the key practices of Sikh Dharam are contemplation on God and the recitation of Gurbani, the hymns composed by the Gurus. The religion also advocates justice and equality and urges its followers to serve mankind.

*The lotus flower floats
untouched upon the
surface of the water, and
the duck swims through
the stream; with one's
consciousness focused on
the Word of the Shabad,
one crosses over the
terrifying world-ocean.*

GURU NANAK





SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS



Guru Nanak was determined to spread the message of the God. He was saddened by the plight of mankind as the world was fast falling prey to the wickedness of Kalyug.





It is believed that Guru Nanak spent 24 years of his life in his journeys, covering a staggering distance of 28,000 kilometers by foot. Apart from these confirmed udasis, recently there have been suggestions, with some proof that Guru Sahib has also travelled into Egypt, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya and also to some other countries in the former Soviet Union block.

Hence, Guru Sahib, in 1499, decided to travel across the subcontinent to educate the people. It is said that he undertook five Divine journeys (Udasis) in his lifetime. Before beginning his first journey, Guru Nanak is believed to have visited his parents to explain them the importance of his udasis.



*When the lamp is lit, the
darkness is dispelled;
reading the Vedas, sinful
intellect is destroyed.
When the sun rises, the
moon is not visible.
Wherever spiritual
wisdom appears,
ignorance is dispelled.*

GURU NANAK





*All the wicked are ruined
by their anger. Honor and
good sense are lost, when
one forgets the Naam,
the Name of the Lord.*

GURU NANAK

For a year he spread his message of peace, compassion, righteousness and truth to the people in and around his home.

He journeyed around the near entirely Indian sub-continent and west ward all the way to Rome and Baghdad, Iraq, into the Arabian Peninsula, and return through the Persian empire to India.

In these journeys, he preached the new concept of God as supreme, all powerful and truthful, formless (*Nirankar*), fearless (*Nirbhau*), without hate (*Nirvair*), the sole (*Ik*), the self-existent (*Saibhang*), the incomprehensible and everlasting creator of all things (*Karta Purakh*), and the eternal and absolute truth (*Satnam*).

Guru Nanak spoke out against empty religious rituals, pilgrimages, the caste system, the sacrifice of widows, dependence on books to learn the true religion, and all the other tenets that were to define his teachings. Never did he ask his listeners to follow him.





SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

First Udasi

1500-1506



His first Udasi lasted about seven years and covered the following towns and regions: Sultanpur, Tulamba (modern Makhdumpur, zila Multan), Panipat, Delhi, Banaras (Varanasi), Nanakmata (zila Nainital, U.P.), Tanda Vanjara (zila Rampur), Kamrup (Assam), Asa Desh (Assam), Saidpur (modern Eminabad, Pakistan), Pasrur (Pakistan), Sialkot (Pakistan). Guru Nanak was of the age of 31-37.



*Make the Fear of God the
farm, purify the water,
truth and contentment
the cows and bulls,
humility the plow,
consciousness the
plowman, remembrance
the preparation of the
soil, and union with the
Lord the planting time.
Let the Lord's Name be
the seed, and His
Forgiving Grace the
harvest. Do this, and the
whole world will seem
false.*

GURU NANAK

During his first Udasi, when Guru Nanak, along with Bhai Mardana reached Jagannathpuri (now Odisha), he witnessed that the people there had great faith on a sadhu (saint), who claimed to predict people's future. One day, there was a huge gathering (people who wanted to know there future) before that sadhu. While the sadhu seemed to be in a samadhi (meditation), there was a bowl placed in front of him, full to the brim with money which people had offered to him in return for his predictions. Guru Nanak visited the place and very gently lifted the bowl and placed it right behind the sadhu. A few moments after, the sadhu opened his eyes and was surprised to not find the bowl full of money in front of him. Angrily, he asked the gathering where did the bowl go? No one replied. Guru Sahib then stood and said to the sadhu that you can predict everything, then why don't you find out where your bowl is? The sadhu grew angrier but could neither find the bowl nor could he reply, Guru Sahib then took out the bowl from behind the sadhu and said to him "when you can't find out where your things are, how can you find what has in-store for other people" the gathering was watching and instantly realized that they are being conned.



SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

Second Udasi

1506-1513



In his second udasi, Guru Nanak visited most parts of present day Sri Lanka, [Dhanasri Valley, Sangladip (Ceylon)] Guru Nanak was of the age of 37-44. This journey too, lasted for about seven years.





O Nanak, God blesses the unworthy with virtue, and bestows virtue on the virtuous. No one can even imagine anyone who can bestow virtue upon Him.

GURU NANAK

During one of his udasis (travelling on foot for the purpose of preaching), Guru Nanak along with Bhai Mardana reached a village. The people of that village were corrupt, dishonest, rude and never respected their guests. While leaving that village, Guru Nanak raised his hands and blessed the villagers saying *Vasde Raho* (may you keep dwelling and prospering). The next day, they reached another village. The people of this village were honest, spiritual, were very receptive, received guests kindly and did sewa wholeheartedly. While leaving the village, Guru Sahib raised his hand and blessed the villagers saying *Ujjad Jao* (may you get displaced).

Shocked by this, Bhai Mardana asked the Guru why he did so. To which the Guru explained “when the people with good values and clean consciences will get displaced, wherever they will go they will spread peace and harmony. On the other side, if the people with evil qualities disperse, they will spread corruption everywhere because that is all they have. The world needs more of good, not bad.”



SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

Third Udasi

1514-1518



In his third udasi, Guru Nanak travelled through the difficult terrains of the Himalayas and covered places like Kashmir, Sumer Parbat, Nepal, Tashkand, Sikkim, Tibet. Guru Nanak was of the age of 45-49. This journey lasted for about five years.





Once Guru Nanak visited Haridwar, there he saw some priests throwing water from the river in the sun's direction. He asked them what it was about and they told him that they were offering water to their ancestors who are in the other world, in the region of the sun to quench their thirst. Upon hearing this, the Guru started doing the same but in westerly direction (opposite side of the rising sun). On seeing this, priests asked him about what he was doing. He replied that he was watering his fields which were around 400 miles to the west. The priests again asked that how is that possible? Guru Sahib quipped, saying that if water can reach your ancestors who aren't even in this world any more, then why can't it reach my fields which are just 400 miles away.

*One who works for what
he eats, and gives some
of what he has - O
Nanak, he knows the
Path.*

GURU NANAK





SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

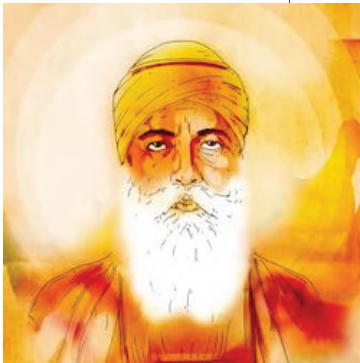
Fourth Udsi

1519-1521



In his fourth Udsai, Guru Sahib travelled to places like Mecca and most parts of Middle East. Guru Nanak was of the age of 50-52. This lasted for about three years.





There is a remarkable incident in connection with Nanak's visit to Mecca. At Mecca, Guru Nanak was found sleeping with his feet towards the Kaaba, before which the Mohammedans prostrated themselves when performing their prayer. Qazi Rukan-ud-din, who observed this, angrily remarked: "Infidel! How dare you dishonor God's place by turning your feet towards him?" he also kicked Guru Sahib who calmly replied, "I am tired, turn my feet in any direction where the place of God is not". The Qazi took hold of Guru Sahib's feet angrily and moved them towards opposite direction. The Mosque also began to move, the Qazi was struck with wonder. Guru Sahib got up and said, "Don't you see that God's house is in every direction? I tell you He dwells in every place, in every heart. He is in your hearts, he is also in mine." The Qazi then recognized the glory of Guru Nanak.

*Why do you wander lost,
O mortal, attached to
falsehood and greed?
Nothing has been lost
yet - there is still time to
wake up!*

GURU NANAK



SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

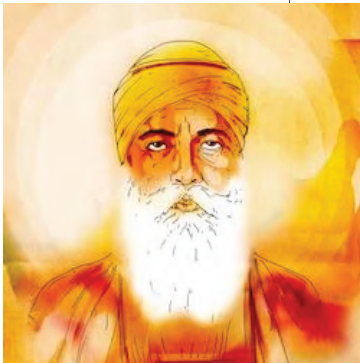
Fifth Udasi

1523-1524



In his fifth and final journey, Guru Nanak focused on spreading the message within the region of Punjab. Guru Nanak was of the age of 54-56. He was accompanied by Bhai Mardana in most of his journeys.





*Why do you wander lost,
O mortal, attached to
falsehood and greed?
Nothing has been lost
yet - there is still time to
wake up!*

GURU NANAK

He sat under a Peepal tree at the foot of a hillock. On the top of the hill, there lived a Mohammedan saint named Vali Quandhari. There was then a spring of water on the top of the hill. Mardana used to get water from the spring. Guru Nanak became very popular in a short time. The Mohammedan saint became jealous. He forbade Mardana from taking water from the spring. Mardana informed Guru Sahib of the conduct of the saint. Guru Sahib said to Mardana, "O Mardana! Do not be afraid God will send water down to us soon." The spring that was on the top of the hill dried up immediately. There arose a spring at the foot of the hill where Guru Sahib stopped by. The saint was very much enraged. He hurled a big rock from the top of the hill down to the spot where Guru Sahib was sitting. Guru Nanak stopped the rock by his open hand. The impression of his hand on the rock exists even now. Then the saint came to Guru Sahib, prostrated at his feet and asked for pardon. Guru Sahib smiled and pardoned the arrogant saint. There now stands a beautiful shrine by the side of the spring which is called Panja Sahib.



NANAK NAAM



Guru Nanak is revered by different
countries and known by different names.
Here are some of them.





Nanakachraya	Sri Lanka
Nanak Lama	Tibet
Guru Rimpochea	Sikkam and Bhutan
Nanak Rishi	Nepal
Nanak Peer	Bagdad
Vali Hind	Makka
Nanak Vali	Misar
Nanak Kandmdar	Russia
Baba Nanak	Iraq
Peer Balagda	Mazahar Sharif
Baba Fooza	China





NANAK TEACHINGS



The basis of Guru Sahib's religious teachings was the belief in a universal God, who was beyond form, but who was manifest to varying degrees in all of creation.





WaheGuru is the *Gur Mantar* for the followers of Guru Nanak. Ideally, it is to be recited with every breath you take, throughout the day even as you carry one with worldly duties.

Mool Mantar (as below) is the other important Mantar for repetition.

Ek Onkar, Satnam, Karta Purakh, Nirbhau, Nirvair, Akal Murat, Ajooni, Saibhang, Gur Parsad – *God is but one, his name is true, he is the creator, he pervaded the whole universe, he is without fear, he is without enmity, he is immortal, he is birth-less, he is self-existent, he is the remover of darkness(of ignorance) and he is merciful.*
–Guru Nanak

The Lord is eternal, he has no beginning and no end.

The message of Guru Nanak, is an inclusive barrier for squandering of resources on self indulgence. All Sikh Gurus did not have to

worry about providing food (*langar*) for themselves or their followers as an entire infrastructure for doing so came about after Guru Nanak's divine enlightenment. As so often stated in the early days of the Sikh Panth.

A leaf could not even move from the wind if his will is not behind it.

Guru Sahib instituted the common meal, requiring the rich and poor, Hindu and Muslim, high caste and low caste, to sit together while eating, all work together, all owned the town.

And it was through Divine Will that the message spread peacefully throughout India and the world.







CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD



Equality of all humans



When in the the Middle East – the west and the rest of Asia – slavery, class and race discrimination was rife and disrespect between the different classes and caste was at peak, Guru Nanak preached against discrimination and prejudices due to race, caste and status. he said,

See the brotherhood of all mankind as the highest order of yogis; conquer your own mind, and conquer the world.

- SGGS: 6

There is one awareness among all created beings.

- SGSS: 24

One who recognizes the one lord among all beings does not talk of ego.

- SGGS:432

He urges all the peoples of the world to conquer their minds to these evil practices. All human beings have the light of the Lord and are the same – only by subduing one's pride and ego could one see this light in all.



Equality of Women

In about 1499 when the world offered low to no status or respect to women, Guru Nanak improved and sealed the respect of women by saying the following:

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her bad? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all.

- SGGS: 473

In so doing, he promoted women's rights and equality- a first for the 15th century. It was a radical revelation, 550 years ago. Yet in any parts of the world today, women still do not have a status or rights. Guru Nanak is one of the most important religious figures to have contributed to women empowerment in India. Guru Sahib appealed to his followers to respect women and to treat them as their equal. He said a man is always bound to women and that without women there would be no creation on earth.





Universal message for all

Guru Nanak's preaching came at a time when there were conflicts between various religions. Mankind was so intoxicated with pride and ego that people had started fighting against each other in the name of God and religion. Hence, Guru Sahib began his teachings by saying that there was 'no Hindu and no Muslim'. This implies the fact that God is one and that He is only seen differently through various religions.

Guru Nanak's teachings, although not intended, contributed to the unity of Hindus and Muslims to an extent. He also emphasized on the importance of equality of mankind. He condemned slavery and racial discrimination and said that all are equal.





It had been a custom at the time for religious leaders to address only their own congregation and for segregation of the different religions—but Guru Nanak broke with tradition and spoke to all of humanity.

to the Muslims he said;
And when, O Nanak, he is merciful to all beings, only then shall he be called a Muslim.

- SGGS: 141

to the Hindus, he said;
O Nanak, without the true name, of what use is the frontal mark of the Hindus, or their sacred thread?

- SGGS: 467

and to all he preached;
To take what rightfully belongs to another is like a Muslim eating pork. Or a Hindu eating beef.

- SGGS: 141

He also restored the faith in God by saying that the Creator is deeply involved in what man is trying to achieve on earth. While most of the major religions including the sects of Hinduism and Buddhism advocated monasticism in order to achieve salvation, Guru Sahib came up with a religion that supports the lifestyle of an average householder.

Most importantly, he also taught his followers the methods to attain salvation while leading a normal life within the society. In fact, he stressed on the importance of leading life with one's family members. Not only did he teach his ideals, but he also served as a living example. When Guru Nanak left for the heavenly abode, nine other Gurus followed his teachings and continued to further his message and mission.







LIGHT MERGES WITH LIGHT



After completing his Udasis, Guru Nanak
settled in Katarpur (city of the creator).
This city was established by Guru Sahib
himself in 1522.



Through his teachings, Guru Nanak had become widely renowned and respected by everyone for the love and guidance he'd bestowed on humanity.

Extremely popular among both the Hindus and the Muslims. His ideals were such that both communities found it ideal. Both claimed Guru Nanak to be one of their own and needless to say, Guru Sahib's ardent followers who called themselves the Sikhs (disciples) were also in the race along with the Hindus and the Muslims.

According to the history, when Guru Nanak's end was imminent, approaching his final few days, a debate and an argument ensued between Hindus, Muslims, and the Sikhs arose as to who should be given the honor to perform the last rites.

O Nanak, it is absurd to ask to be spared from pain by begging for comfort. Pleasure and pain are the two garments given, to be worn in the Court of the Lord.

GURU NANAK





While Hindus and Sikhs wanted to cremate the mortal remains of the Guru as per their respective customs, the Muslims wanted to perform the last rites according to their beliefs. When the debate failed to conclude amicably, they decided to ask Guru Sahib himself as to what needs to be done.

When they all approached him, Guru Nanak explained the concept of Joti Jot, that only his mortal body would expire, but that light which illumined him was the divine and imperishable light, and would pass to his successor Bhai Lehna renaming him Siri Guru Angad Dev Ji (Angad - meaning a part of him). He further asked the devotees to bring flowers and lay them next to his mortal remains. He asked the Hindus and the Sikhs to place their flowers on the right side of his body and the Muslims to place theirs on the left. He said that the honor of performing the last rites would go to those whose flowers remain fresh for a night.



*Wisdom, honor and
wealth are in the laps of
those whose hearts
remain permeated with
the Lord.*

GURU NANAK





*O mind, love the Lord, as
the fish loves the water.
The more the water, the
more the happiness, and
the greater the peace of
mind and body. Without
water, she cannot live,
even for an instant. God
knows the suffering of
her mind.*

GURU NANAK

When Guru Sahib took his last breath (1596 Bikrmi Monday September 22, 1539), the Sikh, Hindu and Muslim devotees returned the following morning. They carefully lifted and removed sheet which had been placed over the Guru's body. All were amazed and astonished to discover that no trace at all remained of Guru Nanak's mortal body. Only fresh flowers remained, for not a single bud had wilted of any blossom which had been left by either Sikhs, Hindus or Muslims the night before. The Muslims then buried the flowers, while Hindus and Sikhs cremated them. Therefore, both a *Samadhi* (traditional monument of remembrance) and a grave (according to Muslim traditions) were created by each community.

A Gurudwara now stands there, near the banks of River Ravi, next to a small village named Kothay Pind (village) on the west bank of River Ravi in Panjab, Pakistan. That's the spirit of Guru Nanak's sanctity, divinity and religious authority that descended upon each of the nine subsequent Gurus when the Guruship was devolved on to them.





CORE TEACHINGS



The basis of Guru Sahib's religious teachings was the belief in a universal God, who was beyond form, but who was manifest to varying degrees in all of creation.



Kirt Karni

Honest earning of bread with dignity and labor. To earn one's livelihood through creative, productive and honest labour.

Wand Shakna

To share the fruits of earnings with the needy. Sharing with and caring for the needy and sick. Help those people who cannot help themselves.

Naam Japna

Contemplation on the Divine Name with love and devotion. To be in tune with the Infinite through meditation on the Divine qualities so that the believer becomes filled with His Name.





SIKHI OF NANAK



Sikh Dharam is the youngest of the World
Religions, barely 550 years old. It was
founded by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in 1469 who
laid the basic principles of Sikh Dharam.







Sikh Dharam was founded at a time when people were groaning under the religious tyranny of Islamic and the Brahmanical order and the atrocities of the Mughal rule. At that critical moment Guru Nanak, founder of Sikh Dharam, raised his voice against that tyrannical order. Thanks to the genius of Guru Nanak, contrary to the popular belief, he did not merely stop short at reform in religious or social conduct of the individual but planted the seed of a new people in whom the whole mankind could find self-expression and fulfillment.

It offered the people a simple Sikh Dharam teaching 'Oneness of God', whose name is TRUTH. *There is light in all and that light is He. Through this light everything is illuminated.* A Sikh is the disciple of ten Gurus.

To this respect, Guru Nanak is the first Guru. Nine Gurus followed him who all reinforced and added to what was taught by the first

Guru. After 1708, the holy book of the Sikhs, The Siri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was proclaimed to be the only Guru by the last Guru, Siri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. This holy book embodies the philosophy and fundamentals of Sikh Dharam. It is the only holy book of a major religion which was written and authenticated by its founders.

All the fundamentals of Sikh Dharam emanate from the concept of love for God which follows the love of man. God is the Supreme Being, Universal and all powerful. For a Sikh, all human beings are creatures of God and must be treated equally. One must work hard and share one's earnings with the less fortunate which had to be earned by righteous means. One must be always active in mind and body. Guru Gobind Singh, the last Sikh Guru, gave the Sikhs a distinct uniform and appearance so that they were easily recognized.





So, in 1699 on the day of Vasakhi April 13, he assembled his Sikhs and baptized five beloved who were brave and obedient to his orders and called this brotherhood - The Khalsa. Also he gave them a new surname 'SINGH' (lion) to be added to their first names. He gave them the five symbols and five basic prayers. These saint-soldiers were devoted to mankind. The women were given equal status with men as the new brotherhood had no distinctions of caste, creed, color or sex. The women were to add 'KAUR' (princess) to their names and were also to be always protectors.



The Sikh

The word Sikh goes back to Sanskrit *shishya*, meaning a disciple or a learner. In Pali, *shishya* became *sissa*. The Pali word *sekha* (also *sikka*, *shiksha*) means pupil or one under training in a religious doctrine.

The term Sikh, in the Punjab, came to be used for the disciples of Guru Nanak and his nine spiritual successors. The Sikh today, a well-knit community of nearly thirty million, are a unique people in the religious civilization of the world. Practical and progressive in their outlook, they are deeply attached to their faith. Religious belief is their living impulse and the mainspring of their national characteristics and history.

Sikh Dharam had its birth in the Punjab and most of its followers live in this state; yet many have migrated to other parts of India and to countries abroad. Whenever they may live, Sikhs are easily recognized by their flowing beards and distinct turbans. They value these as the signs of their religious faith. As their history reveals, their religious forms and symbols have been of supreme importance to them.





They give them a sense of identity and are as essential part of their way of life. The Sikhs are widely known as good soldiers and farmers. In a foreign land a Sikh may be hailed as representative of the oriental princely order-such is his physical mien and stature. Tribute has not been lacking for Sikhs' handsome beard and headgear and for their qualities of courage and adventure, but appreciation of the underlying sources of their inspiration and tradition has generally been rather limited.

The Sikhs are a deeply devoted people and faith is an essential trait of their nature. An immense reserve of spiritual energy has been their strong asset in many a crisis during their 550-year-old history.

When at the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 nearly one-third of the community was reduced to a homeless and landless refugee population, they exhibited great recuperative power. The Radcliff line, which marked off the two sovereign states

of India and Pakistan, from each other, ran through the middle of the Sikh population - and once expansive Sikh Empire.

Migrating from what then became the west Punjab province of Pakistan, the uprooted sections of the community established themselves gradually, but securely in their new homeland. A firm and unflinching faith was their sole support in that most trying situation. Rather than produce any truculent or fanatical spirit, the Sikhs' religious zeal had resulted in some shining deeds of heroism and sacrifice. For, at the root of their history lie simple virtues such as tolerance, compassion, and service, so sedulously inculcated by their Gurus, or prophets-teachers.







Features of Sikhi

Each prophet gives some light and message to the world. Guru Nanak, the Founder of Sikh Dharam, and his nine successors made a distinct contribution to religion and religious thought.

Sikh Dharam may be distinguished from other religions from three standpoints: philosophy, community or institution and physical appearance. From the philosophical stand-point, the contribution of Sikh Dharam may be called *Naam Marg*. Guru Nanak emphasized the need for man's devotion to the Timeless Almighty. He illustrates the attributes of God in his *Mool Mantar*. He asks man to dedicate himself, day and night to the remembrance of God and His Name. The Guru also gave to his

followers the form of a community with certain institutions such as *Degh*, *Tegh*, and *Fateh*. By *Degh* is meant the system of community kitchen (*Langar*) maintained by contributions of the Sikhs. Everyone is to donate one tenth (*Dasvandh*) of his income. *Tegh* is the sword that represents power, which was necessary to preserve freedom of religious worship and to end tyranny.





For this reason, Guru Gobind Singh gave to God among other names, the name of *Sarbloh* (all steel). The Sikh believes in God's victory (*Fateh*). His salutation is *WaheGuru Ji Ka Khalsa, WaheGuru Ji Ki Fateh*: the victory is God's and the Khalsa is God's.

bent knees and with folded hands, to administer baptism (*Amrit*) to him. In the entire human history, there is no other case of a Guru kneeling before his followers.

Sikh Dharam also believes in discipline. Guru Gobind Singh gave the Sikh a new appearance and administered to him the Baptism of the Sword. He infused in him a spirit of fearlessness and a belief in his own invincibility and told him to maintain the five symbols, each beginning with the letter K symbols are: *Kes* (Hair), *Kirpan* (Sword), *Kachhera* (knee-long underwear), *Kanga* (Comb) and *Kara* (Iron Bracelet).

Another tenet of Sikh Dharam is humility (*Garibi*). The Gurus asked their followers to regard themselves servants of the Congregation (*Sangat*). The tenth Sikh Guru, after administering his new baptism to the five chosen ones, asked them on







Martydoms

The essential condition for entry into the Sikh fold is self-surrender and devotion to the Guru and God. Readiness for the supreme sacrifice or of offering one's head on the palm of one's hand to the Guru is an essential condition laid down by the Gurus for becoming a Khalsa Sikh.

Seeking death not for personal glory, winning reward of going to heaven, but for the purpose of protection the weak and the oppressed is what made the Khalsa brave and invincible. This has become traditional reputation for the Khalsa. Right from the times of Gurus till the last India Pakistan conflict (1971), the Sikhs have demonstrated that death in the service of truth, faith, justice and country is part of their character

and their glorious tradition. They do not seek martyrdom but they attain it. Dying for a just and righteous cause is the privilege of heroes.



It should, however be for an approved or noble cause. Sikh history furnishes outstanding examples of Guru Arjan, Guru Teg Bahadur, the sons of Guru Gobind Singh and countless other Sikh men and women, who laid down their lives to uphold the cause of the religious freedom and the uproot of tyranny.

According to Guru Gobind Singh, the true hero is one who fights to uphold “the truth.” A true martyr regards himself as God’s instrument. Sikh history is replete with the glorious deeds and the heroic sacrifices of the Sikhs who suffered for upholding decency, truth and moral values.



Heroism out of Holy Tradition

Guru Arjan's martyrdom marked a turning point in the history of the Sikh faith. Instead of the rosary and other saintly emblems of spiritual inheritance, his son Guru Hargobind wore a warrior's equipment for ceremonies of succession.

He put on two swords, declaring one to be the symbol of his spiritual and the other that of his temporal investiture. This was a significant act crucial to the future evolutionary of the Sikh panth. Until the time of Guru Arjan, the Sikh had been a sect of peaceable people. Guru Hargobind foresaw that sterner methods were required to meet the growing oppression of the Mughal emperors. So he adopted the style of a soldier.

"Great hero is Guru Hargobind. He is the breaker of enemy ranks, yet his heart is full of love and charity".

The synthesis of the heroic and the spiritual was Guru Hargobind's distinctive contribution to the evolution of the Sikh people. Guru Hargobind took up arms only to uphold the values established by his predecessors. For the Sikhs, the role of saints and the soldier had become mutually complementary.





The Sacrament of Steel

The Guru Gobind created a new metaphor of the sword. The sword was the symbol of Akal himself. God is described as *Sarbloh* - all-steel.

I bow with love and devotion to the Holy Sword. Assist me that I may be able to complete this work.

I bow to Thee, Lord, Who art the wielder of the sword! I bow to Thee, Lord, Who art the possessor of arms! I bow to Thee, Lord, Who knowest the ultimate secret! I bow to Thee, Lord, Who lovest the world like a mother!

God and sword became interchangeable terms. When Guru Gobind Singh referred to God as *Sarbloh* or the Sword, he was not oblivious of His characteristics of love and compassion. A couplet in his Jaap Sahib reads:





God is symbolized in the weapons of war. He is presented as the punisher of evil and the destroyer of the tyrant – the benevolent aspect is simultaneously and equally forcefully emphasized and he is invoked as the fountain-head of mercy, the kinsmen of the poor and bestower of felicity. A brave death on the field of battle for a holy cause was set out as noble and worthy end. Thus does Guru Gobind Singh supplicate God:

the emblem of manliness and self-respect and was to be used only in self-defense, as a last resort. For Gobind Singh said:

When all other means have failed, it is but righteous to take to the sword.

Grant unto me this boon, O Lord, that I may never be deterred from doing good deeds. I should have no fear of the enemy when I go to battle, and turn victory decidedly to my side. In my mind there is but one desire That I may ever be singing Thy praises. And when the time comes, I should die fighting in the thick of action.

The glorification of the sword itself was to secure fulfillment of God's justice. The sword was never the symbol of aggression. It stood for righteous and brave action for the protection of truth and virtue. It was





Understanding of God

Like Christianity, Hinduism and Islam there is place for God in Sikh Dharam, which is called *Akaal* or timeless. Sikh Dharam believes in a just and merciful God. According to Guru Nanak, God is one, immortal, omnipotent, and omniscient. In brief, Guru Nanak stated his concept of God in the following manner:

*There is one God; His name is truth,
He is the creator; He is without fear and
without halt; He is beyond time immortal;
His spirit pervades the universe; He is not
born; Nor does He die to be born again; He is
self-existent; By the Guru's grace shalt thou
worship Him.*

1. God is One

Guru Nanak can be said to be the pioneer of a mighty religious revolution.

Monotheism is the beginning and the end of Guru Nanak's faith. According to him God is *Ik*, without a second. Oneness of God is the first principle of Sikh faith. Guru Nanak regards God as the one but he can be called or addressed by many names. The multiple names are the forms of addressing God.



The state of the faithful cannot be described. One who tries to describe this shall regret the attempt. No paper, no pen, no scribe can record the state of the faithful. Such is the Name of the Immaculate Lord. Only one who has faith comes to know such a state of mind.

GURU NANAK

But in reality, God is one. Guru Nanak supports his idea of monotheism with similes and metaphors. One metaphor is related to different seasons and it is the sun that makes them into a unity. In the same way the creator has many garbs, but is one. He further compares God with a beautiful lake: God, according to him is like a large lake in which many varieties of water lilies blossom. Thus God is one and source of all things.

According to Nanak, God is both transcendental and immanent. He is present in all things. When God is seen through the universe, we think of him as *sargun* (quality-full). On the other hand, when we realize his transcendence, we think of him as *nirgun* (abstract). We may say that God is both in and above the universe. God is the whole and the world a part of that whole. A complete knowledge of God is impossible. According to Guru Nanak, only one who is as great as God himself can know him fully. We can only have some glimpses of him. Guru Nanak's God is *Nirankar* or formless and therefore beyond our description.



Guru Nanak further states that,

The implication of God being formless is that he cannot take human incarnation, nor can He be represented in any concrete shape through any material medium.

The idea of formless God is ruled out the idea of any image or worship of any statue.

The formless being is also eternal. Since God is without beginning and end, he is immortal. It is beyond time and space. It is deathless, ever living, ever present absolute. The Sikh Gurus, therefore, regard the Eternal *Akal Purkh* as the only reality. He strengthens his statement by saying,

A hundred thousands of Muhammads, a million of Brahmans, Vishnus, Krishnas, and Rams stand at the gate of God, the Most High. They all perish but God alone is immortal.



From the Word, comes destiny, written on one's forehead. But the One who wrote these Words of Destiny-no words are written on His Forehead. As He ordains, so do we receive.

GURU NANAK





*Within the mind are
gems, jewels and rubies,
if you listen to the Guru's
Teachings, even once.*

GURU NANAK

According to Guru Nanak, birth and rebirth does not affect Him, because God is ever new, that is changeless and unaffected by time. The fifth Guru, Arjan also says,

Sky and earth will pass away, only the one will remain forever.

This view also implies that God is immortal and eternal.

Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer

According to Guru Nanak, God himself created and recognized his creation. He created the sun and moon and infused his light into them. He made the wonderful play of night and day. Thus he created everything in the universe. He accepted the concept of creation, according to which there was nothing in the world. When He willed, He shaped the universe. In a long hymn consisting of 48 lines, in Rag Maru, Guru Nanak speculates on the origin of the universe. He says:



Millions and millions of years ago there was utter darkness; There was neither earth nor sky; There was only the Lord's unfathomable Will; There was neither day nor night, nor moon nor sun; There was only God in a state of deep meditation.

Guru Nanak says that the time of the creation is unknown. He says that only the creator, created the universe, knows when and how he created the world. The creator himself sustains this world. He does not remain apart from his creation. Guru Nanak rightly says,

He is the Creator of all men and of all Sikh Dharam, the ultimate source of all that is in us in God alone. Without Him there is no strength in us.

Nobody, not even the evil man, can do anything independent of God. God is in and around them:



Wealth, the beauty of youth and flowers are guests for only a few days. Like the leaves of the water-lily, they wither and fade and finally die.

GURU NANAK





*Imbued with the True
Fear of God, pride is
taken away; realize that
He is One, and
contemplate the Shabad.*

GURU NANAK

The fish may run against the current of the river or along with it; Just as it likes, but it cannot escape the river itself; Similarly man may run counter; What is received as good or moral, but he can never escape from the pale of God's Will.

The hymns of Guru Ram Das beautifully express the presence and sustaining power of God. He says,

Thou are the creator of all, Thy glory is everywhere; Thou settest every thing in motion as Thou pleasant.

He is the source of all life, and inspires, enlightens, and sustains every heart. For the wellbeing of the life on the earth, God projected a part of himself in his creation and he thus became a part of that very creation. It simply means that God is present everywhere and protects his creation in their trouble. According to Guru Nanak, the three ways of seeing God as the creator, sustainer and destroyer are the three qualities of God. Though there is one God, his nature has spread all over the universe, that power has come to be accepted as three subordinate powers.



One is the Creator, and the other is the Sustainer and the third one is He who from his court of justice passes orders for death and destruction. Thus God is all. He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of all things.

He is the Scribe as well as the Script. He is the playwright as well as the director, and all of us are the actors on the stage of the world.

God is Perfect, Absolute, Independent

As the absolute being God is perfect and independent. Unborn and undying are his attributes. All things and being take birth in him, but he is never born. All things and beings die in him but he never dies. Thus deathlessness and birthlessness of God present him as an eternal being. The following quotation brings forth the attribute of God:

May that tongue burn by which it is said that God, who neither comes nor departs from this earth, become incarnate. The God of Nanak is all-absorbing and ever present.



There is a famine of Truth; falsehood prevails, and the blackness of the Dark Age of Kali Yuga has turned men into demons.

GURU NANAK





Men of charity gather wealth by committing sins, and then give it away in donations to charity.

GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak's God is both *abinashi* (indestructible) and *anadi* (without beginning). On this basis, he rejected the theory of reincarnation. To be incarnated means to be involved in death (*binash*). Thus God is formless.

God is Merciful, Just and Loving

God is merciful by nature. Because of his compassionate nature, he is manifesting himself everywhere. Being a merciful God, he is the friend of every person. That is to say God pardons man's sins. According to Guru Nanak ritual bath aimed at inner purification, holds no meaning:

He who hears and obeys and loves God in his heart, shall wash off his impurities in the place of pilgrimage within him.

Real purity according to Guru Nanak is from within. Impurity of the heart is greed and the impurity of the tongue is untruth. Impurity of the eye is coveting another's wealth and his wife. Impurity of the ear is listening to calumny.



Even if he is living in sin, God will take care of him.

On the other hand God is just. God does not take any sides. He does justice to all equally. God is love and He loves the whole creation. He is present everywhere in the form of love. When a man loves someone, he too is loved. He realizes the presence of God in love. God himself is love, and he reciprocates our love with open arms. Thus God becomes intensely personal like any other beloved human being. The creation itself is the evidence of God's love; because without creator, a creation is not possible.

Hukam of God

Hukam is an Arabic word which means Divine Order. Sometimes *hukam* is translated as God's will. Thus *hukam* can be understood as God's will or God's command. The entire creation depends on *hukam* - God's Will. His *hukam* is the principle of all life. This creation is the outcome of the will of the Conscious Being. He is the first cause.



The Gurmukh remains awake and aware; he does not fall sleep. He enshrines the unlimited, absolute Shabad deep within.

GURU NANAK





Royal power, wealth, beauty, social status and youth are the five thieves. These thieves have plundered the world; no one's honor has been spared. But these thieves themselves are robbed, by those who fall at the Guru's Feet.

GURU NANAK

There was neither earth nor sky. Before creation there was darkness for countless years. There was only His Will. This universe came into being when He willed to manifest himself. Thus, all are subject to God's order and nothing lays out side it.

In Japji, Guru Nanak affirmed that God is truth and it is attained by submitting to the *hukam*. The *hukam* is the fundamental principle of God's activity. Man's duty is to seek an understanding of the divine *hukam* and to live a life wholly in accord with it. This is the way to break the wall of falsehood. Guru Nanak says,

"Walk with hukam (the divine will) as your guide".

According to Guru Nanak man is under different bondages. The primary cause of the bondage is egoism (*haumai*). It is egoism that separates man from primal reality and dims the divine spark within him. Egoism or the self-concern creates a wall around the individual and separates him from his original source as well as from society.



This is what leads him to spiritual blindness. One becomes alienated from the universal will and considers the world as the real. In such situation one cannot overcome from the five evils - *kaam* (lust), *krodh* (anger), *lobh* (avarice), *moh* (attachment), and *ahankar* (pride). *Haumai* is the cause of all suffering. By overcoming *haumai* one can have realization of truth. Attainment of union with the eternal one is the ultimate purpose of man. Such union ends the cycle of birth and death. Thus for one's *mukti* one has to overcome egotism.

Many people accept pilgrimage, fast and ascetic practices as the means for salvation but Guru Nanak rejects such ideas. For Guru Nanak the first step toward enlightenment is the awakening of the belief that the transcendent is the only ultimate Truth. This awakening must be accompanied by an intense love of God. He further says that self surrender and complete faith in his *hukam* or will, frees a man from the bondage of ego. Besides the faith in God, one needs to understand oneself, for self-realization helps people to overcome from their weakness.



The swan do not leave this pool. In loving devotional worship, they merge in the Celestial Lord. The swans are in the pool, and the pool is in the swans.

GURU NANAK





*Speak, read and hear of
the One Lord. The
Support of the earth shall
bless you with courage,
righteousness and
protection. Chastity,
purity and self-restraint
are infused into the
heart, when one centers
his mind in the fourth
state.*

GURU NANAK

Thus accepting God's Will and by overcoming one's weakness people move towards the ultimate truth.

Manifestation of God

According to Guru Nanak, God manifests Himself; and makes the seeker know Him, have a vision or realization of Him. God is infinite and so ultimately beyond apprehension but this does not mean that he is wholly unknowable. He is knowable. He is knowable, may be in glimpse, when he reveals himself to his devotees who knock at his door by means of *Simran* (inner contemplation) remembering him with single-minded love, regard and devotion. He reveals himself when the Guru is pleased with the disciple or seekers of truth.

*Within all here is light, and
It is thy Light, which is in all.
Through the guru's leading
The Light is revealed.*



For Guru Nanak, He who creates, sustains, and destroys reveals himself in His creation. Manifestation does not mean the clear vision or appearance of God but the realization of Him. Guru Nanak says:

God is manifested through His omnipresent name and the voice and the word of the Guru.

It is also understood that God embraced onto only matter and spirit, but also all the moral, social, emotional, and the intellectual attributes, and these are made manifest in His creation. God is self-caused, omnipresent and all-powerful.

God, the Ultimate Guru

In the Sikh tradition, there was the transfer of the guruship. The Guruship passed from one guru to the other as one candle lights another. The real Guru is Shabad (God's Word) for He is the source of all light. After Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Guru of the Sikhs, the transfer of the guruship ended. When the Sikhs asked him who their guru would be in future, Guru Gobind said:

By mere talk, people do not earn passage to Heaven. Salvation comes only from the practice of Truth.

GURU NANAK



I abolish from now on the succession of persons through heredity or selection. God's word enshrined in the Guru Granth will be the eternal and the spiritual Guru, and the secular Guru will be the Panth, or the whole community of the Khalsa.

Thus the last Guru passed on the Sacred Book, the Guru Granth. Since then, the Sikhs accepted the Guru Granth as their Guru. They look upon their holy book as the visible embodiment of the gurus. They accept it as their Living Guru and keep their holy scripture in all gurudwaras. All the teaching of the Gurus and all that they need to believe is contained in the Guru Granth Sahib.

Being the repository of the Divine Word it is worshiped and held in great respect. Because of the sacredness, they fold their hands and pray and give reverence to it - as it contains the wisdom of mankind to follow and imbibe in their lives to connect with the Divine.

*Serving You, peace is
obtained; granting Your
Mercy, You bestow
salvation.*

GURU NANAK





Meaning of Guru

Guru is one of the most important words in Sikhism. It has a number of related meanings. First, it refers to God, because the ultimate guide of the whole beings is God. In Sikhism *Satguru* is meant to imply the Supreme. Secondly, the word *Guru* is used for the ten Sikh Gurus. All are regarded as the messengers of God. The Sikh Gurus are highly respected. It is often said that their birth was non-karmic, that is they were born in obedience to the Divine Will and not as a consequence of *karma*. However, they are not objects of worship. Their pictures should never be placed in such a position in the Gurdwara that people bowing towards the Guru Granth Sahib, accidentally bow towards them. Thirdly, the word *Guru* refers to the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of the Sikhs. The messages and the writings of the Gurus as well as the compositions of Hindus and Muslims are included in this sacred book. Thus the Guru Granth Sahib, the eternal and the spiritual Guru will guide the Sikhs. Fourthly, the word *Guru* refers to the Guru Panth, the Sikh community, which lives according to the teaching of the scriptures and is inspired by them.



*One who eradicates his
self-conceit becomes free
of desire; he alone is a
Yogi, who enshrines the
True Lord deep within.*

GURU NANAK





Sikhism is based on the idea of monism. God alone is the Creator and Sustainer and the source of all life. He is the ultimate Guru who guides the entire world. According to Guru Nanak, God does not need man's praise. Guru Nanak further says, if all people start praising Him, it will not make the least difference to His greatness. Just as the sun does not need light of the lamps, so in the same way, God does not need the praises of men. But people worship Him from a sense of duty and *dharma*. They love or show their reverence by singing His praises. On the other hand such duties increase the spirituality of the people and help them to live a better life. They have faith in the words of Guru Nanak, which says,

He that repeats the name of the Lord in this world will reap his reward in the world to come.

*He alone is a Brahmin,
who contemplates God.
He saves himself, and
saves all his generations
as well.*

GURU NANAK





PHILOSOPHY OF NANAK





Guru Nanak's Philosophy of Man

According to Guru Nanak, the meaning and the purpose of human existence centers in the divine existence of *Ik*, (The One); He who creates, sustains and destroys; He who having created revels Himself in His creation; He who by His grace communicates to man the way of salvation and calls forth the response which enables him to appropriate that salvation.

Guru Nanak divides the entire mankind into two classes: those who belong to God and those who belong to *maya*. Thus, human beings of this world are either servants of God or servers of mammon. The former ones are the conscientious travelers on the path of God-realization while the latter are the willing but ignorant prisoners of passion on life.

It is up to the people themselves to choose either God or mammon. Since God and mammon are different in nature, their followers are different and opposite of each other.



*Riches cannot be
gathered without sin or
evil means.*

GURU NANAK





The Great Giver keeps on giving, while those who receive grow weary of receiving.

GURU NANAK

Attachment to the World

Guru Nanak says that *'whatever is visible is perishable'*. Nothing that comes to the eyes lives for ever. It is, therefore, futile for man to cling to the things and beings of the world for that plain reason that those things are subject to decay. In other words, the world is transitory in nature and God alone is all abiding for ever living reality. So they alone are happy who crave for the Real, the rest who are mad after transitory things of the world are ever struck by misery. Thus Guru Nanak points out that *"false is the discretion to attach importance to the world"*. This attachment grows and deepens ever more and so long as man keeps his back to God and firmly denies his love of God. Until he turns his face towards God through the Guru's grace, he will go on regarding the world as real and thus fall into the deceitful cycle of birth and death.

According to Guru Nanak, The awareness of the impermanence of the world, and of the permanence of the only One is the epitome of spiritual life.



It follows, therefore, that the only objective of human life is God-realization and the golden way to it is the loveful remembrance of God and repetition of His name which comes through Guru's *kirpa* (grace). Those who cling to the fleeting world are asleep and those who cling to God alone are awake. Sleep is bondage and wakefulness is freedom from bondage. Guru Nanak shows them the way to come out from such prison by the constant meditation on the name of God.

The sense of delusion of blindness, and sleep is not the only incentives to spiritual life; the consciousness of sin too serves as a very powerful incentives. To forget God is man's positive act of denying His existence, omnipresence and authority. It is a stark disobedience by man of God's Word. It is a willful turning away from God and implies a deliberate choice on the part of man to open his lustful eyes on the world of passions. Ego is the root of sin. It is the wilful disobedience of what is known to be God's Will. Nanak differentiates sin from evil. Sin for him is not the same as evil; because sin has its meaning only in association with totality of those values, which have roots in the belief in God.



*I am neither a child, a
young man, nor an
ancient; nor am I of any
caste.*

GURU NANAK



*Death would not be called
bad, O people, if one
knew how to truly die.*

GURU NANAK

Evil is related to social life - good and bad behavior but is not related to spiritual life.

What happens to the sinner is quite terrifying. In this very life, he suffers by deprivation of grace and the enlightening bliss of saintly contacts; in the next, he suffers miserably in hell, the result of his own ill deeds, until he falls back, deliberately indeed in the lap of the gracious and merciful God. The agonizing experiences of the sinner in the hellishness of life creates an acute sense of awe and fear, struck by the depressing feelings of horror he prostrates at the feet of the Almighty, bemoans his lot, cures himself for the evils perpetrated by him, and approaches Him with imploring prayers seeking His shelter and mercy.

Guru Nanak says that the sinners can be changed to good life or can attain powerful spiritual life. He therefore asks the sinners (the non-believers) to repent for their worldliness, their deeds of violence, their sex perversions and their desire for wealth – and to pray to the Almighty so that they might imbibe virtues in place of vices in their life.



Chastity and purity of mind, word and deed count in the spiritual rejuvenation of man. Repeatedly thus Nanak says,

Relinquish your sins and have recourse to good actions; repent if you have committed any sin.

Death

The consciousness of sin may instill in human heart the idea of the inevitability of the cursed old age and death. Some do die young without having any opportunity to entertain old age as guests in their life spans.

Barring them, old age visits all creatures as the fore runner of death and waits upon them till the last flicker of life. Whatever is born, lives and dies. For Guru Nanak, the separateness from God is man's real death. In other words, people who lose their link with *Parmatma*, become victim of death. Only those moments are beyond death, which are the moments of meditation on the Name divine.



The production of children, the nurture of those born, and the daily life of men, of these matters, woman is visibly the cause.

GURU NANAK





*Through shallow
intellect, the mind
becomes shallow, and
one eats the fly, along
with the sweets.*

GURU NANAK

They never die who resort to and reside in God. Guru Nanak asks people to remember two things in life: Death and God. For, death befalls the Godless ones; Godful ones alone are deathless. He says that death is the lot of all these who have forgotten God, and those who remember Him are beyond death. Mortality of man is the result of his sinfulness, separation from God being the original sin. Though destined for immortal bliss, by the delusive pleasures of the world the soul of man is trapped in the false belief that the body is his self and that the needs of the body are his own wants. Thus entrapped in the perishable things of the world, body itself being one of them, bodily death is common to all who take the body. Guru Nanak points out that the human body is like just like an ash and when the life leaves the body it falls motionless and is still, and is only a corpse fit to be burnt, buried or disposed of. They are ash and return to ash. No use then to take pride and enjoy glory in the might, majesty and beauty of the body. Guru Nanak, therefore, declares at the trumpet beat, *“those who have come, will have to quit: this world is an expanse of falseness”*.



All die and all their belongings lie in this very world. Disposed of life, man is dispossessed of all his property. Nothing goes with the dead. What is that then on which man takes a vain glorious pride? Mortality is thus the inevitable fate of the biological world, as immortality is the reality of the spiritual life. Once this realization dawns upon human beings that to God alone he belongs and that only His name to be meditated upon, the consciousness of old age and death serves as a surer incentives towards the spiritual life of man.

Cycle of Birth and Rebirth

Man's inquisitiveness to what happens after death has been, in its ultimate analysis, a strong psychic force in pushing him on the pathway of spiritual life. The great question persists whether there is life before birth and after death and the saints and seers of the ages have given the answer in the positive. These God's men, both in the east and the west, have asserted ever that the *jeev* (being) is subject to the eternal law of transmigration.



*Evil thoughts are erased,
contemplating the Word
of the Guru's Shabad.*

GURU NANAK





*That one plant should be
sown and another be
produced cannot happen;
whatever seed is sown, a
plant of that kind comes
forth.*

GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak supported the concept of birth and rebirth and the transmigration of the soul. He says that the journey of soul comes to its final end only when the Nectar Name is permanently lodged on the tip of the pilgrim's tongue. Only the God-bound is not bound in the cycle of 'coming and going', only when the being establishes its perfect communion or merger with God that the wheel (of births and rebirths) releases the being from its hellish spell.

Says Guru Nanak:

*He who dies with the divine Word on his lips dies to death;
He need not die a second time; Without the Word, people
wander in error; They die only to be reborn, over and over
again.*

Guru Nanak does not stop at the inevitability of soul's transmigration. He gives the reason for these wanderings of the being. I-ness is the root of all this coming and going. This I-ness is the result of the separation from God or of his forgetfulness of God.



Without the root anchor, the egoically cut away the *jeev* gets bound by the triple chord of worldliness and is thus caught up in the wheel of births and deaths. According to Guru Nanak, it is sinful life that leads a person to birth and rebirth. As the biblical saying goes 'As you sow, so shall you reap' is the essence of this *Karmic* law too.

Evil deeds are attended by hellish suffering and good deeds are accomplished by heavenly pleasures. The law of *karma* is thus related to the idea of heaven and hell. Guru Nanak states that all creatures who are born are the inescapable subjects of transmigration.

Nanak's Conception of Soul

As in transmigration, so in metempsychosis Guru Nanak's belief is markedly evident. Guru Nanak's notion of birth and rebirth indicates the immortality of soul. The soul, the *jeev* is part of God. It is deathless like Him. Before creation, it lives with God. After creation it takes bodily forms according to His will. Metempsychosis is similar to transmigration.



*The body is the paper,
and the mind is the
inscription written upon
it. The ignorant fool does
not read what is written
on his forehead. In the
Court of the Lord, three
inscriptions are recorded.
Behold, the counterfeit
coin is worthless there.*

GURU NANAK





*So weed out evil,
wickedness and
corruption; leave these
behind, and let your soul
meditate on God.*

GURU NANAK

But transmigration implies only the process of the soul's passage from the body; metempsychosis implies the taking of another body to another of the same type but to different categories also. One can be reborn as birds, animals or even *pret* or ghost. After death, people come to the next birth according to what they deserve. If they have been wicked and evil, they take birth in the lower species. If they have done good deeds, they take birth in the good family. Guru Nanak says that the *jeev* takes on several forms as a result of his passionate urges. The wicked soul merges with God, only if the individual makes spiritual effort to overcome one's past sinful life.

Heaven and Hell

Guru Nanak makes references to *swarg* and *baikunth*, paradise or heaven – and even the name of the God of death, *Jamm*. According to Guru Nanak and Sikhism as a whole, it may be called a demythologized concept of heaven, hell and after life.



Heaven and hell therefore are not any geographical localities in time and space, but real states of mind. But heaven and hell are symbolically represented in joy and sorrow, bliss and agony, light and darkness. In Sikh faith there is no eternal damnation or an everlasting pit to fire created by a revengeful God to punish man. Sikhism teaches us that the suffering and torment come due to sinful life, and to be in hell is to be out of the presence of God. To be in heaven means to be in God's presence. Therefore heaven and hell can be experienced here and now in earthly existence. Guru Arjan also says, *baikunth* is wherever God's praises are sung and wherever Godly people live. On the other hand, in the midst of myriad joys, if one does not cherish the Lord's name one lives as it in the depths of hell.

Evil

Sikhism does not believe in the principle of evil, though it admits that there are things that are evil. But man's core essentially being of God-nature is nothing but good and pure.



The blind man is carrying such a heavy load, and his journey through the mountains is so long. My eyes can see, but I cannot find the Way. How can I climb up and cross over the mountain?

GURU NANAK





*They alone are my
friends, who travel along
with me; and in that
place, where the accounts
are called for, they appear
standing with me.*

GURU NANAK

The world being the seat and the arena of God's expression is sanctified and, hence it is neither illusory nor is it sinful to engage in the activity - any activity - of the world. Again, if God's laws are uniform and universally applicable, the peculiar ideas of good and evil super-imposed by a particular society or sect upon its constituents have no validity whatsoever for the God-conscious. It is the awakened inner man by whom the God-man is directed, effortlessly on to the path of the good. *"No food, no pleasure is in vain"* says Guru Nanak, *"except the one which fills the mind with evil or brings pain to the body"*. The greatest sin according to the Guru is one's separation from his own self, which disintegrates one's personality and tears him apart from the others, and also from God who is in oneself as well as in others. Egocentrism is the first sin that erects a standing wall between one's soul and the Supreme Soul. But even though ego is a primary malady, its cure also is within it. It is by being 'I' that one can also overcome "I-amness". It is that I which practices the universal degrees of God, and through God's grace overcomes himself and becomes another, like unto God.



What we regard as evil has a special purpose to serve. The purpose of the evil is to test the character of man. Man is inherently liable to succumb to temptation. The greater his faith the greater the evil that challenges him. People face evil in the form of a persecutor. The company of the evil-minded should be avoided at all costs, for such company is the gateway to the cycle of birth and death. The company of evil defiles whoever it comes in contact with. The mind of man is more prone to evil than to good. Man is slow to take virtue but swift to succumb to vice. Evil actions arrive from evil thinking, motivated by lust, anger, drinking, gambling and backbiting. Egoism is the greatest evil, because it creates the wall between man and the Creator. Someway or other, our senses of bodies cause the evil. For example, our ears are evil that hear slander. Evil are the hands that grab what belongs to another. Evil are the eyes, which feed upon the beauty of another woman. Evil is the tongue that tastes other than God. Evil is the mind that craves for the other and evil is the body that does not do good to another. By hard and sincere effort one can overcome evil.



*There are houses,
mansions and tall
buildings, painted on all
sides; but they are empty
within, and they crumble
like useless ruins.*

GURU NANAK





Becoming worn, the cloth is torn; with needle and thread it is sewn up again. It will not last for a month, or even a week. It barely lasts for an hour, or even a moment. But the Truth does not grow old; and when it is stitched, it is never torn again.

GURU NANAK

He who seeks to fight the evil must first uproot the evil within himself. The company of holy men has a positive role to play in spiritual attainment.

The Highest Good

Guru Nanak's philosophy is the philosophy of God-realization, for the highest and the noblest purpose of human life is the realization of one who creates, sustains and dwells in every human heart. According to Guru Nanak, everything that is visible is perishable. It is, therefore, futile for man to cling to the things of the world, for those things are subject to decay. Therefore only reality is the creator of these visible things. Guru Nanak calls it the highest good. For Guru Nanak, the meaning and the purpose of human existence centers in the divine existence of Ik, The One, He who is the source of everything.

Such men who do not respond to the call of God and choose the path of anger, lust and passions, are *Manmukh*. But those who lovingly listen and respond to the voice of God are *Gurumukh*.



Such humans alone are the followers of the True-way, the path of God-realization.

There are five virtues prescribed in Sikhism. They are truth, contentment, patience, faith and compassion. These virtues are helpful to attain the highest good and peace and happiness. The most important in the teaching of the gurus are the practice of truth. On the other hand the contented person is free from worldly ambition, envy, greed and jealousy. It is contentment that gives peace in mind and heart. Perfect faith is the fourth virtue, which a Sikh has to cultivate. Those who have strong faith move positively towards their goal. Those whose faith is diluted or deficient cannot serve the Guru truly or gain the goal of their heart's desire. A compassionate person shares the sorrows of others and helps them in their difficulties.

The Sikh regards the practice of virtue as a means to an end. His goal is the integration of human personality with spiritual realization.



By the karma of past actions, the robe of this physical body is obtained. By His Grace, the Gate of Liberation is found. O Nanak, know this well: the True One Himself is All.

GURU NANAK





*If you desire to play this
game of love with Me,
then step onto My Path
with your head in hand.
When you place your feet
on this Path, give Me
your head, and do not
pay any attention to
public opinion.*

GURU NANAK

The virtues can be acquired only through contemplation on the wisdom of Shabad Guru (Guru granth Sahib) for these are characteristics of God that the devotee imbibes in oneself.

Besides the five virtues, Sikhism cautions people from five vices. They are *kaam* (lust), *krodh* (anger), *lobh* (greed), *moh* (worldly attachment), and *ahankar* (pride). These are great enemies of people because they cause suffering and become a barrier on the way to God-realization. With the grace of the Guru, these may be avoided from one's life.

Thus to attain highest good (God), one has to be watchful of the five vices and has to strengthen oneself in the five virtues by avoiding them.





RELIGION OF NANAK



God, man, and the universe are the three main themes of the teaching of all great religions. All religions seek to enlighten man about his right attitude, and hence his duty, towards God, his fellowmen, the things of the world and his own self-soul and the body alike.





Concept of God

Sikhism cannot be understood as a system of philosophy, but as a way of life – as a mystic rather than a metaphysical path. It is a strictly monotheistic religion. God is both absolute and personal.

There have ever been two conflicting and opposite conceptions about God. He has been regarded by some as Immanent and by others as Transcendent. Pure immanence, or pantheism as it is also called, believed that God is present equally in every part of His creation, or as a typical saying puts it,

The learned behold God alike in the reverend Brahmin, in the ox and the elephant, in the dog and in him who eateth the flesh of dogs. No degrees, no difference. This view cuts at the morality of all morality.



Sing, and listen, and let your mind be filled with love. Your pain shall be sent far away, and peace shall come to your home.

GURU NANAK





We can only express a sense of wonder about the beginning. The absolute abided endlessly deep within Himself then.

GURU NANAK

This view leaves no room for progress and aspiration. In it there is no place or justification for prohibiting and condemning even the vilest acts. Morality and the highest teachings of all religions become meaningless. There is no God in any way distinguishable from the created things. There is neither good nor bad, neither better or worse; for everything, just as it exists, is divine and therefore, equally perfect.

In the opposite view, God is regarded as the Omnipotent, creating and destroying the world at His will; enthrones above the heavens; the sole agent in everything that happens; the infinite and absolute who rules the world like as all-powerful despot unaffected by the wishes, thoughts and prayers of men.

Such a view of God leaves us necessarily cold. We feel that we can enter into no relation with God; that no amount of effort on our part to improve our destiny can be fruitful, for God does all as it pleases Him; that no amount of exertion or prayer can move Him to alter His arbitrarily determined course of things.



Such a being can fill us with dread and despair but not with love, faith, and hope. These saving emotions are inhibited completely. This concept leaves us with a mighty darkness filling the seat of power. We can have nothing to do with Him. Ultimately this view leads one to a practical denial of the Divine. Knowing that all acts and their fruits and consequences are pre-ordained by an arbitrary will, without any regard to his feelings, thoughts, and efforts, man ceases to have any interest in his destiny and is tempts to give reins to his desires, appetites and passions. So this view of God, too, leaves little room for man to make efforts towards bettering himself, his future state, and the world around him.



O Nanak, by spinning falsehood, a fabric of falsehood is woven. False is the cloth and its measurement, and false is pride in such a garment.

GURU NANAK





Around your neck is a rosary, and on your forehead is a sacred mark; upon your head is a turban, and you wear two loin cloths. If you knew the nature of God, you would know that all of these beliefs and rituals are in vain.

GURU NANAK

The question of immanence and transcendental is thus a fundamental issue in all religious philosophy. Guru Nanak has not shirked or evaded it. In all his teachings he has persistently attempted and effected a wholesome reconciliation of these two opposites views of divine nature and action. Thus, in the words which contain the central formula, the *Mool Mantar*, of his religion, Guru Nanak gives us a few glimpses of the Lord as under:

The One Supreme Being; the Eternal; the Creator Who pervadeth; And sustaineth all His creation: free from fear and enmity; Timeless; not subject to birth and death; Self-subsistent, and the Enlightener; to be known and realized by the grace of Guru.

God is thus not the great 'First Cause' of the world once upon a time, but the indwelling Spirit that creates and sustains the universe each moment of its existence. He is not equated with His creation; He transcends it; but He is also present of the transcendence, this presence of the Infinite in our finite lives, is emphasized again and again by the Guru. For example:



Thou alone hast created the earth and heaven; And Thou alone art sustaining them at all times; Wonderful art Thou art o Lord; O supreme spirit pervading all Nature!; Infinite art thou and inscrutable is thy action; Thou dwellest in all creatures and all creatures dwell in thee'; Thou fillest the heavens and earths by an art that none is able to apprehend; He who creates the universe and sustains it for aye; Is to be known in and through His creation; Don't look for the true one in zones far away; In every heart he dwells as the spark divine.; Look for him and find him there; Thou hast created the world; Thou dost ever stand in the midst of thy works; But, all the same, art ever aloof and away from them all; The infinite, he absolute, aloof from all; Timeless, unborn, confined to no rave or creed; Unpolluted, inaccessible, and beyond comprehension; Having no form, no features, no shape; Such is He; But an earnest, persistent search reveals him indwelling is every heart.; Over land and sea, unseen by all, he acts; And through the word of God proclaimed by the guru is he seen and realized.



Virtue and vice do not come by mere words; actions repeated, over and over again, are engraved on the soul. You shall harvest what you plant.

GURU NANAK





The Divine Light is within everyone; You are that Light. Yours is that Light which shines within everyone.

GURU NANAK

He is the life of all, and inspires, enlightens, and sustains every heart, but he is also the one of whom no effort of human intellect can form an adequate conception. He rules the universe by His Supreme Will from which none is exempt. All creatures simply carry out His Will but are at the same time, responsible for their act as agents having a good deal of choice. He is the supreme ruler of the world but He listens to the prayers of the devout and faithful. He protects them with His own hands. Nay, he even becomes a willing servant of his servants and runs about in execution of their wishes. But, of course, such servants live by the command of their Master and cease to have any wishes or will apart from the Will of their Lord.

Transcendence thus does not mean aloofness or remoteness. God as Transcendent is the Perfect One who is the ideal of all human endeavors. Man is not divine as he is, but he is capable of becoming divine.

Indeed to be one with God is the goal of the soul's journey through the cycle of birth and death.



Man has to become like God. If he were only far away, outside of us, we could hope to see him as we see other objects all round us. But he is present also in the innermost depths of our own hearts. So we cannot see him with the eyes of flesh as they are. By the grace of Guru, the divinely-ordained teacher, we gradually come to know him; he gradually discloses his feature to us as we become able to apprehend the vision.

This experience gives us contact with God; not an understanding of God but living in vital union with him is what we get. In the end we come to see Him face-to-face as surely as we see the material world around us. We find him in every object, we recognize him as the inspiring spirit to who, all progress is due. But the immanent God is thus always infinitely transcendent. He is ever our ideal. We are ever reaching out to him. This need not confound us. We have, in our own human nature, a reflection of this immanence of the transcendent, the presence of the infinite in the finite world.



*The diseases of egotism
and possessiveness do
not afflict one who
worships the Lord. Fear
of the Messenger of
Death runs away.*

GURU NANAK





*You may place gold
before a herd of cattle,
but they will pick out the
grass to eat. You may add
flux to iron and melt it,
but it will not become
soft like cotton. O Nanak,
this is the nature of a
fool-everything he speaks
is useless and wasted.*

GURU NANAK

Duty to God

Man's duty towards God springs naturally from this view of God. Man has to develop the divine in him so as to become like God, be one with Him. The human life is an opportunity given him for the attainment of that blissful union. In order to become God-like he has to develop in his being a love for Him. Man's daily experience tells him how to achieve this. How so we come to love a valued friend but by a constant thinking upon his good and noble qualities which endear Him to us? We love Him for his virtues.

Similar is the way suggested by the Guru for the development of a love for God. Meditation on His divine personal attributes of beauty, goodness, and truth, rouses in the heart a desire to acquire those cherished virtues in our own persons. The attitude places us in harmony with the unseen divine forces working in the universe. As we exert to realize in our actual daily life the divine virtues which are thus the objects of our constant meditations, we come to love Him who is the embodiment of all these charming and coveted qualities.



But caught in the whirlpool of passions and low desires, borne helplessly along on the tide of world's allurements and attachments, man hearkens not to the Voice of God as He speaks through His dear ones. The wall of ego gets thicker and thicker, shutting out, more and more, Divine Light from his being, with every victory of the lower self. A time comes, some catastrophe, some sublime contact with the Almighty, and the man is filled with fear for his safety. The world then appears hollow at the core, unreal and unreliable. All those in whom he had been placing his hope and confidence seem to be but bits of lifeless clay and fall away from him. He finds himself utterly powerless and completely in the hands of a mysterious Supreme – and completely like kneaded clay in the potter's hands.

Blessed is he who gets such an experience. This fear is the beginning of wisdom, for it rescues man from the clutches of his lover self and make him hearken to the voice of his higher self and look up to his Maker and Sustainer.



*He has not considered my
merits and demerits; this
is God's Own Nature.
Hugging me close in His
Embrace, He protects me,
and now, even the hot
wind does not touch me.*

GURU NANAK





*The kings acted
righteously only out of
self-interest. Tied to
hopes of reward, they
gave to charities.*

GURU NANAK

When he finds in Him all those powers and qualities which he lacks and which he needs most in his journey through life, he begins to love and adore Him. Indeed Guru Nanak says again and again that:

Without the fear of the Lord, love for Him cannot grow in the heart of man.

Be it remembered, however, that the this fear is not a deadening, benumbing, repelling sentiment; but one which fills man with a longing to run to the bosom of the Queller of all fear, the Almighty Father who alone can give him every protection. Reverence and awe are the chief components of this fear. They lead to love. Ultimately, all fear disappears. Love becomes all in all. Love fills him through and through. All evil then departs from his heart. No evil can now touch him. By contemplating on God, by living in vital union with Him, the devotee becomes God-like – no difference, no distance, and no separateness are left. The two become one. Man becomes as powerful as God but also as full of divine pity, sympathy, love, and compassion, as the Beloved Lord.



In fact, he thinks not of the power that His union with the Almighty gives him, but only of the duty of love towards his fellow-creatures which that union entails. He can sin no more. For what is sin? "It is the self assertion, either of the one part of a man's nature against the whole, or of a member of the human family against the welfare of that family and the will of its Father". But, by a revelation of a love which is so intense that no heart which beats can remain indifferent to it, this self-will is overcome and transformed into conformity with the Divine Will. Every deed then becomes a song of praise and every thought a movement of love towards Him by whom and in whom all things and beings subsist. Guru Nanak's ideal for the soul of man is not a condition of nothingness, or a seat in paradise where there would be an abundance of means or sensual enjoyment, but a union-living, vital union - with the ever active Creator and Sustainer of the universe. As he says in one of his songs of the Lord,

What is paradise or salvation to a man who is athirst for the Lord Himself?



O Nanak, the bags of coins are brought in and placed in the Court of our Lord and Master, and there, the genuine and the counterfeit are separated.

GURU NANAK





*One who does not
observe any fasts, make
religious vows or chant - -
he does not have to worry
about good luck or bad, if
he obeys the Command
of the True Guru.*

GURU NANAK

Need of a Guru

We cannot have the love for the Lord at will. No amount of reasoning an argument can establish in us that vital contact with the Divine which is the mainspring of this love. Nor can all have revelation direct from God. But if a man desires to have a vision of the Eternal love and power rightly and sweetly ordering all things, he must seek the fruits earned by those who have striven and suffered and prayed and received the answering light from Heaven. For the rousing of that love for the Lord, man needs both the Grace of God and the help and guidance of the divinely-appointed teacher.

Guru Nanak does not believe in a pivotal individual can turn the salvation of mankind, or because of whose sacrifice, once upon a time, all who put their faith in him are to be saved from the consequences of their actions, or who can intercede with the Great Judge in favor of his followers and get them the pleasures of paradise in spite of their sins.



He says again and again that human conduct in its widest sense, including thoughts and desires not necessarily externalized, in action, will be followed by its natural and inevitable results, not only in this life but also in the life to come. At the same time, he emphasizes the great part which the Guru can play in moulding and transforming this conduct and rescuing the character of man from downward tendencies born of his conduct in the past. The Guru awakens the soul in man, turns him to a living consciousness of his higher needs, and sets him on the path of love, service and devotion. He shows the light of the Lord to the seeker, and bids him to go ahead on his journey to His door. The Guru washes away the devout seeker's sins in the sense that he eradicates from his character all tendencies born of those sins. He gives him even a glimpse of the Lord and helps him to establish a vital union with Him. But self-help is to be the chief, though not the only, mainstay of a seeker after the Lord. Once well on the right path, his progress on it will depend on his own attitude and efforts, guided by the Word of God as guided by Shabad Guru.



Slandering others is putting the filth of others into your own mouth. The fire of anger is the outcaste who burns dead bodies at the crematorium.

GURU NANAK





*If you yearn for goodness,
then perform good deeds
and feel humble. Even if
you remove the signs of
old age, old age shall still
come in the guise of
death. No one remains
here when the count of
the breaths is full.*

GURU NANAK

In brief, man's duty towards God consists in honoring and loving Him; in so moulding his character as to make his thoughts, feelings, and efforts, conform to His Will; in worshipping Him with zeal and devotion. True worship, it may be added, will always have two sides, a practical side, in our conduct, for our whole life will become an act of worship; but worship must also have its own life in adoration, prayer and communion. Hence a true worshipper of God can never sit idle or harbor thoughts of pride, hate and arrogance. Love fills him through and through. The whole universe appears to him to be a part of himself.

Duty to Neighbors

If a man has, by his earnest efforts guided and assisted by the Guru, succeeded in placing in the right attitude towards God, he will have no doubts about his duty to his fellow beings. He will love them as his own self. He cannot even think of tyrannizing over or exploiting his fellowmen. His joys will consist in loving them all in the path of progress. It is a fact that those who are filled with the love of the Lord love everybody.



If a man becomes fully convinced of the presence of God in, and around, and beyond every object that He has created, he ceases to sin against his fellow-beings; for how can he be sincere with God and a hypocrite with men? With most people God is not a living God. He is a pale shadow, floating like an almost extinct memory in the little of religious sentiment that is yet left in them.

This shadow has eyes but sees not, ears but hears not. They do not hesitate to commit their sins in His presence, when the presence of man would restrain them. Their religion is but a cloak for their evil, vicious, degenerate selves. They put it on when they are about to plot and act against God and man. They hope to wipe away their sins by a prayer or two at homes, an offering at a temple or a pilgrimage to some holy place. A true devotee of God can never let himself fall so low. He adores and worships the Father and loves and serves his fellow men. He will think neither of deserting his family, renouncing the world, and thereby becoming a burden on society, nor of aggrandizing himself and his own at the expense of others.



*Even kings and emperors,
with mountains of
property and oceans of
wealth - these are not
even equal to an ant, who
does not forget God.*

GURU NANAK





The world is deceived and plundered by riches, youth, greed and egotism. The drug of emotional attachment has destroyed me, as it has destroyed the whole world.

GURU NANAK

He will remain in the world, derive nourishment from it, do his duty in and towards it, but keep his thoughts fixed on God. He will find God in the world and the world in God. He will never think of forcing his convictions on others. He will not tyrannize but love and serve.

Duty to Self

The materialists consider matter to be the only reality. Guru Nanak did not regard the body to be only an encumbrance which had to be subdued, tortured, and reduced, so as to liberate, for upward flight, the human soul. Unlike the early evolutionists, he did not regard the human intelligence to be a product of mere chance; he did not agree with the pantheists that man with all his propensities towards evil is intrinsically divine and therefore perfect as God.

He did not regard the world with all its means of good, pleasure, and joy to be only a delusion and a snare to be avoided and shunned.



He regarded the human soul to be a spark from the spirit of God, capable of becoming one with Him. He regarded the body as the servant of the soul designed to help its progress towards God. The world with its manifold charms and snares, pleasures and pains, is a field for the soul's battle with all downward tendencies, the stone by stepping on which the soul can reach up to God.

Hence man's duty towards his self consists in his duty to his body, heart, mind, soul, and the world. Considering the body to obey a necessary helper of the soul in its journey towards the great ideal, the disciple has to attend and guard it; but knowing also that it might become a real encumbrance, if it comes to monopolize his attention, he does not pamper it. He treats it as a servant of the soul. He also knows that ignorance is the root of error and sin; hence he tries to cultivate every means of extending knowledge. This mental culture does not absorb him altogether. He keeps ever conscious of the fact that this knowledge is to help his progress towards God.



The Gurmukh knows the Divine Light, while the foolish self-willed manmukh gropes around in the darkness. One who sees that Light within each and every heart understands the Essence of the Guru's Teachings.

GURU NANAK





*I am not good; no one is
bad. Prays Nanak, He
alone saves us!*

GURU NANAK

Hence he uses his knowledge for the discrimination of right from wrong, and ever does the right in the light of his knowledge. All his knowledge has its root in faith and fructifies in love and service. He knows that man's actions are performed in accordance with his nature or self. The reason and intellect are being used afterwards to justify the course chosen by the self of man. He has, therefore, to conquer this self; not by torturing the body or by practicing austerities, but by hearkening to the Word of God and getting rid of all lower, downward tendencies. He knows that the spirit in him is his real, ultimate self and he feeds his spirit on the Word of God and develops it by a life of love, service and worship. He gets ready the chamber of his heart for the divine guest. He regards the world around him as God's creation and His dwelling place. Hence he does his duty to the world by helping it onwards on the path towards its Eternal Ideal.

In this way he lives a life of poise and balance, of love and usefulness. Ultimately he comes to live in God and God comes to live in him.





DIVINE PRAISE





Holy Scripture

The holiest book of the Sikh, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, is the Living Guru of the Sikhs. The Guru Granth gives light and shows the path to the suffering-humanity.

A Sikh reads the holy hymns from the Guru Granth and finds consolation when faced with difficulties. The fifth Guru, Guru Arjan collected the hymns of the first four Gurus, including his own hymns, bound them together as a guide for the Sikhs. He chose the hymns and *sloks*, which conformed to the spirit of Sikhism and were consistent with the teaching of Guru Nanak. He gave preference to the verses, which praised God and denounced superstition and castesim.

Besides the hymns and *sloks* of the Sikh gurus, the hymns of some well-known Hindu and Muslim saints have also been included in the Guru Granth.



*Consider freedom from
desire to be the earrings
of the Guru's spiritual
wisdom. The True Lord,
the Soul of all, dwells
within each and every
heart.*

GURU NANAK





*Modesty and
righteousness both, O
Nanak, are qualities of
those who are blessed
with true wealth.*

GURU NANAK

For example, 292 hymns of Kabir, 41 hymns of Ravidas, 4 hymns and 130 *sloks* of Farid and 60 hymns of Namdev are included in the Guru Granth . In all, Sri Guru Granth Sahib consists of 3384 hymns. Guru Granth Sahib consists of the writings of different saints and poets and thus serves as a textbook of universal religion. It is applicable for every one and everywhere.

Prof. Puran Singh rightly says, “the Guru Granth is the scripture of all nations, for it is the lyric of divine love, and all the people of the earth subsists on such a glowing lyrical prayer”.

Hymns of Guru Nanak

The Guru Granth contains almost a thousand hymns of Guru Nanak under different *raags*. The hymns are based on verities of themes and composed in different periods of his life.



Credit goes to the fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjan who collected all the hymns of Guru Nanak including the hymns of other gurus and recorded them in the Guru Granth. Throughout his life, Guru Nanak proclaimed the name of God.

He believes that his creator is everywhere and sees every activity of Guru Nanak. He eats what God gives to him. He does not beg at the door of people but at the door of God. In every pain and pleasure he turns towards God, either to get help or to praise Him for His favor. His body, souls, understanding is the gifts of God. Thus he leaves his body, soul, understanding and everything in God's keeping. Guru Nanak accepts anyone's inability to do anything. For everything is created by God and everything depends on Him alone. He beautifully presents such ideas in his hymns:



*He takes payment for
performing marriages;
reading their horoscopes,
he shows them the way.
Hear, and see, O people,
this wondrous thing. He
is mentally blind, and yet
his name is wisdom.*

GURU NANAK





*The faithful do not follow
empty religious rituals.
The faithful are firmly
bound to the Dharma.
Such is the Name of the
Immaculate Lord.*

GURU NANAK

By his ordinances comes all creation into being; By his ordinances all labor and earn; Under his ordinance is death; By his ordinance we mingle with Truth; O Nanak! Whatever pleases Him comes to pass; We mortals by ourselves can do nothing.

Thus, it is only by God's grace we can cross the ocean of life. If God wills it, we shall be liberated, because God alone can pardon us. According to Guru Nanak this world is like a turbulent sea. Without the help of God and the Guru, none will find the opposite shore. Again Guru Nanak compares himself with a bird *chatrik* bird.

Chatrik loves the rain and cries for a few drops of water to slake its thirst. Similarly; Nanak is athirst for the name of God. The name of God fills his heart with joys and satisfies his needs. All people are united with the creator. He sings,

O Lord! The river in their course break into steams; and steams again run back in to the river, so our souls united with God from whom they come.



Thus Guru Nanak composed hymns all through his life singing the praises of God. He composed his hymns while visiting different places within and outside India. Many of his hymns are related to God, whom he considers as the Creator and Sustainer of everything. Following the footsteps of Guru Nanak most of the other Sikh Gurus also composed hymns and *sloks*, on various themes. The fifth Guru also composed the biggest number of hymns and *sloks*. He suggested the Sikhs to sing the hymns for their spiritual benefit. The Gurdwara dedicated to Guru Arjan in Lahore bears the following inscription of his own composition,

O my brethren, ever sing, listen, and read (the Shabad), and the perfect Guru will preserve you.

He further suggests to the Sikhs to remember God and perform ablution for the freedom of minds and bodies from disease. By doing so God will remove the millions of obstacle and will give good fortune.



*Sweetness and humility,
O Nanak, are the essence
of virtue and goodness.*

GURU NANAK





*How great should we call
the Giver? His Gifts are
beyond estimation. O
Nanak, there is no
deficiency; Your
Storehouses are filled to
overflowing, age after
age.*

GURU NANAK

The hymns and the *sloks* of the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur are also based on divine praises. By his *sloks* he has given beautiful suggestions and instructions to the whole human race.

In the *slok* 35,
There are three stages of life, childhood, youth, and the old age. These stages are in vain without worshipping God.

Again in the *slok* 28 he says that,
The fools and ignorant people run after wealth. But without repeating God's name their lives are in vain.

According to him God's praises free people from the prison of death.

Thus in *slok* 48 he gives a very common example,
As a dog never abandoneth his master's house, Nanak, in the same way worship God with single mind and single heart.



Japji

Japji is the opening part of the Guru Granth. It is a composition of 38 hymns and two *sloks*. It contains the essence of Sikh religion and philosophy. Japji is recited in the morning by every true Sikh. At the time of preparation of Amrit for baptism it is the first Bani to be recited. Japji was composed by Guru Nanak. People believe that the opening lines were recited by Guru Nanak during his mystical experience at Sultanpur.

This would make Japji amongst Nanak's earliest compositions. But most of the Sikh scholars do not accept this version of the *janam sakhis*. According to them, it seems to be composed after his return to Kartarpur. The reason behind this idea is the maturity of style and thought-content of Japji. It is also believed that Japji is the fruit of God's orders, for Guru Nanak has addressed his chief disciple Angad, in the following words,



The praisers praise the Lord, but they do not obtain intuitive understanding - the streams and rivers flowing into the ocean do not know its vastness.

GURU NANAK





They shout out loud, and sing epic poems and heroic stories. The fools call themselves spiritual scholars, and by their clever tricks, they love to gather wealth.

GURU NANAK

Man, it is the command of the great Creator that I must compose a hymn of praise.

Angad, the second Guru arranged the verses in order to make up the Japji. He selected 38 verses of Nanak's compositions. According to Japji, God is beyond time and space and is the only reality. The opening paragraph of Japji says,

Before time there was truth. When time began to run its course then also He was Truth and even now He is Truth.

It is the aspect of *Sat*, meaning both truth and reality, which Guru Nanak emphasizes, more than any other qualities of God. Since God is Truth, it is the duty of each Sikh to be just. One should not hurt others by his misbehavior like lying and cheating. Realizing God as truth and learning to be true to others help other and the society at large to live in a friendly way. The aim of our life is to know God and to be united with Him. But our eyes are covered with illusion.





To know the Truth, one needs to remove such illusions from the eyes. In Japji, Guru Nanak guides a person to get rid of such illusions. The verse five of the Japji says:

He cannot be established; neither can He be created; That pure One is Self-resplendent by Himself; Those who meditate on Him get the honor; Nanak, sing ye men, His praises who is the treasure-house of virtue; Sing and hear, and keep love for Him in the heart; He will remove your pain and take you to the abode of bliss.

By hearing the names of God one achieves wisdom, courage and conquer the fear of death. The name of God has the power to remove the sorrows and the sins from one's heart. The tenth verse of Japji reveals the power of the name of God. It says that by hearing the name of God the qualities like truth, contentment, and divine knowledge can be obtained. Those, who hear the name of God, do not need the pilgrimages and other rituals for their inner purification.



Even if you could live throughout the four ages, or even ten times more, and even if you were known throughout the nine continents and followed by all, with a good name and reputation, with praise and fame throughout the world - still, if the Lord does not bless you with His Glance of Grace, then who cares? What is the use?

GURU NANAK





*Some, by His Command,
are blessed and forgiven;
others, by His Command,
wander aimlessly forever.
Everyone is subject to His
Command; no one is
beyond His Command. O
Nanak, one who
understands His
Command, does not
speak in ego.*

GURU NANAK

After seeking the way to find Truth and experiencing sine tastes of divinity, the outlook of the devotees changes. They consider God their everything. They suggest others to rely on Him alone. According to verse 29, God is the storehouse of compassion. He alone is the Lord, who has the whole creation under his control. He is the master of destiny. Thus one should have faith in Him for all the deeds.

His seat and His storehouses are in every world. What was to be put into them was put in at one time.

It means God is the creator. Before birth itself the portion of a person is fully allotted to him/her.

Japji ends with the beautiful *slok*, which reminds each and every one that the air, water, the earth and day and night give us opportunities to grow and reach our destiny. The merits and demerits of each person will be judged. It says:



Virtues and evils are read out by Dharamraj (judge) in the Holy presence; According to their own deeds some get nearer, others remain distant from Him; Those who ponder on the name have departed with hard toil ever ended; Bright are their countenances, O Nanak, and in company with them many others, are emancipated.

Japji is the essence of Guru Nanak's teachings. It is a *Mool Mantar* to the Sikh faith. By reciting it or meditating over it, a Sikh is reminded about the purpose of life. A person is reminded that the qualities like, self-control, patience, knowledge, fear of God, and earnest prayer are needed to achieve perfection. In Japji, Guru Nanak has also stated how the universe was created. He said then, long before Galileo's telescope was made, that there are thousands of other worlds out there. Astrologists only figured this out a few decades ago. Guru Sahib also stated that regardless of the instrument one may make, man cannot realise the other worlds that exist in creation of galaxies. Astrologists the world over are frantically trying to find such but till to date they have not reached there. Guru Sahib also said that the world will only come to an end on God's Order.



The Gurmukh is lovingly attuned to the True Shabad. Bestowing His Glance of Grace, He unites us in His Union.

GURU NANAK





CONCEPTS AND BELIEFS OF SIKH DHARAM





Concept of,

One God, monotheism, unity of God; of Creation theory of *Daswand* (giving one-tenth of the earnings and contribution towards charity); of *Naam Simran* (Contemplation on the Name of God); of *Amrit* (Nectar initiation); of *Bani and Bana* (look of outer and inner values); of co-operative and corporate living; of selfless *Seva* (Selfless Service); of *Sarbat Da Bhala* (wellbeing of all); of *Degh and Tegh*; of *Miri and Piri* (Temporal & Spiritual power); of *Sangat and Pangat*; of universal peace and prosperity; of democracy; of liberty, equality and fraternity; of sacrifice; of universal brotherhood, peace and prosperity; of householder's life; of *maya*; of *Chardikala* (Optimism & high spirit); of *Bhana* (Will of God); of healthy mind in a healthy body; of Guru; of equality of woman; of immortality of soul; of transmigration; of *Karma* (actions and deeds).



According to their own actions, some are drawn closer, and some are driven farther away.

GURU NANAK





CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF SIKH DHARAM





Parcha Shabad Ka - Understanding Gurbani

Sarbat Da Bhala - Well-Being of Human Race

Bhana Mannana - Accepting will of God

Nishkam Seva Sambhal - Selfless service

Ishnan and Darshan Ishnan - Purity of mind and body

Sacha Achar - Keeping good moral character

Charhdikala - Optimism-exalted spirit

Daswand - Donate the Earnings

Five Evils to be shunned

Kaam (Lust)

Krodh (Rage)

Lobh (Greed)

Moh (Attachment)

Ahankar (Ego)



*According to their own
actions, some are drawn
closer, and some are
driven farther away.*

GURU NANAK





**By conquering your mind,
you conquer the world.**

G U R U N A N A K









