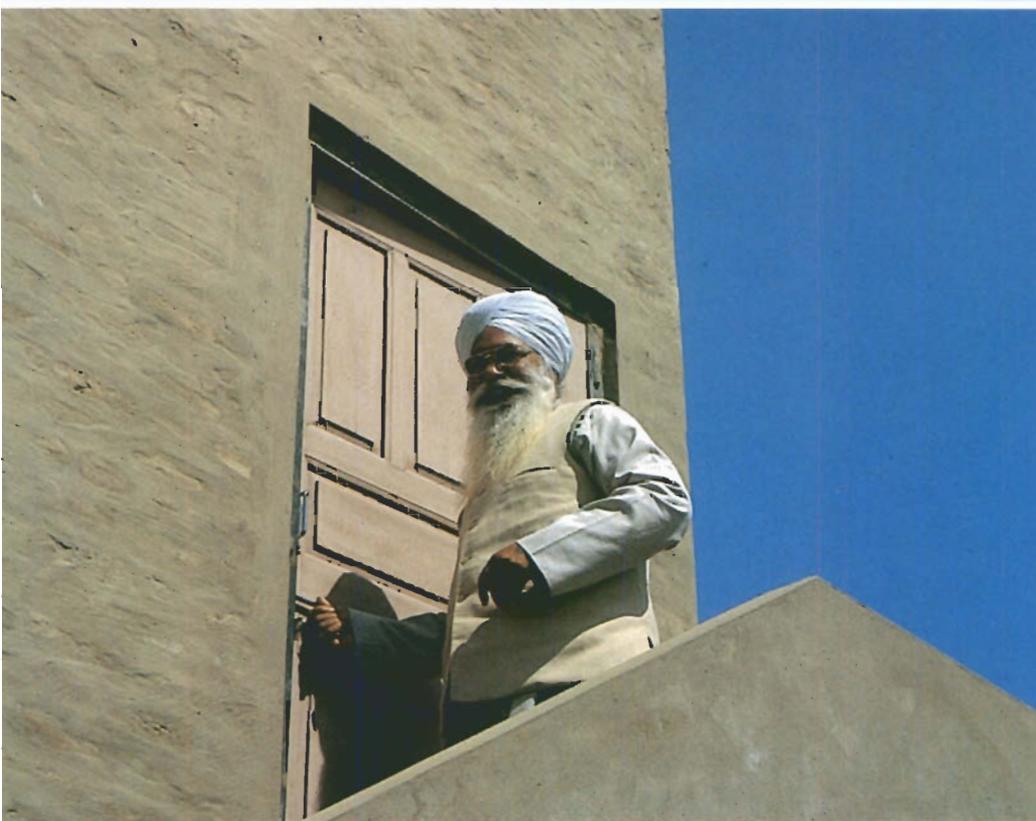


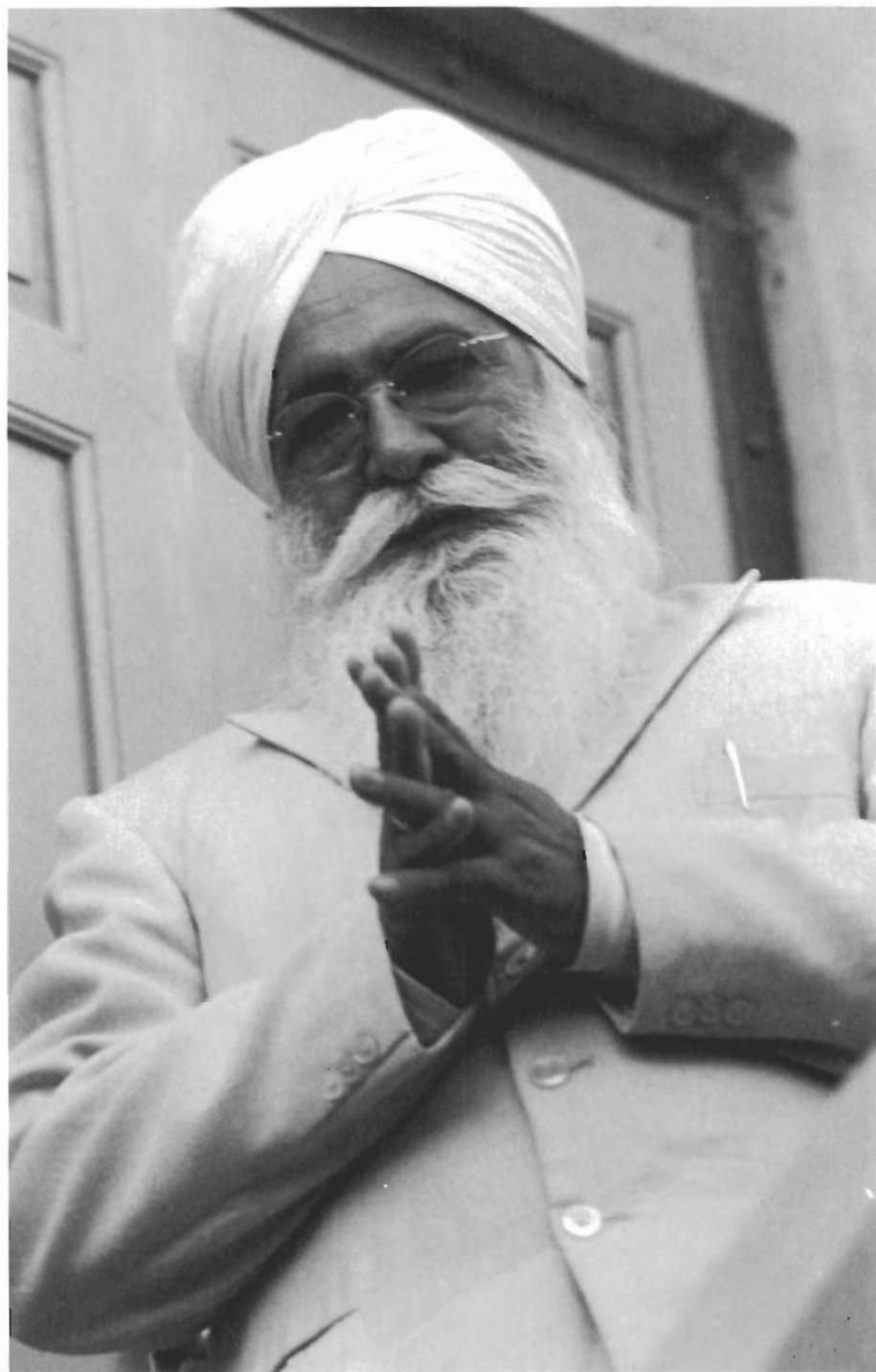
IN ♦ THE ♦ PALACE OF ♦ LOVE



AJAIB ♦ SINGH

In the Palace of Love





SANT AJAIB SINGH JI

In the Palace of Love

comments on the Asa di Vars of Guru Nanak

Ajaib Singh

Sant Bani Ashram, Sanbornton, New Hampshire, 1992

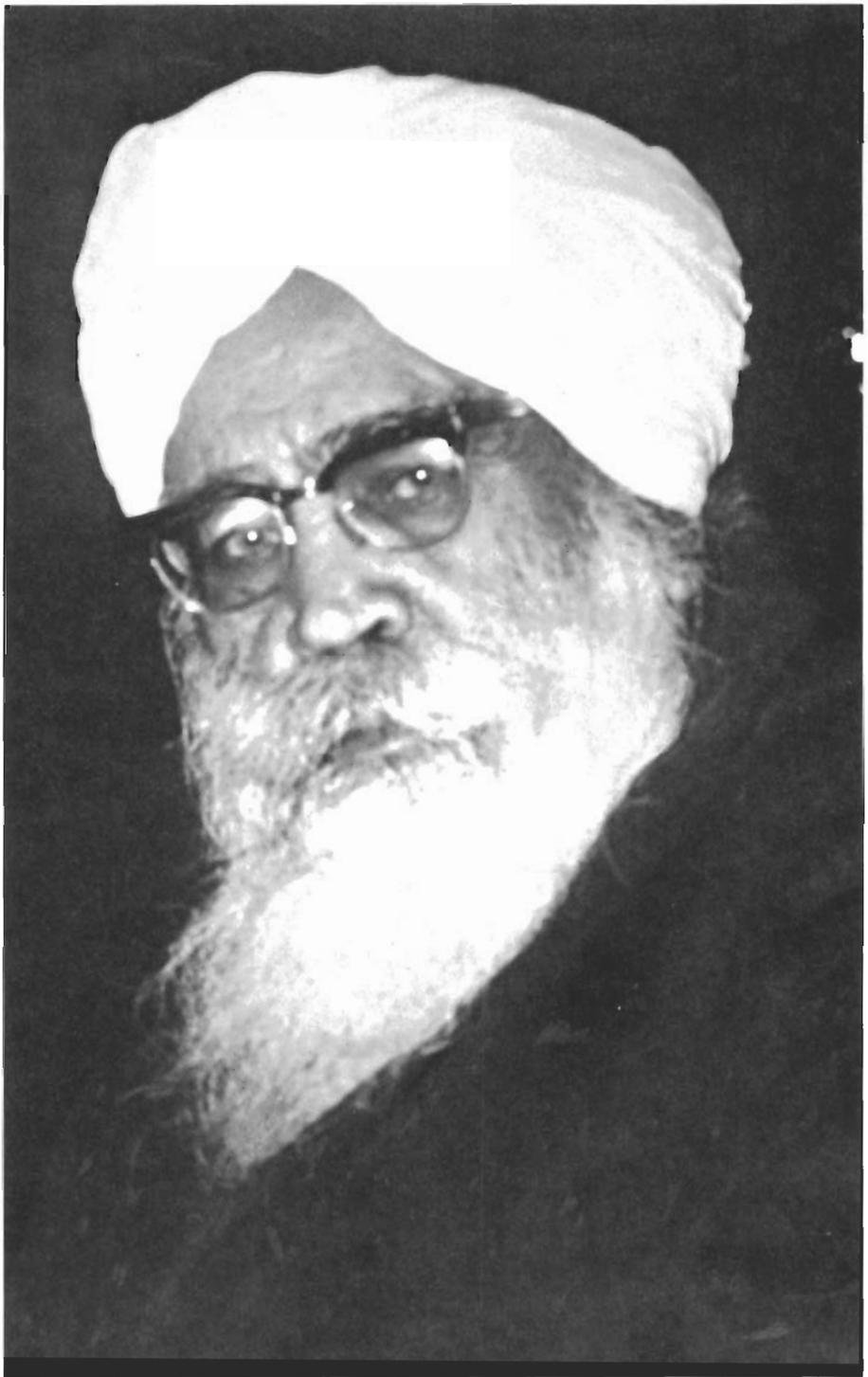
This book is transcribed from a series of talks given by Sant Ajaib Singh Ji at Sant Bani Ashram, Village 16PS, Rajasthan, India, between December 26, 1986, and May 25, 1987. They were translated from the Punjabi by Raaj Kumar Bagga at the time the talks were given, and have been edited from the point of view of the English language by Russell Perkins. A few of the chapters have appeared in *Sant Bani Magazine*.

The hymns of the *Asa di Vars* were translated by Raaj Kumar Bagga with the assistance of Kent Bicknell.

Photo credits: Front cover, Charlie Boynton; p. ii (frontispiece), Jonas Gerard; p. v, (Sat Sandesh staff) unknown; p. viii, unknown; p. xvi, unknown; p. 2, Karen Lawrence; p. 22, Russell Perkins; p. 40, Jonas Gerard; p. 60, Bobbe Baker; p. 70, Christopher Bicknell; p. 92, Bobbe Baker; p. 116, Bobbe Baker; p. 162, Jonas Gerard; p. 182, Jonas Gerard; back cover, Joan Degradi.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 92-60608

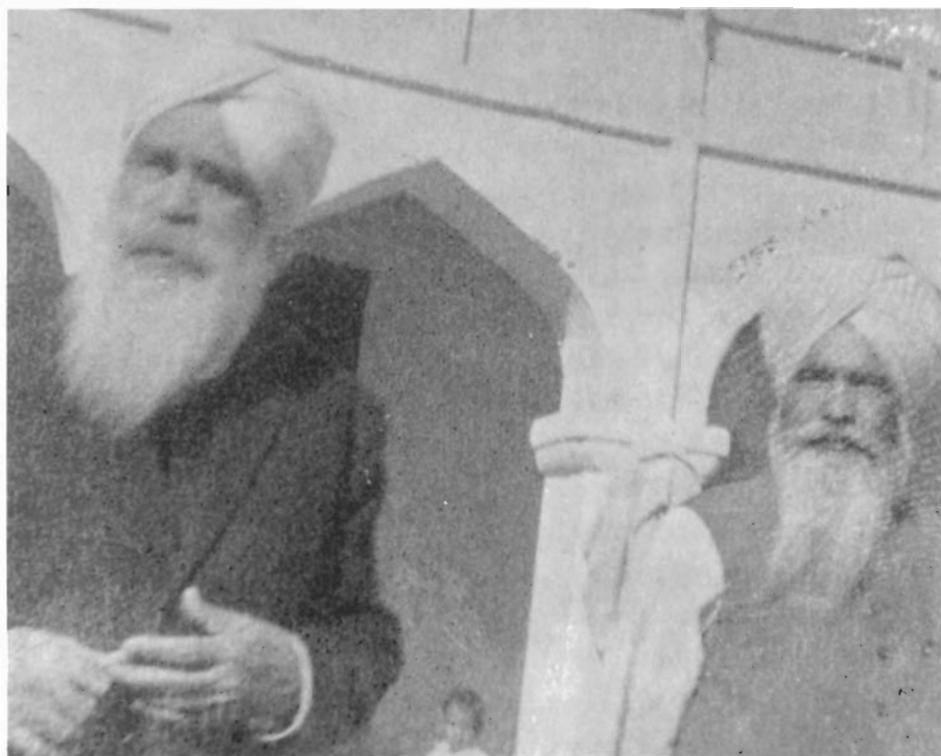
International Standard Book Number: 0-89142-046-0



SANT KIRPAL SINGH JI

Table of Contents

1. The Giver and the Doer	3
2. The Value of Human Birth	13
3. A Glimpse of Truth	23
4. On Fear and Freedom	31
5. The Real Ritual	41
6. The Food of Our Soul	51
7. The Creeping of the Ego	61
8. The Cycle of Unfulfilled Desire	71
9. How Will We Awaken?	81
10. On Reality and Falsehood	93
11. The Broken Seed	105
12. The Price of Happiness	117
13. Respecting Our Own Self	127
14. The Sacred Thread	139
15. To Wake Us Up	151
16. The Pure and the Impure	163
17. The Bond That Holds Us Together	173
18. Heaven on Earth	183
19. In the Palace of Love	193
20. Understanding the Will of God	199
21. The Glory of the Almighty	209



SANT KIRPAL SINGH AND SANT AJAIB SINGH, 1972

Introduction

IT WAS my great privilege to be present, along with many others, when Sant Ajaib Singh Ji gave the first eight talks of the twenty-one included in this book. It seemed to me at the time, and it still seems to me, that these talks—and the book that they are a part of—are extraordinary in a very special way: that the combination of essential ideas and the profound applications of those ideas makes this (up to now, at any rate) Sant Ji's definitive book.

The talks are commentaries on the section of the Sikh scriptures (the Guru Granth Sahib) known as the Asa di Vars, a section mostly written by Guru Nanak, the first guru of the Sikhs, although there are also a few verses by Guru Angad, the second guru (Sant Ji usually calls attention to these as they come up). Guru Nanak is a towering figure in the history of Sant Mat, the esoteric Indian tradition that shares the world view of the Jewish Kabbalah, Christian Gnosticism and Islamic Sufism; to a very great extent, it is Nanak's terms and categories (along with those of Kabir, His great predecessor and guru) which still define Sant Mat today.* Sant Ajaib Singh Ji, who is a direct spiritual descendant of Kabir and Nanak, manages in His commentary to shed light on every concept and nuance, explicit or implicit, in Guru Nanak's great hymn sequence, and thus makes what

*While Sant Ji has referred to many incidents of Guru Nanak's life in the course of this book, more complete biographical information may be found in Kirpal Singh, *The Jap Ji: The Message of Guru Nanak*, pp. 125–145, or Jon Engle, *Servants of God*, pp. 15–46. For a brief biography of Kabir, see *The Ocean of Love: The Anurag Sagar of Kabir*, pp. xvii–xxvi. The best discussion of Sant Mat from an academic perspective is Daniel Gold, *The Lord as Guru: Hindi Sants in the Northern Indian Tradition*.

is often a difficult and enigmatic scripture into a book that is supremely relevant for today.*

Central to Sant Mat, and to the other traditions which share its world view, is the idea of the Positive and Negative, an idea which works itself out in the course of this book in many ways: fundamentally, as, on the one hand, the God of mercy and forgiveness, Who resides “in the palace of love,” and Whose only desire regarding His children (human beings and all other forms of life) is to bring us back to our true Home, that same palace; and on the other as Kal or Dharam Rai, “Time” or the “Lord of Judgment,” the Negative Power who is responsible for the operation of the Law of Karma within the lower three worlds, and whose desire regarding us is to punish and reward. The Positive Power resides within each one of us in the form of the soul; the Negative in the form of the mind. Both are essential to life as we know it, but there is no doubt that the primacy of the Negative in our world is best explained by the idea of the Fall: an idea implicit throughout this commentary, but explicit in Kabir’s *Anurag Sagar* (English translation: *The Ocean of Love*), to which the reader is referred for a detailed description.

In this book, the ideas of Positive and Negative are expressed primarily psychologically, in the recurring opposition of Love (Positive) and Fear (Negative) respectively. The theme is set in the first chapter with two remarkable stories: the first of Usraj, “the crippled king,” reminiscent of the Biblical story of Joseph both in its details and in its theme of reaching the top via the bottom (“the last shall be first, and the first last”); and the second, the incredible story of the reborn man with two wives, on both of whom God had mercy. The idea of the patient, infinitely tender, caring God Who somehow manages to turn every pitfall and stumbling block that His children have to endure into something that will lead to their growth and ultimate happiness finds full expression in these stories. As Sant Kirpal Singh Ji once wrote me, “Please know it for certain that everything that comes to your count is in your best spiritual interest.”

The understanding of how Love and Fear work in our lives is perhaps illuminated most vividly in the fourth chapter, “On Fear and Freedom.” Here Sant Ji gives us the stunning statement, which I have

* For details of Ajaib Singh’s life and his connection with his guru, Sant Kirpal Singh Ji, as well as Baba Sawan Singh Ji and Baba Bishan Das (all of whom are mentioned frequently in this book), see the Introduction to Ajaib Singh, *Streams in the Desert*, pp. 1-17; see also A. S. Oberoi, *Support for the Shaken Sangat*.

never been able to forget since that memorable afternoon when I heard Him say it, that the greatest sin of all is *to be afraid*. This is a clarification of earlier statements (as He explains) such as this one:

The principle of Sant Mat is this: don't be afraid of anybody and don't make other people afraid. One should not allow oneself to be intimidated by anybody and one should not intimidate others. ("The UPI Interview," *Sant Bani*, June 1984, p. 12)

To grasp the full implications of fear being defined as the greatest sin, it might be useful to consider what "sin" is. It is defined in two different but complementary ways in the spiritual tradition. My guru, Sant Kirpal Singh Ji, defines it this way in His book, *The Wheel of Life* (p. 37): "Saints give a very simple definition of sin as 'forgetting one's origin' (or God-head)." In the New Testament the Greek word translated as "sin" is *hamartia*, which comes from archery and means literally "missing the mark." These two definitions—as *forgetting* and as *missing the point*—are implicit in all the Masters' writings on this subject, so much so that Sant Ji characteristically uses the word "mistake" when referring to sin.

In this book, Sant Ji calls attention to many "missings of the mark" or "forgettings" which can perhaps be best understood in terms of the opposition of love and fear within ourselves: the stubborn faith in ritual which He, like all the Masters of Sant Mat as well as the Biblical prophets, sees as baseless and counter-productive (see Chapters 5 and 6 in particular, among many other references); judgment and criticism of others, and violence toward others (see pp. 34–35 and 51 in particular, among many others); allowing our love for God as an "idol" to wipe out our love for God as He exists in His children (see especially pp. 66–67); and, by no means least, the contempt of renunciates for householders (Chapter 11) and men for women (pp. 146, 166, 178–179)—both of which Sant Ji examines very closely in the light of the recognition of God as the indweller of the human heart.

This understanding of the Positive and Negative is far from new: the New Testament makes the same point:

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear

has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because He first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from Him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. (I John 4:16-21, NRSV)

This passage, like the Asa di Vars of Guru Nanak, is grounded in the understanding of life and its origin found in the esoteric tradition: that all life is an expression of God, and that the power of God is found within every living thing (which are all, therefore, of infinite worth); and that human beings, in particular, have the ability to understand this and go within themselves to claim that treasure as their own. This idea is expressed in the Prologue to the Gospel of John in words which have not been fully appreciated by mainstream Christianity:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. (John 1:1-5, NRSV)

The concept of the Word—the power of God which is responsible for all creation, and which gives life to all—is identical with the concept referred to throughout this book as Shabd Naam, the expression of God which exists within us all. This power or expression, because it is the way by which we came from God, is also the way back to Him—if we learn how to make full use of it. And how to do that is shown to us by another manifestation of the same power: “The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, NRSV). The Word is metaphorically (as the New Revised Standard Version correctly makes clear) referred to as “a father’s only son,” because no matter how many times the Word incarnates (and, as the esoteric tradition emphasizes, the Word is continually incarnating: “Whoever seeks the Satguru will surely find Him, for the Satguru is an incarnation eternally present on this earth,” Sar Bachan 2:208) it is still only the one Word which is present. It is these multiple incarnations of the

Word or Shabd Naam which Sant Ji refers to as “Saints and Mahatmas,” and it is through our own connection with one of these great ones that the Word within us can become our stairway to the palace of love; this is the meaning of John 1:51, “Very truly I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” — the allusion being to Jacob’s stairway (or ladder) in Genesis 28:12. The Master, the Word made flesh, the human being who has united with God and through whom the Word is reachable, becomes our stairway by showing us how to reach and make use of the Word within us.

Strictly speaking, of course, we are all “Word made flesh”; as the Gospel makes clear, none of us would have life if it were not for the presence of the Word. Furthermore, if from one point of view, the Master is someone who has descended from God for our sake, from another He is someone who was like us once, but has realized His full potential. Sant Kirpal Singh Ji used to say, “What a man has done a man can do,” and “Every Saint has a past, every sinner a future.” I was personally present on January 19, 1964, in the Friends Meeting House, Washington, D.C., when He put it this way:

Follow the beauty of the sayings, I tell you. Live up to them, each one of you. You *must* be an ambassador, I tell you. Whoever has got the human body has the *birthright* to become God, I tell you. There is no exaggeration about it. But the pity is that we don’t follow it. (*Sat Sandesh*, March 1975, p. 11)

So the Master, the Saint, the Mahatma, the Word made flesh, is not only the Way, He is also a reminder that what is asked is possible: when Jesus said, “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect,” (Matthew 5:48) He was reminding us of our birthright. And that birthright and its implications are why “forgetting of origin” is the fundamental definition of sin: if we have the Word of God dwelling within us, if our birthright is to become that Word, if to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect is a real possibility because, as His children, we are not different from our Father — then when we forget, we are in effect denying what we really are, and all of our “missings of the mark” follow from that.

I have several times used the word “esoteric” and I have mentioned Sant Mat in connection with other esoteric traditions with a similar world view. As a matter of fact, Sant Mat (which means “the tradition of the Saints”) is that part of *any* tradition which is concerned with

going within ourselves and finding the true God of love, Who is not different from our inmost self. The Masters of Sant Mat agree with the Sixth Patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Hui Neng, who, when he was asked for esoteric teachings, replied, “What I can tell you is not esoteric. If you turn your light inward, you will find what is esoteric within your own mind.” (“The Sutra Spoken by the Sixth Patriarch,” *A Buddhist Bible*, p. 505) The outer teaching given by the Masters (including books written by Saints—what we call “scriptures”) is only for the purpose of directing us inward, or persuading us to go within and see what we find there; it has no value other than that. Sant Ji points out in Chapter 5:

But it is a pity that whenever a Mahatma leaves this world, people begin doing rituals in His name; and whatever book He may have written, they understand it as the order of God or the voice of God and begin to worship it—even though we all know that books are written by bodies, and the Mahatmas also write books only after assuming the body. (p. 41)

That which makes a Master a Master—His identity with the Word—cannot be conveyed via a book; the point of view of the Word made flesh, His priorities, can be conveyed that way, *insofar as language and our limitations allow*. But the contact with the Word within ourselves, which is *how* we realize our birthright and become perfect as our heavenly Father, can never come via a book, and to worship a book as an infallible authority is a disastrous mistake. Books are written by bodies, and the contact with the Word within can only come from soul to soul. Again due to our limitations, both the Master and the disciple have to be on the physical plane at the same time for any meaningful initiation to occur; a wonderful story from Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav explains why this is and how the Master (called *tzaddik* in the esoteric Jewish tradition) uses His humanity to lift us up:

A prince becomes mentally ill and feels that he has become a rooster. He insists on sitting “naked beneath the table to eat pieces of bread and bone.” The king and his physicians despair of curing him, but a wise man comes along and offers to heal him. The latter takes off his own clothes and sits under the table with the prince. When the prince asks him what he is doing, the wise man says that

he too is a rooster. "And they both sat together until they became used to each other." Finally, the wise man asks for a shirt, telling the prince, "You think that a rooster cannot wear a shirt? Even though he is a rooster, he can wear a shirt." And both of them put on shirts. After a while he asks for pants and soon both of them are wearing pants. The same process is used to get the prince to eat regular food and, finally, to sit at the table. Nachman concludes his story by saying that every man who wishes to come closer to the worship of God is a "rooster, that is enveloped in grossness." By the above technique, however, the *tzaddik* can gradually lift up the man, and bring him to the right way of serving God. (Herbert Weiner, *9 1/2 Mystics: The Kabbala Today*, p. 219)

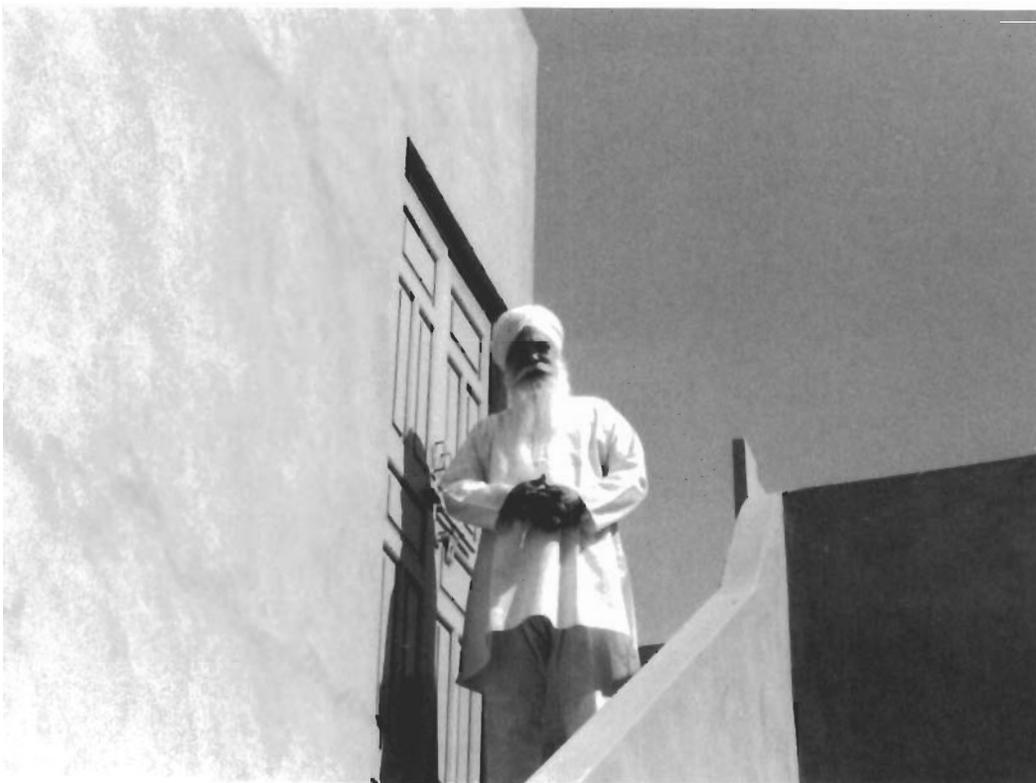
Sant Ji has said many times that the Master comes down only to love; and this patient, gentle, never-ending concern for us, without which we cannot hope to reach love's palace, is why the Word continues to be made flesh; why, if we search we will find (Matthew 7:7); and why the Satguru is an incarnation eternally present upon the earth.

RUSSELL PERKINS



BABA SAWAN SINGH JI

In the Palace of Love



The Giver and the Doer

EARLIER I commented on Rag Gauri and Sukhmani Sahib,¹ and I am very happy that I was able to explain those two *banis* or sections from the Guru Granth Sahib. The dear ones took benefit from those words of the Saints that I was able to explain to you, and they liked it very much. I promised Russell Perkins that I would comment on another section of Guru Granth Sahib called Asa ji di Var, and I am very pleased that today I am able to start fulfilling that promise—because in the past months I was not well physically and I was not able to do this seva. But today Russell Perkins is sitting here, and I hope with the grace of our Almighty Master I will be able to do this seva. In fact He Himself will do this work. All the *banis* (writings of the perfect Masters) are worth reading and respecting but Asa ji di Var has a special importance in Guru Granth Sahib. With the grace of the Master today I am beginning this, and I hope that in this little effort Master will shower all His grace; and with His grace this work will be done.

We should thank the Almighty Lord Who has given us this beautiful body, Who has given us good health, and so many other comforts in this world. He has sent us into this world, saying: “I am separating you from Myself and I am sending you into the world; but those who make the effort and do the devotion of the Lord will be able to come back to the Real Home. Their devotion will bring the highest prize: coming back to the Real Home from which I am separating you.” He

¹ These commentaries were published as *The Two Ways* and *The Jewel of Happiness*, respectively.

has sent His beloveds, His dear children, the Saints, into this world, and They have always given us these teachings and inspired us to do the devotion of God which enables us to go back to the Real Home.

After coming into this world, Saints do not tell us to sit idle and do nothing. They tell us, "As there is disease, so there is remedy." There is a remedy for every disease. They ceaselessly tell us to make efforts.

The government administrators, and even the wise people who are sent into this world by God Almighty, have made some laws, and these are not kept hidden from anyone. These laws are not a secret; everyone knows about them; they are highly publicized. These laws prescribe punishment for committing crimes such as murder, adultery, or stealing. So according to the crimes or mistakes people do, they receive punishment; and all citizens know that if they commit any crime, they will get the appropriate punishment. It is very open and everyone knows about it. If anyone wants to know more about the laws of the country he is living in, he is free to get that information. This is just to keep everyone in this world within discipline.

In the same way, if someone murders another person and then goes to the sessions judge or administrator and tells him, "I did not know about this law or its punishment, and I should be forgiven"—that is not possible. You know that when someone murders anyone he is taken into custody and then to court. The administrator tells that person, "You have done this mistake and you will be put on trial," and if he is given punishment in the lower courts he can appeal to the higher courts; he can even appeal for mercy. Sometimes his appeal for mercy is accepted and he is released. Not everyone is fortunate to get the benefit of that mercy, but some people do get it if they appeal to the higher courts.

In the same way, God Almighty sends Saints and Mahatmas, priests, preachers, and all the holy people into this world, giving them His blessings and knowledge. They came and wrote many scriptures and holy books in which they told us about the rules and regulations which apply to our souls, the laws which are applicable in the inner worlds. In fact, all these holy scriptures are like laws which we will have to face when we leave this world and go back into the inner worlds. There God Almighty has appointed one special person whom we call the Lord of Judgment or *Dharam Raj*. He knows about our accounts—our deeds, good or bad—and does not need anybody's witness because he is well aware of everything which we have done. If someone who is presented before the Lord of Judgment tells him that he did not know that these were the laws, he will at once ask him, "Did you not read the books of the Mahatma? Did you not read the holy

scriptures?" Because those scriptures are in fact the law books which tell us what we need to do to reach the home of the Almighty Lord, what the punishment for doing bad deeds is, and so on. So when Saints and Mahatmas come into this world, they tell us about the laws which are applicable to our soul and which we will have to face when we leave this world and go into the inner worlds.

Us was born in the home of King Sarang. He was beautiful and strong, and he was devoted to the service of the Saints. He was a meditator on Naam, a very good person. King Sarang had two wives: Us was born from one of them, and Sardul and Khan Sultan were born from the other.

Since Us was very beautiful, his stepmother was fascinated by him and attracted by his beauty and strength. She expressed her desire to indulge with him; but Us was a very pure soul and a devotee of a perfect Master. He had served the Saints, he knew what the punishment is for those who commit adultery, and he did not respond to his stepmother's desire. So she got so upset that she played a trick to defame him: one day, when the King came back to the palace, she told him that Us had raped her.

Now the King was proud of his kingdom and very much in love with his wife; and he did not act justly. Without investigating the matter, he called his Council of Ministers and told them, "Since Us has done this, take him outside the town and kill him"; and to prove that the killing had been done, he told them to bring back some part of his body. But Us was a pure and devoted being and very popular with everybody, including those ministers, and they did not want to kill him. They thought, "He is a good person, very devoted to the Saints; why should we kill him and do more sin?" Since it was the King's order, they cut one of his hands off and brought it to show the King that he was dead; but instead of killing him, they threw him in a well.

So Us was in the well; but a group of merchants, going from place to place, passed by that well and became thirsty. When they lowered the bucket, Us caught hold of it and the merchants realized that there was a living man in the well, and they helped him out. Us accompanied them from town to town, taking care of them and serving them. Since he was a devoted soul, he also did his meditation. He lived a pure and chaste life.

Later, in one of the towns they passed through, a washerman bought Us from the merchants to work for him: every morning he had to take a bullock loaded with dirty clothes out of town, wash the clothes, and bring them back in the evening. In that way he continued serving the washerman and also did his meditation.

It so happened after some time that the King of the country in which Us was living died without leaving any heir, and there was no one to replace him. So his Council of Ministers made this decision: "Since there is no one to become King, we will take the first person who opens the main gate of the town tomorrow morning and make him King." They did not announce this, but kept a vigil all night at the gate. Since Us went out every morning very early with his dirty clothes, he was the first one to open the gate; and he was brought before the Council of Ministers and they proclaimed him King.

Now Us was already a prince, and he was a very good and devoted soul; so he became an excellent King and very popular. He served the Saints and Mahatmas; he made sure that there was always food for those who needed it; he took very good care of all the people he was ruling over. He collected a large surplus of grain and other foods just in case there might be a drought; in all things he thought about the benefit of his people. He was not the kind of king who takes advantage of his position to enjoy the pleasures of the world: he was, in fact, a very good and righteous king.

King Sarang, his father, was a pleasure-seeking king however, and he did not take good care of his kingdom. After some time, that country experienced a very severe drought, food became scarce, and people began dying from hunger. Then King Sarang became worried, and he sent his ministers to find food at any cost. So that minister who had saved Us's life (by cutting off his hand instead of killing him) went searching for food and finally came to Us's kingdom. Us had now become Usraj; people called him King Usraj, "the crippled king." King Usraj recognized that minister, welcomed him, and gave him all the food he needed without taking any payment. When the minister returned, he told King Sarang: "King Usraj is your son, whom you ordered killed; but we did not kill him. Now he has become a king, and he is ruling over that country; and he is a very good king who takes care of his people."

When he heard that, King Sarang wanted to meet his son and welcome him; he also wanted to give him his kingdom, so that he could be a very good king to his people as well. He invited King Usraj to his kingdom, and Usraj came to meet his father accompanied by his forces and his advisors. King Sarang's other sons were jealous of Usraj, though, and instead of welcoming him they fought with him; but Usraj was successful in that battle and became the king of that place also, and took very good care of the people of that kingdom too. Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj has written this story in the Guru Granth Sahib in a very beautiful way, to tell us what happens to people who

are righteous and good, who do the devotion of the Lord and who serve the Saints. He says, "Those who are always devoted to God, who maintain purity and chastity, and who value and appreciate the Saints, can do anything they want and always become successful." Because for God Almighty, nothing is impossible: He can make a monster into a God in just a moment.

So Guru Arjan Dev says that those who remain pure, who maintain chastity and who are good in their soul, who remain devoted to the Almighty Lord, always win through no matter how many difficulties they have to face. Since they have the grace of God Almighty and their attention is always towards God Almighty, they get all the grace of the Master.

In the life sketch of Guru Nanak, there is a story about a person who was very devoted to Him. After connecting many souls with Shabd Naam, Guru Nanak came to River Ravi and settled on its banks, in the place which became Kartarpur Bedian; and many people came to see Him there and receive Initiation from Him, because you know that if there is a pond or river or any source of good water you don't need to tell anybody there is water there: those who are thirsty will find the place and go there by themselves. In the same way, when Guru Nanak settled on the banks of River Ravi, many people who were yearning for the devotion of the Lord and who wanted to realize God came to Him by themselves. One of them was a merchant who became very devoted to Guru Nanak. He was a young man of thirty-five years, and every morning at three o'clock he would cross the river, have the darshan of Guru Nanak, and remove the dirt of his soul. Then he would bathe in the river and remove the dirt of his body. Then he would sit for meditation. This was his daily routine and he did it every day without fail.

Once it so happened that after having the darshan of Guru Nanak at three in the morning, he went into the river to bathe and a crocodile swallowed him. Not far away, in another part of the river, a rich fisherman was laying down his traps; and on that day he caught, along with the usual small fish, that crocodile. He became very happy, thinking, "Now I will become still wealthier," and took the crocodile home. When he cut open its stomach, out came the body of that initiate merchant, and the fisherman was surprised to see not one scratch on him, even though he had used a very sharp knife to cut open the crocodile's stomach. He cleaned his body for him, but that devotee was not conscious; and when he came back into life, he didn't remember anything. It was as though he were reborn. When we are born into our present life, we don't remember anything of our past

births; in the same way, that devotee did not remember anything of his past.

The fisherman was very happy, because he had a lot of money and no children and he had been craving a son; and here was a son without any effort on his part. He thought, "God has been very gracious on me; He has given me this beautiful son who is already grown up, so that I don't have to work hard raising him!" He adopted him as his son, and found a very good match for him: he married him to a girl who became, although she did not know it, his second wife—because he was already married when he was swallowed by the crocodile, and he had two children by that earlier wife. And he and his second wife had two daughters and two sons.

His first wife and her children had never stopped looking for him since he had disappeared, and in the course of their search one day they came to a fair where the devotee and his second family were enjoying themselves. They ran into each other, and the first wife at once recognized her husband. She said, "Where have you been? We have been looking for you for so many years!" But he did not recognize her, and his second wife got upset and said, "Who are you? Why are you bothering my husband?" Now both of them were right: he was the husband of both wives, but the poor person did not know anything about his past. It was a very complicated problem.

Both wives went to the officer and told him about their problem, but he couldn't make any decision. Then they went to the higher authorities, but they couldn't find any solution either: for them it was a baseless riddle and they did not know what to do. But a wise person was present, and he told them, "Why don't you go to a Saint or Mahatma? They have inner vision, and they know truth from untruth. One of the Mahatmas will be able to solve your problem. Why not go to Guru Nanak, who is living on the banks of River Ravi in Kartarpur Bedian? He may be able to help you; Saints and Mahatmas have the grace of God Almighty." So both wives of that husband went to Guru Nanak and told Him their painful story.

Guru Nanak listened and then He smiled and said, "Daughters, both of you are true: you are both wives of this person. Let me seek the permission of God Almighty, and if it is in His will something will come up and your problem will be solved." After a moment, Guru Nanak told them, "Both of you stand on either side of him, catch him by his hand and pull his body toward you, remembering the formless Almighty Lord and having faith in Him. If it is His will, maybe both of you will be satisfied." And when they did that, having faith in God and with the grace of Guru Nanak, that person became two people,

and each wife went home taking her husband with her; they were both satisfied.

The meaning of telling this story is this: for a Saint, nothing is impossible because Saints have the grace of God Almighty. In fact, God works through the Saints, and whatever God wants to do, He can do: He can change water into sand, He can take out water from sand, He can make a man into a woman and a woman into a man. So for the Saint—for that being in whom God Almighty works—nothing is impossible.

History is full of stories which say that the Protector is stronger than the one who kills. When Ibrahim was made to walk on fire, that fire was changed to flowers. In the same way, when Prahlad was being killed by his aunt, she took him and sat in the fire, because she was a magician and fire did not have any effect on her body; and you know how Prahlad was protected by his Almighty Master. The history of Sant Mat is full of incidents like this, which show how God or the perfect Master protects His disciples. Masters always protect Their disciples; the question is, how much faith do we have in the Masters? How devoted are we to Them? We should also consider how much effort we put into carrying out the orders of the Master. Masters always shower grace on us and protect us, but we should also have faith in Them, make the effort, and become receptive to Their grace.

Kabir Sahib says, "He who is protected by God cannot be killed; no one can turn even one of his hairs; if the whole world is against him, no one can harm him."

In this Asa ji di Var most of the bani is by Guru Nanak, but there is also some writing of Guru Angad Dev Ji.

No matter when the Saints and Mahatmas have come into this world and written their bani, all Mahatmas have had the same things to say: Without the perfect Master we cannot get Naam; without Naam there is no liberation; and without the Satsang we cannot find out about our shortcomings and faults. These are the three main points which the Masters have made in their writings.

**I sacrifice myself for my Master hundreds of times a day;
He who made Gods out of human beings did not take
much time to do so.**

The Sufi Saint Sheikh Farid was a perfect Saint and a very great meditator. His bani is also included in Guru Granth Sahib. His grandson Sheikh Baram, who was also His successor, asked many questions of Guru Nanak, and Guru Nanak answered them all. He

told him about the importance of having a living Master and about the living Master's power and what He is able to do.

He who has eaten rock candy knows its taste; only he can tell us about it. In the same way, only he who has received something from the Master can tell us about His greatness and glory. So here Guru Nanak Dev Ji is telling Sheikh Baram, "I sacrifice myself constantly on the Master; millions of times a day I sacrifice myself on the Master Who has given me all this. Why do I sacrifice myself so many times on the Master? Because He has changed my demon intellect to a Godly intellect and put me on the right path; He changed my life and everything in it; and He did not take a long time to do it. He connected me to God Almighty and He did not delay; and so I sacrifice myself on Him millions of times a day."

**Even if a hundred moons were to rise and a thousand suns
to blaze,
Without the Master it would all be dense darkness.**

Now He says, "Look here, O Sheikh Baram! In this outer world, this physical plane, there is one sun and one moon, and when they shine they remove the darkness of this plane. But even thousands and millions of suns and moons cannot remove the darkness of ignorance which is within us. That can be done only by the Master. That is why I sacrifice myself on the Master Who has removed this darkness of ignorance."

**O Nanak, Those who do not awaken in the Master, but
awaken only in their own minds,
They, like the false sesame plant, are abandoned in the
farm.
Abandoned in the farm, they do not please anyone, says
Nanak:
Though they seem to flourish, within their bodies are
only ashes.**

Those who do not receive the Naam Initiation from a perfect Master, but instead think that just by doing their own reading they are awakened and are doing the devotion of the Lord—Guru Nanak says that their condition is just like that useless false sesame plant which is left in the field by the farmers. Along with the sesame plant there grows another plant which looks like the sesame—it has flowers and all things in common with it—but it doesn't have any seeds. When the

farmers harvest sesame fields, they leave those useless plants in the field.

So Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj here compares those people who do not receive Naam Initiation from the Masters and who think that by reading and making their own efforts they can awaken themselves and do the devotion of the Lord, to those useless plants which are left unattended in the fields by the farmers. Those *manmukhs* may have children, good health, all the things of this world; but when they go to the Court of the Lord, they are not accepted – because they did not seek the guidance of the Master and therefore did not do the real devotion of the Lord.

He Himself created Himself and He Himself created the Naam.

Secondly He created Nature; sitting on the throne, He Himself watches the play.

God Almighty Himself has created this creation; there is no one else who has done it. He Himself created the Power Who created the creation, and He Himself gave names to His creatures. You may read *Anurag Sagar** and find that God Himself created the Powers Who then became responsible for creating this creation. He Himself is sitting and watching everything that is happening.

You are the Giver and the Doer: After giving Your gifts, You Yourself make them function.

You know all, You give life and You Yourself take it back in a moment.

Now He says: “You Yourself create the bodies; You Yourself put Light into the bodies; You Yourself make them run around. The fact that people can see and do, means that You are the only one Who has power to make them function.”

So, creating the throne and sitting on it, You watch the play.

Guru Nanak says that there is such a Power Who has created this creation that is *timeless*: not within the limits of the Negative Power or

*See *The Ocean of Love: The Anurag Sagar of Kabir*, pp. 18-36.

Time. It is created by Itself and It is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the world. Only that Power knows who should be brought to the Masters and made to meditate, who should be kept away from the Masters, and who should be allowed and not allowed to do the devotion of the Lord. Only that Power knows everything; and that Power is taking care of everything. We can have the real understanding of all this only with the grace of the Masters and Saints. And in fact, when we go within and see the Power of God working there, then we realize how that Power is working everywhere, within and without, and how everything is happening.

In the Asa ji di Var, Guru Nanak has touched on almost every subject, and talked about every possible thing. Every day in Satsang a new subject will be commented on; and when these talks are published in the form of a book, you will come to realize how much grace Guru Nanak showered on the poor miserable souls, and in what a good way He has explained everything which will be helpful to us.

The Value of Human Birth

THERE was a time when this creation did not exist. There were no trees or birds or animals; there were no mountains or oceans; there were no human beings. But it came in the Will of the Almighty Lord that He should become many from One; and from that Will alone, as Guru Nanak says, everything was created. That Ocean of Power of All Consciousness became many from One, and from that Power of God the mountains and oceans, *khands* and *brahmands*,¹ humans and animals, birds and trees, vegetation, and all things were created. And after creating all this with His Will, He came and lived among the gods and goddesses; and among the human beings He came as a human being; and He took care of the creation He had made.

After creating, He thought, “Where will this creation go? How will people be able to come back to me if they want to?” So He came in the human form, because we are human beings. Only a human being can become a teacher of human beings; that is why He came in the same form that we are in. After coming in the human form, He explained to us about the creation.

God Almighty has always sent His beloved children, the competent Mahatmas, into this world. The purpose of Their coming is to make us understand the reason of creation and why we have been given human birth — what we are supposed to do in the human birth. Even though the Mahatmas are almighty, all competent and perfect from the beginning, still They are so humble that They do not say that They are all conscious or perfect. Only a teacher can make you a teacher; only a wrestler can show you how to wrestle; in the same way,

¹ Planes of creation

only someone who has done meditation can teach you how to meditate. So even though the Mahatmas are perfect and prepared before coming into this world, still, in order to make us understand that without doing meditation and without working hard we cannot be successful on the Path, the Masters also, in Their lifetimes, work very hard in meditation and teach us how to become like Them. But what can the Masters do if we are not ready to receive Their grace? If we are not prepared to mold our lives according to Their teachings? As Kabir Sahib says, "What is the fault of the Master if the disciples do not mold their lives according to His teachings? It is like blowing air into bamboo which has openings on both ends; the air will not stay there." What can the Master do if the disciples have become like that?

I have told this story many times: There was once a King who went into the forest to hunt, and lost his way. He became very thirsty and thought, "If I do not get water, I may die." There was a woodcutter who lived in that forest, who made charcoal to sell on the market; and when the King lost his way, somehow he met him, and the woodcutter gave the King some water and saved his life. The King was very pleased and grateful and he thought, "This person has saved my precious life; I should give him something that is very precious." So the King said, "Well, dear one, I am the King; and whenever you need anything, come to my court and I will give it to you."

After a few days, the woodcutter went to the court, and the King asked him what he would like. The woodcutter said that he was very poor, and the King became pleased that he could help him, and gave him a grove of sandalwood trees not far from the city. The King thought that he would be able to sell the sandalwood and make a great deal of money, because sandalwood is very valuable. But the woodcutter was not happy; he had expected the King to give him a lot of money and precious things, and he didn't appreciate the sandalwood trees: he had no idea of their value. Still he thought, "Okay, it is better for me now because I will not have to cut wood far into the forest; I can cut it right here and make my charcoal and sell it in the city." So, not knowing the value of the sandalwood trees, he turned them all into charcoal and maintained himself by selling it in the city.

After some days the King was passing by that grove and he thought, "Maybe now, after cutting all these trees, my friend who saved my precious life will have made a lot of money and be living very comfortably." But when he saw the woodcutter, he was just the same—same torn clothes, same axe in his hand—and he was astonished and asked him what he had done with all the sandalwood trees. When the woodcutter told him, the King asked if there was any at all left, and he

said, "Yes, I have this one piece with which I moved the wood." The King told him to take that piece of wood and sell it in the market; and when he did, he was amazed that for that little piece of wood he got many hundreds of rupees, and then he realized what he had done.

The Mahatmas lovingly tell us that this world is like the forest, and God the Timeless Lord, the Owner of the creation, is like the King. When because of some good karmas of the past, God showers grace on us, He gives us as a prize or reward the sandalwood grove of the human birth; but since we do not appreciate the value of the breath which is put in the human body, we go on wasting it and making charcoal out of it, losing our breath in worldly and sensual pleasures and indulgences without understanding how precious those breaths are. If God showers grace on us and we do some little meditation, or if we have done some good karma and God gives us the reward for that, then we may come to realize how precious our breaths and human body are. But once we have lost the human birth, what can we get? Once the birds have taken all the grain, what is the use of repenting?

Baba Sawan Singh Ji often used to tell this story from the Bible: There was a person who had three servants. Once when he was leaving for a while he gave some money to all of them and told them that they should invest it in merchandise, work hard in their business, and increase what they had been given. The first servant worked very hard and made a lot of money. The second did the same and doubled his capital. The third servant buried his money in the ground, thinking that he didn't want to lose the capital which his master had given him. After some time when the master came back, he called all three of them. The first two gave him all the money they had made, and the master was very pleased; he said, "This is praiseworthy; you understood what I told you; you have worked hard, and I will give you more powers and rights." The third servant presented the master with the same money he had given him, and said, "I did not do anything with this because you always try to get money which is not yours. I was worried that if I lost this, you would be upset; so I did not do anything. Here is your capital." How could that master be pleased with someone who did not do anything with the capital he was given?

So Mahatmas lovingly explain to us that God is that master, and we are those servants, and we have been given the capital of the human birth; and there are certain responsibilities which we are supposed to attend to in order to increase the capital which God has given us. Those who, sitting in this human body, attend to those responsibilities — they do *human* deeds, and also the devotion of God — God opens His door and welcomes them, and gives them more rights and

more powers. But those who do not increase their capital, who just keep it or lose it—God is not pleased with them. Guru Nanak says, “There are those who increase the capital which God has given them, and there are those who lose it.”

**True are Your Khands, true are Your Brahmands;
True are Your Loa,² true are Your Forms.**

Sheikh Baram asked Guru Nanak, “What is true in this world? Is speaking truth the only true thing?” Guru Nanak replied, “Speaking truth is indeed a very good thing; one does that when the effect of *Satogun* is upon him, and it is one of the good deeds. But Truth is that which never perishes and which never destroys; it is the Power of God. And all that God has created—the Khands and Brahmands and other divisions of the Creation, the different parts of the body—all things which God has created—are also Truth, because God Himself is sitting within everything He has created.”

He who is not affected by the three *gunas*³ is the *gurumukh*,⁴ and he receives glory in the Court of the Lord.

Mahatma Pipa also writes, “Whatever is in Brahmand is also in Pind;⁵ Pipa says, Those who search for it get it.”

All the Mahatmas have said, “We could not have recognized the Khands and Brahmands; we had no understanding of this Creation. It was God Himself Who sent His beloveds and Who made us realize and understand His Creation.”

**True are Your doings and all Your thoughts;
True is Your command, true is Your court;
True is Your will, true is Your order;
True is Your mercy, true is Your sign.**

Guru Nanak sings the praises of God Almighty and says, “Your court, Your Satsang, is Truth; Your thoughts of whom You should bring to the Satsang and whom You should keep away is Truth; Your will, Your orders for all creatures, is also Truth.”

² Plural of *lok* or world.

³ The three qualities or modes of being which make up the created universe. They are *Satogun*, *Rajogun*, and *Tamogun*, or peace/equipoise, activity/energy, and inertia, respectively.

⁴ The mouthpiece of the guru; the disciple through whom the Master speaks.

⁵ Pind is the physical plane or the physical body.

**Millions and billions say You are True;
And True are all who depend on You and get strength
from You.**

Lovingly He says that those who sing the praises of God and remember Him, and remembering Him become His Form, are also true beings; because that Name that they remember always remains in this world. Once Guru Nanak asked some dear ones whose name would be remembered; they answered that those who benefit the people by making resting places or digging wells, or those who have children, would be remembered. But Guru Nanak was not satisfied, and he said, "The Name (*Naam*) of the Almighty Lord remains in this world forever, and God remains here forever; and in this age only those who become the gurmukhs of God will be remembered forever." The Naam is the only thing which remains; those who do the meditation of Naam are remembering God and thus become the form of God; God cannot be destroyed and neither can they; so it is the names of those who meditate on Naam which is remembered forever.

**True is Your praise, true is Your advice;
True is Your nature, O True Emperor.**

Guru Nanak Sahib says, "Sing the praise of God. Whatever thoughts we have of You or Your power are true, and whoever sits and sings Your glory and praise becomes true."

**Nanak says, Those who meditate on You are true;
Those who are born and die are false.**

Now He says, "Those who do Your devotion and connect themselves with You, they also become true ones and rise above the pain of birth and death." The untrue ones are those who, by looking at other people, come to the Satsang but still do not have enough faith in the Master. Sometimes they bring faith and sometimes they lose it and in this way, even though they come into the Satsang of the Master, they will not become perfect. Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, "Those who go within and see with their own eyes know what is real; even if the whole world tells them it is different, they will not believe it." If you yourself see a donkey with your own eyes, the whole world may tell you it is a horse but you won't believe it.

The Lord of my soul, the Form of the Shabd, Supreme Father Kirpal, always said that we should not be attached to the body because

it does not remain in this world forever; but you all know of the chaos that occurred when He left His body, among those who were around Him and knew about Him: how they fought with each other and even went to court. But this poor one always said, "The Master never dies, the Master never leaves. Those who say that the Master is dead should be taken to court and asked why they took someone as a Master who was involved in births and deaths." The perfect Masters are never involved in birth and death; They never die or leave this world; They are always present in this world in the form of the Shabd. Master is the form of the Shabd; and in that form He is always present. He never connects anyone with His body; He connects the soul with the Shabd, because Shabd is the power which remains. He may change His body; but the Power working within Him never changes. But what is our condition? Kabir Sahib says, "We have taken the body of the Master as the Master; we have not recognized the real Satguru working within Him, and so we come back into the cycle of eighty-four lakhs births and deaths again and again and remain in delusion." Guru Nanak says, "My Satguru is present in this world forever; He never comes, He never goes; He is indestructible and He is permanent."

In the Var of Rai Balwand, in Guru Granth Sahib, it is written: "The Light is the same, the practices are the same, but He changes the body and sits there."

**Great is Your glory because great is Your Naam;
Great is Your glory because True is Your justice.**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib describes the glory of that God Almighty Who is present within everyone. He says that His mantra is the highest of all mantras; His judgment is the highest of all judgments because He always gives justice.

God gives us the rewards or fruits of our deeds whether we remember Him or not. He does not take away riches or good things from those who abuse Him or call Him names; He gives the fruits equally, but it is true that we have to take the fruits of our deeds. If we have done good deeds, we get good fruit; if we have done bad deeds, we have to take bad fruit. But it is not true that God does not give the fruits to those who do not remember Him.

**Great is Your glory because Your seat is immovable;
Great is Your glory because You know our speech.**

It is His great glory that His seat is Sach Khand. All the planes up to Om or Brahmmand are washed away in the Dissolution (*pralaya*) and all the planes up to Bhanvar Gupha are washed away in the Grand Dissolution (*mahapralaya*); but Sach Khand is not dissolved or destroyed in any dissolution or grand dissolution.

**Great is Your glory because You know all thoughts;
Great is Your glory because You are the Unasked Giver.**

His greatest glory is that once He manifests His Naam within someone and authorizes that person to give the Naam initiation to others, He does not ask him, "Why have you brought so many?" or "Why did you give Naam initiation to so many people?" This is His great glory: that once He has given His gift He does not ask any questions.

Great is Your glory because You are all in all.

His glory is great because He does not give His gifts after consulting anyone: He has no equal.

**Nanak says, All Your doings cannot be told.
Because what You have done and what You will do are all
in Your Will.**

With our tongue and with words we cannot glorify Him or sing His praises; we can sing His praises only after going within and becoming one with Him.

**This world is the abode of the True One, and in it the True
One abides;
Some, in His Will, He merges with Himself; some, in His
Will, He destroys.**

This is the bani of Guru Angad Dev Ji, Who says lovingly that this human body is a beautiful house of God. Guru Amardas Ji Maharaj calls the human body "the temple of God"; some Mahatmas have called it a mosque or church, because within this human body God Almighty Himself resides. So Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj says here that this beautiful house of the body is the temple of God in which He Himself is residing, and it is His own decision who should be brought near Him and who should be left attached to Maya.

Some, in His Will, He takes out of Maya; some He makes dwell in Maya.

How can we say whom He will bless?

Nanak says, Understand them as gurmukhs whom He illumines Himself.

Guru Nanak does not have any ego; He does not say, "I am the only one who knows about God, or the Khands and Brahmands or other divisions of Creation, or have the understanding of God." No; He says that all those who have obeyed the commandments of the Master and molded their lives according to His teachings, and become gurmukhs, all know these secrets; they all have the understanding of God. Mahatmas tell us that up to now those who have practiced this Path according to the instructions of the Master and done the meditation have never said that this Path is not true. Those who have not meditated or followed the Master's commandments may say that this Path is not true; but those who have worked, gone within, and reached Sach Khand have never said it.

Nanak says, Creating the jivas,⁶ He made Dharma (the Lord of Judgment) sit and write the accounts.

There the true ones are judged true; the false are picked and separated.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says that after the jivas were created they were not left unattended. God created Dharam Raj, the Lord of Judgment, and appointed him to make arrangements according to the accounts of the jivas. In this world the souls are all free to do any karma they want, good or bad. When they leave this world they are brought before the Lord of Judgment. He has been given the job of rewarding good deeds and punishing bad, and he does that very efficiently. He separates the true from the false.

The false ones do not find any place; their faces are blackened and they are sent to hell.

Those who are colored in Your Naam won, and the deceivers lost;

Yes, He made Dharma sit and write the accounts.

In old times the currency was silver or metal coins; now for conve-

⁶ Individual or embodied souls, subject to karma.

nience we have bills of paper, but in the old days it was coins, and when anyone took coins to the Treasurer he would test them. If he found any coin that was not pure, he would cut it and throw it away. The pure coins he accepted for the treasury. The same thing happens to all souls when they leave this world and are brought before the Lord of Judgment. Those who are true, who have done the devotion of the Lord, are accepted in the treasury of the Court of God; the others – the impure, the false, those who have not done the devotion of God – they are not accepted in the Court of the Lord and, just as the Treasurer cut the coins as a sign of their rejection, so Dharam Raj blackens the faces of the souls who are false: this is a sign that that soul is going to hell and prevents it from mixing with other souls. The Lord of Judgment does not have any enmity towards anyone, nor does he have any love for anyone; he does justice. We are given reward or punishment according to our deeds.

I would like to make a request: The dear ones who are in the habit of doing meditation in their homes, and who have been able to reduce the amount of sleep, do not usually have any difficulty when they come here and try to meditate for many hours. But those who have not yet developed the habit of sleeping less and meditating more come here and see other people meditating, and then they also do not sleep much and sit for meditation. But since they are not in the habit of doing it, it bothers them and creates disturbances in their minds; and this disturbs others. So I hope that those who have not yet developed the habit of sleeping less will try to take enough sleep so that they do not disturb others. You should take care of yourselves.

During my first tour when I talked about coming to Rajasthan I said that everyone should prepare themselves for this trip so that when they come here they will not have any difficulty. If the dear ones who have not reduced their sleep sit too much, they fall asleep in Satsang, their eyes are swollen, and you can easily see that. I have often said that once you reduce sleep, it becomes difficult for you to sleep too much; but if you have not reduced your sleep, it is very difficult for you to stay up.



A Glimpse of Truth

THE COMPANY which a man keeps makes him good or bad. You should avoid bad company—the company of liars, thieves, or those involved in destructive things—and keep the company of good people, those righteous and true people who do the devotion of the Lord; because whatever company we keep we will become like that. This human birth is very precious: don't waste it by spending time in bad company. A person who sells wine may have a cup of milk in his hand—or even a cup of nectar—but even so, anyone looking at him will assume that it is wine, because handling wine is his daily routine.

So always remember that this human birth is very precious, and have pity on yourself and on your children. Not even in the state of forgetfulness should you do anything which may bring a bad name to your family, your children, and your own self. Remain in good company.

Once the prophet Lukman was explaining all this to his son, because he noticed that he was in the company of a boy whom he did not trust. He told him, “Dear son, don't be in the company of that boy; he does bad things, and if you remain with him you may also learn to do bad things.” His son was also very wise, and he said, “Father, how is that possible? I am wise and confident, and I don't accept his bad qualities.” Lukman told him, “Dear son, because of your wisdom, it may be that for a few days you will be able to spare yourself and not be affected by his bad qualities. But in the end they will affect you, and you will become like him.” But his son was not convinced, so Lukman told him to hold a piece of coal in his hand and said, “Dear son, hold this coal—it is not burning, just a piece of coal—and don't throw it

away until I tell you. Just don't let your hand get dirty." When he threw it away, his hand was black, and he said, "Father, how was it possible for me to hold the coal and not get my hand dirty?" The prophet Lukman said, "You are convinced that you cannot keep your hand clean while holding coal?" His son said, "Yes, Father." The prophet said, "Then how can you be convinced that the bad company you are keeping is not going to affect you?"

Kabir Sahib says, "You want rice, but you are grinding the leaves and not the paddy; how can you get rice that way?" If you do not do good deeds, or remain in good company, how can you expect a good reward? The Lord of Judgment will ask you, "Why do you expect a good reward when you did not become good? By spending time in bad company, you have also become bad!" If a murderer is brought to be hanged and he says, "Let me sleep on a comfortable bed and don't punish me" – how is that possible? As the Lord of Judgment also says, "Whatever you are getting is only according to the deeds you have done."

Once a person was very devoted to the god Varuna, and as a result Varuna gave him a diamond. He was very happy about that, and sewed the diamond into his blanket, which he carried with him everywhere. It so happened that once while traveling he met four professional thugs, and they observed that while he seemed to be very poor, there was a happiness and contentment about him which was inconsistent with his poverty; and they determined to discover the reason. So they came to him and asked him where he was going and where he had come from. The poor fellow said, "I come from the east and I am going west." One of the thugs laughed and said, "Well, when God wants us to meet someone, He Himself makes the arrangements. We are also going west!" So all four thugs accompanied him.

After some time, they recognized that whatever he had was in his blanket. So they gave him some money and sent him to the market to buy supplies. When he returned, they looked over his receipts and said, "You are a penny short; the merchant must have cheated you. Run back and get it!" As he was leaving, they said, "Why don't you leave your blanket here? You can run faster without it!" The dear one was worried about that penny, so he left his blanket with the thugs and ran back to the merchant; but he found that everything was in order and he had not been cheated. When he returned he could not find either the thugs or the blanket. Then he repented and said, "I meditated all my life long and received that precious diamond; and now I have thrown it away for the sake of a penny."

Kabir Sahib says, "I have seen a surprising thing: A precious diamond was being sold, and the people who had owned it were not even

there! They were sitting outside the market place, playing with the shells they had sold the diamond to get!"

Just like that devotee of the god Varuna who meditated for so long and got that diamond, so it is with us: when we do enough good deeds in our past lives, we get the human birth; and in this birth we get the precious diamond, the jewel of Naam initiation. And who are the thugs who snatch away our diamond? Lust, anger, greed, attachment, egoism: they are the thugs who are attached to us and who take away from us our precious wealth of Naam. In the beginning they are very friendly: Lust may say, "Well, there is nothing wrong in doing this, we just want to have children; even the rishis and munis who had children did this, so what is wrong with it? We are not doing anything different than other people." Even though we have not seen the rishis and munis we are talking about, and we have no idea how they were involved in lust and how they used it, still, using our own mind and understanding, we convince ourselves that there is nothing wrong with it. In the beginning all these passions are very friendly, and somehow they convince us that there is nothing wrong in using them; but as we go on, they involve us in them so much so that we cannot get rid of them—we cannot come out of the tangle they have created for us. Kabir Sahib and Swami Ji Maharaj both say, "You will not get rid of this trap until you die." We have gotten so involved in them that there is no escape from them until we leave the body.

So these thugs take from us our precious wealth of Naam and then, like that poor fellow who got the diamond from Varuna, we complain that we cannot progress in meditation. "We used to see the Light and hear the Sound Current, but now everything is gone. Why?" It is only because we are allowing all these thugs—lust, anger, and the other passions—to plunder our wealth which God Almighty, our Master, has given us.

**Amazing is the Naad (Sound); amazing are the Vedas;
 Amazing are the jivas; amazing their distinctions;
 Amazing is the Form; amazing is the color;
 Amazing is air; amazing is water;
 Amazing is the fire that works many wonders;
 Amazing is the earth; amazing are the species;
 Amazing are the tastes to which the jivas are attached.
 Amazing is the union; amazing the separation;
 Amazing is the hunger; amazing the indulgence;
 Amazing is the praise; amazing is the eulogy.
 Amazing is straying from the Path; amazing is the Path.**

Amazing is the nearness; amazing is the distance;
 Amazing are those who see Him manifested everywhere.
 Amazed am I to see these amazing things;
 Nanak says, Only through perfect destiny can one understand it.

The position or status of the gurumukhs is beyond the three gunas and is called the position of *sahaj*.¹ Gurumukhs awake in *sahaj*, sleep in *sahaj*, whatever they do or speak they do in *sahaj*. The gurumukhs therefore are not controlled by the three gunas; in fact, the gunas are controlled by the gurumukhs.

Because of *tamogun*, we become involved with anger and ego; only because of *tamogun*, a brother cuts the head of his brother like he cuts a radish or carrot. Only because of *tamogun* are there fights and disturbances. *Rajagun* makes a person greedy. Guru Nanak says, "You are collecting people's curses and their wealth. You think that the wealth of all the world should enter your home. You are not concerned for other people, whether they die or live; you are interested only in their possessions." But when the wave of *satogun* comes, a person rises above all the other qualities and desires, and thinks of doing righteous and good deeds, donations, and devotion. Under the influence of *satogun*, a person becomes afraid of hell and, desiring the heavens, worships.

All Mahatmas have written about the position of *sahaj*. Kabir Sahib has written, "After attaining the state of *sahaj*, Kabir and God have become one; but no one can recognize them." He says further: "Someone who has been to my country can recognize me; because in my country, the rain falls without clouds, there is Light without suns, and the Sound is made without instruments." He also says, "In that place there is a waterfall with drops of water that are neither sweet nor sour."

Guru Nanak says, "Now what is the difference between You and me? I do not see anyone but God Almighty within all beings. Everywhere I see only You."

Mahatma Ravidas says, "The name of my city is 'The Place Where There Is No Pain,' and the citizens of that city are those who reach there." He says, "In my city there is no pain or suffering, no taxes, and no problem of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, or Christian; there is only peace and everyone lives in harmony." That state Guru Nanak describes as the state of supreme happiness: "Over there is no death or birth, and

¹ The state of effortless bliss and total awareness.

the soul who reaches there says, Timeless is my Lord and I am His child; He is my God and I am not afraid of death.”

Mahatma Ravidas says, “That is the Country of the Freed Souls; and the souls who reach there have the food of Naam to eat if they are hungry, and the water of Naam to drink if they are thirsty; and it is a very surprising thing. The happiness there cannot be described.” And it is indeed a surprising thing, that there are people who have manifested that world within themselves, while others search for it outside in temples and holy places.

The Path of the Saints and Mahatmas is not a path of hopes or blind faith. This is a Path of practice. The Mahatmas say, “*Come, do, and see.*”

But what do we lack? We say, “We cannot leave the tastes of the world but we can realize God anyway.” But how is that possible? Kabir Sahib says, “I have not seen two swords living in the same sheath; I have never even heard of it.”

The Mahatmas who have attained the status of *sahaj* are liberated while living, and they do not tell their disciples, “You will have liberation only after you leave the body.” The Masters are determined that their disciples will manifest the Sound Current within them and achieve liberation while they are sitting in the body; and that is why they constantly tell us, “While the Master is in the body, you should also do your work and get the liberation. Since the Master is determined to give us liberation, it is our duty to act according to His instructions, manifest that Sound Current within us, and achieve it.”

Dear ones, in the beginning it is very difficult to reduce the amount of food we eat, and if we try to do it too soon it has an effect on our body. But later on we can reduce the amount of food we eat without its having an effect on the body. In the same way, Baba Sawan Singh Ji used to say, “The fire of lust is very serious: it finishes the body of a man the way a candle finishes a moth.” But Baba Sawan Singh Ji also used to say, “*That can be reduced.*” Don’t create thoughts of lust within you – don’t taste this poison – and it will be very easy to reduce the fire of lust.

Whatever is seen and heard is because of Nature (the Power of God);

Fear and happiness exist because of Nature;

The sky, the earth, and Beyond, are all Nature;

All forms and creations are Nature.

The Vedas, Puranas, and scriptures come through Nature;

All our thinking and reasoning is due to Nature.

**Eating, drinking, and dressing are through Nature;
 Love for all is also from Nature.
 All classes, varieties, colors are by Nature;
 All creation in the world is by Nature;
 All good and bad acts are due to Nature;
 All honor and pride are part of Nature;
 Air, water, and fire are the products of Nature.
 The earth and its dust are nothing but Nature;
 All is Your Nature: You are the omnipotent Creator,
 Your Naam is pure, and You are the purest of all;
 Nanak says, Only the one who is chosen discriminately by
 God sees all this happening in His Will.**

First Guru Nanak described the amazing form of God Almighty; now He is talking about the Power of God, Whom we also call Nature. He says that because of Nature, the Power of God, the water in the river is flowing, and the mountains are standing where they are, and the air is blowing: this is all happening because of the Power of God. It is only because of the presence of the Power of God that we can see with our eyes, smell through our nose, move our body; it is only because of the presence of the Power of God that we can walk. When He withdraws that Power from our body, our eyes, nose, legs, are still there: but the eyes do not see and the legs have ceased to function. He says, "In the air, water, earth, and the world below, everything is functioning only because of the presence of Your Power."

His Power works through the Saints and Mahatmas. In fact, He Himself has put that Power within the Saints and Mahatmas, and only because of that Power have the Saints written the holy scriptures of the world.

Only the Saints can know and understand the writings of the Saints. Only They know which plane a Saint was on when writing a particular *bani*, and what a Saint means by writing it. Intellectuals and learned people are like someone who tells us all about a place from looking at a map. They will say, "Here is a canal, here is a city," and so on. In fact there is no canal or city in the map. Of course they can give us information, but only what they have read. But the experience of the Saints is exactly opposite: They have been to the place and speak from that level. Saints say, "You speak from what you have read, but we speak from what we have seen."

Having indulged in the pleasures, he became ashes and left.

He was a great worldly man, but in the end he was carried away with a chain around his neck.

In the first part of this section, Guru Nanak spoke about the amazing Form of God; then He spoke about the Power of God Who is present everywhere. Now He is lovingly explaining and opening up to us this fact: He says, "No one made you become involved in the pleasures and indulgences of the world; you yourself decided to do this. As a result of your own deeds, you have made your soul burn in the fire of the passions in which you were involved. No external power inspired you; it was your own decision, and because of it you have wasted your life." And now that you have destroyed this precious opportunity, you will be brought before the Lord of Judgment and he will say, "You were a great householder; but it doesn't make any difference to me whether you were President of your country or a poor man in your country." In front of the Lord of Judgment, the king and the poor man are alike: whatever deeds they have done, they will be given reward or punishment accordingly. If they have done bad karma, a chain is put around their neck, their hands are cuffed, and they are punished for what they have done. So Guru Nanak is lovingly explaining, "Dear one, no one forced you to do what you did. It was your own idea; and now because of your own deeds you are being given this punishment."

I have witnessed the deaths of many people, rich and poor. Some people leave the body without saying anything, but some people describe their condition. They tell what they are seeing, what is happening to them, and what they are going through.

Kapurthala was a princely state in the Punjab, and the Queen of Kapurthala was an initiate of Master Sawan Singh. She used to tell her husband that he should go see the Master and take initiation. But he always made excuses: he would say things like, "Well, today I don't have a good coat; maybe later when I get new clothes I will go see Him." So he never went. But death does not spare anyone, and when his time came the King of Kapurthala complained that the angels of death were pulling him by chains around his neck and he was in serious pain. The Queen said, "Didn't I tell you to go and see Master Sawan Singh? He is the only one who can save you from this!" But when the Queen realized how much he was suffering, she requested Master Sawan Singh to help him; and because of the grace of the Master he was saved from the beating of the angels of death.

Last July my brother left the body. I have often said in Satsang that none of my family members believed in either Master Sawan Singh or Kirpal Singh. They would tell me that I was under the effect of Master

Kirpal and he had done some magic on me so that I would believe in Him; and they never believed in what I was doing. My brother especially used to drink a lot of wine and shout, "I don't believe in any Kirpal or anyone like that!" On the 2nd of July, he showed no signs of sickness; but when he came home that evening he said, "There are four butchers who are holding me and giving me trouble." The people asked him what butchers, and he said, "Butchers who buy animals and kill them." Then suddenly he said, "But now I don't feel any pain! Because Master Kirpal has come and saved me from those butchers." So before leaving the body he told his family members, "Bring Ajaib to this house and all of you take initiation"; when he was saved by Master Kirpal, he realized the power of Master Kirpal. So after he left the body, they all came and received initiation. I have often said that I did not have any connection with my family members until then; now they all have faith in the power of Kirpal.

**In the Beyond, his actions are read and judged, and he is
made to understand.**

**He gets no refuge; who will listen to his crying now?
The blind-minded person has wasted his life.**

Guru Nanak Sahib feels very sorry for us and says, "Over there he is told about his accounts and what he has coming to him; he repents and cries, but he does not find a place to hide his head. But what can he do? He can only repent, but what is the use of repenting then?" Guru Nanak says, "I am sorry to say that even though this punishment is waiting for them, still, obeying the mind, they are wasting the precious diamond of the human birth which they have been given."

The Masters do not write these things to create terror in our hearts; they only tell us the truth. Guru Nanak says, "Whatever the servant Nanak utters is true in this world as well as in the world beyond."

On Fear and Freedom

SHEIKH BARAM asked Guru Nanak, "Is there anything in this world which is not affected by fear? And if one wants to become free from this fear, what should he do?"

Guru Nanak replied, "Look here, dear one, the whole world is made of fear. When a child is born, first he is afraid of his parents; when he goes to school, he is afraid of his teachers; when he grows up and gets a job he is afraid of his employer and senior officers; if he becomes a rich person, he is afraid of thieves and taxes; when he becomes old, he is afraid of death."

If one gets name and fame in this world, if one becomes King or President, he is afraid that one day that kingship or presidentship may be taken away from him. In this way, everyone in this world is afraid of something. We are afraid of serpents, tigers, and other dreadful animals; and they are also afraid of us. There is no one who is free from fear.

If someone murders someone else, he is afraid of the police or the gallows; if anyone commits sin, he is afraid of the Lord of Judgment. Kabir Sahib says, "We *should* be afraid if we are earning sin, because those who do good deeds are welcomed and appreciated and are not punished."

The history of Sant Mat bears witness to the hard time that rulers have often given Saints. Kabir Sahib's hands and feet were tied and He was thrown into the Ganges River; another time He was thrown in front of elephants. But history also bears witness that no matter how the Saints were tortured They were not afraid of anyone and Their faith was not shaken.

Bhagat Namdev was told by the rulers of His time, “We will cut off your head if you will not leave this path”; but He did not leave the Path and he was not afraid. In the same way, Bhagat Prahlad was made to embrace the heated pillars, and his sorceress aunt took him and sat in the fire; but still He was not afraid. Guru Gobind Singh Ji was also given a very hard time by the rulers of His day. His parents were killed, He was made to flee from His home, even His children were buried alive; but still, even though He went and lived in the forest, He was not afraid.

In this hymn Guru Nanak is explaining to Sheikh Baram that God Almighty has no fear; the human pole where the power of God Almighty is manifested and working is also free from fear, and does not frighten anyone; and if we come across that human pole—the Mahatma of the time—and He gives us Naam initiation, and if by meditating on Naam we become one with Naam, then we also become free of fear.

Even psychologists have come to the conclusion that fear is created by sin. If we are upset or have trouble in the mind, it is because of worry. Worry is a funeral pyre. One who commits sin worries, and as a result fear is created.

So Saints tell us that we should do the meditation of Surat Shabd. By doing this meditation, we make our soul mix with the Almighty Lord just like a drop mixes with the ocean and becomes the ocean. Since that Lord, the Oversoul, is free from all fear, if we mix ourselves in Him we will also become free of all fear.

Why do worldly people and the devotees of the Lord not get along with each other? Because Kal, the Negative Power, sits within the worldly people and he makes them frighten the devotees. They do their best to prevent the devotees from doing the devotion of Naam and taking their souls out from the trap of Kal. So they frighten them; but the real devotees of the Lord are without fear, so what Kal does has no effect.

Once there was a Mahatma who did his meditation sitting in a forest, and just as flowers attract honey bees, so the fragrance of his meditation attracted the people. Among the people who flocked to Him was a prostitute, and once she said to him, “Tell me, are you a man or a woman?” The Mahatma did not reply. Shortly after he became sick and prepared to die. Again the prostitute asked him that same question, he said, “Well, there are still one or two days left; come when I leave the body and then I will answer your question.” So when he was about to leave the body, she came and said, “Now reply to my question so it will not remain unanswered: Are you a man or a

woman?" He replied, "I am a man." She said, "You always looked like a man to me; but why didn't you tell me before?" He answered, "Mind is a deceiver. We should never rely on the mind. If I had told you earlier that I was a man, who knows what my mind would have done with me? But today I am leaving as a complete man without allowing my mind to deceive myself."

Saints and Mahatmas do not hesitate to tell the truth. Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say that if we tell one lie, we have to tell a hundred lies to back it up.

Once many rishis and munis were gathered in a forest. One of them asked their leader a question: "How does a person get glorified in both this world and the world beyond?" The reply was, "A person who speaks the truth gets glorified in this world and is appreciated and welcomed in the world beyond." Everyone appreciates truth: even if people are committing sins, still they like others to be truthful and sincere.

It is written in the Mahabharata, the story of the Pandavas and Kauravas, that after the great war was over the Pandavas, as a result of their good deeds, were supposed to go to the heavens. So they asked Lord Krishna, "Now that we have done our good deeds, how can we reach the heavens?" He replied, "Climb to the top of the Himalaya Mountains, and you will get there." So all five brothers began climbing the Himalayas. Four of them were buried in snow and could not reach the top. Only the oldest, Yuddhisthra, who was known as "The Son of Religion" because he was a true person, managed to reach the top. But he had lost one of his toes. So he asked Lord Krishna, "Why did this happen? People called me the Son of Religion because I was always truthful. Why have I lost a toe?" Lord Krishna replied, "Once in your lifetime you spoke a lie; that is why you have lost a toe."

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "You seek liberation by doing good religious deeds; but liberation comes only from the devotion of Naam."

So in this hymn Guru Nanak first lovingly lists everyone who is under the effect of fear; then He lovingly lists those who are free from fear; and then He tells us that unless we get Naam from the perfect Satguru and do its devotion we cannot become free from fear.

**In the fear (of the Lord) the air blows with its myriad
breezes;
Lakhs of rivers flow in fear.**

He lovingly says that air and water is all in the fear of God.

**In His fear fire performs without reward;
In His fear the earth is crushed under a burden.**

Now He says that the god of fire, who helps create heat and coolness and who helps us digest food in our bodies, is also under the fear of God. Even the Lord of Judgment who keeps the accounts in the Court of the Lord is afraid that he might do something wrong.

**In His fear Indra moves with a burden on his head;
In His fear Dharam Raj (the Lord of Judgment) stands at
the Lord's gate.**

Lord Indra, the supreme god of gods, is also afraid. Even the clouds are afraid because they know they have to produce rain.

**The sun is afraid of Him; so is the moon.
They travel millions of miles, but their journey is endless.**

Now He says that the moons and suns all perform their duty in the fear of God.

**In His fear are the Siddhas, the pundits, and the Nathas;
In His fear is the huge outspread sky.**

Even those who can exercise supernatural powers — who perform miracles and bother people — even they are in the fear of God. The birds who fly in the sky, and the sky itself, which exists without any pillars, are in the fear of God.

**In His fear are the great warriors and strong soldiers;
In His fear the multitudes come and go.**

Time and time again many warriors and brave soldiers are born into this world; but they are all in the fear of God.

The leaders of the religions which we have adopted according to our bodies understand that their religion is the only religion; and those leaders, whom we call “brave ones” or “warriors,” make us fight with other people; and in order to protect that religion, we kill others and call our religious leaders “brave ones.” But Guru Nanak and Kabir do not call such people “brave warriors”; They say that those who control their bodies, their minds, their organs of senses and their organs of action, they are the brave warriors.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Victory over the mind is victory over the world." If you conquer your mind, you please the Creator.

The Master says, "Call him a warrior who fights in the battlefield for his own religion: He who does not turn his back and who lets his body be cut in pieces for the sake of religion, he is a brave warrior." What is our religion? Our religion is the religion of our soul, the religion of God. In Sukhmani Sahib, Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj has written that the real religion is the religion of the soul. Kabir says, "When the trumpet is blown, get up and go to the battlefield – this is the time to fight." He is saying that when the inner Sound is manifested, we should get up; in this human birth only can we fight. Where is our battlefield? The eye center or *Tisra Til* is our battlefield.

Guru Nanak says, "Even though you have to fight with five warriors, still the hand of the perfect Master is on your back." He is saying that when we reach the eye center, our Master, Who has armed us with the weapon of Shabd or the Sound Current, makes us fight with the five passions: lust, anger, and the others. And even though they are very powerful, still we have the hand of our Satguru on our back; and those who go within know how the perfect Master Who has armed us with the Shabd Naam helps us and supports us while we fight these passions.

Kabir Sahib says, "I do not call 'warriors' those people who fight with swords, guns, and bullets, and who kill others; I call 'warriors' those who fight with the five passions, taking the weapons and support of the Master."

Saints do not make anyone weakhearted. Earlier I asked, "Who becomes fearless? Who is afraid?" Only those who commit sins are involved in fear; those who do not do sins become fearless.

**His fear is written in the fate of all Creation;
Nanak says, The True Formless One is the only one without fear.**

Now He says that fear is written in the fate of all jivas when they are born. If there is anyone fearless, who is not involved in fear or affected by it, it is the Timeless Almighty Lord. And Guru Nanak says that those who become the beloveds of that God neither frighten anyone nor are afraid of anyone.

In the beginning, at the ashram in 77RB, one of our western dear ones asked me, "What is the greatest sin?" I replied, "To be afraid of anything is the greatest sin."

**Nanak says, The Formless One is the only one without
fear;
Many Ramas before Him are nothing.**

If there is anyone fearless it is Almighty God. When Lord Rama assumed the body, even he was afraid. How was he afraid? When he went into the forest for his twelve-year exile, he took his younger brother Lakhsman to protect him and guard him with his bow and arrows.

After 1947, for a couple of years, I had the opportunity to meet eight heads of states in the Punjab. I did not see anyone who was free from fear. Even though many people would guard their palaces, still, if there was a little bit of noise in the middle of the night, the alarms would go off and everybody would wake up and ask if the guards were alert or not.

**Many are the stories of Krishna;
Many are the thoughts of the Vedas.**

Guru Nanak says, "Look here, Baram, people sing the stories of Lord Krishna, and they read the Vedas, Shastras, and other holy scriptures. But just by reading these scriptures and singing stories of Krishna, no one has become free from the fear of the Angel of Death; even though they sing so much and read so much, still they are afraid of death."

Like beggars, many dance to the tunes of others.

Now He says, "Singing the stories of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna people dance so much and collect money in their names; and while singing their praises they fall down on the floor and do tricks; but still they have not become free from the fear of death."

The performers perform their dances in the open market.

Just like entertainers who come into the marketplace to entertain people, so those who sing the stories of Rama and Krishna have opened their shops. But their fear of death has not vanished.

**They sing of kings and queens and speak nonsense;
Precious are the earrings, precious are the bracelets.**

He is speaking of the performers who sing the stories of Rama and Krishna and perform their plays. What do they do? They go to religious places far and near, they disguise themselves—some as Lord Rama, some as Lord Krishna, some as their wives—and they sing the songs and enact the plays to amuse and entertain the people; they talk in the way than an intoxicated person talks. And just as the real Rama and Krishna wore jewelry, they wear artificial jewelry. They do all this to impress and amuse the people. But their bodies are still subject to death, and their fear of death does not vanish, even though they do all these things.

Guru Nanak is not criticizing any of the past Masters; but when people go astray and misunderstand the teachings of the Masters, when they leave the real Path of devotion to the Lord, then the perfect Saints come as a lighthouse to the world and They explain to the people that they are not really understanding or following the teachings of the Masters in the real sense. Lovingly They say, “You will never be able to get butter from churning water. You will only be able to get butter when you churn milk.”

Swami Ji Maharaj also says, “You cannot get anything in your hands by churning water; the pity is that you are too lazy to churn milk.”

Nanak says, The body (which was wearing these ornaments) is reduced to dust.

Knowledge cannot be obtained by talking—it is as hard as iron.

You cannot obtain Knowledge by talking, or from any scripture or holy book. It is very difficult to obtain Knowledge: it is as hard as iron.

Guru Nanak does not call reading of scriptures obtaining Knowledge. He says, “The unutterable Knowledge within us is the real Knowledge, and the one who understands that gets it.” The real Knowledge cannot be spoken or written; it will never come through reading scriptures.

**One gets Knowledge only by His Grace;
All cleverness and willingness are useless.**

Guru Nanak says that only if we have good fortune can we meet the perfect Master and get the perfect Naam from Him. We cannot get it by any of our power or any of our wisdom.

**If He bestows His merciful gaze on us,
Then by His Grace we get the Satguru.**

If God showers mercy and grace on us, He makes us meet the Master. And if Master showers grace on us, He unites us with the Shabd.

It is a pity that even we, the satsangis, do not understand the grace of the Master. Usually we think that if we get some promotion in our job, or if our sick child gets better, or if we get something of a worldly nature, that that is the grace of the Master. And if we lose a little bit in our home, then all our faith and devotion is broken and we lose all our faith in Master. The profits and loss which we have are according to our own karma which we have done.

Swami Ji Maharaj says, "Such people do not find any place to be still within, and they blame the Master." They never hear the Shabd, they do not find stillness and rest within, and outside they blame the Master: "Master did not help us."

**This soul has wandered in many births
And then the Satguru made him hear the Shabd.**

When this soul, this deluded soul, after wandering in many different bodies—animals, snakes, this or that body—and being deluded so much, finally gets this human body and comes to the door of the Masters, the Masters see that he is begging for the alms of goodness. So when They see the poor condition of that soul who has gone into so many different bodies and has finally come to the door of the Master, They shower grace on him and tell him, "Come here, dear one," and They make him hear the Sound of the Shabd; and They tell him, "If you follow this Sound, you will be able to reach the Real Home from which you were separated."

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "We have wandered in many different bodies, but we have not got liberation without the Master. Finally, when we have fallen at the Feet of the Master, and when He made us hear the Shabd, then we have gotten liberation."

**Listen, people of all the world!
There is no giver like the Satguru.**

When the Shabd is manifested within a satsangi and he goes within and sees his Master there, he comes out and, stretching out both his arms, he calls the people of the world and shouts that the gift of the

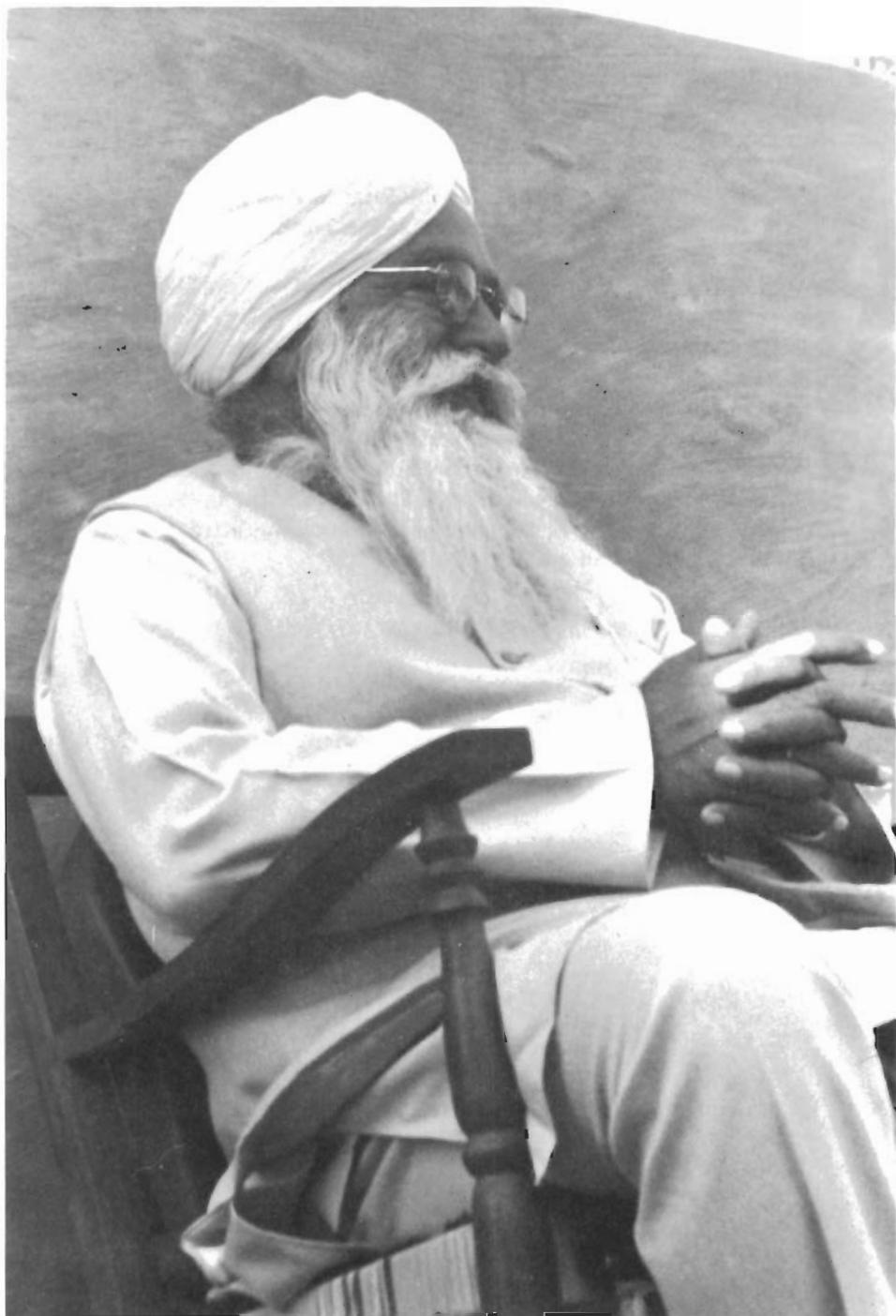
Master is such that it cannot be stolen by any thief, no air can blow it away, no fire can burn it, and there is nothing which is more precious than His gift: the Master is the only giver.

One gets the Truth by meeting the Satguru Who removed the ego and made him recognize the Truth.

In the end Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj instructs us that we have found the Master Who is such a personality, a True Being, Who never destroys and never perishes; and that those who surrender themselves to the feet of such a perfect Master get the benefit of Him.

So as Guru Nanak has instructed us, so we should do: we should do the meditation of Shabd Naam, we should weed out egoism from within, and we should become purely a human being of God.

Kabir Sahib says, "By saying 'Thou, Thou' all egoism has vanished and there is no room for 'I'; when the veil of I-hood was lifted, then no difference between You and me remained."



The Real Ritual

WE KNOW that whenever Saints and Mahatmas, the Beloveds of God, come into this world, They do not use rites or rituals in Their Satsangs, nor do They lay emphasis on righteous or religious deeds. They only teach Their disciples to do the meditation of Surat Shabd.

They do not come into this world to attach Their disciples to Their shoes or clothes or any of Their physical belongings. The fact is, They consistently teach and inspire the dear ones to go within, to meditate on Naam, and to realize themselves.

But it is a pity that whenever a Mahatma leaves this world, people begin doing rituals in His name; and whatever book He may have written, they understand it as the order of God or the voice of God and begin to worship it—even though we all know that books are written by bodies, and the Mahatmas also write books only after assuming the body.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj called the rites and traditions of His time (many of which are prevailing now) “deeds of hypocrisy”; He said, “No matter what religious deeds you do, it is all hypocrisy, and you will not become free from the beating of the angel of death.”

When He said that, the Muslims created an uproar and complained that their religion, Islam, and their holy book, the Koran, which they said was “the book which had come down from heaven,” were criticized in the holy book Guru Granth Sahib. They complained to the Emperor Jehangir, and he had the Granth Sahib read through six times to find any criticism of Islam or the Koran. But he did not find any criticism there: he did find the praise of Naam—that without

Naam one cannot be liberated, without the perfect Master one cannot get Naam, and without the Satsang we cannot know our shortcomings and failures.

It is a pity that Guru Arjan Dev Ji was tortured by the rulers of that time: He was made to sit on a hot pan, and burning sand was thrown on His head. His physical brother was friendly with the powerful people of that time, and he was the instrument of the torture given to Guru Arjan. What was Guru Arjan's offense? That He said, "All human beings are the same," and, "Who is the real Muslim? Only he whose heart is like wax," and, "We have been given this human birth to do the devotion of the Lord." So this was Guru Arjan's offense: that He told people the reality.

It is very easy to say, "He was made to sit on hot pans." Just imagine our condition if we were made to touch even a little hot place, or if we were forced to step barefooted on hot sand, what would happen to us? Just imagine what that Mahatma had to go through.

In the same way Lord Krishna and Lord Rama came into this world; but if we read the Bhagavad Gita which contains the teaching of Lord Krishna, we find out that He did not come to establish or inspire any rites or rituals. He did inspire people to live a pure life; but after he left, how people misunderstood His teachings! They began the practice of dressing themselves up as Krishna, they began chanting sections of the Gita as a form of prayer, and they gave birth to a religion.

In His writings, Guru Gobind Singh has written about Rama and Sita, and called them very good and noble people. Sita was a woman who did very religious deeds; she was a very righteous person. But it is a pity that nowadays people think that by disguising themselves as Rama and Sita, going from door to door and begging in their name, and playing their parts, they are following them.

In today's and tomorrow's Satsangs you will hear a lot about them. Because, when Sheikh Baram saw people enacting the parts of Rama and Krishna and other deities, and performing plays in their name, he asked Guru Nanak, "Tell me, all these plays and rituals which they are doing in the name of past gods, is that right? Or is there some other play which is worth doing?" So Guru Nanak told him about that play being performed in the Court of the Lord which the Saints have written about: that play which is always happening and which the Saints are always enjoying.

**The hours are like the gopis
And the pahars are like the friends of Krishna.**

Guru Nanak tells Sheikh Baram that in the olden days the day was divided into eight *pahars* or watches of three hours each (instead of 24 hours) and each *pahar* was divided into eight parts. So He says, "You can understand those sixty-four hour-like parts as the *gopis* or admirers of Lord Krishna, and the eight *pahars* or watches of the day as Krishna's friends."

**Their ornaments are air, water, and fire
And the moon and sun, who are the incarnations of time.**

What are the ornaments with which that play is made beautiful? Air and water, the sun and the moon, are the jewelry which remain on guard twenty-four hours a day and which support and protect us: they are the ornaments which make that play beautiful.

According to the Hindu Shastras, if a god comes in human form he is called an *avatar* or incarnation; and some Hindus believe that twenty-four avatars have come. They say that avatars are those who incarnate by themselves without taking birth from the womb of a mother; but it is strange that they refer to Krishna and Rama as avatars and also speak of their parents.

And the riches of this earth are a trap given to us to use.

The earth produces food for the jivas to eat, which appears to be very useful; but that usefulness is in fact part of the trap.

**Nanak says, Without Knowledge the creatures are
deceived,
And the Yama devours them.**

Lovingly He says, "Those creatures I have mentioned in the above lines — if they do not have the Knowledge of Naam, the Yama or angel of death will devour them all." Guru Arjan Dev says, "Even this earth and sky will be devoured and go away; they will not remain forever."

**The disciples play music and the gurus dance
They wave and move their feet and heads.**

When the performers go from village to village to perform acts in the name of Krishna and Rama and all those other avatars, someone disguises himself as Krishna and the others become "disciples" and they play musical instruments and dance before an audience. So when

the person playing Krishna (the guru) makes a mistake while dancing, the audience and the “disciples” shake their head and say, “No, this is not right, you should do it again.” You see, Lord Krishna was the owner of the three worlds, but what is his condition today? He is dancing and repeating steps, dancing again and again just for the sake of money.

Bhai Gurdas said, “The time will come when the disciples will sit in their homes and the masters will go to see them. The disciples will play musical instruments and the masters will dance to that music.”

We do not mean to criticize anyone, as Guru Nanak Sahib had no intention to criticize anyone. Guru Nanak is describing what He has seen and what is still happening today.

**Thus they blow away the dust which falls into their hair;
Looking at them, people laugh—even back in their homes.**

In foreign countries there may be floors where people dance; but in India plays and dances are usually performed on sand. When people dance on it, the sand gets blown around and often ends up in their hair. The people enjoy that dancing and when they go home and remember how they danced, they laugh a lot.

**They dance for the sake of earning bread
And for this they strike their heads against the ground.**

When children go home after seeing these plays and tell their elders what they have seen, the elders tell them, “These are not the real Krishna or gopis; they are doing this for their own interest.”

**They sing and act as the gopis and as Lord Krishna;
They sing and act as Sita and as Lord Rama.**

Someone becomes a gopi from among them; someone becomes Sita; someone sings as Rama; what more insult could we give those Ma-hatmas? Can a son make his mother dance?

**The True Naam is the Formless, without any fear;
He has created this whole creation.**

The Timeless Almighty God is the only One Who is fearless; only His Naam is worth meditating upon and worth remembering.

**Those servants who have good karmas serve Him;
Those who have love for Him in their minds—their night
is sweet.**

When a disciple comes to the Master, he tells Him, “Master, I am very unhappy; I have suffered very much in this world. Tell me the means of liberation.” Master gives him, and tells him about, the best ritual: the meditation of Shabd Naam. He says, “Along with attending to your worldly responsibilities, do the meditation of Shabd Naam. Wake up early in the morning, sit in meditation for two or three hours every day, connect yourself with the *kirtan* or music festival happening within you, and absorb yourself in that. Only by doing this meditation of Shabd Naam can you get liberation from the suffering world.”

**By thinking upon the Word of the Master, the disciple has
learned this:
Only by His Grace can one go across.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “Who is the *sikh* or disciple? Only the one who has the teachings of the Master.” And what are the teachings of the Master? The Master has taught us to do Simran and Bhajan—the meditation of Shabd Naam—and to attend Satsang and obey the good things the Master tells us. If the son of a worldly father obeys his instructions and molds his life accordingly, how pleased his father becomes! He even gives him his own earnings. Do you think that if we are working according to the Master’s instructions and we are pleasing Him, He will keep anything hidden from us? No: He will also give us all that He has earned—the wealth of spirituality which He has earned for us. He will give us everything. When a disciple molds his life according to the instructions of the Master, when he obeys His commandments, then the Master sits within such a disciple, carrying all His wealth.

In the home of the Master, only those who do the meditation of Naam are appreciated and welcomed; only those who do Simran and seva are respected and appreciated. People who talk a lot and tell stories are not appreciated.

**The oil mill, spinning wheel, flour mill, potter’s wheel,
Countless cyclones and storms—**

Now He tells Sheikh Baram, “You have seen people performing in those plays about Rama and Krishna and dancing in circles; in the circular form they go on dancing. But if one could get liberation just by dancing in circles, then why wouldn’t the oil mill or potter’s wheel get liberated? And what about sandstorms? They all move in circles; if that led to liberation, all these things would have it.”

**The spinning tops, the churning sticks, the threshers,
Birds fly and roam without giving rest to their wings—**

Children play with tops, which move in circles; some birds fly round and round in the sky. The threshing machine which is attached to a tractor, as well as the stick with which we churn milk, also moves in a circle; why are they not all liberated?

**Many creatures revolve around an axle;
Nanak says, By moving around only, one does not know
his end.**

Now He is talking about a children’s merry-go-round, how we put children on it and it goes around in a circle: if the circular dance leads to liberation, then all those children should also get it.

Saints do not intend to criticize anyone. Guru Nanak is not criticizing anyone here; but in order to dispel Sheikh Baram’s illusion — that maybe those who go around in circles get liberation — Guru Nanak is giving him these examples of things which move in circles to show him how that is not possible.

**They are bound in the bond as He has willed,
They all dance for their livelihood;
They laugh and dance—in the end they leave weeping:
They neither fly nor become siddhas.**

Guru Nanak says, “Look here, dear one: all these people are doing what they are doing because of food and money. They have taken up this business because of their bad karma from the past; by following it they are creating more bad karma for the future. These people will neither become siddhas nor will they become liberated ones.”

**Playing and dancing amuses the mind;
Nanak says, Only those who have fear in their minds have
love for Him.**

All this dancing and jumping around is feeding the mind. Those who are the devotees or beloveds of God are not afraid of anything: they have the fear of God, they love God, and they do not do anything like this.

**Your Naam is the Formless One;
By meditating upon it, one does not go to Hell.**

Now Guru Nanak sings the praises of Almighty God. He says, “O Lord, only You are the One Who can shower grace on the souls and only You are the One Who can give liberation.” In Sant Mat, Naam is given a lot of importance. Which Naam? That Naam (Name) which cannot be written or spoken in any language.

With firm determination, Guru Nanak says that one who has the Naam never goes to Hell. Tulsi Sahib also said, “Just as gold cannot be eaten by rust and iron by moth, in the same way, whether he is good or bad, the devotee of a perfect Master who has Naam cannot go to Hell.”

**This body and soul is all His:
Share with all and lose nothing.**

Guru Nanak is telling His disciples, “God has given you this soul—the soul Who is the doer is given to you by God—and the body in which your soul is residing—in which you are residing—is also given by God.” He has also given you many other things, and you should be grateful and thankful to Him because of what He has given you. If out of what God has given you, you are able to feed someone and to share some of what you have with others, you should be humble: not proud that you are doing it, because you are not doing anything; God Himself is doing it through you.

Baba Sawan Singh Ji used to quote from the words of Lord Jesus, that if you are giving a donation your left hand should not know what your right hand is doing.

Guru Nanak even says that after doing good deeds, you should think of yourself as one who has done bad deeds; He says that if God makes you do good deeds, you should think of yourself as a sinner with bad qualities on whom God has showered grace.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to tell a story about a businessman who was very miserly and would never give anything to anybody, but whose wife was very good. She always wanted to feed the pundits and poor and needy people, but she never could because her husband was

a miser. But she did what she could and her husband thought, "Well, today I should go to the River Ganges and see if I can find some pundit I can feed without spending much money." So he found four pundits sitting on the bank of the Ganges doing their rites and rituals, and when they had finished he asked them all, "Pundit ji, how much will you eat?" They told him they would eat ten kilograms of ghee, sweets, milk, and whatever they were used to eating. That man thought, that will cost too much; so he left that place. Finally he found a pundit who was very thin and emaciated, and he thought, this pundit is fit for me: he won't eat very much and it won't cost me too much, and maybe I will be able to please my wife. The pundit saw right away that he was a miser, so when the businessman asked him, "How much will you eat?", he thought, if I tell him everything I want he will run away; so he said, "Well, you see I am very thin, and I always have a fever, so I am not able to eat much. But whatever you give me—wet or dry—I will accept." So the businessman thought, "This is it! He's a good person," and he invited him to his home.

When he got home, he told his wife, "Today I have found a pundit and he will be here soon. Whatever he demands, you should give him." His wife was very pleased that at last he had invited somebody and given her permission to give him what he wanted, so when he got there, she asked him what he wanted. He told her, "Ten kilos of milk, five kilos of ghee, fifteen kilos of sweets, plus clothes, and all that stuff." And then he demanded a thousand rupees for the wear and tear on his teeth. So after he got all those things, he went home.

But he was afraid because he had deceived that businessman, so he gave everything to his wife and told her, "Today I have brought all this from a miser's home, and now it is up to you to keep it: because when he finds out about it, he may well come and take everything back." His wife was very clever; she said, "Don't worry about it. When he comes, lie down on the bed and cry and act as though you are sick. I will take care of the rest."

When the miser found out what the pundit had done, he went straight to his house, where he found the pundit weeping and sighing and saying, "I feel as though I'm dying." The pundit's wife began to weep and to say, "I don't know where he has been today; I don't know who the sinner was that gave him all the food. He must have given him poison and now he is going to die! What will happen to me? Who will take care of me after he leaves the body? I don't even have money to get him medicine!" When the businessman observed all this, he was afraid: he thought that the police would investigate him because the

pundit had taken food from his home. So he gave the pundit's wife some more money and said, "Take him to the doctor and get him treated."

This is the condition of misers. They want to give donations, but still they are misers; so they act like this.

**If one wants one's good,
Doing good, one should call himself the lowly one.**

Sheikh Baram told Guru Nanak, "Master, I have supernatural powers within me and the angel of death will leave me alone." Guru Nanak said, "Sheikh Baram, if you are that strong you should prevent old age from coming; you should remain forever young. If you are able to do that, I will accept your might."

**If one postpones the appearance of old age, still it comes:
No one remains here when the cup is full.**

In the old days they had a container which was used as a measure to weigh wheat and other things. Guru Nanak says that when that measure is filled with breath—when all our breaths have been used up—no one stays in this world.

Nowadays people connected with various religions and institutions give lectures and talk about making life better for the people. They all talk about freedom, but they do not know what freedom really is. Whatever we have done in the past, we are suffering the consequences of that; and now we are free to do the karma whose consequences we will have to suffer in the future. Freedom is, that we should do such a thing which makes us free from a suffering world and which does not make us come back again.

The effect of the Kali Yuga is in its full force. Nowadays they have made movies in the name of past Masters: Kabir, Ravidas, Guru Nanak, and many others. People go to see those movies, and take their families to see them. I have often heard that those people who make movies in the name of past Masters boast that they can make more money that way than what is collected in gurdwaras and holy places. People go to see those so-called religious movies thinking they are going to get some inspiration, but instead they earn sins, and get more in the habit of watching movies.

You know that the teachings of the Saints are for our improvement, to teach us how to purify ourselves, and you know how the men and women and youth of today are indulging in lust and destroying their own lives.

Saints do not criticize anyone. They tell us how to discipline ourselves and purify ourselves, and how to do things in this world while keeping ourselves in the Satsang and improving our lives. So according to Their instructions and teaching we should improve our lives.

The Food of Our Soul

YESTERDAY I told you that the perfect Mahatmas, the beloveds of God, neither criticize anyone Themselves, nor do They allow their disciples to get involved in criticism. Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj didn't mean to criticize any particular community or any religion, but He had to tell the truth; and that is, that it is the personal experience of the Saints and Mahatmas that no matter how many rites and rituals we do, we still cannot do our work. Unless we go within, and unless some perfect Master connects us with the Shabd Naam, we cannot get the liberation.

Criticism cuts the root of spirituality. Other bad deeds give you some kind of taste or enjoyment, but what taste do you get from criticism? Insults and disgrace.

Baba Bishan Das Ji used to quote the Greek writer Aesop, who said, "Every person carries two bags, one in front of him and one behind. In the bag in front of him, he carries the qualities of others; and in the bag behind he carries his own. So that is why he does not hesitate to describe the bad qualities of others: because they are right in front of him. But he does not sweep under his own bed or look into his own self to see what qualities, good or bad, he has." Swami Ji Maharaj also says, "People look at other people's faults and laugh and smile; but they do not see their own faults which have no beginning or end."

Baba Bishan Das Ji used to tell this story: Once there was a rich person who had a servant who was very competent at preparing food. So that rich person said to him, "Today many guests are coming; you should prepare good food for them." That servant made many different kinds of food, but he made all of them look like tongues. When his master came home, he asked him, "Why have you made all the food in

the shape of tongues?" He said, "My lord, the tongue is the sweetest of all. If the tongue utters sweet words, it can make our enemies our friends; if the tongue speaks good words, it can praise even sinners; if the tongue is used in the right way, it can do anything it wants."

Next day the rich person asked his servant to make bad foods, and again he made all the food in the shape of tongues. So when the rich person asked for an explanation, he said, "My lord, if the tongue speaks bad words, it can be worse than anything; it can make people fight. When it comes to this tongue speaking for its own name and fame, then even if the person in the way of the tongue is a good and righteous person, still it will criticize him. So if the tongue doesn't speak good words it can create any trouble. The Kauravas and Pandavas were made to fight only because of the tongue; and just as I said before that it could be very sweet, it is equally true that it can be even bitterer than the Neem tree."

Sheikh Baram asked Guru Nanak this question: "The Hindus cremate their dead bodies; the Muslims bury theirs. Which is correct?" In those days in India the Hindus and Muslims were the two main religions; and since the Mahatmas had not gone to the Christian world or the places where the Christian religion was spread, in most of their writings only these two religions, Hinduism and Islam, are talked about.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji does not mean to criticize anyone, but He tells the truth: "It is written in the scriptures of the Muslims, 'Those who have done such bad deeds that they are not accepted even by the fire of hell, they are burnt in this world; but those who are buried go to heaven.' But you see, dear one, there are some who are buried, there are some who are burnt, there are some who are eaten by dogs, and there are some who are thrown in the water. But people do not know whether the soul which was in the body is liberated or not. They just believe in doing rites and rituals."

When Guru Nanak went to Mecca, the pilgrims there asked Him a question: "Tell us if, in the Court of the Lord, Hindus are better than Muslims, or Muslims are better than Hindus, or who is closer to God Almighty?" He answered, "Because of their deeds, both Hindus and Muslims weep; after doing the devotion of the Lord, both Hindus and Muslims fight with each other. Then both of them say that they are superior."

Kabir Sahib was also asked the same question. He was born in a Muslim family, but He lived most of his life in the town of Kashi which was dominated by Hindus; so both the Hindus and the Muslims were against Him. Once Muslims asked him, "At least tell us this: are

you a Hindu or a Muslim?" Kabir Sahib replied, "I am neither Muslim nor Hindu. My body and my soul belong to God Almighty."

Kabir Sahib even says, "They may bury you or burn you, but neither will liberate you."

In the laws of the Muslim religion it is said that only he who offers the *Namaz* or prayers regularly, who fasts for thirty days a year, and who obeys the other Islamic laws, is a real Muslim. It is also written in those laws that if the *Imam*, the head of the mosque, who makes other people perform prayers, lets his knee get uncovered while praying, then his prayers are not accepted. Also according to Muslim law, women are not allowed to go to the mosque to pray.

Hindus believe, on the other hand, that only he can be called a Hindu who puts the *tilak* on his forehead; goes to the places of pilgrimage; wears the sacred thread; bows down in front of the idol and performs the worship; and recites the Gayatri Mantra and the other mantras. Only someone who does all this has the right to be called a Hindu.

In the same way, in the time of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, there were many yogis in India, and they used to believe that only those who carried a wooden stick, wore earrings, believed in Gorakh Nath (the founder of their sect), and repeated the word *Alakh* could be called yogis. Their goal was to reach Daswan Dwar and they contemplated on Trikuti; and they used to say that their path was the only correct one.

So Guru Nanak Dev Ji explains all these things in detail in the following hymn. You should pay attention to it.

**The Muslims praise their religion—reading again and
again, they ponder over it;
But the one who sees Him in all is the real human being.**

Muslims read the books which contain the laws of their religion, and they say that only he who has been circumcised and does everything according to those laws, can realize God.

In this world, the rites and rituals and practices of one religion are not like the rites and rituals and practices of other religions. That is why there are all the disputes. We say that only the religion which we practice, and the rites and rituals which we perform, are correct, and that only we are entitled to go to heaven; and we condemn the other religions, and the other rites and rituals. But Masters tell us to catch hold of the truth and not to go after the outer rites and rituals, because as Master Kirpal Singh used to say, "When the child is born, it does

not have any label or sign on it, that it belongs to any particular religion." And He never allowed anyone to put any label on it. He always said, "Stick to the truth; and the truth is, that you should do the meditation of Shabd Naam." People forgot about doing the meditation of Shabd Naam. They left that Path of Shabd Naam and got involved in rites and rituals, and that is why there are all these disputes.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, "There is one holy book Koran, and there was one Prophet Mohammed. But there are so many different sects of people who believe in the Koran and the Prophet Mohammed." There are at least seventy different divisions of the Muslim religion, and no one section has the same rites and rituals as any other. You already know how the Shi'ites and Sunnites, the two main branches of the Muslim religion, are fighting each other.

In the same way, there is one Christ, and the teachings of the Bible are the same for everyone. But still there are many different branches of the Christian religion. During the Second World War, I had the opportunity to go outside, and there I saw that Christians were killing Christians.

During one of my tours, when I went to California, some dear ones came to me and told me that they were Catholics. I told them that they should talk to Russell Perkins because he has studied the Bible and has much knowledge of it. So I mean to say that if a certain religion is practiced by a number of people, and if that number increases, they are not ready to recognize other parts or branches of that religion, even though it is the same religion. They say that only their part of the religion is good.

In the same way, there is only one Guru Granth Sahib, and the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib are the same for all Sikhs, and all the Masters from Guru Nanak through Guru Gobind Singh gave the same kind of Naam initiation to all the dear ones who came in their contact. But still, there are now more than fifty branches of people who believe in Guru Granth Sahib and the Sikh gurus, and we don't know how many more are going to be found.

In the same way, there is no count of the Hindu religion's branches. There is only one Gita, and there was only one Lord Krishna, but the believers in Lord Krishna and the Gita are divided into so many different branches, that no one has any idea how many there are. Master used to say, "In the olden days, the Mahatmas who preached and practiced Surat Shabda had to face the opposition of only two main religions, Hindus and Muslims. But nowadays there are so many different branches of all these religions, that they have to face the

opposition of all those seven hundred sects.” So just imagine how much more difficult it has become for the Master to preach and practice Sant Mat in this modern world.

**The Hindus praise the darshan of the praiseworthy Whose
beauty is limitless;
They bathe in the holy waters, and by burning the scented
incense, worship and perform the prayers.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “The Hindus praise God Almighty: They sing His praises, they burn incense, they offer fragrances, they offer flowers to the idol and worship it, and they believe that by doing all these deeds, they will be able to have the darshan of God Almighty from the idols. But that is not possible.” Guru Nanak says, “Just by doing this you cannot have the darshan of God Almighty. These deeds are useless.” In the olden days, people used to burn incense in order to keep the atmosphere pure and clear. When the Mahatmas did meditation, people from far and near would come to see them, and a huge crowd would gather. So in order to keep the atmosphere free from diseases or pollution, they used to burn incense and other things. But nowadays there are so many ways to keep the atmosphere free from pollution that there is no practical use of burning incense—or burning anything—as part of worship.

Because the idol is without life, it cannot attract or pull up one who has life.

**The yogis meditate upon the void (and admit that) limitless are the names of the Creator;
They give bodily form to the astral image of the Naam
Niranjan.**

Guru Nanak says that the yogis say that they are the limitless Shabd, and that they do the repetition of the word *Alakh*. By contemplating at Trikuti, they are able to reach Daswan Dwar. This was the condition of the yogis in the time of Guru Nanak Dev when they really used to meditate and go within, but nowadays, what is their condition? All they have left are that piece of wood they carry, their earrings, and their cap, the kind that Gorakh Nath used to wear. No yogi does any kind of yoga or practice; they are called yogis just for the name's sake, but in fact they do not perform any kind of sadhanas.

The donor gets contentment with the thought of donating.

**After giving, he begs a hundred times more (and expects)
that the world will praise him.**

When do donors get contentment? When they are able to donate; but on the other hand, after donating they ask more as their reward, so that they may be glorified and given name and fame in this world. After giving the donation, they say to God Almighty, "O Lord, give us more so that we can donate more, and get more name and fame."

**Thieves, adulterers, liars—useless are their doings; they
leave here after eating away what they had earned in
the past;
Is there any value in their works?**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib says, "Thieves, adulterers, liars—these people believe that liberation lies in what they are doing. They are not concerned for anyone else, and that is why they do not care for anything. Thieves, adulterers, and liars do whatever they want. The thief can steal anything he wants, the adulterer may take any woman, and the liar may speak any lie; and each one will feel content that he is doing the right thing." But Guru Nanak feels very sorry for them, and he says, "Whatever they had done in their past life, they have been given the reward in the form of the human birth. But what will they take from this lifetime?"

**All sorts of shapes, forms, and creations of the world—in
water, on earth—
You know what they are saying: They have only Your
support.
Nanak says, To praise the Lord is the hunger of the
devotees,
And the True Naam of the Lord is their only support.**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj sings the praise of God Almighty. He says, "O Lord, it doesn't matter if a soul is born in the water, or in the form of birds or animals who live on the earth or fly in the sky. Wherever the souls are born, they ask from You and You give them whatever they need." Guru Nanak Sahib also said, "All creatures have knowledge according to the body they are living in, and God Almighty listens to all of them; and He is giving them whatever they need. Whatever they ask for, they are given."

He says, "O Lord, if your beloved children, your devotees, are hungry, it is for Your glory; and they are living in this world only because of the support of the Shabd Naam."

**Day and night they remain happy
And wish to become the dust of His feet.**

The devotees of God, within whom God Almighty has put the Shabd Naam, remain happy day and night, understanding themselves as the dust of the feet of the Lord.

**The clay of a Muslim grave becomes material for the
potter;
He makes pots and bricks—and the clay cries after being
put in the fire;
The clay weeps bitterly while it is burning and emitting
sparks of fire;
Nanak says, Only He Who created the Creation knows the
cause of it.**

When Sheikh Baram asked Guru Nanak whether those who are buried go to heaven and those who are burned go to the fire of hell, Guru Nanak Sahib replied, "Only God Almighty knows who goes to heaven and who goes to hell." Those who have eyes can see what happens to the souls, who goes to heaven and who goes to hell. All the disputes and fights of this world remain here, and only those who have eyes know the reality.

Often the mud of the graveyard is very soft; and as time goes by, because the world is changing, the graveyard also gets changed, and the time comes when nobody knows that this place was once a graveyard. So here Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "The mud of the Muslim is brought by the potter, and he makes the bricks and vessels, and other things, out of it; because it is very soft and it is easy to make things from that clay. Then, when the things are baked, that clay or that mud cries." Guru Nanak says, "I do not mean to criticize anyone, but at that time only God Almighty knows who has gone to heaven and who has gone to hell. Why should we get involved in all these disputes? Come, Sheikh Baram, let us do the meditation of Shabd Naam, so that we may also know the reality."

Guru Nanak Dev Ji has lovingly answered all the questions of Sheikh Baram without criticizing anyone.

Now in the next section, Guru Nanak Dev Ji will explain from his own experience who gets liberation.

**Except for the Satguru, no one has realized God;
And without the Satguru, no one else can realize Him.
He has manifested Himself within the Satguru and has
made it known after manifesting:
By meeting the Satguru Who has erased attachment from
within,
One gets the everlasting liberation.
This is the best thought: He who has attached himself to
the True One has realized the life-giving Benefactor.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "I will tell you the truth: up until now, except for the Satguru, no one has realized God Almighty; and God Almighty has Himself put the Satguru in between human beings and Himself; He Himself has installed the Satguru as the mediator; and with His permission, Satguru is the one who helps others to meet the Almighty Lord."

The one who meets the Master and gets Naam from Him, who meditates on the Naam and becomes the form of the Naam, does not keep anything hidden from the world. He comes out in the world and tells everyone openly, "I have found the Satguru and I have got the liberation." How does one get the liberation? Only from doing the meditation of Naam. Those who have withdrawn their attachment from the things of the world, they get the liberation.

Which thought of our life was good? Only that thought, that moment was good in our life, when we connected ourselves with that Naam of the Lord.

If after receiving the Naam initiation we obey the commandments of the Masters, and do the meditation, we meet the Lord Who has given life to all creation, Who is sitting within all, and with Whose support all the Khands, Brahmands, and other divisions of the creation are sustained.

So, very lovingly, Guru Nanak answered all Sheikh Baram's questions, and then He told him His experience also: that liberation is in the Naam, and the treasure of Naam lies with the Sant Satgurus.

Mahatmas have sung the praises of satsang. They have said that the most important factor which makes one successful in meditation is satsang. Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, "Satsang is the fence to protect the meditation."

Supreme Father Kirpal used to say, “Leaving hundreds of urgent works, you should go to satsang; and leaving thousands of urgent works, you should sit for meditation.” He even used to say, “Unless you have given food to your soul, don’t give food to your body.” He used to say, “As the food we eat is the diet of our body, in the same way, meditation is the food of our soul.”



The Creeping of the Ego

WHenever the Saints and Mahatmas, the beloveds of God, have come into this world, They have told us about the value of the human body. They have explained to us why God Almighty has given us this human birth; as a result of which good karmas of our past we have been blessed with this gift of the human body; and They have told us how, while sitting within this human body, we have to surrender ourselves to God Almighty and do His devotion. They have also given us information about those elements who are residing within us and misleading us; and They have also told us about those good elements within us which inspire us to do the devotion of God. But they did not only give us that information; They also taught us the way to enter this human body. Furthermore: They not only gave us the information we needed, and They not only taught us how to go into the human body, but They also gave us a promise: "If you withdraw your attention from outside and come within to the eye center, We will be there to help you."

So, whenever Saints and Mahatmas have come into this world, after telling us the value of this human body, They have inspired us and taught us to go within, and They have very clearly shown us how the bad elements within are misleading us, and how the good elements are inspiring us and taking us to the home of the Lord.

Mahatma Ravidas Ji says, "These five passions have spoiled my mind; moment after moment, they have broadened the gap between me and Almighty God."

Further, Ravidas Ji says, "These five dacoits or passions have no peace, and they create a fire within us that goes on increasing no

matter how much you give it. Whatever we feed these dacoits, they just want more."

Ravidas Ji Maharaj also says, "What to speak of human beings saving themselves from these passions! They have not spared even the animals. Fish, moth, deer—all are ruled by one passion only and still they are not protected! What hope is there for the human being who has all five in him?"

The mother of these five dacoits, the intellect, says, "Your coming into this world will be successful only if you are glorified in this world: if you collect name and fame and praise; and if you are called by the title of religious or community leader."

So all these five brothers enter within us, and the leader of the five is the ego. First the ego creeps within us, and then he opens the door for the other brothers and tells them, "You can also come in."

In the beginning they are good. In the beginning ego tells us, "You have the same right to live on this earth as others. You are independent; your children should also be independent. You should have everything which the other people in this world have." So, as he gradually goes on telling such things to the person, and the person starts seeing that scholars and other people get name and fame and praise and all the things of the world, he feels that he should also get all those things, and egoism is created within him. So when he is breeding this egoism, it is just like maintaining a ghost within him: because once egoism is created, then the jiva is thrown into the frightening forest of this world.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "The yogis perform yoga, and still they have ego: they are proud of performing yoga, and they say that they are the best people. In the same way, the *sanyasis* are proud of being renunciates: they say that they have left everything and that is why there is nobody like them. And the pundits are proud of their scholarship: they say, 'I have read all these Puranas and other holy scriptures, and there is no one like me.'"

Guru Nanak says, "Ego kills." Egoism throws out whatever good qualities we may have. In the beginning the ego becomes the cause of little disputes and clashes among family or friends, but it goes on increasing and becomes the cause of fights between countries, and then wars happen.

Tulsi Sahib says, "It is very easy to give up the desire for gold and silver, and it may be easy to give up the attachment of sex—some brave ones can do that—but it is very difficult to give up egoism and the desire for name and fame."

Kabir Sahib says, "The Rishis and Munis gave up egoism and maya from outside; they left their homes and went in the wilderness to do the devotion of the Lord. But they did not give up their attachment to the maya within." Whatever we have outside is within us also; whatever we have in the outer world exists in the inner worlds also, the planes through which we have to pass. So Kabir Sahib says, "Everyone gives up the gross or outer maya, but no one gives up the subtle or inner maya. He who gives up the subtle maya is called *sadhu*."

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly says, "The reason for your getting involved in the cycle of births and deaths, and your suffering in the fire of the womb of the mother, is the ego: your being proud of all this."

In Asa ji di Var, Guru Nanak says, "The jiva comes in egoism, he goes in egoism, he gives in egoism, he receives in egoism. In egoism he is called clever, in egoism he does everything."

Guru Arjan Dev has defined egoism as a chronic terminal disease like tuberculosis. He says, "The disease of egoism is the share of human beings, as the disease of lust is the share of elephants, the disease of attachment to the pleasure of smell is the share of the honey bees, and the disease of attachment to taste is the share of the fish. And no one can save us from this passion and pleasure, neither our mother nor our father, nor any kingdom or power or ruler can help us or save us from this disease." Guru Nanak says, "All these five diseases are incurable." If there is anyone who can protect us from these diseases, if there is any doctor who has a remedy for them, that is our Master; and only in the company of the Sadh and the Master can we be protected from and cured of all these diseases.

Who can be more foolish than a person whose friend is a doctor, and who knows very well that by eating poison he will die—and who still eats poison? Even his doctor friend may not be able to save him once he has eaten the poison. In the same way, if after receiving Naam initiation, going to the satsang, and doing meditation, we are still affected by one of these five diseases, then what will people say?—the people who know that we have a perfect Master and we are doing meditation, but still we are affected by one or another of these five diseases? What will people say about our Master? What will they think about us? The Master Who has given you initiation will definitely be given a bad name because of your deeds.

Many of our dear brothers and sisters who come to see me in the interviews tell me how they have become toys in the hands of the mind, and how the mind is tossing them around and playing with

them. Some people say, "Can we be protected from lust if we wear old people's clothes? Will we be saved from it when we become older?" Just imagine what will be their condition. King Bhateri gave up his kingdom when he came to realize that he should do the devotion of the Lord. He has written that as he was leaving he saw a dying dog who was very old, who had many wounds, and worms in his head, but still he was involved in lust with a bitch, and she was also dying. So King Bhateri rebuked his mind and said, "O mind, see what you have done to this dog! When you are chasing someone, even if you send one person from your force, one of your elements to anyone, what condition you can reduce that person to, what you can make of that jiva! Look at this dog, what his condition has become: he is dying, but still he is involved in lust."

Supreme Father Kirpal used to say, "If a pigeon closes his eyes when he sees a cat, and thinks that the cat cannot see him, after a moment he finds himself in the mouth of the cat." If he had flown away before the cat could catch him, he would have been saved. Our condition is the same: we should not close our eyes in the face of all these passions, we should be wide awake, we should be alert, and we should do the meditation of Shabd Naam. We should fly with the wings of the Shabd Naam before they can attack us, before we fall into their trap.

Our body is a true temple, and in this temple there is a well which is full of nectar. These five brothers have entered our body and they are drinking the nectar from that well.

Our body has nine doors. When we leave even one door open for them, gradually they enter one by one, and finally all of them enter our body.

**In ego one comes; in ego one goes;
In ego one is born; in ego one dies.
In ego one gives; in ego one takes;
In ego one earns; in ego one loses.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "The jiva comes in egoism, goes in egoism, takes birth in egoism, and dies in egoism." And if the jiva gives any donation to anyone, then he is proud of that; and if he receives anything from someone, even then he is full of ego: he says, "I went there; I got this donation for the school, or the temple. This is because of my ability, that I was able to get things from him."

Nowadays people even advertise in the newspapers after they have donated. They say that they gave this much land to the school, or they have given so much money to a particular church.

I have had the opportunity of visiting many communities and religions, and I have seen that if someone is able to feed a few people, then after giving that donation, he will perform prayers in which he tells Almighty God, "I have fed all these people, I have given them these things, I have given them clothes, I have even given them this small vessel." He will list all the things he has done for those people. But Guru Nanak says, "Without your saying it, He knows everything about you. So why are you praying?"

Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj has written, "Dear one, He knows your thoughts before you have thought them." He even says, "God hears the cry of the ant before He hears the cry of the elephant."

**In ego one is truthful or a liar;
In ego one thinks about sins and virtues.**

Only in egoism does the jiva discriminate between sins and virtues. Whatever he does, he does in egoism, even up to this extent: only in egoism does he become clever or smart; only in egoism does he become false or untrue.

**In ego are the incarnations of hells and heavens;
In ego one laughs; in ego one weeps.**

He says, "Only in egoism one goes to hell or heaven, and in the ego one goes to many places and takes birth."

We had a camel who used to balk and to bite the person who took care of him. Even when he had to pull a very heavy plough, still he would walk for two steps in a straight line and then he would go here and there and try to hurt his caretaker. We tried so many things but still he would not change. We even had him churn a juicer which was very heavy, but still he would do that in a good way for a couple of minutes, and then he would again rebel and try to bite his caretaker. So I looked at him and I felt very sorry for him; I thought, "Now you have become dumb and cannot speak; you have become a camel; but still you cannot give up your egoism, and because of your ego, you are doing all this."

**In ego we sin; in ego we wash it off;
In ego we lose the distinctions of caste and kind.**

He says, "The jiva does everything in egoism. If he gives up his religion or caste, and adopts some other, even there egoism doesn't

leave him." If he goes to places of pilgrimage and washes away his dirt, still he is proud of having gone to the places of pilgrimage.

**The foolish and the wise are both within ego:
They do not know the importance of liberation.**

Sane or insane, we are still within the ego, and by following the ego we do not adopt the practice which leads to our liberation.

**In ego is maya; in ego is the shadow;
The creatures are created under the influence of the ego.
If one understands the ego, he realizes the door;
Without the knowledge, one uselessly quarrels.**

The ego is not a bad thing. If we realize it, understand it, and come to know why it is kept within us—if we recognize its importance and make use of its true meaning—only then can we realize the door to our real home.

**Nanak says, Our destiny is written under His orders.
See the world as He sees you.**

Guru Nanak says, "God Almighty has written in our fate whether we will understand this or not: In whatever way we see the world, God Almighty also looks at us."

There was an old woman who worshiped idols. With all her love and devotion she would burn incense and perform the ritual. One day a thought came to her: "Today I will not eat any food until God accepts some part of it." So she sat there with this determination in her mind. She had some milk in a golden cup, and some other food also, and she offered them to the idol, and sat there waiting for God to accept some part of it. Now God Almighty thought, "Look at the determination of this woman!" You know that idols cannot speak or eat; so how was that idol going to accept any food? But God Almighty was pleased with her devotion, so He came in the form of a very old, crippled man, knocked at her door, and asked her to give Him some food. He said, "I am in difficulty; I need clothes and food; why don't you give me something?" She replied, "I do not have any food. Whatever food I had, I put it in front of this god, and I cannot give you anything unless He accepts part of it." So He went away.

Again God Almighty came in the form of a poor old man – poorer than the other one – and He said, “I have pain in my stomach; if you would make me some tea, the pain would go away and I’ll be very grateful to you.” She said, “I do not have any milk to make tea. I only have the milk which I have placed before God, and unless He accepts part of it, I cannot do anything with it and I cannot make tea.” So He also went away.

Now just imagine: if that woman had known that God Almighty resides in every being, in every creature, she would not have refused both those old men, who in fact were God Almighty. She would have given them food and tea. But she did not know that God Almighty resides in every being; she did not have that understanding; that is why she did not oblige. She did not give food to the living God, because she was waiting for the idol to accept it.

**This existence is egoism;
 Because of the ego one does karma;
 The ego is a bond that puts the soul in different bodies
 again and again.
 From where is the ego created?
 And with what efforts does it go?
 It is the Will that because of the ego one goes on doing and
 wandering.
 Egoism is a chronic disease, but within it is its remedy:
 If the Lord showers His grace, then one meditates on the
 Shabd of the Master.
 Nanak says, Listen, people: This is the way this pain goes
 away.**

Guru Angad Dev was asked, “From where is egoism created, and how can we get rid of it?” He said, “Egoism is the cause of our births and deaths. It is a sweet and incurable disease. Only if God Almighty showers grace on us, if the Master showers grace on us, can we get the medicine to remove this disease. If God showers grace on us, He brings us to the Master Who gives us the meditation of Shabd Naam, by doing which we can become free from this disease.”

**Those content ones who meditate on the Truest of all, did
 the seva.**

Who can do seva? Those who are content. Who is content? Those who do the meditation of Shabd Naam are content, because they do not have egoism within them.

They do the meditation of the true Naam. They are always truthful. Whatever seva they have been given by the Master—whether it is working in the langar, or doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, or taking care of the shoes—they do not make any excuses, they do that work lovingly.

I have often said that I learned so many things from serving in the army. It all depends upon the experience of a person, and upon his understanding, what he is able to learn from serving. The most important thing I learned was the habit of obeying commands: because in the army when they give the orders, you are supposed to obey without making any excuses. If they tell you to go and cook the food, you cannot say that the fireplace is not good, or you do not have any wood, or anything like that. You are expected to go and do it. So in the army I developed this habit of obeying; because if you make excuses, the officer will get upset at you; he will say, “First go and do it, then come and give me the report.” Many times when people would not obey, they would be punished, or even sent back to their homes. But as you know, I had not joined the army because of my own desire, but because of the government’s decision. During the Second World War they were drafting people in the army, so I also joined. The most important thing that I learned there, as I said before, was to obey the orders of my officers without making any excuses; and that helped me a great deal when I met Beloved Master Kirpal. Because whatever He told me, I lovingly did that, and as a result, you know that with His Grace, I became successful.

Pappu knows that when people write letters to me, they tell me, “We have difficulty in meditation; we have pain in our knees; we cannot sit for a long time; we have this difficulty and that difficulty; and we know what you are going to reply: you will tell us to meditate, and we cannot do that.” But what can the remedy be except meditation?

**They do not put their feet on the dirty path;
 Becoming righteous, they earn virtues.
 They break away from the attachments of the world;
 They eat and drink less.
 O Lord, You bless them with the next world
 And daily give them more and more here.
 They realize the Great Lord by praising Him.**

A content person does seva; he does the meditation of Shabd Naam; he does not take even one step toward bad deeds; he always does good deeds. He earns his livelihood, and he makes his earnings successful and holy by contributing to the langar. Only with love can he break the attachment to this world; and his diet, his food and drinking, is also reduced. Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj says, "He eats very little."

He eats very little, he sleeps very little, and the body of such a Sadh becomes holy. By doing the meditation of Naam he pleases God Almighty; and the glory of God is such that when God blesses him with the treasure of Naam, that Naam doesn't decrease but goes on increasing; and the greatest glory of that being is that he always manifests, respects and appreciates his Master within him.



The Cycle of Unfulfilled Desire

SHOWERING a lot of grace on us, God Almighty has given us this human birth. We cannot get it at any price or by applying any amount of force: human birth is the mine of jewels. We should not waste it in the pleasures of the world, or in following our mind and obeying him. Instead we should always remember the purpose for which we have been given this human birth. God Almighty has given us this prize, and He has a purpose for it: to do that which we cannot do in any other body. We cannot do the devotion of God in the bodies of animals or in the bodies of trees or other creatures. It can only be done in the human body. So that is why we should not waste it in the pleasures of the world and in obeying our mind. We should utilize it for the purpose for which it was given to us.

Sheikh Baram asked Guru Nanak this question: "All this moving and functioning creation which we are seeing—human beings, birds, animals, trees, and all the others—who nourishes them? Who protects and maintains them? Are they able to take care of themselves? Or is there any power which is taking care of them?" So Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly explained to him, "In the beginning all the creatures think that they are able to take care of themselves and nourish themselves. But the Mahatmas whose eyes become opened and who go within know that they are not able to protect or nourish themselves. They come to realize that there is some other Power—the Power of God Almighty—Who is nourishing them and maintaining them, and then they realize that He is more concerned for us than we are for ourselves."

Guru Nanak says, "Look here, O dear one: when we spread food

for the birds, they come and eat it; and when they are satisfied, they fly away without carrying any food with them because they do not have storehouses where they can store that food for the next day." In fact they are not worried about the following day; because they have the knowledge from within that God Almighty, Who has given them food for that day, will give them food on the next day also. Only human beings are such creatures that worry so much; they are stuck in their worries. First a person thinks that he should somehow earn money; when he is able to do that, then he thinks about his old age: "What will I do in my old age? I should have a lot of reserve." And when that worry is finished and he is in old age and has enough to live on, then he starts thinking and worrying about his children and grandchildren.

There was an Udasi sadhu named Rotinand who was my friend; he used to accept chapatis from people (as is the custom in the Udasi sect) but only as much as he could hold in his hand; and he would eat them while continuing his walk. He would not keep anything in stock, in his home or anywhere. So he used to live like that, by getting as much food from people as he could hold in his hand. Once it so happened that he became sick, and he did not have anything to eat, and he could not go out to get food from the people. One day somebody gave him four annas (one-quarter of a rupee), which at that time would buy three or four kilos of wheat flour, on which you could live for many days. But he did not buy wheat flour, or chapatis, or anything which he could save. Instead he bought sweets with that money, which was very little, and he ate some of them and shared the rest with two people who were sitting with him. He had so much confidence in God Almighty that he used to say, "God Who has given me food today will give me tomorrow also"; and he used to say, "He who eats dry food and remains content in the will of God—he who eats half of the food he has and shares half with others—he is the dear one of God." So the Mahatmas are always confident and have faith in God Almighty, that God Who has given them food today will give them food tomorrow also.

In the langar of the Saints and Mahatmas, you know that whatever Their own earnings are, They contribute from that to the langar; and They also allow the dear ones to contribute to the langar. In that way They keep doing Their work; but They always have faith in God Almighty that He will provide Them with whatever They need.

In the langar of Guru Amardev Ji Maharaj at Goindwal, He used to tell the sevadars to cook and serve all the food they had on hand each

day; and after serving it all, they would clean the vessels and say, "God Who has given us food today will fill our vessels tomorrow."

I told you earlier the story of that miser business man; Kabir Sahib says, "The maya or wealth which misers have is only for looking at: they know how much interest is coming, how much wealth they own, and how many assets they have: but if they spend even one penny on themselves or if one penny is lost, then the owner of maya, their lord, breaks their bones and asks them, 'Who gave you the authority to spend any of this money?' " So the maya or wealth which misers have cannot be used; they have it only for looking at it.

So lovingly Guru Nanak Sahib tells Sheikh Baram, "Look here, O dear one: God Almighty Who has created this creation is concerned for everyone; He nourishes everyone; He gives food to everyone. And He doesn't get tired giving food to everyone: He even gives food to those creatures who live in stones, and He even takes care of those creatures who live under water. He is worried for everyone; He protects and nourishes all."

Of human beings, vegetation, places of pilgrimage, river banks, clouds, and farms—

Now He says, "You see that He Himself gives to human beings; He gives to those creatures who are under the waters of the ocean; He gives to those creatures who live on the banks of rivers and oceans; and He even nourishes those souls who live in the clouds. He provides food to the creatures who live in the fields also; in fact, no matter where they live, He provides food for everyone."

He nourishes the creatures who are on this physical world; He also nourishes and protects the creatures who are in the astral world; He even nourishes the gods and goddesses.

—Of islands, spheres, regions, Khands and Brahmands—

He nourishes and sustains all the creatures who live on islands and in all the different universes.

—Of the egg born, the womb born, the seed born, the moisture born—

He nourishes those creatures who are born from eggs, such as birds and reptiles; He Himself nourishes those creatures who are born from

the womb, like human beings and four-legged mammals; He Himself nourishes and sustains the lives of those creatures who are born because of the result of changes in weather; and He Himself finds out the needs of and provides for the vegetation and other creatures who are born in this world.

Nanak says, O friends, only He knows and understands all creatures.

Now He says, “God Almighty understands and knows all creatures; He knows what food to give to who. He doesn’t forget; He never forgets; He always remembers them.”

Nanak says, After creating all, He takes care of all.

He says, “After creating all the creatures, He Himself protects them. He takes care of them. He knows when someone has to be born, and when someone has to die, and the appropriate time is not delayed even by one second.”

While giving food to the creatures He doesn’t look at their bad qualities. He nourishes good ones as well as bad ones.

The Creator Who has created this creation worries for it.

Now He says, “You see, Sheikh Baram, God Almighty has created this play; He should be worried about it; and He is worrying about it, since He has to take care of it. Why should a man worry about all these things? His worrying will accomplish nothing, except that it might make him sick: because the wise people say, ‘Worries are a funeral pyre.’ ”

Nanak says, “Don’t worry, because He worries. He even nourishes and provides the food to creatures who live under the waters where there are no markets, where nobody gives and nobody takes. He even nourishes those souls and those creatures who live in cities. You don’t need to worry: because He worries.”

**The Creator Who has created this creation worries for it.
I bow down to Him, His court is ever true and lasting.**

Now He says, “He who has created this world is worried for all of us, and I salute Him. His court is unique, there is no one equal to Him. He never forgets, and there is no one who can give Him punishment.”

Nanak says, Without the true Naam, what is the use of the saffron mark or the sacred thread?

Guru Nanak Sahib tells Sheikh Baram, “You see, Sheikh Baram, unless we get the Naam initiation and meditate on it, we cannot remove the three vestures – physical, astral and causal – from our soul and reach Daswan Dwar; and until we do that, we cannot get this understanding. If without getting the Naam initiation and going within, we are putting signs on our forehead, or we are wearing sacred threads, or doing any other kind of outer rites and rituals, they do not have any meaning: because we do not get the real understanding until we reach Daswan Dwar.”

Millions of good deeds and millions of virtues—

This hymn which we are beginning now is the hymn which Guru Nanak Dev Ji recited when He was leaving the physical body and going back into the Light; He recited this hymn for His children, because His children did not come near Him when He left the body, nor did they believe in Him. Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, “Doctors, lawyers, leaders and Saints, do not get any appreciation in their own home town; maternal and paternal grandparents and even people of their own family do not recognize them or take advantage of them”; so in that way, Guru Nanak’s children, his two sons, Siri Chand and Lakhmi Chand, did not come near Him when He was leaving the body, nor did they ever take initiation from Him. Siri Chand took initiation from Avinash Muni, who taught him only to perform austerities on the banks of rivers, to keep his body naked except for a loin cloth, and to do outer rites and rituals. So even though Guru Nanak’s children did not believe in him, still in the end Guru Nanak Sahib had mercy on them, and graciously He is telling them, “No matter if you do millions of good deeds, no matter if you are full of good qualities, no matter how many austerities and outer rites and rituals you perform, in the Court of the Lord these deeds are not appreciated; they do not have any place in His devotion.”

Siri Chand's path was that of the Udasis, and it is a very famous path in India. They used to give the initiation into Two Words, and Baba Amolak Das received the initiation direct from Siri Chand; and Baba Bishan Das received initiation from Baba Amolak Das.* The *gaddi* or seat of Siri Chand was very famous in India, and I know many true stories from them.

Guru Nanak was born in the Bedi family, and even now in India people recognize and appreciate the Bedis; because in India people honor that family into which a Saint was born. Even though He was born long ago, still people believe that that family is blessed because one of the Masters was born in it.

**–Millions of austerities at holy places and performances
of samaj yoga in the wilderness–**

Now He says, “No matter if you perform millions of austerities going to the places of pilgrimage, and no matter how many other good deeds you do, in the Court of the Lord these things do not find recognition. There is no concession for those who do deeds in the Court of the Lord.”

**–Millions of heroic acts in the battlefield, even dying
there–
Knowledge of Shrutis and contemplation–
Read millions of Puranas and other scriptures–**

What to speak about going to the battlefield once and leaving the body there! Even if you go to the battlefield and die there millions of times, still you will not get liberation. Even if you read the eighteen Puranas, and talk so much about your knowledge, even then you cannot realize God.

**The Creator Who has created the creation has Himself
written the coming and going.
Nanak says, All the above are false: His Grace is the only
true sign.**

God has made this system of coming and going into this world, and all the outer rites and rituals are useless pursuits without meaning. So He

*All of these people are noted for their long lives; see *The Beloved Master* by Bhadra Sena, pp. 19–22 (“A Sadhu’s Experience”) for a story that Master Kirpal used to tell about this line of sadhus, also emphasizing their long life.

says, "By doing all these outer practices, we cannot finish our coming and going into this world."

Guru Nanak says even up to this extent: "O Nanak, without Naam you will not be liberated. Nanak says, Catch hold of the true thing."

He who forgets the path of the Naam and follows other paths, in the end, without Naam, he will repent.

**O Lord, You are the only true Lord Who has spread the
Truth all over.**

Now he says, "Only God is true." True means that which does not get destroyed, which does not perish. So God is the only thing which is true because He is always there, and He Himself has sat within the Satgurus and the Masters, and He Himself is preaching the Naam through them.

Mahatmas lovingly tell us, "There is no one in this world who has finished or fulfilled all his desires." He may have finished or fulfilled some of his desires, but not all; and you may even find someone who has finished most of his desires, but there will still be a couple which were not fulfilled. So at the time of the death of such a person, all the desires which are not fulfilled come up in front of him and he starts worrying about them; he says, "That desire was not fulfilled," or, "I should have done this," or, "I should have got that." So according to the desires and imaginations and fantasies which he is having at the time of death, he gets his next birth: because our desires have to be fulfilled either in this birth or the next. So according to this, because of his unfulfilled desires he gets another birth. In that birth, those desires are fulfilled, but he creates many other desires which are not. So in this way he gets another birth, and this cycle of birth and death goes on and on. As long as he is involved in desires he goes on coming into this world again and again.

Baba Bishan Das Ji used to call this mind "Sheikh Chili." Sheikh Chili was a great daydreamer. Once it so happened that a soldier told him to carry a tin full of ghee (clarified butter) to his house, and promised him two annas as pay. So he was carrying that tin on his head and he started dreaming: "From the two annas I will get from the soldier, I will buy a couple of eggs, and from those eggs hens will come out, and when they are grown they will lay more eggs, and I will then sell those hens and eggs and I will buy a goat, and that goat will also have children, and I will sell all of them, and then I will buy a cow, and she will bear many calves, and for them I will collect so much money, and then I will get married. Then I will have many children,

and I will take care of them. When they fight I will teach them not to, and if they continue fighting after they grow up, then I will kick them with my leg.” And at this point in his fantasy, he actually kicked with his leg as if he were kicking his children, so that suddenly that tin of ghee which was on his head fell off and all the ghee was gone. The soldier got upset and said, “You have lost all this ghee”; but Sheikh Chili replied, “You are worried about your ghee which is worth only a few rupees, but I have lost all my family. You should give me some compensation.” So Baba Bishan Das Ji used to say, “Our mind is just like Sheikh Chili. There is nothing material there, but still he is thinking about this and that, and he goes on doing fantasies.”

**Only he to whom You give it gets the Truth;
Then he earns the Truth.**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib praises God Almighty, and He expresses His gratitude for God's grace and mercy. He says, “People say that they have decided to receive the initiation; or that they have received the initiation; or that they don't want the initiation; or that they are going for receiving the initiation; they talk about all these things, but it is our misunderstanding. We do not realize that God Almighty has kept everything in His hands. Only He knows and only He makes the decision about who is going to get initiation, and who He will make do the meditation in this lifetime and give the liberation, and who are the ones who are not to be given initiation, and who are the ones who will be sent in this world again.” So God Almighty makes all these decisions; we do not know anything about what He is deciding for us. Everything is kept in the hands of God.

Baba Sawan Singh Ji also used to say, “As long as our eyes are closed, we say, ‘We are going for initiation,’ or ‘We received initiation,’ or, ‘We are going to the satsang,’ but when our eyes get opened, then we come to realize that it was not because of our efforts that we went for initiation, it was because of the Master. Master Himself brought us for initiation; He Himself brought us to the satsang.” In the same way people may say that they are going to India or they are going to satsang, but when their eyes get opened, they realize that it was the power of the Master which was bringing them to India and taking them to satsang. So I mean to say that when we do the meditation of Shabd Naam and go within, and our eyes get opened, then we come to realize that all the things which we were doing, and about which we were saying, “We are doing that,” in fact were not being done by us at all: it was all done by the Master Himself.

**One gets the Truth by meeting with the Satguru:
In His heart dwells the Truth.**

We can get these riches of Naam only from the Satguru. If we may meet Him, and if He may give us the initiation into Naam, only then can we get it. Only He can lovingly manifest that Naam within us.

**The foolish ones do not know the Truth; being manmukh,
they waste their birth.
Why did they come into this world?**

Those who obey their minds are the foolish ones or *manmukhs* because after receiving from God Almighty all the comforts and conveniences of this world, including children, still they have become thieves of the devotion of the Lord, and they do not believe in the existence of God. Why did such people come into this world? Whatever capital they were given, they have lost it; they go from this world empty-handed.

Baba Bishan Das used to tell about a manmukh and a gurumukh. This manmukh was always angry at God Almighty, and complained about Him; and the gurumukh always remained happy in the will of God. As a result, the manmukh and gurumukh were given another birth, and this time both of them were born together joined at the back. God did that to see how far the manmukh could go on not believing in God, and He wanted to test the faith of the gurumukh and see how long he could remain faithful to God. Now the manmukh always used to complain about God, and he refused to believe in Him; and the gurumukh had to hear all that. But he would lovingly explain to him, "You see that God has given us this punishment. Because of our bad karmas He has given us this kind of body, and now I have to listen to all this? It is not good for you! You should believe in God and do His devotion because He may give us even more punishment." The manmukh replied, "What more punishment can He give? What more can He do?" God looked at the faith of the gurumukh and caused him to leave the body; now the manmukh had to carry the dead body of the gurumukh also, because he was joined with his body at the back. Still the manmukh did not understand, and he did not believe in God nor do His devotion. After a few days, a bad smell started coming out from the gurumukh's body, and the people who were taking care of the manmukh refused to come near him because they could not bear that foul smell; but even though he was suffering so much, still he

refused to believe in God. A voice came from the sky, "At least now you should believe in God; you should accept His existence." But still he did not. Guru Nanak Sahib says, "Even if you explain things to a manmukh, still he will go astray."

Guru Nanak says, "In pain and happiness we should remember only Him. We should always remain happy in the will of God. Whatever He gives us, pain or happiness, we should be content with that; because it is all our doing which we are getting in this world when we should always do His devotion. We should not find fault with God. We should not blame Him." Swami Ji Maharaj says, "Don't blame anyone: because you are only suffering the consequences of whatever you have done in the past. Whatever we have done, good or bad, we are getting its results here, so why should we blame others?"

Guru Nanak says, "O brother, don't blame anyone; if there is anyone to be blamed it is our own karma. Whatever I have done, I am getting its results; I am suffering for that. So all the blame is to be put on my karma."

How Will We Awaken?

FIVE HUNDRED years ago, when Guru Nanak and Kabir Sahib were living, there were no educational institutions in India except in the city of Kashi (or Benares). This was because in those days the people were divided into four categories or castes: the *Brahmins*, or pundits; the *shudras*; the *vaishnavas*; and the *kshatriyas*. Only the pundits were considered to be the highest kind of people, and only they were allowed to get a good education; and they did not allow anyone else to join them. In those days if other people wanted to get a good education, they had to disguise themselves as pundits and go to Kashi; that was the only way they could get it. Even Guru Gobind Singh sent some of his disciples to Kashi in the disguise of pundits, and they got an education. In this way education or learning was spread around, and the people of other castes also came to know about it.

Once a learned, well-educated pundit came to Guru Nanak and debated with him, arguing that only by reading the holy scriptures can one get liberation; but Guru Nanak Sahib lovingly explained to him that that was not the case, because the real liberation lies in the meditation of Naam.

This pundit, whenever he came to know that a sadhu or mahatma was at a given place, would go there and debate with him. He was so learned and competent in the holy scriptures that he always won those debates; and once he had defeated any sadhu, he would take away his holy scriptures. So he had collected a huge pile of holy books. Finally, when he came to Guru Nanak, he wanted to argue with Him also, and he was talking about the holy scriptures he had read; but when Guru Nanak Sahib told him about His experience—that the devotion of Naam is the only means of liberation, and if he wanted to get libera-

tion he should receive the Naam initiation – he was convinced, and he requested Guru Nanak Sahib to give him the initiation; but Guru Nanak Ji replied, “First go and contact that power whom you consider to be your guru.” Just as a doctor first purifies the body and then gives the remedy, so Guru Nanak wanted him to get rid of all the things in which he was involved before giving him initiation. And Guru Nanak wanted him to find out who his real guru was.

So the pundit set out and at one place he met three sadhus, who in fact were Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh (Shiva), sitting there in the form of mahatmas, and he requested them to give him some knowledge, and tell him who his guru was. But they said, “We are not your gurus, and we do not have anything to give to you. Go a little bit farther, and you will see somebody sitting in a temple; and that person is your guru.” When he got there, he did not find any mahatma; but there was a very attractive and charming woman sitting there, and as soon as he arrived, she got up and began beating him with her shoes. He did not stop to ask why she was beating him; he just ran away. When he came back to those three mahatmas, they asked him, “Dear one, why did you come back so soon? Why didn’t you take some knowledge from your guru?” He said, “Well, what can I say? I did not find any mahatma or guru there; there was only a woman who gave me a beating.” Then those mahatmas told him, “You did not recognize her. In fact, she is your guru. She is Maya whom you have been worshiping. With all your learning and knowledge, you have become such an egotist that you started worshiping Maya. When you were arguing with the great mahatmas, you were under the influence of Maya, and she was your real guru. Now if you want to get the real liberation, you should go back to that mahatma who sent you to find your real guru: because only by getting the Naam initiation, and doing the devotion of Naam, can you get the real liberation.” So when that pundit came back to Guru Nanak Sahib, he had already realized His importance and greatness; so he bowed down his head at the feet of Guru Nanak, and took initiation from Him.

Guru Nanak says, “If a learned one has anger, greed, and attachment within him, we should call him a foolish one.”

Further He says, “To read and get the knowledge of this world are all worldly things. If the desire of getting more and more is still within you, all your learning and reading is useless.”

Saints and mahatmas do not condemn or criticize the reading and writing of this world. They say, “It is all right; we should do the reading and writing of the world in order to obtain the worldly knowledge; but if we want our soul to be liberated, then we need the

practice of Surat Shabd Yoga; we need the initiation into Naam so that we can meditate on it.”

So in this hymn, Guru Nanak Sahib Ji is making that pundit understand. This is a hymn which needs your attention and is worth understanding, so listen to it carefully.

**We fill up the carts with books we have read;
We carry them along with us after reading;**

No matter if you fill up trains with books you have read—or even if you fill up camel carts—it does not make a bit of difference.

**We fill up boats with books we have read;
We bury them in the earth after reading;**

Now he says, “It doesn’t matter how much one reads: even if we take all our books across the ocean, even if we fill up boats and ships with our books, and if when the books get old, we bury them and buy new ones, we will still not get liberation that way.”

**We read year after year;
We read month after month;**

No matter if we read books all our life long, all the years which we have in our life; even if we go on reading all the months and days we have in those years, still it cannot do anything for us.

**We read all our life long;
We read with every breath;**

No matter if you read with all the breaths which come into your body, still you cannot get liberation that way.

**Nanak says, Only one thing is counted;
All the rest is the vain prattle of the ego.**

Guru Nanak Sahib tells that pundit, “O dear one, the only thing which will be written in your account and will do you any good is, getting the Master in your lifetime and getting the Naam from Him. Only that will be counted; only that will become the cause of your liberation.” Kabir Sahib also says, “The moment spent in the company of the

Master is the only moment counted as your devotion. All other moments are useless.”

Lovingly He says, “By reading books and scriptures, we argue and debate with others, and it is all useless. It is putting fuel in a fire which is not doing us any good.”

**The more one writes and reads, the more one is burned;
The more one wanders in the places of pilgrimage, the
more one's talk is useless.**

This thing I have seen myself, and it was true in those days also, that in India there are so many different kinds of sects and groups: people change their outer appearance, or wear certain kinds of clothes, and form themselves in groups; and those people will either get involved in reading books or they will go to the places of pilgrimage, where they find other people, and then they debate and argue with each other. So Guru Nanak Sahib here says, “The more you read, the more you argue with others, and the more fire you have within; the person who has read a lot of holy scriptures gets the habit of arguing, and then there remains unrest within him.”

In India there are many places of pilgrimage; many people spend ten days at one place of pilgrimage, and ten days at another, and in that way they go on touring from place to place. And while they are there they beg from other people who visit those places. They ask for shoes from one person, for books from another, for clothes from someone else, and then they sell those things; and in this way they earn their living. Outwardly they have taken up the form of a *siddha purush*: they call themselves “a good person,” and they put a *tilak* or sign on their forehead so that people may know that they are holy; but inwardly they are involved in this business of going from place to place.

The householders who visit these places of pilgrimage are innocent, and out of their devotion they give to those people whatever they can from their hard-earned income; and those so-called “holy men” use that money for buying drugs and other things, which they consume.

Guru Nanak Sahib does not criticize anyone, and it is not my intention to be critical of anyone either. The Masters have written only what They have seen with Their own eyes and what has come into Their experience. Guru Nanak went to all the places of pilgrimage, met the people, and found out what they do and how they make their living. He talked with them and came to this conclusion, and that is why he has written, “No matter how many outer rites and rituals you

do, you cannot get liberation that way. If there is any liberation, it comes only with the meditation of Naam.”

**The more one takes to costumes, the more pain he gives to
his body;
The jiva suffers his own doings.
And as one does not eat food, he loses the taste of his
tongue;
He suffers by loving the other one (other than God).**

Now he says, “The more outer appearances you take up, the more outer costumes you wear, the more problems you face: it keeps you unstable within.” Because those who take up different forms and outer appearances have to pose like them; and that keeps them unsettled and unrested within themselves. Further, Guru Nanak says, “You give up eating grain, and you drink milk, and then you call yourself ‘the mahatma who lives only on milk.’ ” Master Sawan Singh Ji also used to say, “People who give up eating food and just drink milk won’t spend one rupee on grain, but they make another person spend ten rupees buying milk for them, and still they think that they have done so much sacrifice.” So that is why Guru Nanak Sahib Ji here says, “You have taken so many outer appearances, and you have confused yourself so much, and you have given up eating grains and only drink milk, and you call yourself a mahatma; but all you have done is lost the taste of your tongue.”

Kabir Sahib says, “If just by drinking milk one can get liberation, then all babies should have it.”

**Those who do not wear clothes suffer day and night;
They are lost in keeping silence.
How will we wake up from this slumber without the
Master?**

There are sadhus who do not wear any kind of clothes, but remain naked like animals. Those poor people suffer in the winter because it gets very cold, and they suffer in the summer because it gets very hot and they do not have any protection. Day or night, they live outside; so they suffer a great deal. But still they think that by remaining naked they are doing the devotion of God, and that they will achieve liberation this way.

There is another kind of sadhu who keeps quiet: they do not use their tongue to ask for anything, but whatever they need, whatever

they want to beg, they will write it down somewhere; in that way they ask. Those sadhus never speak, and they think that just by keeping quiet they are doing the devotion of God, and that God will become pleased with them and will give them liberation. But Guru Nanak says, "What is the use of keeping quiet, if the desire for worldly things is still burning within your heart?" We do the devotion of God to make our mind quiet and peaceful—we need to withdraw from the worldly materials, we need to still our mind—but if we have not been able to do that, what is the use of keeping quiet? And what is the use of doing other forms of devotion if we cannot bring our mind into our control?

In Punjab there is a village named Daule: I once met a *muni sadhu*— a sadhu who keeps quiet—there and I asked him if I could do any seva for him. He lifted up the mat on which he was sitting, and while he did not say anything to me, his disciple told me, "This mahatma always keeps quiet; he is a renunciate sadhu, he has sacrificed everything; he does not touch maya, but if you want to give any money, you can just leave it there." So when you need to ask for something, what difference does it make whether you do it by speaking, or by writing, or with the help of somebody else? Because if desire is still within you—if the flames of lust, anger, greed, attachment and egoism are still raging within you—what difference does it make whether you keep quiet or whether you speak aloud? Baba Bishan Das Ji used to say, "Those who keep quiet in fact have more desires, and more attachment for worldly things. It is better to speak than to keep quiet and still have all this desire."

**One walks barefoot, he gets what he has earned;
He eats dirt and throws ashes on his head.**

Now He is lovingly explaining that there are so many different kinds of paths. There is a path in which the devotees do not wear any kind of shoes, but instead walk barefoot; and they do not travel on a train or airplane, but always walk. And there is another path also in which people do not bathe, and do not see any difference between good and bad: they even eat their own refuse, their own dirt, and do not see anything wrong in that. But wise people do not like those who do not bathe or even eat their own refuse, because they not only know that by doing these things they cannot do the devotion of God, but that if we want to do the real devotion of God, then we have to see and discriminate between what is good and what is not.

Once a person came to Kabir Sahib who had given up clothes and shoes for twelve years, and he told Kabir about the great sacrifice he had made. Kabir Sahib lovingly told him, "If by remaining naked one can get liberation, then all the deer in the forest should have it. What difference does it make whether you are naked or wearing clothes? Unless you recognize your beloved Lord Who is sitting within you, the naked and clothed are alike."

**Such a blind and foolish one loses his honor;
Without Naam he does not get anywhere.**

Without Naam, we do not have any place to go. Without Naam we cannot get liberation. We cannot make this human birth worthy of liberation unless we do the meditation of Naam.

**One lives in the wilderness, among graves and cremation
places;
Such blind ones do not know, and repent later.**

There are certain paths in which the people do not live in their homes but in graveyards; people believe in them and appreciate them, and they say, "This baba is not afraid of ghosts; that is why he lives in graveyards." But those people are also very far away from the path of Naam initiation. They also do not get liberation.

The place where Baba Bishan Das Ji used to live was not far from the graveyard of the village, and once a sadhu came to live in that graveyard. Baba Bishan Das asked him, "If you have any powers within you, if you are capable of doing anything, why don't you go and live among the living? Why are you living here among the dead? Are you afraid that if you will live with the living, they will argue with you or ask you questions that you cannot answer? Here you are sure that they will not get up from the graves and bother you. Is that why you are living here?" So Baba Bishan Das advised him to go and live among the living, so that they could get the benefit of his company.

So there are so many different paths. We, the worldly people, the householders, are the innocent ones, and we do not know what the real form of the devotion of God is. We go to people who live in graveyards, and we think that they are great mahatmas, and we worship them. We are blind, because we do not know whether we should do that or not; and they are blind whom we worship. In the end, they cannot do anything for us. They repent, and we also repent.

We people think that our relatives whom we have taken to the graveyards and buried there, are living there; that is why we go to such places and worship those who are living there.

**He who meets the Satguru becomes happy;
He makes the Naam of the Lord dwell within his mind.**

If we meet the perfect Master, who can give us the Naam Initiation, who can install the Naam within us, and who can manifest that Naam within us; and if we give up those attachments and desires which are keeping us away from Almighty God, and if we seek only the support of God Almighty, and if we do the devotion of that Naam, then all the karmas which have been piling up within ourselves from so many of our past births will leave us—we can get rid of those karmas and we can get liberation just by doing the meditation of that Naam, which in fact is Almighty God Himself.

**Nanak says, The one on whom He is gracious gets it;
Becoming free of hope and fear he burns his egoism with
the Shabda.**

When the mahatmas tell us that Naam is the only giver of liberation, and that only by doing the devotion of Naam we can remove all of our karma and its suffering and consequences—when mahatmas talk so highly about the importance of receiving Naam initiation, then this question comes to us: “What is so difficult about getting the Naam initiation? The mahatmas are gracious—they give us Naam, they do not refuse us—it is not a difficult thing for us to get the Naam initiation.” Such thoughts may come in our mind, and we may think that it is very easy for us to get the Naam initiation from the mahatmas, because, after all, They have come in this world to give us the Naam initiation. But when such thoughts come, they prevent us from understanding the importance and value of the Naam. The mahatmas whose inner eyes are opened know that it is not in our hands to get Naam or not to get Naam: they know that God Almighty decides who should be given the Naam initiation and who should not. In fact, only those selected souls who have been chosen by God Almighty, and whom God Almighty has decided will not be sent into this suffering world again—only they come to the Masters, and only they get the Naam initiation. So that is why Guru Nanak Dev Ji here lovingly says, “It is not in our hands to make the decision of getting the Naam initiation or not. We cannot stay away from the path of Naam if it has

been decided that we will get it.” When God Almighty showers grace on us, when He selects us and chooses us for doing His devotion, He brings us into the company of the perfect Master Who is capable of giving us Naam.

Guru Nanak says, “Everyone in this world seeks happiness; no one asks for pain. But still people are suffering. God Almighty is making them suffer the consequences of their bad deeds.”

We see that the sun gives light according to fixed time. The moon also gives the light according to fixed time. In the same way the stars also shine on fixed time. When our birth takes place at a fixed time, when our death also comes at a fixed time—when we see all these things happening on fixed time—then we should also believe in the reality of this statement: “God Almighty decides whether we get the Naam initiation.” Only He knows the fixed time when we have to come to the Master, when we have to spend time in His company, and when we have to get the Naam from Him.

**Your devotees are pleasing to You;
They look beautiful at Your door singing Your glory.**

Now he says, “No doubt the manmukhs are also created by God Almighty, and the same God Almighty is residing within them also. But who are the ones who get honor and glory at the door of our real home? Who are the ones who gain His pleasure? Those who do His devotion, who bow down their feet at the door of the Lord, those within whom God Almighty is manifested—only they get the glory; and such souls—those who have reached the real home by doing the devotion of God—they have mercy on everyone, and those souls inspire other souls also to do the devotion of God, and they help them to make their journey back to God.”

Supreme Father Kirpal used to say, “The path of spirituality is like a contagious disease.” You know that if one person has that kind of disease, he spreads it to many other people. In the same way, one devotee of God comes into this world, he himself does the devotion of God, and he spreads this disease to many other people; Like himself, he makes many other people also do the devotion.

**Nanak says, Unless it is written in our karma
We cannot come to Your door; we wander about.**

Now he says that to receive the Naam initiation is like getting a reward for the good karma which we have done in our many past lifetimes.

But those who have not received the Naam initiation yet, it means that for them God Almighty has not yet written in their fate to get it. Such people do not get the Naam, they cannot reach the door of our real home, and they cannot do the devotion.

**One does not understand his root;
Still he counts himself all in all.**

There are people in the world who do not know why they have come into this world, and where they were before coming into this lifetime, and where they will go from this world. Such people think that they know everything: "What do the mahatmas know?" They always have this kind of feeling. And even though they know nothing, still they are under the impression that they know everything, and that is why they neither accept the words of the Masters nor live up to Their teachings.

**I am a low-caste bard; the others call themselves high-caste.
I yearn for those who meditate upon You.**

Those who have not recognized themselves, who do not have any understanding of their own self, they are egoists: because they do not know who they really are. Guru Nanak Sahib says, "O Lord, I am of low caste, I am very poor, I am a sinner." All these words he is saying to show his humility. It is not true that he was of a low caste. He was from the Bedi caste, and Bedis are considered to be one of the highest castes in India, and people respect them a lot. But just to teach us humility, Guru Nanak Sahib is using these humble words, and identifying Himself with the low caste, the humble, the poor, and the sinners; and He wants us also to adopt that kind of humility if we want to become successful.

Kabir Sahib says, "I went to find a bad person, but I did not find anyone worse than me. When I looked within myself, I saw that I was the worst of all."

Mahatmas are not bad people: Kabir Sahib was the Owner of the whole creation. The Masters protected and took care of the souls then just as They do now. But to teach us humility, they are using these humble words. They tell us that God Almighty loves humility, and if we want to reach Him, if we want to see Him, we should also develop humility like that.

Guru Nanak says, "I yearn for those who do Your devotion. I am seeking the company of those who have connected themselves with

You, who devote themselves to You, and who have become one with You.”

As Guru Nanak has lovingly explained to us, we should both understand His teachings and live up to them. He neither criticizes anyone nor does He condemn reading and writing: He says that it is all right to read and write, but whatever we are reading, we should live up to that. Because just by reading the holy books we cannot get liberation. We have to live up to the words and the teachings of the holy scriptures which the mahatmas have written for us. They do not say that the Vedas and Shastras and the other holy scriptures are false; in fact they say, as Kabir Sahib has said, that those who say that the Vedas are false are the false ones, because they do not recognize what is written in them. So Guru Nanak lovingly tells us, “No matter how much you read, you cannot get liberation. Unless you live up to what you have read and do the devotion of Naam, you cannot get liberation.”

Reading the holy scriptures without living up to the teachings is just like coming to the satsang with all your love. You know that you have come here in the satsang with all your love and affection, but if you do not live up to the words which you have heard here, if you do not mold your life according to what is taught here, it is exactly the same as reading the books and not living up to them. So what we have heard in the satsang, and what we have come to know from the satsang, we should live up to that.



On Reality and Falsehood

EVERY DAY, the bani of Guru Nanak, Asa ji di Var, is presented to you. Saints and Mahatmas come into this world because They have been sent by Almighty God; and They live Their lives according to the principles laid down by God Almighty Himself. And only those chosen souls who have the yearning to do the devotion of God and to realize Him come into the contact of the Saints and Mahatmas Who are sent in this world by God Almighty. Other people remain without taking any benefit from Them; they just spend all their time thinking about it, and even if they are born close to the Mahatmas, they cannot take advantage of Their coming into this world. It is not necessary that the family members of the Mahatma take advantage of His coming. Many times they don't; and other people who live far away come and take advantage of Him. Neither is it true that only rich people can be benefited by Mahatmas. Many times the rich stay away from the Masters, and poor ones from far away come and take advantage of Them. For the Masters, it does not make any difference if one is rich or poor: They see everyone alike, and They have love for everyone alike.

The area where Guru Nanak Sahib was born is now in Pakistan, and it is called Nankana Sahib; but it used to be called Rai Bhoi Ki Talwandi. Rai Bhoi was very prominent there—he owned the whole area—and right from the beginning, from Guru Nanak's childhood, Rai Bhoi recognized Guru Nanak as one who was sent into this world by God Almighty for some special purpose. So he had a lot of love, appreciation, and devotion for Guru Nanak Sahib, while the parents of Guru Nanak did not recognize Him and did not appreciate what He

was doing. His father was against Guru Nanak Sahib: he was always worried because Guru Nanak would not get involved in worldly pursuits, and he would wonder, what is going to happen to him? So Rai Bhoi, who was very rich, would say to Guru Nanak's father, "Look here, Kalu Ji, you should not worry about this boy. If he is the cause of any harm or loss to you, tell me and I will pay for that loss; but you should not tell him anything. When the time comes, he will be doing the work for which he has been sent; and you should not worry about him. Let him do what he wants to do."

One day Rai Bhoi asked Guru Nanak Sahib, "Master, God Almighty has given me worldly riches. He has given me name and fame and glory and everything of this world; but give me such a teaching that I may realize the truth and my mind may get peace, and I may know that all the things which are in this world are not going to go with me. Give me that real knowledge, so that I may realize the truth." So, answering this question of Rai Bhoi, Guru Nanak Sahib composed the hymn which is going to be presented to you now: listen to it carefully.

**False is the king, false are his subjects;
False is the whole world.**

Very lovingly, He explains to Rai Bhoi that the king is garbage or false, and so are his subjects. In fact, the whole world which we see with our eyes is false, or unreal, or garbage. You know that those things are ultimately false which do not have any form of their own selves and which do not exist forever. In Sant Mat, all the things which we see with our eyes in this world, which will finish their existence one day, are all called false, or unreal. In this hymn the word *kur* is used, which means "garbage." Just as a deer feels thirsty, thinks that it sees water, but when it gets there, finds that there is no water, but a reflection of the sun or a mirage; then sees another mirage, and goes on running for water but never gets it — in the same way, in Sant Mat it is said that all the things after which we are running, and all the things which we think are real, are in fact not real, but false; and they can be called "garbage."

**False is the palace, false are high buildings;
False are those who dwell in them.**

In the Ramayana it is written that King Ravana lived a very long life, studied and gained as much knowledge of the world as was possible,

collected a lot of gold and other riches, and made many high palaces — high-rise buildings like those that exist nowadays. It is a very ordinary thing to see high-rise buildings today, and in those days also King Ravana made many of them. But he left everything here; so here the Master says, “All palaces and buildings are unreal; they are false. And those who dwell in them are also false and unreal: because they will not live there forever.”

Bhagat Namdev Ji says, “Ravana made Lanka, his country, out of gold. But foolish Ravana! — What did he take when he left?”

Kabir Sahib says that Ravana had one hundred thousand sons and one hundred and twenty-five thousand grandchildren, but when he died there was no one in his home to burn a lamp in his memory.

**False is gold, false is silver;
False is the wearer.**

Now He says, “Gold is garbage: it is false. So is silver. And those who beautify themselves by wearing gold and silver are also false; they are unreal, because they will leave one day.”

**False is the body; false are the clothes;
False is limitless beauty.**

This body is also false, it is unreal, it is garbage, because we are not going to live in it forever. It is like a rented house which we will have to leave one day. And all the beautiful clothes and ornaments, which we wear on this body, they are also garbage: they are unreal, they are false. And those who wear all these clothes and ornaments are also false and unreal, because they will have to leave them all one day, and leave this world.

We people are proud of our beauty. We have the ego of our being beautiful. But Guru Sahib says, “On the bones, there is flesh, and on the flesh, there is skin, and He has painted you on your skin, and that is what has made you beautiful; and you are proud of that?” But you know how, when old age comes, that beauty goes away; and when we die, what happens? If we are buried, we become mud; and if our body is burned, we are reduced to a handful of ashes. So that is why here Guru Sahib says, “Why should you be proud of such a thing which you are going to lose one day, and which is going to be reduced to a handful of ashes?”

False is the husband; false is the wife;

(All become) fed up and get destroyed.

Now He says, “The husbands are unreal and the wives are also unreal. All the love which they have for each other, and all the fights and disputes which they have with each other, that is all unreal and false.” Because we do not know, up until now, how many times we have been made husbands, and how many times we became wives. And we do not know how many more husbands or wives we are going to make. We left everything behind; and in the future also we are going to leave. Nothing is going to be here forever. That is why He says that everything is unreal.

**False is attached to false;
The Creator is forgotten.**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib says, “You see, O dear ones, this is a very surprising thing: garbage is attached to garbage, unreal things are attached to unreal things, and after getting attached to the unreal, we have forgotten the Reality; we have forgotten the Giver. We are attached to the gifts, but we have forgotten the Giver.”

**With whom should one become friends?—
When the whole world is passing away.**

Very lovingly now, He explains to Rai Bhoi, “Whose name should I mention to you? Whom should I say that you should go and be friends with? Because everyone in this world is going to die one day. All those who are born into this world will have to leave one day, and everything in this world is unreal and false. Except for God Almighty Himself, nothing remains in this world forever. Everyone comes into this world, spends the night—just like we spend the night in a rest house—and goes next morning. So whom should I say that you should make friends with?—except God Almighty.”

**False is the sweet; false is the honey;
Boatloads (of humans) have drowned in the false.**

Now He says, “Even though garbage is very bad, still people are attached to it so much, that they think it is as sweet as honey; and because of that attachment, millions and trillions of people in this world have drowned in this ocean of life.”

Once there was a pundit in the court of a king, and he used to read books and give sermons in that court. One day after he finished his reading, he noticed the princess there, and he felt attracted towards her: he started thinking, "What can I do to get this beautiful, charming princess?" Since he was only a pundit, he could not do anything, but still he went on thinking about it. He went to his home and thought about it the whole night, and next morning when he came back to the king's court to do his work, he was very sad; and the king asked him, "Pundit Ji, why are you so unhappy?" He said, "No, your majesty, I am fine"; but because the king insisted, he finally said, "Your majesty, the reason for my unhappiness is such that you will not be able to bear it: I am just an ordinary pundit, and you are a great king, and it does not look nice for me to tell you all these things." But when the king insisted, the pundit replied, "Your majesty, I have looked in your horoscope, and I have come to know that after a few days, a very bad time is going to come on you, and you are going to lose everything; and it is not good for me to see all that, because I am your servant, and if you are going to be suffering so much, how can I bear that? That is why I am sad."

Now the king believed in that pundit, so he asked him, "Is there any way to avoid that bad time? Can we remove that suffering?" The pundit said, "Your majesty, there is a way to do that, but it will be very difficult for you to do. And that is why I don't want to mention it to you, because you will not be able to do it." But the king said, "No, you should tell me, and I will see if I can do it; I will do it!" So the pundit told him, "Your majesty, you should make a big wooden box, in which you should put your princess, along with all her dowry and whatever you were going to give for her wedding. Also you should put enough food for a couple of days, and then you should throw that box in the river. If you will do that—get rid of your princess—then that bad time will not come, and you will live happily."

The king wanted to live happily, so he did everything the pundit had told him. After that box was thrown into the river, the pundit told his friends, "A box is going to come, and it may have a lot of wealth. So you should help me try to take it out of the river." They went there and took it out, and the pundit's friends wanted to open it right away, but the pundit was very clever, and told them, "No, we should not open it now, because it is possible that somebody will come here and catch us. We should hide it in the forest, and maybe after two or three days, we should come and open it; and then whatever we get, we will share among ourselves." So, his friends believed in him and went.

After they all left, a king came hunting in that forest and he saw the big box lying there, and he wondered why someone would hide such a beautiful box there in the forest. He was curious, so he opened it; and there he saw that beautiful, charming princess, and was also fascinated by her. Then the princess told that king everything that the pundit had said and done. The king realized that it was a trick of the pundit to get the princess and he took her along with him. Previously he had caught a bear, so he left that bear in the box in the place of the princess. He also took all the gold and other riches.

Now after the pundit and his friends had left the box in the forest, the pundit could not control his lust, and he thought, "If I go with my friends to open that box, they will want to share everything which is in it, and that won't be good. So I should go now and fulfill my desire with the princess." So he went back, and happily opened the box. But the bear who had been put in the box was very angry, and as soon as the box was opened he killed the pundit.

So the point of this story is that the pundit, even though he was reading the holy scriptures every day for the people, and even though he knew that everything in this world is unreal and false, still he was attached too much to those false and unreal things, so much so that he was drowned in this ocean of life: he was killed, just because he was attached to that which was false and unreal.

So, that is why Guru Sahib here makes a prayer in front of God Almighty: "O Lord, whatever I see in this world, except for your Naam, is unreal, false, garbage; everything in this world except your Naam is untruth."

**Nanak says this prayer: Except You, it is all false.
One can know the truth only if his heart is true.**

Now Rai Bhoi told Guru Nanak Sahib, "Master, you have explained to me very clearly and lovingly that everything in this world is unreal and false; but now you should tell me how one can get to that Reality which is never destroyed, which is never created, and which is permanent in this world."

So Guru Nanak told him, "First of all our heart, our inner self, should be clear, should be clean, should be pure. And then we should have the real desire and yearning to realize that Reality, that Truth." Because God Almighty, that Truth, is sitting within us, and He does not need any witness: He can see everything very clearly. We do not need to present any excuses or evidence: we can deceive ourselves, but we can never deceive Him Who is sitting within us. So that is why He

says, "First of all, your inner self should be pure; then you should have the real, sincere desire for realizing that Reality, that Truth, and only then you can realize It."

Saints and Mahatmas set an example for the satsangis: They are like models for the satsangis, to show them how they should live their lives. They tell them, "Earn your livelihood with honest and sincere means," and They say that we should maintain loyalty with our companions: husbands should be content with their wives, and the same order applies to the wives also, that they should also be happy and content with the husband they are married to. Saints and Mahatmas do not condemn marriage; They are not against marriage; but They do lay a lot of emphasis on maintaining our marriage.

**Thus the dirt of the false is cleaned
And the body after bathing becomes pure.**

When we make our body, and mind, and our inner self pure, and when we do the meditation of the Naam, and that Naam is manifested within us, then It removes all the impurities, all the dirt, all the garbage, all the unreal things, which we have been allowing to accumulate on our soul from ages and ages, from our many past births. The manifestation of the Naam within us removes all dirty things from within. Naam never gets dirty, Naam is always pure, and when the Naam is manifested within us, Naam makes our inner self also pure.

**One can know the Truth only if he loves the Truth.
(If one) becomes pleased by hearing the Naam, only then
he reaches the Door of Liberation.**

How can we manifest that Truth, that Almighty Lord, within us? He says, "First of all, we should listen to the sound of the Shabd, Which is all-pervading, Which is everywhere in this creation, Which is emanating from Sach Khand and sounding at our eye-center: we should come in contact with that Sound and we should listen to It. And in order to be able to listen to It, we need to make our thoughts pure: because if our thoughts become purer, our mind will become pure; and the purer our mind becomes, the more our soul becomes pure, and then we will not have any difficulty in getting in touch with that Sound Which is coming from Sach Khand and sounding at our eye-center."

So that is why here He says, "When you listen to that Sound Current Which is all-pervading everywhere in the creation, then that

Truth which is God Almighty will manifest within you. Then you will have such a love with Him, that even though you might want to break your love with Him, you will not be able to: you will not be able to forget Him, once you have developed so much love and devotion for Him.”

One can know the Truth only if he knows the way (and means):

Now he says, “We can recognize the Shabd Naam, the Reality, the Truth, only if we know the way by which we can go within. And in order to know about the Path, in order to be able to go within, we need to go in the company of such a Being Who Himself has done this thing: Someone Who has traversed that Path, Who can Himself go within, and Who can take us there.”

By preparing the body—if One sows the seed of the Creator.

When we make our body pure; when we rise above worldly pleasures, sensual pleasures; when we make our mind pure by making our thoughts pure; when we give up thinking and desires and fantasies of worldly pleasures and worldly things—when, in other words, we prepare ourselves for doing the devotion of God, then, when Master sees our condition like this, He at once sows the seed of Naam within us. You know that if the land is prepared, it does not take much time for the seed which is sown there to become a plant; in the same way, when God Almighty sees that our body is pure, our heart is pure, and that in our mind we do not have any desires of worldly things, He sows the seed of Naam within us, and then we become successful in the Path of the Naam. Master Kirpal Singh Ji used to say, “The coming of a renunciate soul, a yearning soul, a good dear soul, into the company of the Master, is just like bringing dry gunpowder into the company of the fire.” As it explodes instantly, in the same way, if a dear yearning soul, a renunciate soul who has become pure, comes into the company of the Master, that soul goes right up.

One can know the Truth only if he takes the true teachings—

Now He says, “We can recognize Almighty God, and we can get that Reality or Truth, only when we take the true teachings: when we

withdraw our attention from outside and attach ourselves inside. Only then we can realize Him.”

(And if) he is gracious on creatures and does some good deeds and donations.

Saints and Mahatmas do not teach us to criticize any community or religion, and they do not tell us to comment about the practices of those religions and communities. They do tell us the Reality, the Truth, and They always inspire us to get the Naam initiation, and meditating upon that Naam, to go within and see what the Reality is.

When we do the meditation of Naam, then grace is created within us by itself, and the desire to donate and to be helpful to others is created within us by itself.

And at that time we also get the understanding of who is worthy of our donation, where our donation should be made, and who is capable of handling it properly.

Masters are neither hungry for our donations nor for our name and fame, because They earn Their own livelihood to maintain Their lives. But they do tell us, “If God Almighty has showered grace on you, and graciously has given you some worldly wealth, then you should be prepared to help those who need your help; and if you feel that someone can make the best use of your help, you may help him.”

Regarding grace, we people do not understand what being gracious on others really means. Usually we are burning in the fire of jealousy, but outwardly we are thinking of doing good to others. In a way we are trying to shower grace on them, when we are not showering grace on our own selves.

Guru Sahib says, “First of all, shower grace on your own self, because your house is being plundered by the five dacoits. First extinguish your own fire within you, and only then you should try to extinguish the fire of other people’s homes.”

Tulsi Sahib says, “Grace is the root of religion, and sin is the cause of going to hell. O Tulsi, as long as you have life in your body, as long as you have breath in your body, don’t give up showering grace.”

One can know the Truth only if he makes his soul live in the place of pilgrimage—

Now He says, “We can recognize that ultimate Truth, which is always present in this world, and which can never be destroyed, only when we remove the physical, astral, and causal covers from our soul, and

reach the Daswan Dwar, the tenth door, and bathe in the Pool of Nectar which is there. Unless we go there and bathe in that Pool of Nectar, we cannot recognize God Almighty.” Kabir Sahib calls that place as *Prayag Raj*. Guru Amardev Ji calls that place “the real temple of God,” or the real pool of nectar which is in our body. So unless we rise above all these three covers and remove them from our soul, and go into the Daswan Dwar and bathe there, we cannot recognize the Truth.

(And) after asking from the Satguru, if one sits there.

By bathing in that Pool of Nectar, the karmas which we have had from ages and ages, from birth after birth, are all removed from our soul. He says, “We can reach that place only with the help of the Saints and Mahatmas, only with the help of the One Who has made His residence there.” So we cannot reach there unless we go in the company of the Master Who has made His residence there. When we reach there and bathe in that Pool of Nectar, our soul starts sleeping towards the world, and is awakened towards God.

**Truth is the medicine for all (diseases);
It removes sins and it cleans.**

Now Guru Sahib says, “Naam is the only medicine which can remove pain and suffering.” Just as, by using soap, we remove dirt from our clothes—in the same way, by applying the soap of the Naam, we remove all the sins and the dirt from our soul.

Guru Sahib says, “The whole world is suffering, the whole world is sick, and Naam is the only medicine; without applying this medicine of Truth, everyone is suffering.”

**Nanak says this prayer (to Him) Who has the Truth with
Him:**

**I beg for the dust (of Thy Feet)—if I get It, I'll put It on my
forehead.**

Now He tells Rai Bhoi, “What do I ask from God Almighty, and what should one ask from God Almighty if one gets the opportunity?” He says, “I ask Him for the dust of the feet of such a Saint or Master Who has become one with God Almighty.” He says, “If I meet Someone Who has become one with Him, I would put the dust of His Feet on my forehead.”

Eagles, crows, and other creatures, do not know how far the cuckoo bird can go, and from where the cuckoo bird comes. Only the cuckoo birds know the destination and origin of cuckoo birds. In the same way, how can we, the worldly people, know the glory and importance and power of the Mahatmas? Only the Mahatmas know what the Mahatmas are.

**We should give up falsehood and greed
And with one mind meditate upon the Alakh.**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib tells Rai Bhoi, “If we give up our greed for garbage, our greed for all the unreal and worldly things, and if, becoming pure in our mind, we do the devotion of that Almighty Who cannot be reached, Who cannot be seen—if we do His devotion, only then we can realize Him.”

Whatever we do, (accordingly) we get such fruits.

The reward which we get from doing the devotion of the Lord, from serving God Almighty, is that God Almighty Himself manifests within us, and sitting within us, He gives Himself to us; and we can have that only by doing His devotion.”

**If it is written in our fate from before,
Only then we get the dust of Their feet.**

Now he says, “If God Almighty has written in our fate, that we are supposed to go to the Master, and if it is written in our fate that after getting the initiation, we are supposed to do the meditation, only then can we come to the feet of the Master, and only then can we get the opportunity of touching the dust of the feet of the Master.”

**(Otherwise) because of our little intellect, we lose the
(benefit of) seva.**

Dear ones, it is very easy to do *seva* or service: because the jivas, looking at other jivas doing *seva*, are easily able to do it. But it is very difficult to maintain it.

He says, “We, the people of low intellect, do *seva*.” We may even do the *seva* of doing the bhajan and simran; we may do the *seva* of the langar; or we may do the other *sevas* for the Master and His children, looking at other people doing it. But when we do *seva*, we do it for

two reasons: first, we do it with a worldly desire in our mind which we want fulfilled. If it is fulfilled, then another desire is created in our mind, and in this way we go on creating desires within ourselves. If that desire is not fulfilled, then we stop doing seva. On the other hand, if we do not have any difficulty with worldly desires, what happens when we do seva? We become proud of it; we allow ego to come within us, and in that way, whatever seva we have done, we lose its benefit—just by allowing a little bit of ego to come in our mind.

So Guru Sahib has lovingly explained to us many aspects of the Path in brief, emphasizing that everything belongs to God and we should not be proud of anything, but should devote ourselves to His devotion.

The Broken Seed

PREACHING the Shabd Naam, giving the teachings of Naam, and giving initiation into Naam, took Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj into many different parts of India; and when He went into the Himalayas, on the mountain of Sumer, He met a group of *siddhas*—renunciates who had left their homes to live in the jungle, who were doing yogic practices there, who were living on fruits and vegetables only, and who believed that only by sacrificing everything in this way could they achieve liberation. In those days, many great kings and emperors had become followers of the *siddhas* or *Naths*: Gorakh Nath, Gopi Chand Barthree, and many other kings and powerful people had gone to such yogis, so their subjects also went to them and they developed a large following. The path of the yogis was very popular in those days, and it had been a long time since those yogis had left the world and gone to the Himalayas; so when Guru Nanak went there, they asked him, “How is everything in the world? How are things happening there?” And they also asked many questions about realizing God: How one can realize God, whose refuge one should seek, and where should one go if he wants to learn the way of realizing God Almighty. So Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly explained the answers to those questions in detail in this hymn which will be presented to you now. You should listen to it carefully.

Siddhas and yogis had long lives, and Guru Nanak had a short life. Because of their yogic practices, the *siddhas* and yogis lived long. So when the *siddhas* saw Guru Nanak coming to that mountain of Sumer, they wondered how He who had such a short life was able to come there: “because,” they thought, “we have been able to reach here and stay here only because of our yoga and our *siddhis* (supernatural

powers), so how can Guru Nanak and His two attendants, Bala and Mardana, come here? So,” they asked Him, “What is happening in the mortal world nowadays?”

**There is a famine of Truth. Falsehood is spread all over.
(The souls are) ghosts of the dirt of Kal.**

He says, “O siddhas, what should I tell you about the mortal world? From the world, from the physical plane, the Truth has vanished: everywhere there is untruth. Buried under the swamp of sins, the soul is getting kicked and knocked, and everyone has stopped telling the truth: they all speak lies. Because the soul is buried under the swamp of sins, she has become a ghost: the people who live there are like ghosts.”

**They have taken the Seed (of Truth) and its glory;
How can the daal, the broken seed, grow?**

Now He says, “The people who came in the Golden Age took away with them their honor, glory, Truth—and now only false things remain in this world.” It is as though they took the seed of Truth and left only the *daal* or split pea: you know that the split pea cannot grow because the seed is broken. He says, “In the Golden Age, just by accepting the Truth and giving a little bit of attention to it, the soul was able to go up; and one was able to do the devotion of God because everyone was truthful. But now the Truth has eloped and no one does the devotion of God.”

In the Golden Age or *Sat Yuga*, Truth was the means of liberation. In the Silver Age or *Treta Yuga*, performance of austerities was the means of liberation. In the Copper Age or *Dwapar Yuga*, worship and outer rites and rituals were means of liberation. But in this Iron Age or *Kali Yuga*, the support of Naam is the only means of liberation.

**It would grow only if it were whole,
And only if it is the proper season.**

Now he says, “All seeds have become like daal or split peas, which will not grow. And also the season is not favorable.” He means that in the earlier days there were Rishis and Munis of a high degree who used to perform austerities and do outer rites and rituals. They were very devoted in doing those practices, and they became successful. And in those days there were also rich people who used to support the Rishis

and Munis in performing those austerities, and that is how they used to achieve liberation and do the devotion of God. So He is saying that now, in the present time, we have neither those Rishis and Munis who are competent in performing austerities by which they could achieve liberation, nor do we have any rich people who would wholeheartedly contribute to the performing of those austerities. We do not have the season nor the favorable conditions in which we could achieve liberation by doing that kind of devotion of God.

In the Golden Age, everyone was truthful, and by accepting and maintaining Truth, one was able to achieve liberation. As the time changed and the Silver Age came, people started doing devotion by performing austerities – not the austerities people do now, but a different kind. And when the Copper Age came, the Rishis and Munis of that age did rites and rituals as well as performing austerities. But if in the Iron Age – because this is the Iron Age – if in the Iron Age we do the practices which were meant for the past ages, we will not be able to get anything out of them: because the conditions are not favorable. We do not have that kind of Rishis and Munis, nor do we have the long life which we had in the past ages. In the Iron Age, because the time has changed, we will have to adopt the means of liberation which is successful in this age, and that is the meditation of Shabd Naam. Unless we work hard in the meditation of Shabd Naam and adopt this means of liberation, we can never have it.

Swami Ji Maharaj says, “In the Iron Age, no karmas, no dharmas” – that is, no religious acts can be successful. Without the support of Naam one cannot get liberation.

**Nanak says, Without preparation,
The color will not stick to the fresh cloth.**

Now He says, “Just as if we want to dye a fresh piece of cloth, first we need to bleach it or treat it with a chemical, and only then will we be able to get the fast color on that cloth – in the same way, if we want to dye our mind in the color of Naam, first we will have to do Simran and remove the impurities from it, and only then, after going in the company of the Master, and with the help of the Master’s Naam, can we dye our mind in the color of Naam.” He says, “No matter how much you read, or how many other things you do, unless you go to the Master and purify your mind, you cannot get that color of Naam on your mind.”

Bleach (the mind) in fear of God;

In the body feel embarrassed.

What is that with which we need to treat our mind? Just like we need to treat the cloth before dyeing it, in the same way we need to treat our mind with the fear of God: before doing any bad deed, we should think about it and we should feel *embarrassed* at the idea of doing that. We should ask, "Will this be a good thing for me if I do this? Will God be pleased with me if I do this bad deed?"

When we are afraid of God and feel embarrassed about doing sins, then we will be able to easily do the meditation of Naam. When the cloth is clean and pure, it easily catches the color; in the same way, if our inner self is pure, we will easily catch the color of Naam.

People say, "This world is sweet, who has seen the beyond?" but this is the kind of thought which leads us astray: because whatever we do, we have to suffer the consequences of it ourselves.

We know that we never do anything against our family members, our relatives, or our friends, because we think that if we do, they will get upset at us; and we are afraid of that. But, have we ever had even that much fear of God Almighty, as we have of our family members?

**Nanak says, If one gets the color of devotion,
Falsehood does not dirty him.**

Now He says, "Once you get the color of devotion, the color of Naam, after that such a soul does not get dirty in the dirt of falsehood and garbage."

Kabir Sahib says, "Those who have been colored by the Master never lose their color. Day after day they go on getting more shine, until they become perfect."

**Greed is King, Sin the Prime Minister;
Lust is the Counselor.**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji tells the siddhas, "The King of this age is Greed, and his Prime Minister is Falsehood; the one who gives them counsel is Lust."

**Lust is the Counselor and they call him (for advice);
They all sit together and think.**

Now He says, "When they have to do any judgment, they call Lust because he is the chief counselor; and the judge, who is Greed, will

dispense the justice.” It means that in this age, those who are affected by lust, anger, greed, attachment, and egoism, will be the ones who will present the cases and make the decisions; they will be the ones who will teach the other people, “Dear ones, you should abstain from these five passions”—even though they themselves will be involved in all five.

**Their subjects are blind and without knowledge;
Like the dead, they submit to others’ will.**

Now He describes the condition of the world: No one has the knowledge of Shabd Naam. No one has any knowledge about satsang or its purpose. They do not have any understanding of the Mahatmas. They do not know why the Mahatmas have come into this world, nor do they have any knowledge of the grace the Masters have for us. So He says, “Without the knowledge of the Reality, the whole world has become blind; and in this world, since no one has the real knowledge of the Shabd Naam, all the people are buried under the darkness of ignorance, and they have become like the dead.” A dead body cannot move by itself; in the same way, people who do not have the knowledge of Shabd Naam cannot do anything by themselves: they do not know what is good and what is not.

**The (so-called) gyanis dance and make music;
And beautify themselves (with ornaments and cosmetics).**

Now He says, “In this age, those who call themselves teachers or holy men, what do they do? They disguise themselves in the form of past Mahatmas or Saints like Krishna or Rama, and their disciples play musical instruments, and for the sake of worldly things, they dance.”

If we wear the skin of a lion, we do not get the power of a lion. In the same way, even if we adopt any of the outer things of a past Master, even if we behave like Him outwardly, still we cannot get that power which was working within Him.

**They shout and sing;
They remember the brave ones.**

Now he says, “In large gatherings, with the help of musical instruments, they sing very loudly; they sing of the bravery of those who came in the past. Nobody talks about the Shabd Naam; they only talk about the glory and the bravery of the past people.”

Once some people asked Master Kirpal Singh Ji, “How can peace prevail in this world?” Master gave them a very loving and beautiful reply: “If we live up to the words of the holy scriptures which the Saints and Mahatmas of the past have written, then peace can prevail in this world very easily.”

**The foolish pundits argue and criticize;
They love the collection.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “Those who do not have any knowledge of the Shabd Naam and who are the most foolish ones, they will be called ‘pundits’ by the people; and since they do not have any knowledge of the Shabd Naam, what devotion of God are they going to do? They will only comment on other people, and criticize others by saying, ‘He has this fault,’ or ‘He has that fault’; and since they do not know the real way of the devotion of God, they will not be able to teach devotion to others. Their job will be to make people fight with each other, and divide them; this will be the only quality they will have.”

He says, “In this Iron Age, the husband and wife will love one another only for worldly pleasures.”

**Religious people will do religious deeds and lose,
Asking for the door of liberation.**

Now He says, “No doubt there will be good people in this age; no doubt they will do good deeds; but the pity is that whatever reward they are supposed to get, they will lose it right here.” In other words, the people who do good deeds will do them expecting their reward right here. If someone’s son is sick, he will ask for his good health. If someone has difficulty in his employment, he will ask for the grace of the Master in that. And if someone has any lawsuit pending in court, he will ask for help in that. In this way, whatever benefit or reward they might get for their good deeds, they will get it right here, and thus lose all the benefit. Even the wiser people, who would not expect worldly things in return for good deeds, even they will ask, “Will we get liberation here?” So, just by expressing their desire and showing that they had done the devotion of God expecting the reward in this lifetime, in this world, or in this age, they will lose the benefit, and they will remain at the door.

I have often mentioned a person in the village of Ganeshgarh who was hurt in his leg and unable to come to satsang. He told me that if I

would bring Master to his home, he would be very grateful; and he invited Master to go there for tea. So I requested Master, and He graciously agreed to go there. Before they served tea to Master, that person opened his leg and asked Master to have a look at his wound so that he might be healed. So just imagine how much that cup of tea was worth! What was he asking from the Master for that one cup of tea? So, when we have these desires and expectations, how can we get the benefit from the grace of the Master?

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, quoting the Bible, “If God graciously gives us worldly riches and material things, and if we are giving away those things to others, if our right hand is giving the donation, not even our left hand should know about it.” We should be grateful to God Almighty, and we should express our thanks to Him by saying, “It is only because of Your grace and kindness, that we have become able to help others.”

**They call themselves celibates but do not know the way.
They give up their homes.**

Siddhas were proud of being renunciates, and they used to say, “Guru Nanak is only a householder, but we are renunciates! We have left our homes” – so, in order to explain to them the meaning of real renunciation, Guru Nanak Sahib is telling them, “Look here, O dear ones: you have left your homes, but were you able to live without your wives? You have left your one woman at home, but you have had to go and beg from so many other women because you could not live without food; you left your own homes and properties, but you have had to appropriate many other properties which belonged to other people, and make them as your own. You say that you are celibates, but you do not know the way to become celibate. You say that you do not have any desire, but it is very hard to control the mind. No doubt, outwardly you have become celibate; but inwardly, if you still have desire for lust, you are not celibate.”

Guru Sahib says, “One who is content with one wife is a celibate.” If one lives in married life, and is content with one companion, then he is not less than a celibate. If you are living your married life according to the instructions of the Master, if you are living in contentment and within the limits, then you are not less than the celibates – because just imagine: suppose you are in the market, and your mind creates the desire of buying something or eating something there. If you are a householder, working in the world and earning your livelihood by honest means, and you have the money, then you can easily satisfy the

need of your mind, buy that thing and eat it or whatever; but if you have left your home, and the mind creates any desire (because the mind is still there), you cannot fulfill that desire because you do not have any money since you are not working like the householders. So what will you have to do? Either you will have to suppress the desire of the mind, which you cannot do, or you will have to steal money in order to fulfill that desire, or you will have to do something else. So which is better? It is better to be a householder, work hard, and earn your livelihood by honest means, and in this way fulfill the desires of the mind. And also be content with one companion, and live like a celibate. So that is why Guru Nanak Sahib lovingly explained to the siddhas, "You are not celibates. Celibates are those who live in married life and, earning their own livelihood, remain content with one companion."

**Everyone says that he is complete.
No one says that he is lacking.**

Now Guru Nanak tells the siddhas, "Of all the people I have met, no one has told me that he is less competent or incomplete. Everyone says that he is the highest, the competent one, the perfect one."

**If one is weighed on the scales of Glory,
Only then the weight is known, says Nanak.**

Now Guru Nanak says, "Regarding the one who calls himself perfect: you should find out whether, in his life, he has done any sacrifice, any practices, any devotion of God, anything to become worthy of being called perfect; or if he is calling himself perfect just for the sake of saying it." He says, "If someone has done something in this world, and the people in this world recognize and respect him, if he is known in this world, only then he will be known, accepted, and glorified in the Court of the Lord also. God Almighty will also recognize him if he is recognized by the people here."

"Recognized by the people here" does not mean that you have a high position and people are afraid of you, and in that way they remember you or recognize you—it is not like that. You know that Saints and Mahatmas rule over the hearts of the people; you know that it has been more than five hundred years since Guru Nanak Sahib came into this world, and about two thousand years since Jesus Christ came into this world, and so much time has passed; but still every morning when we get up, we remember Them with all our love and affection. This is

because They ruled over the hearts of the people, and because of their qualities were recognized by the people, and loved and adored by them; and only because of Their good qualities we remember Them every morning. So that is why here He says, "If someone has done something in this world, only then he is recognized and appreciated by the people, and such beings are the ones who are accepted and glorified by God Almighty also."

He says, "You should weigh the life of the Mahatma, using the scale of the Naam." It means that you should find out whether he has done anything in the path of the Naam or not: whether he has stayed up many nights in his life to do the devotion of Naam; whether he has sacrificed anything. If he has done all these things and has become perfect in the Naam, only then you can call him the perfect one.

The True One sees what He has made, says Nanak.

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "God Almighty has Himself laid down the tradition, and made the limitations and regulations: how the creatures are to be created, how they will be dissolved, how the sun and moon will shine and will give the light to everyone. God Almighty, Who has made these traditions and regulations, is the One Who Himself administers all this; Who Himself sees that all these things are maintained."

**Everyone jumps,
But only that happens which He Himself does.**

Now He says, "After coming into this world, every jiva, according to his karmas, has tried to jump; they have all wanted to be *gyanis* and great meditators; they have all wanted to control everything and become supreme powers. But God Almighty has kept everything in His hands, and whatever one has done, he gets the reward according to that; according to their own karmas, they get the benefit."

**Hereafter caste and power do not exist;
Hereafter the jiva is born anew.**

Now He says, "In the Court of the Lord, neither our caste nor our creed, nor our power nor our rule will go with us. The beings with whom we have to deal will not be related to us there; they will be new people. Only our deeds will go with us. And only those who have done the devotion of God will be accepted and welcome there."

**Only those whose honor is counted (in the Court of the Lord)
Are good people.**

Now Guru Nanak tells the siddhas, “Dear ones, only in the true Court of the Lord do we come to know who is good and who is bad. If we are accepted there, if we are welcome there in that court, then we are good. But if no one cares for us or welcomes us there—if even after going there we are bothered by the angels of death—then we are bad. Only after going to the true Court of the Lord can we know our reality.”

Kabir Sahib says, “If the mind is true, only then is it easy to settle accounts: because in that true Court of the Lord there is no one who can help.”

**Only those in whose fate it is written, get You;
Only they meditate upon the Husband.**

Now Guru Nanak says, “It is not in our hands to wander here and there in the forests, to do the devotion of the Lord, or to perform austerities: everything is in the hands of God Almighty, Who has kept everything under His control. Those in whose fate it is written by God Almighty are able to do the meditation of the Naam and the devotion of God.” He says, “Only those about whom it has been decided that they will meet the Master and do the devotion of God are given the opportunity to do that devotion; God Almighty has kept everything in His hands.”

**Nothing is in the hands of these creatures;
You have created this amazing Creation.**

The Mahatmas Who have met with God Almighty know about the power and the existence of God, and that is why Guru Nanak Sahib says here, “O Lord, these creatures, these people, do not know anything about themselves; they do not have anything in their hands; they do not know that they cannot make a decision whether to become the devotee of God or to seek the pleasures of the world. And this is a surprising Creation which You have made: that some people are made to do the devotion of God, and some people are involved in the worldly pleasures; some people become good and some people waste their lives becoming bad. Nothing is in the hands of the people; all this

has been created by You; and this is a very surprising thing that You have done.”

**There are the ones whom You unite (with Yourself);
There are the ones whom You Yourself make lose You.**

Now He says, “This is a very unique play of Yours. You Yourself come in the human body, and You Yourself make certain human beings do the devotion of God, and You Yourself make them meet Yourself. And there are others whom You make to forget about You; they will never come to the path of the Shabd Naam, no matter how much You explain to them, they will not understand, and instead of understanding they will oppose. So it is all in Your hands: some people are made to do the devotion of God, and some people are made to forget You.”

**With the grace of the Master, I have known (the place)
where You are manifested;
You Yourself have made me realize it.**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib tells the siddhas, “It is only because of the grace of our Satgurus, our Masters, that we have come to know the place where God Almighty resides, and only because of the grace of the Masters have we come to know how we can go there, and how we can meet Him. And God Almighty Himself gives us this knowledge from within ourselves: that without going to the Master and taking refuge at the Satguru’s feet, we can never do His devotion, and we can never achieve liberation.”

Easily one merges with the Truth.

Now He says, “When we get the Naam initiation, and when we fortunately get the shelter at the feet of the Master, and when, after coming into the satsang and listening to the words of the Master, we remove our shortcomings and our failures and do the meditation of the Shabd Naam, then we easily get absorbed into that Shabd Naam, become one with God Almighty, and make our lives successful.”



The Price of Happiness

TODAY, as every day, the satsang is on the hymns of Asa ji di Var. Once some disciples of Guru Nanak Dev Ji requested him, "Master, every day in Your satsang, You talk about pain and suffering and happiness; please tell us lovingly what You really mean by pain and happiness. Because we do not know what pain and happiness really are; we are blind and we do not know the reality of things. If we get a little bit of pain or suffering, we start complaining and cannot bear it. If we get a little bit of happiness, then we start thinking that it is because of our own efforts. So kindly and lovingly tell us: what do You mean by suffering and happiness, and what are the things which we should seek in this world? Please explain to us these things so that we can benefit from Your teachings."

Guru Nanak Sahib said, "Look here, dear ones, that happiness is not happiness whose end is unhappiness or suffering. The happiness you get in enjoying worldly or sensual pleasures cannot be called happiness because after you have enjoyed those pleasures, you feel bad about it." Guru Nanak says, "O brothers, understand what happiness or suffering is. By indulging in sensual pleasure you get a little bit of happiness, but the end of that happiness is suffering. And by indulging in pleasures you get disease."

He says, "When the Saints say, 'suffering', They mean that suffering which everyone has to bear after each of his deaths. Even at the time of death, the pain which he suffers then is the suffering which the Masters and Saints mean. You know that all those who are born into this world will die one day, and after the death of their present body, according to their karma they will have to take another birth. So the pain or suffering at the time of death, and after death, the pain of

getting birth—Saints and Masters always mention that pain as the real suffering.”

He says, “Dear ones, don’t forget that painful time when you were in the womb of your mother.” You know that everyone has to go into the womb of the mother, and that place is very narrow, very damp, and very dark. We cannot run or move in any direction; we have to stay there as we are, and whatever happens there, we do not have any control over it: we cannot change any conditions, and it is a very painful condition there. Many times the mother eats something which is not good for the baby, but the baby cannot say anything or complain, “This is not good for me.” And the tube through which the mother passes her urine goes right on top of the nose of the baby, and the baby is hanged upside down. He cannot complain; he cannot say anything; he has to bear all these things. So Guru Nanak Sahib says, “Don’t forget that painful time, that suffering which you had in the womb of the mother, which everyone has to go through. And at that time who was there who could help you? Not even the mother, within whom you were living, was able to help you, because you could not tell her anything. At that time only the Name of the Lord, only God Himself was there to protect you; and when you came out from the womb of the mother and took birth into this world, you forgot that Protector: the Almighty God Who protected you in the womb of the mother. Just for the sake of momentary happinesses and comforts, you have forgotten Him; you have forgotten His real Name. As a result, once again you will have to go and present yourself in front of the Lord of Judgment, and once again you will be sent into that womb of the mother, and once again you will go through all that suffering.”

We people think that those who take birth and die are not people like us—they are somebody else—and we will not go through the same cycle, we will not have the suffering of taking birth or dying. But this is not true. Everyone who does not do the devotion of God and who does not get liberation from the cycle of eighty-four lakhs births and deaths, always goes through that pain which one suffers in the womb of the mother. So that is why here He says, “You will be hanged upside down, and you will not be positioned in a good place. And at that place you will not have anyone to help you. Only God Himself will be there to help you. And you have to go through this suffering and pain every time.” So here He said, “Dear ones, the pain of birth and death is the greatest suffering.”

Guru Nanak Sahib says, “Your mouth will be upside down, your legs will be on top, and why did you forget God Who helped you at that place?”

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "The fire which one has to bear in the womb of the mother for ninety days – that fire is the fire of Maya outside, in which the soul forgets the real Almighty God, and forgets the devotion of God." Baba Jaimal Singh Ji also used to say, "The jiva has to bear that fire for ninety days, because only then are the bones made strong." And Guru Arjan Dev Ji says, "The fire which we have to bear in the womb of the mother and the fire of Maya outside are the same: outside we are roasted in the fire of Maya, and because of that we have forgotten that it was God Almighty Himself Who saved us from that fire inside."

When Mahatmas warn us about the pain and suffering which we have to go through, They also tell us about Sach Khand, our Real Home; They talk about the happiness and comfort which we have in our Real Home. They tell us that there, there is no pain of birth and death, there is no jealousy, there is no impatience: there, there is complete peace.

The price which we have to pay for happiness is pain. Even in this world we cannot achieve anything unless we work hard for it and endure pain. Not even a child is born if the mother does not suffer pain. If we want to take out gold from a mine we have to go into the mine and work hard. In the same way, if we want to take out a pearl from the waters of the ocean, we have to dive very deep down in the ocean. And those who say that without working hard, and without bearing pain, they have done the devotion of the Lord and have realized God Almighty – and they have become one with Him – in fact are carrying one more burden on themselves: because the Mahatmas who have realized Almighty God have suffered a great deal of pain. In order to realize Him they have done so much devotion of the Lord, and have gone through so much suffering and pain: and only then have they successfully realized God. If you read the writings and the life sketches of the Mahatmas, you will come to know how much They had to go through in their search, and after They found Him, how much They had to meditate and sacrifice in order to realize Him.

Guru Nanak Sahib was born in the Bedi family, which was and is a very well respected family. His parents were able to give Him all kinds of comforts and conveniences, but still Guru Nanak preferred to sleep on sand: He would boil leaves to eat, and would make His bed of pebbles, so that he would not fall asleep.

Bhai Gurdas, who was a very faithful devotee of the Masters, and a great meditator who used to go within, has written in his Var, "He slept on the sand on a bed made of pebbles; and the Master's food was leaves."

When the respected mother of Guru Nanak Sahib asked him, “How difficult is it to do the devotion of the real Naam?”, He replied, “Mother, it is very difficult to meditate on the real Naam. The closer we come to the Naam, the more we feel attracted towards the devotion of the Naam, and the harder we work on this path of the Naam, the more God Almighty sends many problems: He creates many attractions of the world to see whether we are attracted to those things, or whether we are doing the devotion only for Him.”

In Rajasthan there is a saying, “O Lord, I will become the medicine for Your sufferings, and Your happiness will be my disease.”

So here in this shabd, Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “The pain which we suffer here—staying up in the night, working hard in the meditation of Naam, giving up all the worldly pleasures—the reward for all this is that we get a very comfortable place in the Court of the Lord. And if we get involved in the worldly pleasures and forget that there is a God and we should do His devotion—the reward for that is suffering.”

Kabir Sahib says, “If you did not do Simran when you were happy, and remembered Him only in pain—Kabir says, Who will listen to the prayers of those who remember Him only in pain?”

We know that if we wait till the enemy comes to our door before we try to learn to use a gun, or if we wait till we are thirsty before we try to dig a well, we will never become successful.

The condition of the jivas is the same. Nowadays, what do people do? When their old age or their end time comes, when disease comes and surrounds a person, at that time he starts giving donations and trying to do the devotion of the Lord. At the time of death the holy scriptures like Gita and Ramayana are read to that person, and if he cannot listen to what is being read—if his ears are not functioning because he has become very old—then they have some other person sitting there who listens to the holy words on his behalf. They put some water in the mouth of the person who is leaving the body, and the Hindus even burn a light and tell him to take his attention into the light. All these things he was supposed to do in his lifetime when he was able to do them: he was supposed to manifest the light within him, and take his attention into it, and he was supposed to listen to the holy words when he was able to hear them—but he did not do it. What is the use of doing it at the time of death if he did not do it when he was supposed to? Kabir Sahib also says, “When you did not run when you were able to run, how can you run now?”

Pain is the cure, happiness the disease:

**One doesn't meditate in comfort.
You are the Creator, I can create nothing;
Even if I try to, nothing happens.**

Now He says, "Happiness is the disease; in order to be free of pain, we have to do the meditation of Naam." Because, Guru Nanak says in another place, "The whole world is suffering, and the meditation of Naam is the only remedy. Without doing the meditation of Naam, we get the dirt of the dirty things."

He says, "O Lord, You are omnipotent, You are competent, You are able to do everything. What can I advise You? No one can advise You. No one can tell You, 'Don't do this,' or, 'Do this thing in this way.' You are the One Who is gracious on sinners. You are everything."

Kabir Sahib says, "God does what He thinks. What is my thinking going to do?" Our planning or our thinking will not do any good, because whatever God has planned, He will do according to that. Guru Sahib also says, "We may plan to go to the east, but He may have a plan to take us to the west." So He says, "What can our planning or our thinking do, when everything is happening according to the plan of God Almighty? And we do not have any understanding of what He has planned for us."

One moment, He kills many animals because of lack of water, and the next moment He may bring so much water there, that everywhere you would see only water. One night the king goes to sleep as king; next morning, the people of the other party capture him, and he is no longer king. In the same way, the tiger is king of the forest; he is free and all powerful; but when hunters capture him, he finds himself in a cage.

Saint Vajida says, "There are those who have sons, and who even have grandsons and great-grandsons. There are those who have daughters, and who also have many grandchildren while they are living. There are those who have only one child, and that may be killed in an accident or some other way. Vajida says, Who can say to the Lord, 'Don't do it like this,' or, 'Do it like that?'"

**I sacrifice myself on You Who reside in Nature;
Your end cannot be known.**

Now He says, "I sacrifice myself on You because, in such a beautiful and unique way, You are present within all in the form of Light, and You are giving them their strength, power and life. No one can know

Your end, no one can know Your reality. All the learned scholars tried their best, but they could not find Your reality or realize You, and in the end they said that You are limitless.”

**In all Your creatures is Your Light, in Your Light are all the creatures;
You are without attributes, but all attributes are within You.**

Now He says, “You are residing within all in the form of the Light and the Shabd, and You are protecting everyone. You are absorbed within all like the *patasa* or sugar candy is dissolved in water: in that way You are present within all.”

Kabir Sahib says, “There is oil in sesame seeds which you cannot see; but if you learn and practice the right technique, you can take out the oil from the sesame seed. In the same way, there is fire in the stone, but unless you strike it with another stone, you cannot get that fire.” So, Kabir Sahib says, “Just like the oil in the seeds, and the fire in the stone, your beloved Lord is residing within you. If you can manifest Him, if you can wake Him up, you may do so.”

**You are the True Lord, Your praise is worth singing;
Those who have sung Your praise have crossed over.**

Now He says, “You are the true Lord, and You are never destroyed. You have been here ever since the beginning, and You are always present. Those who sing Your glory are fortunate, because Your glory is very sweet and very high. Those fortunate souls who were able to sing Your glory crossed this ocean of life and got liberation from it; and they became free from all kinds of sufferings.”

**Nanak says, This is all I have to say about the Creator:
Whatever He wants to do, He is doing.**

Replying to the question of the dear ones, Guru Nanak Sahib is telling them, “Dear ones, I have told you about God Almighty Who is sitting within all of us in the form of the Light and the Shabd. He does not have any equal, and whatever He wants to do, He is doing. He is omnipotent, He is pervading everywhere, He is all-in-all, and He is able to do whatever He wants.”

The Yogi’s Shabda is that of knowledge;

The Brahmin's Shabda is that of the Vedas.

Someone asked Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj: "All humanity is divided into four different kinds of castes—the Brahmins, Shudras, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas—do each of them have their own religion, or is there anything common to them all, which they all have to follow?" So Guru Angad lovingly explains to them, "*Yoga* means that you have to unite yourself with the Shabd, and the knowledge which we are supposed to get should also be of the Shabd. So you have to do the practice of the Shabd, you have to unite yourself, or become one, with the Shabd, and you have to teach others also to do the same thing. So this is the only religion, the only practice which everyone should do. It does not make any difference to which caste he belongs."

**The Kshatriya's Shabda is that of the warrior;
The Shudra's Shabda is that of serving others.**

Now He says, "The religion of the *Khatri* or warriors is to be brave, strong, and protect the country; the religion of the Shudras is to clean people's houses and earn their livelihood by honest means; the religion of the Brahmins is to get education and then share that with others; it is their religion to serve guests."

**Everyone's Shabda is one Shabda—
If they know Its secret.**

Now He says, "In fact the religion of all the castes is to do the meditation of the Shabd Naam and get united with it"; as Guru Sahib says, "The religion which is highest of all is the religion of Naam—because only by doing the devotion of Naam, can we realize Him."

The Mahatmas Who come from Sach Khand do not divide the world, nor do they condemn any existing religion or community; They do not form any new religions; They only tell us the truth. They teach us how to do the devotion of God Almighty, because God Himself is residing within all of us.

Mahatmas tell us, "Just as the sun does not have any caste or creed—he gives life to everyone—in the same way, God Almighty does not have any caste or creed either. Those who do His devotion, who devote themselves to Him—He becomes theirs."

**Nanak says, I am His slave;
He is the Niranjana (unaffected by Maya) Lord.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “He who has understood that there is only one God and He is residing within all – he who has understood this reality does not get involved in any kind of dispute with anyone.” And he says, “I am the slave of such a being.”

**There is one Krishna Who is God of all gods and souls.
The Lord resides within the soul.
If anyone realizes this secret, Nanak says, I am His slave;
He is the Niranjana Lord.**

Now he says, “There is one Krishna, one God who is God of all the gods. And He Himself is residing within all creatures. He who has understood this reality – how God Almighty is present within all creatures – I am the slave of such a being.”

This thing cannot be understood just by talking about it. Guru Nanak Sahib says, “No one can realize Him just by talking.” The Saints and Mahatmas tell us from their own experience: “We should purify our thoughts; we should rise above the mind and the organs of senses; and we should come to the eye center, because the eye center is the place from where our journey begins.” When we go within and see God Almighty with our own eyes, then we easily understand how He is present within all creatures. Such a satsangi or Mahatma Who has understood this reality, Who has seen God within Himself, and who can see God present within all creatures, is a living God; and such a living God, such a satsangi or Master, does not have any duality nor does He criticize anyone, because He sees God Almighty sitting within everyone.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj says, “He who does the deeds of a sadhu and who meditates on the Naam – He is called God in this world.”

Those who did good deeds, who saw God Almighty present within all creatures, and who did not hurt anyone but helped every being, they were called gods by the people. And those who always gave trouble, who hurt other people and tortured them, were called demons.

**The pitcher holds the water
But without the water there would be no pitcher.**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj tells his dear ones: “Just as a pitcher has no existence without water – the pitcher is created only for the sake of the water – and if there was no pitcher, the water could

not be stored and would just spread everywhere—in the same way, the mind, which is wandering here and there like a wild deer, cannot be fastened or stopped without the knowledge of God, but we cannot get that knowledge from anyone except from the Master.”

Just as the pitcher is created for the water, and the water is stored in the pitcher, in the same way, the beloveds of God are created from God, and God lives in them. Both the Master and disciple are created by the same God, but the only difference between them is that the Master has manifested that power of God within Him and He has seen God Almighty working everywhere with His own eyes; whereas the disciple is still making efforts to manifest that power of God within him and he is not yet able to see the power of God functioning everywhere: he is in progress. When the disciple sees the power of God working within everyone, and when he manifests Him within himself, then no difference remains between the Master and the disciple.

**The mind is controlled by the knowledge of God,
But without the Master the knowledge cannot be
obtained.**

**If a learned man is a sinner,
An uneducated Sadhu is not killed in his place.**

When Guru Nanak Sahib was explaining to his disciples that we cannot get the knowledge of God without the Master, his disciples asked Him, “Master, tell us, can only the learned one get the knowledge of God? Does it make any difference whether one is learned or illiterate? And also tell us, if any learned person makes a mistake, can he be forgiven? Or, if an illiterate person makes the mistake, can he be forgiven, or he will be punished? And is it possible that an illiterate would be punished in the place of a learned man if he makes a mistake?” Guru Nanak said, “No. It is not like that. He who makes the mistake, whether he is learned or illiterate, will be punished for it. It is not as though, if a learned person has made a mistake, an illiterate person would be punished in his place.” You know that in this world, if people who have knowledge of the law make any mistake, we do not punish people who do not have knowledge of the law in their place. Those who make the mistake, who violate the law, are given the punishment. So that is why here He says, “It does not make any difference whether one is learned or illiterate: he who makes the mistake, who commits the sin, is punished for it. He is punished for his bad karma, and rewarded for his good karma.”

As one does, so he is called.

Now He says, "We call each person with a name according to the work he does. Those who do the meditation of the Naam, we call them satsangis, we call them devotees, we call them Saints, Mahatmas and like that. And those who do bad deeds, who are involved in doing sins, we call them according to the sins they do."

**Do not play such a game
Which will make us lose at the Court of the Lord.**

We should not play any games or do any deeds here, that will embarrass us at the court of the Lord, or cause us to lose in front of God.

**Learned and illiterate: These thoughts are not considered
in the Beyond.**

In the Court of the Lord, it is not taken into consideration whether one is learned or illiterate; judgment is done there according to the deeds or karmas one has done.

Those who follow their minds are beaten hereafter.

Now He says, "God Almighty will ask for the account of every single breath you have taken: He does not have any enmity towards any particular person, but whatever deeds we have done we will have to settle those accounts; and those who have done bad deeds will be given a beating by the angels of death." So that is why, according to what Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj has told us, we should improve our life and make this birth successful.

Respecting Our Own Self

Nanak says, Of this human body, one is a chariot and one a charioteer.

THE DISCIPLES asked Guru Nanak Dev Ji, "Please tell us if this chariot of the body remains the same all the time, or if sometimes it is changed." So Guru Nanak Sahib tells them, "My body, which is like a chariot, is driven by my mind, and in every birth it is changed. But those who get the inner knowledge, who become *gyanis* or learned ones, know about this because they have the understanding of the Reality."

No doubt in every age the body is changed, but the soul which functions through the body does not change; she remains the same. No fire can burn, no water can drown, that soul.

**Age after age the bodies change; the gyanis realize this.
In the Sat Yuga the chariot was Contentment and Religion
the charioteer.**

He says, "In the Golden Age, this chariot of the body was the form of Contentment." The people were very content; they did not run after worldly riches. Whatever they got in the will of God, they remained happy with that. People used to remain in deep meditation or *sam-adhi*.

In that age, the people were determined in religion. The true religion is that in which one does the devotion of God and meets the Almighty Lord. So He says that in the Golden Age, people used to do religious

practices and meet with Almighty God, and the soul which ran this chariot was content. The thoughts of the people in the Golden Age were not spread so much into the world as they are nowadays.

It is written that in the Golden Age, the average life of the people was one hundred thousand years, and the power of the mind was equal to the power of an elephant.

In the Treta Yuga, the chariot was Continenence and Power was its charioteer.

Now He says, "When the Silver Age came, the people were celibate: they were chaste, very strong, great warriors, and they used to have pure lives."

It is written about the Silver Age that the average life of the people was reduced to only ten percent of what it had been, or ten thousand years.

In the Dwapar Yuga, Austerity was the chariot and Truth its charioteer.

He says, "In the Copper Age, people performed austerities and did repetitions, and whatever they spoke from their mouth, they lived up to"—that is, they were truthful.

In that age also, the average life of the person was reduced to ten percent: it is written that people lived an average life of one thousand years.

In the Golden Age, the power of the mind is written as equal to the power of an elephant; in the Silver Age it was reduced to the power of a horse; in the Copper Age, the power of the mind was reduced further, to that of a goat.

In the Kali Yuga, the chariot is Fire and Falsehood is its charioteer.

He says, "The bodies or chariots in this Kali Yuga or Iron Age are the forms of Anger, whose other name is Fire; and Falsehood is that which is driving the chariot."

It is said that in the time of Sam Veda, the Lord was incarnated as one wearing white; People came in Truth and remained in Truth.

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly says that in the Golden Age, the time of Sam Veda, it is said that the white swan, wearing white, was incarnated. People were truthful, they dealt in truth, and in the end they dissolved themselves in that truth.

Everyone was absorbed in the Truth.

It is not that only a few people were truthful. He says, “Everyone—all the creatures at that time—dealt in Truth, preached Truth, were truthful. They came from the Truth, and in the end they went back into the Truth, the Almighty Lord.”

**It is said in the Rig Veda that God was all pervading;
The Naam of the Lord was present among the gods and in
the warriors.**

Rig Veda describes the Silver Age, and the highest God of gods is the Name of the Lord: and He is omnipotent and all-pervading.

Kabir Sahib says, “When the Naam is manifested within the heart, at that time all the sins are removed. Exactly as a little spark of fire burns away all the grass; in the same way, a little bit of Naam, if manifested in the heart, removes all the sins.”

**The sins are removed by meditating on Naam;
Nanak says, Through Naam one gets the liberation.**

Guru Nanak says, “Even in the Rig Veda, the glory of the Naam is described and the importance of the Naam is written. He who obtains the Naam and who does the meditation of Naam gets liberation, because Naam is the only medicine to remove the disease of our sins; and it is the only means of achieving the liberation.”

**In the time of Yajur Veda, by force he deceived
Chanraval;
He was Kahn Krishna among the Yadavas.**

Now he says, “He who deceived Chanraval the gopi in his love is called Krishna.” He was born in a family of Yadavas; in his childhood he was called by the name Kahn; later, when he grew up, he was called Lord Krishna.

**To please the gopis, he brought the Parijat;
In Brindavan he enjoyed with them.**

Now He says, “Fascinating the gopis, he brought them to Brindavan, and there he enjoyed, and became pleased with, the gopis.”

In the scriptures it is written that in the heavens there is a tree whose name is Parijat, sitting under which, you can fulfill all your desires. But Guru Nanak says, “There is no tree like Parijat. The real Parijat, that which can fulfill all your desires, is the Naam. By doing the devotion of Naam, you can easily fulfill your desires.”

**In the Kali Yuga, Arth Veda was created;
The name of the Lord became Allah.**

Now He says, “In the Iron Age, this present Kali Yug, the Arth Ved describes things.” At the time when Guru Nanak came into this world, the Moguls were very forceful and strong, and “as the king, so the people”—everyone, all the subjects of the Mogul kings, no matter in which religion they were born, no matter what religion they were practicing, in order to please the rulers, called God Almighty by the name of Allah, and swore by Allah; they did not remember God with the name of their religion but they all called Him by the name the Moguls used.

**They wore blue, and adopted the lifestyles of Turks and
Pathans.**

Muslims like to wear blue, especially if they have been to Mecca, the place of pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. They wear blue clothes so that people may know that they have been to Mecca. So in those days everyone in India wore blue clothes because people felt it was the orders of the Turks or Muslims, and they did not want to displease the rulers.

At that time Guru Gobind Singh Ji awakened the sleeping honor within the people of the other religions. He told them, “Why should you be afraid of death? Death will come whether you follow this religion or that. Why don't you maintain the religion in which you are born?” So, he awakened the people to continue to believe in the religion into which they had been born. Even though He was tortured and given a very hard time, Guru Gobind Singh was the only warrior Saint in north India who shook the roots of the Mogul Empire; after Him the Mogul Empire could not find a place in this country again.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji did not fight to gain rule over any state, or anything like that. The condition of India was so bad at that time that no one's honor was saved. Nobody was protected here, and everywhere people were sighing and crying.

**The four Vedas proclaim their own truth:
Those who read and understand them know its value.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "All the four Vedas have become true describing the glory of Naam. They all have said that Naam is the only means of liberation. Those who understand them find that their thoughts also become beautiful."

**If one after doing the devotion calls himself "lowly one,"
He gets the liberation, says Nanak.**

Now he says, "Those who love God and do His devotion, and always keep themselves in a low profile—who do not say anything like, 'We are something,' even after doing a very great thing—those who have this kind of humility are the real ones who get liberation, and they are liberated while living."

Tulsi Sahib says, "O Tulsi, in this world there are only three things worth doing: to speak sweet words, to be humble, and to work for others."

**I sacrifice myself to the Satguru,
On meeting Whom, I remembered my Husband—**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj describes and mentions the glory and importance of the Satgurus. He says, "I sacrifice myself, I lay down my life for my Satguru. Why do I sacrifice myself for the Satgurus?" He himself replies, "Only after meeting with the Masters and my Satguru was I able to do the devotion of the Lord."

As long as the Masters are sitting within Their bodies, They do not say, "You call us 'Sant' or 'Satguru,' or 'present Master,' or 'His Holiness,' or anything like that." They say, "In fact, it does not make any difference what name you give to us outwardly. It doesn't matter if you call us 'brother,' or 'sir,' or anything like that. You can call us by any name you want, but you should definitely catch hold of the Reality which we are talking about. After going within you will see what our Reality is." And only when we go within do we come to know the real position of the Master, and what Master has come to

give us – and what, day and night, He is thinking for us and and what He is doing for us.

**He Who, after giving the teachings, gave the mascara of
Knowledge—
With which eyes I saw the Reality of the world.**

He who gives the mascara of the knowledge of Naam, and He Who with His eyes made us see Almighty God – He who made us stand in front of the Lord – is the real Master.

When we put the mascara of Knowledge in our eyes, then the darkness of ignorance goes away, and the light of the Naam is manifested.

**Those who get attached to others, giving up the Hus-
band—
Such traders are drowned.**

Those who, giving up the real devotion of Almighty God, started devoting themselves to the gods and goddesses, and worshiping waters and holy places, could not deal in the merchandise for which they had come into this world, and drowned themselves in this ocean of life; they could not take advantage of their life.

**Satguru is the ship:
Rare are the ones who recognize Him.**

Guru Nanak says, “Satguru is the ship of Naam, but rare are those who recognize Him. Rare are those who understand Him.” If we try to find the number of those who have recognized Him, we will see that there are only a few out of millions. But those who do recognize and understand Him are easily liberated and taken across this ocean of life.

Showering His Grace, He ferried us across.

Often I have said that those who have done their meditation and have become perfect while living, have never said, “We are the enlightened ones, we are the perfect ones.” They always call themselves “the dirty ones,” and they have always called their Master “the pure one.” They say, “We are the dirty ones, our Master is the pure one, and He has made us pure.” Those who have been able to do the meditation of

Naam and manifested Naam within them, who have been able to cross this ocean of life, have never said, "This is because of our own efforts." They say, "No, this is not because of our efforts. This is only because of the grace of the Master. He gave us Naam initiation, and He made us cross this ocean of life."

**The tree of Simmal is straight as an arrow
And is very strong and heavy.**

The disciples asked Guru Nanak Dev Ji, "Master, do hypocrites get liberation?" He replied, "No, hypocrites do not get liberation, because everyone's account has to be settled. Almighty God always sees everyone's account, and He always gives justice." He gives the example of a tree which is called *simmal*. That tree is very long, very tall, and very heavy; but neither its leaves nor its fruit are useful for anyone. Animals and birds come from very far away thinking that this tree is very good—it's very tall, and its fruit also is very thick. But when they come there, they neither get fruit nor leaves, and they fly from there with their disappointment. In the same way, when people go to hypocrites, they go expecting something from them; when they do not get it, they leave disappointed.

**If to the simmal tree someone comes with hope, he goes
disappointed:
Its fruit is tasteless and its flowers nauseous,
Its leaves are also of no use.
Nanak says, Sweetness and humility are the essence of
good qualities.**

If there are some fruit trees near that tall simmal tree where the animals can go and satisfy their hunger, then they can get fruit that way. Guru Nanak says, "If you look at qualities, the low trees which give fruit are much better than the tall simmal tree."

He says, "Accept the qualities. Don't look at the tall or big body."

By this hymn, Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj means to say that you should not look at outer appearances. You should not see that, this person is very well educated, or he looks very fresh or very beautiful, or he speaks very good words or things like that, because all those things do not mean anything if that person has not done anything practically: if he has not gone within and manifested that Power within him. All these outer things may attract you, and you may go there: but unless you get the real thing, you will not be satisfied.

Because such people—those who are well educated, who can tell you many good stories, who can explain the scriptures to you in many ways, who can give very beautiful talks—usually those people have not done any practice. Inwardly they are nothing. Kabir Sahib says, “An ounce of practice is more than tons of theories. If you have done a little bit of practice, you can dominate those who have read tons of books.”

So here Guru Nanak says that when we go to such people, who outwardly seem to be well educated and who have many followers, and we start listening to them, in the beginning we like their beautiful words; but later on when our soul does not get that for which she has been craving, we become disappointed—because their programs are tasteless and we do not find any peace there. On the other hand, Someone Who has done the practice and manifested that Power of God Almighty within Him, even if He cannot speak or give a good talk, still, if He gives us darshan, our soul gets peace: because He Who has done the meditation can make us meditate. He who has gone within can take us within.

No Mahatmas, including Guru Nanak, condemn illiterates nor praise learned ones; neither do they condemn the learned ones and praise the illiterates. They mean that we can achieve this thing only by doing the practice, only by working for it. Just by talking about it, or just by giving talks, we cannot achieve liberation. Guru Nanak Sahib has said, “No one has realized God by talking.”

Kabir Sahib says, “By reading the Vedas and other holy scriptures, the worry of our mind does not go away.” No doubt by reading the Vedas, the Qateb, and other holy scriptures, we will become broad-minded and will get more knowledge of this world; but the worry will not go from within. We will always worry whether we will be accepted in the Court of the Lord or not, and what will happen when we will go there.

**Everyone bows to himself;
No one bows to others.
When we weigh things on the scale,
The scale which bows down is heavier.**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “In the devotion of love, one is taught to bow down; the ego is not taught there.” Because when we bow down to others and become humble in front of others, we are not doing any favor to anyone; we are not bowing down to anyone; we are bowing down to, and becoming humble in front of, our own Self. We

are not giving respect to anyone: we are respecting our own Self. God Almighty is present within all; therefore, if we bow down in front of anyone it means that we are bowing before God Almighty and giving respect to our own Self. If you weigh this, you will find that he who bows down is the heavier one: because when you look at the scales, you will find that only the pan in which there is more weight bows down. In the same way, he who has more within, bows down, and he who is humble gains more. So that is why here He says, "When we bow down to others, when we give respect to others, we are not respecting anyone but our own Self."

Kabir Sahib also says, "The Master who bows down to His disciple is the real sadhu." Outwardly you see that the Masters who are real Saints bow down to, and give respect to, their disciples.

**A sinner bows down twice as much
As does the hunter of the deer;
What is the use of bowing your head
If your heart is impure?**

There are ways and ways to bow down and give respect to others. We should not bow down like the leopard does: when the leopard is hunting his prey he bows down. In the same way, the deer hunter also bows down. We should not do like this. We should not bow down because of a feeling of guilt, and we should not try to show outside that we are humble. Whatever we are showing outside, we should have the same feeling within. We should have the feeling of humility within us, if we are going to express it outside.

**They read the holy books, do the sandhya (evening
prayers), and then argue;
They worship the stones and pretend to meditate, like the
crane.**

In those days the pundits used to worship pieces of stones as idols at dawn, and at dusk they did the practice called *sandhya*. So Guru Sahib here says, "No matter if you do the sandhya both times—and no matter if you worship stones—even if you put that piece of stone under your arm and sit in deep samadhi, that stone will not liberate you. The stone will drown, and it will make you also drown: it will not take you across."

Their mouths are adorned with falsehood.

Thrice a day they think upon the three-line verse (Gayatri Mantra).

He says, “What is the use of worshipping that piece of stone? What is the use of doing that sandhya? What is the use of reading the holy books, if you have not given up speaking lies, if you have not stopped fighting with others, if you have not stopped debating and arguing with people, and if you have not stopped saying, ‘I am good, and the others are bad’?”

Usually three times a day, or more if they can do it, they read the Gayatri Mantra, which says that God Almighty is the owner of the three worlds. The point of reading that mantra is to recognize and realize that Almighty Lord Who is the owner of the three worlds; but people do not have any sense of that, they think that just by reading that mantra, they will get liberation.

They are so competent in lying, that even if they have spoken a lie, they will prove that it is the truth. Once there was a king who asked his minister, “Why is it that I do not have any hair on my palms?” So the minister replied, “Your majesty, it is because you give so many donations that the hair of your palms has gone. By giving donations, the hair got rubbed away and you lost it.” So the king asked the minister, “Why is it that you do not have any hair on your palms?” He said, “Lord, the hair of my palms has gone from accepting donations from you.” So the king asked again, “Why is it that no one in this world has hair on their palms?” So the minister replied, “Lord, you give, and you lost your hair that way; we received, and we lost our hair that way; and seeing us receiving from you when they do not get anything, they resent it and rub their hands in anger; and in this way they have lost their hair.” So you see that this is a lie—no one has hair on his palms—but with his competence, that minister proved that it was the truth.

**They put their rosaries around their necks, and on their
foreheads is the Tilak;
They cover their heads with two pieces of cloth.**

This hymn was written when Guru Nanak Sahib had the discussion with the pundits. So here he tells them, “It does not matter if you put more than one rosary around your neck; and even if you put the *tilak* or saffron mark on your forehead and become like a *sidha purush*, it still won’t be any use; and even if you keep one spare piece of cloth

ready when you take the holy bath, still all these things are not going to do any good for you: you will not get any liberation that way.”

**If they knew the karmas of Brahm,
They would realize that all deeds are useless.**

Guru Nanak says, “He who becomes acquainted with Brahm and goes within, knows that all the karmas which you are doing are useless; they do not serve any purpose.”

**Nanak says with determination: One must meditate upon
Him,
But without Satguru one cannot get the Way.**

Guru Nanak Sahib says, “I know this for certain, and I say it with firm determination: unless we meet the Master we cannot cross all the planes which will come in our way, and without the Master our union with Almighty God will not happen.”

**Clothes and beautiful form must be left in this world;
Whatever one has done—good or bad—he has to suffer
that.**

Now He says, “This body, this piece of cloth which we have colored—we have to leave all this here in this world; all the things which we are collecting of this world are also going to be left here. Only our deeds—all of them, good or bad—will go with us, and we ourselves will have to bear their consequences. No one else is going to pay for our karmas.”

**One does what the mind wishes;
One has to go through the narrow path.**

In this world, getting high positions, we give orders according to what comes in our mind; but we forget that narrow path on which our soul has to travel. At that time our soul will be burdened with all the sins we have done, and from behind she will be kicked and knocked by the angels of the Lord of Judgment.

At that time the soul cries, remembering all the mistakes and bad deeds she has done. But who listens to the cries and the weeping then?

One has to go naked to Hell—a dreadful sight to behold;

One has to repent for the bad deeds.

Now Guru Nanak Sahib says, "Dear ones, this body will remain in this world, and all the things of this world will also remain here; the soul will have to go naked and alone over there, and according to our deeds, the Lord of Judgment will send the souls to the hells. And when the soul gets a beating, her condition becomes very frightful: because you know, when a jiva is being punished, what kind of condition becomes his."

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj has lovingly explained to us that we should do the meditation of Naam. If we want to look at faults, we should look at the faults of our own self. If we want to praise anyone, we should look at the qualities of our beloved Master. And we should not point our fingers at others; we should not say, "They have this fault or that fault," because what do we have to do with other people's faults? Why should we be worried about other people's faults? If anyone has done any mistake, God Almighty is there and He will look after his faults; He will see whether he gets punishment or not. We should not be worried about them. We should always look only at our own faults, and at the qualities of the Master.

The Sacred Thread

TODAY, as every day, a hymn from Asa ji di Var, a composition written by Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, is presented. Listen to it carefully.

In this world there are two paths for us to follow. One is the path of the mind, the other is the path of the Masters. By following the path of the mind, we get stuck in the pleasures of the organs of senses, and we create difficulties for our own selves. By following the path of our mind, we do such deeds, to suffer the consequences of which, we have to come back into this world of suffering again and again.

On the path of the Masters, we have to improve ourselves; and, by following the instructions of the Saints and Masters, and vacating our attention from all the nine openings of the body, we have to come to the eye center and connect ourselves with the Shabd Naam.

Saints and Mahatmas tell us that Sant Mat is sweet, loving, wonderful, unique, and no path can compete with it.

We know that every community or religion has its own outer appearance, its own outer rites and rituals, and that the outer appearance and rites and rituals of one religion are not similar to those of the others.

Saints and Mahatmas do not say that any religion or any community is bad. They say that you should remain in whatever religion you are born in. It is a good thing to be born into a religion. But they also say that the religions and the communities should serve as schools and colleges for us, where we can learn about God Almighty. And if we go deep into the basic teachings of those religions, we will find that the practice of the Surat Shabda Naam is always there: it is always taught that by doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, we can be liberated. But

in those religions we do not have practical people, but only those who read and teach the outer teachings; and that is why they teach us that we can get liberation by only following rites and rituals and doing outer things. So, when we follow the religions, we get stuck in that kind of thing, so that we think that we can achieve liberation and realize God Almighty by only doing the rites and rituals; and then we do not feel that it is important to do the meditation of Shabd Naam.

Christians understand that taking the baptism, going to church, offering prayers, and having complete faith in Christ, is enough for doing their devotion; they think that all these things will bring them liberation, but they have forgotten the real teaching of Christ, which was the meditation of Shabd Naam. They do not realize that only by doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, as Christ taught, will they get the liberation.

In the same way, in the Sikh religion it is understood that only by wearing the five signs can one become a disciple (*Sikh*) and follow the path of the Masters. Those five signs are: to have uncut hair; to wear a comb; to wear a special kind of bracelet; to wear a special kind of underwear; to carry a dagger. They say that unless you have all these five things with you, you cannot be called a *Sikh* or disciple, and you cannot follow the path of the Masters.

At present, no one follows the teaching of Guru Nanak and the Sikh Gurus, that you do the meditation and go within, since everything is within. We people do not follow the teaching of the Masters, and we do not do those things which they told us to do. By doing the outer rites and rituals, and taking up the outer appearances, we think that we are following the path of the Masters.

In the same way our Muslim brothers believe that the one who fasts one month out of the year, who goes on the pilgrimage to Mecca, who is circumcised, who offers prayer, and who donates to help others, is the one who follows the path of the Masters; they believe that only he who does all these things is the real devotee.

Similarly, the yogis believe that by performing the practices of *dhoti* and *neti* for cleansing the body, and by vacating the six chakras of the body, they are following the path of the Masters; and they spend all their time devoting themselves to these practices.

In the same way, the Hindus believe that by wearing the sacred thread, by going to the places of pilgrimage, by reading the holy book Gita, by doing the repetition of the Gayatri Mantra, by getting knowledge and making other people have knowledge, and by giving donations—by doing these outer six holy deeds—they are following the path of the Masters.

We do not mean to criticize any religion—we are all born in religions—even Saints and Mahatmas are born in one or another religion—but we all know very well about our religious people, and the practices which are prevailing in our religion: how everybody is concentrating on doing the outer rites and rituals, and outer deeds, and no one wants to look within. No one is making any effort to get that fruit of Naam which is within us.

Saints and Mahatmas lovingly explain to us: “Dear ones, to do the meditation of Shabd Naam you do not need to change your religion; you do not need to change your way of speaking; you do not need to change your clothes, or wear any particular colored clothes; you do not need to change any of your outer appearances to do the meditation of Naam.”

Mahatmas tell us, “If you want to follow the path of the Masters, then accept what we say and do what we are telling you to do.”

These five passions, namely, lust, anger, greed, attachment, and egoism, are like weapons which are attached to our body: it seems as if they are enjoying the pleasures, but that is not the reality. These poor ones do not get any pleasure: the pleasure is obtained by the stream of our mind. So Saints and Mahatmas lovingly explain to us that by doing Simran we should vacate the nine openings of our body and change the direction of the stream of our mind and of our soul; and by doing Simran we should come to the eye center; and after removing the physical, astral, and causal covers from our soul, we should come to the *Daswan Dwar* or tenth door. When our soul becomes free from all these veils and passions, the real path of the Masters starts: only after reaching the tenth door can we say that we are on the path of the Masters.

Mahatmas tell us that as long as we are within the limits of mind and intellect, we are functioning on the physical level, and there is no way we can abstain from physical pleasures. And if someone says that he has been able to rise above physical pleasures without rising above the limits of the mind and intellect, that is not true: because, even if we gain a little bit of control for some time—if we conquer lust, anger, greed, attachment, or egoism for some time—unless you have risen above the limit of the mind and intellect, they may come back and attack you once again and conquer you.

We meet many *tyagis* or renunciates who have given up many things outwardly, but we rarely find those renunciates who have given up everything from within. Kabir Sahib says, “Everyone gives up the gross attachment, but no one gives up the subtle attachment. He who gives up pride, he who gives up name and fame, and the subtle

attachment of maya, he is called the *munivar*, the greatest of all.”

When we are on the physical plane, the pleasures of physical maya bother us, and we are involved in them. When we go to the astral plane, there the astral maya puts us on the wrong path.

Saints and Mahatmas tell us that the Rishis and Munis were not bad people—they were very good people—but since they did not get the complete path, without the real guidance their mind misled them, and made them wander here and there. You can read in the Puranas many stories about the fall of the Rishis and Munis.

Guru Nanak Sahib was born in a *khatri* family; and in India, when a son grows up, they make him wear a “sacred thread,” and on the day of that ceremony they have a feast in which they even kill goats and serve that kind of food to all the family members and others. So, Guru Nanak’s father first had to struggle very hard to convince Him to take part in that ceremony. Finally, when He agreed to have that ceremony done to Him, the family pundit, whose name was Har Dayal, came there; and when he approached Him with the sacred thread, Guru Nanak said, “Pundit Ji, I am ready to wear the thread if you are willing to give it to me, but first listen to my thoughts about it: I will wear the sacred thread if your thread has all these qualities.”

**Compassion the cotton, Contentment the thread:
Of Continenence the knot, of Truth the twist.**

Usually the sacred thread is made of cotton. So Guru Nanak Dev Ji is saying, “Pundit Ji, this thread of yours is no use: it will not go with me into the Court of the Lord. Either it will get burned, or it will get lost, or it will become old and I will leave it.

“Further: a person should be gracious and merciful. That is what the cotton of the sacred thread should be. A person should be content: whatever God gives him, he should be grateful for that; and the form of the thread should be that contentment. And the twists and turns of the thread should be the chastity and purity of the person.”

He says, “I am ready to wear your sacred thread if your thread has all these qualities. If you have made it with these feelings and thoughts, I am ready to wear it.”

Tulsi Sahib also says, “Grace is the root of religion, and sin is what takes us to hell. Tulsi says, As long as you have life in your body, you should not give up being gracious.”

**This indeed is the sacred thread of the soul:
O Pundit, if you have one like it, then put it on me.**

**It neither breaks nor becomes dirty;
It neither burns nor wears out.**

He says, "The sacred thread which I have just told you about is the kind that neither breaks nor burns. Nothing goes wrong with this kind of thread, and it is the only sacred thread which goes with the jiva to the Court of God."

Nanak says, Blessed are those people who wear such a thread and go to the Court of God.

Now He tells the pundit, "Blessed are those people—they are worth worshipping—who go to the Court of the Lord wearing this kind of sacred thread."

If a satsangi has all these qualities—if he is gracious or merciful, if he is content, if he is celibate, if he adopts the Truth—he says, "If anyone has all these qualities in him, if he is practicing all these things, he is worth worshipping. Such a person who is wearing such a sacred thread—he is worth worshipping."

You will be surprised to learn that at this time Guru Nanak was very young; and the pundit was a learned scholar. Still He was explaining these difficult and complicated things to him, because the pundit thought that one could get liberation just by wearing that thread.

For four kauris the thread is bought; when one sits in the sanctified square, it is put on.

O disciple, put it on your ear: Now the brahmin has become your guru.

In those days, this sacred thread used to cost only four *kauris* (one penny) so it was not very expensive; they had a ceremony in the house, and after the pundit had put the sacred thread around the body of the person who is receiving it, he would speak into his ear, saying, "You should give turns of this sacred thread around your ear whenever you use the toilet, and you should not take this off unless you have a new one to put on." And then he would say, "Now this brahmin (i.e., himself) has become your guru. You do not need to seek any other master, and this sacred thread will give you liberation."

Even now in India, there are many families who have such family gurus, the brahmins. Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say that in His family also they had a pundit who visited them once in six months, and he was called "the family guru." So Master Sawan Singh used to

say that after He received the initiation from Baba Jaimal Singh, when that family pundit came to see Him, "Before, I used to give him only one rupee; but on that day I gave him ten rupees, and I told him, 'Now, that's all our connection with you. Now I have got the perfect Master. Now you are not our master, and we are not your disciples.' "

**He dies; the thread is burnt;
He goes without the thread.**

Guru Nanak Sahib says, "You see, Pundit Ji, even if someone does not take off that sacred thread during his lifetime, still when he leaves the body and it is burned, the thread will also be burned." That is, the person will have to go the Court of the Lord without this sacred thread: at the place where his accounts will be settled, this sacred thread will not go with him.

**Millions of thefts; millions of adulteries;
Millions of falsehoods; millions of abuses.**

Guru Nanak says, "You see, Pundit Ji, wearing this sacred thread, people do millions of bad deeds. They deceive others; they commit adulteries; they steal other peoples' things; they do millions of sins, and you never tell them that they should not do all this; you never tell them that they should abstain from doing these bad deeds. You only emphasize the wearing of this thread!"

**Millions of concealed deceits are with the jiva day and
night.**

**Spinning the cotton, the thread is made.
The Brahmin comes and twists it.
They eat the cooked he-goat;
They all say, "Put it on him."**

Now Guru Nanak says, "The girls make thread from cotton; the pundit comes and gives a twist and turn to it; in this way the thread is made. And at that time they kill goats: they cut their bodies into pieces and cook them, using spices and things like that. And after all the relatives who have gathered there for the ceremony eat that, they say, "Now make him wear the sacred thread; now do the ceremony."

Regarding the ceremony, Guru Nanak Dev Ji was explaining to the pundit, "I have come in this world to teach you that we should love the

animals and birds as we love human beings, and that the animals have the same right to live on this earth as human beings have.”

Once Guru Angad Dev Ji was going towards Goindwal, and on the way he met a person named Sheehan Uppal who was leading one hundred goats. Guru Angad Dev Ji asked him, “Sheehan Uppal, why you are taking all these goats with you?” He replied, “The ceremony of the hair-cutting of my son is happening soon, and my relatives and everybody from the community will come there, and I have to feed them. That is why I have these goats: I am going to kill them, and then I am going to cook them and serve them.” Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj told him, “Sheehan Uppal, you will kill these hundred goats to please your relatives, but do you think that the souls of these goats will give you any blessings? Will they give good blessings to your son?” After that, Sheehan Uppal talked more with Guru Angad Dev, understood the reality, and his heart melted; he received initiation from Guru Angad and became a very successful disciple.

Bhai Gurdas has written, “Once in the forest, a tiger was eating other creatures, when a goat came there. Looking at the tiger, she laughed. The tiger said, ‘Why you are laughing? I am going to kill you in a minute.’ She replied, ‘I am laughing to bear witness that if someone is listening to me, he should go and cut the genital organs of all the goats, so that no more may be born. Because with all goats, this happens: that we are killed. And I laughed because we eat grass and other green things, and still this happens to us! What will happen to those who eat us?’ ”

Kabir Sahib also says, “The goat eats grass and she is skinned. What will happen to those who eat the goats?”

We should not think that only the flesh of the goat is bad, and other flesh is all right to eat. Kabir Sahib says, “All flesh is the same, whether rennet, goat, or deer, or whether it is any other animal. Those who eat the flesh of any animal prepare their way to hell.”

The same thing happened with Bulleh Shah, the Sufi saint. In His childhood, at the ceremony of his circumcision, goats were going to be killed to cook and serve the people. He said, “You are happy that you will get the meat to eat, but they are unhappy because they have to leave this world.”

When it becomes old, one throws it away and wears another one;

Nanak says, The thread would not have broken if it had power.

Now He says, "When that sacred thread becomes old, it breaks, and then people wear another; but if that thread had power, it would have never broken."

**By believing in Naam, one receives honor.
The praise of the Lord is the true thread, which we get in
the Court of the Lord.
Such a pure thread never breaks.**

He says, "Pundit Ji, earn the meditation of the Naam. This is the real thread. This thread neither becomes dirty, nor gets burnt in the fire: this is the real thread which will go with you in the Court of the Lord."

He said, "You should do the meditation of Naam yourself, and you should tell the benefit of the meditation of Naam to your friends and other dear ones also. You should tell them that by meditating on Naam we get a place in the Court of the Lord."

**[You put] No thread on the organs of sense; No thread on
woman;
Every day our beards are spat on.
[You put] No thread on the feet; No thread on the hands;
No thread on the tongue; No thread on the eyes.**

Now He says, "You did not put the thread on your eyes," that is, you did not stop your eyes from seeing others' beauty and bad things; "You did not put the thread on your ear," meaning that you did not stop your ear from hearing the criticism of others; "You did not put the thread on your mouth," or stop it from speaking bad words and criticizing others. "You did not put the thread on your feet," you did not stop yourself from going in the wrong direction and doing wrong things. And, "You did not put the thread on your hand," means that you did not stop your hand from doing the bad deeds.

And, "You did not even put the thread on the organs of sense": you did not stop yourself from indulging in pleasures.

"Neither did you put the thread on woman." If the thread is necessary for salvation, how can women be saved if you never put the thread on them? You have not understood this.

**The one without thread himself wanders about;
He twists the threads for others and puts them on them.**

He says, "Pundit Ji, you yourself are without the thread. Are you wearing all the threads which I have mentioned? You are only twisting and turning the outer threads; and that kind of thread you are wearing on your body and are making other people wear. But have you put on all the threads which I have mentioned? You yourself are in illusion, and you are putting other people in illusion."

**Taking wages, you marry people off;
Taking out books, you tell them about the stars.**

Now he says, "You get paid for performing the wedding ceremonies of peoples' daughters and sisters, and if you don't get your money you don't do anything for them; and you open the book and tell people about the stars and about the auspicious days of doing things, but without taking money, you don't do anything for anyone."

In India, people give a lot of respect to daughters. Even the daughter of a poor person is respected and appreciated by rich people. So here Guru Nanak Dev Ji says, "You do not even spare the daughter! In order to get her married, you make them pay you."

**Listen O people: See this wonder.
His mind is blind, but his name is Sujan.**

Now, addressing the other people who were present there, Guru Nanak Dev Ji is saying, "Look here, O dear ones: your pundit is mentally blind, he is ignorant. He does not know what God has put within himself. But you people call him *Sujan*, the one with eyes of wisdom, who can see everything and know everything. What a surprising thing this is!"

Guru Sahib says, "He who has greed, egoism, and attachment in him, even if he is learned, you should call him foolish."

**If the Lord is gracious and showers grace,
He makes us do the right deeds.**

Guru Nanak sings the praises of Almighty God. He says, "The one on whom God Almighty showers His mercy and grace, He makes him obey His *Hukam*, His will." It means that He makes him do the meditation of Shabd Naam.

Such souls are inclined to the path of the Shabd Naam right from their beginning. They are always attracted to the real path of the Shabd Naam, and they are always in search of the true Masters.

**Only that servant can do His seva
Whom He makes obey His will.**

Only one who is given that recognition of the will of God, who has been blessed with this kind of recognition of the will of God, can earn the meditation of the Shabd Naam; only such a disciple, upon whom God Almighty showers His grace and who does the meditation of Shabd Naam, can be called the disciple of the Master; and only such a disciple can do the seva of the Master.

**One gets the palace of the Husband [Lord] only if one
resides in and accepts His Will.**

Now He says, "By obeying and accepting that will of God, by doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, by following the words of the Master, God Almighty gives us the place in His Real Home in the Court of the Lord; and there He embraces us and gives us the real honor."

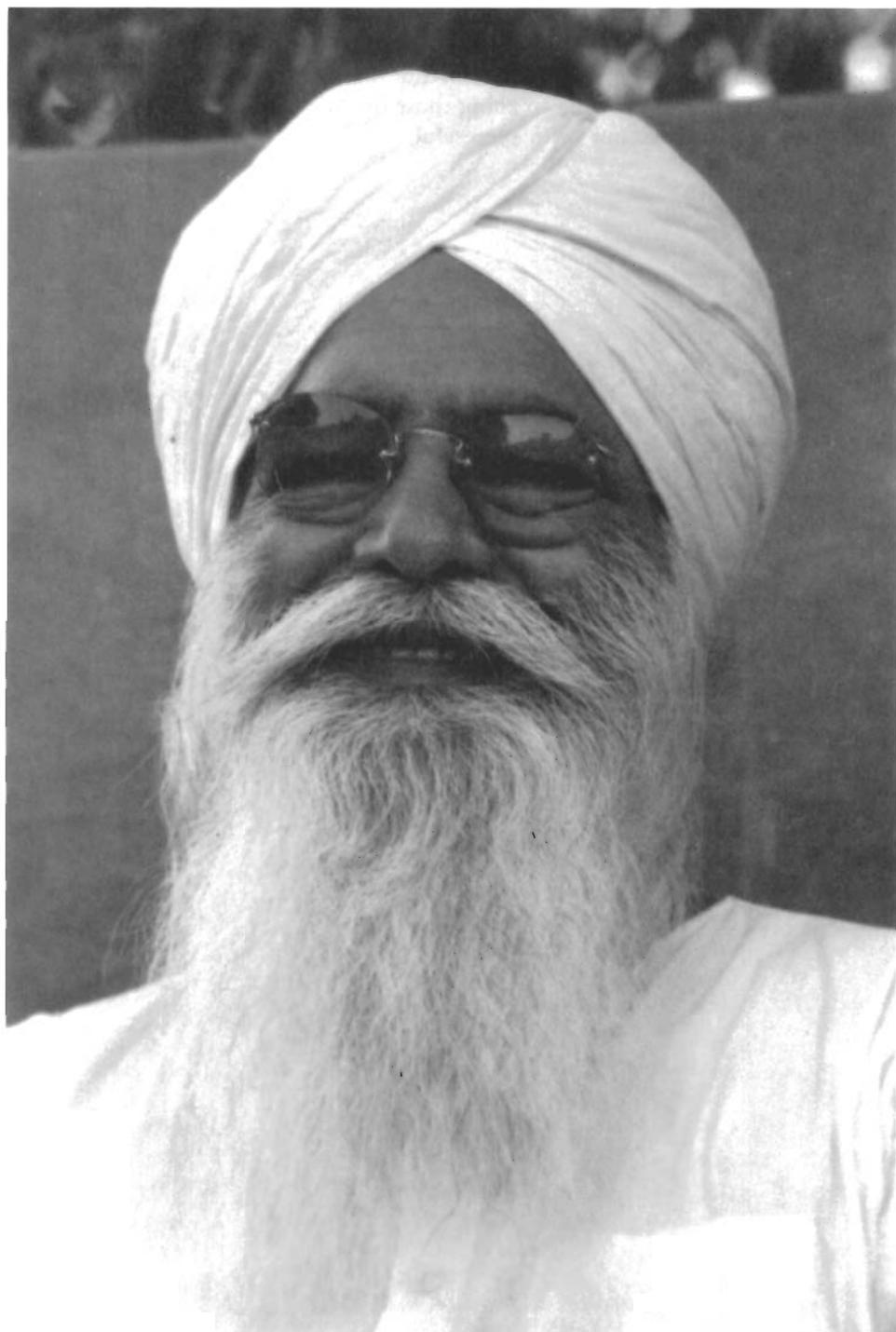
Until we go within after doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, we go on asking for worldly things from the Shabd Master; but when we go within, then we come to realize what our soul really needed, and what our soul was really yearning for. Only then we understand, "My soul was only yearning for God Almighty; she was only asking for the Master; she was only yearning for her real home, Sach Khand."

**He who does only what pleases the Lord, gets fruit accord-
ing to his wishes;
He goes to the Court of the Lord.**

He says, "If God is pleased with His devotee, such a devotee is accepted, such a devotee makes his way to Sach Khand, and is not stopped by any obstacle on the way. No power of the Negative Power can stop that devotee in any of the planes which are in between, and he easily goes to Sach Khand, the Real Home."

We should also do our meditation, removing our attention from all the outer rites and rituals. We should have respect and appreciation for all religions, but we should not get attached to outer rites and rituals. We should respect everyone. But as Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj told us what the sacred thread is which will go with us, and

what qualities we should adopt in our life, so according to His instructions, it is our duty to adopt those qualities, to do our meditation, and to make our birth successful.



To Wake Us Up

WHEN God showers grace on His souls, He sends His beloved children, Saints and Mahatmas, into this world. Saints and Mahatmas come to awaken us—the souls—who have forgotten our real home, and who are sleeping in respect to God Almighty. We are awake in respect to the world, but we are sleeping in respect to God. Saints and Mahatmas come in this world to wake us up.

One Mahatma comes and removes a couple of our misunderstandings and illusions. But we the people are unique: after that Mahatma leaves, we create many other different illusions, and we get stuck in those. Instead of realizing God Almighty within ourselves, we start searching for Him outside. By going to the places of pilgrimage and bathing in the holy waters, we think that we are realizing Him, and are doing His devotion.

Mahatmas have always had to face opposition from the orthodox people, those who are involved in rites and rituals—because the Mahatmas tell us the Reality, whereas the orthodox only preach outer things. If the Mahatmas were to adopt rituals like other people, we would never have gotten any real information about God Almighty, and no one would have done His devotion. But since Masters come into this world to tell us Reality, They always tell us the truth, no matter how much opposition They have to face. The Sufi saint Bulleh Shah says, “If I speak the truth it inflames; it enrages the flame. But if I keep quiet, then nothing is left.” Mahatmas always have to speak the truth. It is very hard for Them to present truth to the people, but since They have come into this world to give us Reality, They always speak the truth.

Kabir Sahib says, "If I speak the truth, no one is willing to accept it; but I cannot tell lies, because then the muscles and bones of my mind deteriorate."

Often I have said that true people and false cannot become alike or go together, because the True Being liberates us and the false one drowns us in this world. This is a very surprising play created by God Almighty since we are all children of the same Father, we are all brothers and sisters; but the True Beings are like those students who pass the examination, and the false ones are those who fail: whatever capital they had been given by God Almighty, they lose even that.

When Guru Nanak Dev and Kabir Sahib came into this world, They had to face opposition from only two sects: the Brahmins or Hindus, and the Muslims. Maharaj Kirpal Singh Ji used to say, "Nowadays, there are at least five or six hundred different religions and communities." So you can imagine how difficult it has become for the Masters of the present day to give out the message of truth when They have to face opposition from all those communities.

When Guru Nanak came, the path of the Brahmins was prevailing. Everywhere in India they were talked about and prominent. Guru Nanak lived in a place called Sultanpurlodi, and near that town the River Bei used to flow. Every morning at three o'clock He would bathe in the River Bei; then He would sit in meditation; when the sun rose He would come back to His home and go to His other things. One day, it so happened in the will of God, that He remained in His meditation after sunrise, because He was connected within; when He came out, He saw an old poor Brahmin, with his cow, trying to cross the bridge that spanned the River Bei very near Guru Nanak's meditation place. That bridge was the only way to get to Lahore or Delhi, and there was a soldier, a Kshatriya, posted there to collect tolls. Guru Nanak saw that the soldier would not let the Brahmin cross because he had no money for the toll. The Brahmin said, "Dear one, I am very poor. I don't have anything to pay you. How can I give you anything if I don't have anything?" But the soldier wouldn't let him cross, so he remained on that side of the river.

He waited and waited, and after some time, the cow left some dung there; and, because Kshatriyas think that cow dung is holy and use it for anointing their fireplaces, etc., that soldier took the dung, reverently pasted his fireplace with it, and cooked his food; but even then he didn't let the Brahmin take his cow over the bridge without the toll, even though he had respected the cow according to his religion. The cow was hungry; the Brahmin was hungry; and they were begging the soldier to let them cross. But he wouldn't let them, unless they paid the

toll. Seeing all this, Guru Nanak addressed this hymn to the soldier: “O soldier, you think cow dung is holy and that by appreciating and respecting it you will get liberation. But what about the cow who produced the dung? You are not sparing her or the pundit from the toll and you are hurting them; how do you think you will get liberation that way?”

You tax the cow and the Brahmin; you cannot get liberation through cow dung.

You have taken on dhoti, tilak, and rosary, but you eat the wealth of the malechh.

Guru Nanak Sahib tells that Kshatriya, “Dear one, you are wearing the *tilak* or caste mark on your forehead, the rosary around your neck, and you are also wearing the *dhoti*; you appear to be a very nice person, a *sidh purush*. But by taking the wealth of the *malechh*, the one with dirty intellect, you have lost your own intellect.” Guru Nanak called the Moguls, the Muslim rulers of His day, as *malechh* because they oppressed and tortured the Hindus. So here He says, “O dear one, outwardly you appear to be very good; but because you are accepting the wealth of the people with dirty intellect, your intellect has also become dirty.”

Inwardly you worship;

[Outwardly] you read the Muslim scriptures and observe the code of the Turks.

In those days the Muslim rulers used Hindus against other Hindus. So He is saying, “Inwardly, in your house, you are doing practices according to the Hindu religion, but outwardly you are respecting and giving honor to the Muslim scriptures, and the Muslim rites and rituals. You are afraid that if you will not do that to please your masters, you will lose your job.”

Give up this hypocrisy;

One gets liberation by meditating on Naam.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji lovingly explains to him: “Dear one, this hypocrisy will not be accepted by God Almighty; you are not going to get liberation this way. You take the Naam and meditate on it, because Naam is the only thing which will liberate you.”

**The man eaters do the Namaz;
The sacred thread circles the neck of those who wield the
knife.**

In those days, in the intoxication of power, the Muslims used to freely kill and torture Hindus; and after torturing, they offered their *Namaz* or prayers. And the Hindus who wore the sacred thread and were supposed to be in high positions, were taking bribes and doing “justice” in favor of the Muslims. They were instruments in the killing of their own brothers.

**In their homes the Brahmins blow the conch;
They also get the same taste.**

Whatever kind of food one eats, he gets that kind of intellect; his mind becomes like that. Now these Brahmins used to accept wealth from the *malechh*, those with dirty intellects, and taking their wealth, they would go and perform the rites and rituals and would get the effect of that: their intellect would also become dirty.

**False is their merchandise, false their business;
They speak and eat falsehood.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “All this literature which talks about outer rites and rituals is all garbage; it is false. And the merchandise — all the things we do in this world, thinking ‘we will get that, we will get to go to the heavens’ — those thoughts are not correct; that is also garbage.”

Also He says, “When they do the practice of offering some food to the idol, saying, ‘Now God has accepted some food, and the rest has become prashad’ — that also is not true: they are lying. They are doing that for their own self-interest. Within themselves they see only darkness. What else do they see except darkness within?”

**For them the abode of religion and [the sense of] shame is
far away;
Nanak says, They are filled up with falsehood.**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji says, “These people are far away from the place where our soul gets the knowledge of Brahm. Outwardly, whatever they are doing or saying or are involved in, is garbage; and they enjoy being involved in garbage.”

**On their forehead is the saffron mark.
The ends of the dhoti are tucked in their waistband.
But in their hands they have knives.
They are the butchers of the world.**

Now He says, “They have the *tilak* on their forehead, and they are outwardly Brahmins—*sidh purush*. But in the hand they are carrying the pen which is the form of the dagger, and they accept bribes from the people whose ‘justice’ they are doing. They do not do true justice; they only do justice in favor of those who give them bribes.”

Baba Bishan Das Ji used to tell a story of how people did justice in those days. Once there was a shepherd and a weaver, and there was a house which was owned by the weaver; but somehow the shepherd took over the possession of that house. So the weaver went to the Maulvi, the Muslim clergyman who presided over the court, and told him, “That is my house, and the shepherd has taken it over; you should do justice.” He knew that unless he gave him a bribe he would not do any “justice” in favor of him, but he was a poor person and he did not have anything except his turban. So he took off his turban and placed that at the feet of the Maulvi and told him, “Please accept this and do justice in my favor even though I am telling you the truth that that house belongs to me.” Now the shepherd was a little more wealthy than the weaver, so he went to the Maulvi and gave him a bullock, which was more expensive than the turban. So naturally, when the time of justice came, the Maulvi decided in favor of the shepherd. That weaver was sitting there with his hand on his head, reminding the Maulvi that he had given him his turban and that he should protect the honor of his turban. But the Maulvi did not pay any attention to that. The clerk who was there, and who knew who had given what, said, “O foolish one, do you not know that the bullock has eaten the turban?” This is how they did justice in those times.

It is because these people were not doing true justice that Guru Nanak Sahib had to say all these things. He is not criticizing anyone. He tells the Reality: He calls the pen with which they write the decrees the knife, and he names them the butchers of this world.

**They seek approval by wearing blue clothes;
Accepting the food of the malechh, they worship the
Puranas.**

It was the rule in those days that those who wanted to go to court should wear blue clothes; the Muslims liked that. So the pundits wore

blue clothes whenever they went to court, in order to please their seniors; then, taking money from them, they would go to their homes and worship the Puranas, their holy scriptures.

They eat the he-goat of those who slaughter it the wrong way;*

(And then say) "No one should come into our sacred square" (in the kitchen).

He says, "They kill the goat 'the wrong way,' and after killing and cooking him, they tell people not to come to the kitchen, because they would contaminate it."

They anoint the sacred square (with cow dung) and draw the lines.

The false ones come and sit on it.

The pundits used to draw a line in the kitchen where they would cook their food, so that people would not cross that line and destroy the sanctity of that place. So Guru Nanak Sahib is telling them, "What will the lines which you have made do? How can you keep the place pure and clean when you yourself are full of lies? When you yourself are not pure?"

Kabir Sahib says, "By day you keep the fast. By night you kill the cow. How can God be pleased with your devotion, when it has involved so much blood?"

"Lest it be defiled, lest it be defiled—our food will be defiled!"

They do bad deeds with their defiled bodies;

Their mind is full of falsehood, but they fill their hand with water.**

They say that if anyone comes in the kitchen when the food is being prepared, that contaminates the food. So Guru Nanak says, "How can that food remain pure when you have killed the goat and cooked it? How can that food remain pure when you have made it impure? You

*Guru Nanak is being ironic. Killing the goat "the wrong way" refers to the supposed "right way" according to Muslim ritual. In reality, of course, there is no "right way."

**A method of swearing or guaranteeing according to Hindu ritual.

are liars; you are full of impurities.” Now we stamp or notarize papers and deeds to guarantee them, but in those days people used to take some water in their hand and pledge, and their guarantee would be accepted. So Guru Nanak says, “How can your guarantees be true, when you are full of falsehood and lies?”

**Nanak says, Meditate on the Truth;
If you are pure, you get Truth.**

Now He says, “We *can* achieve perfect God Almighty, Who is never destroyed, Who is always permanent, and Who resides in Sach Khand. But only if we keep our body, our mind, and our thoughts pure, and only if we live a very high life, can we achieve Him.”

Guru Nanak has said, “Truth is above all, but higher still is true living.” No doubt Truth is higher than everything, but to have true living is even higher than Truth.

Kabir Sahib says, “On the forehead we have the tilak sign, and in our hands we have the rosary: We understand God Almighty to be a toy, and we play with Him.” But this is not the case: if we want to realize God Almighty, if we want to achieve Him, if we want to see Him, we have to become as pure as He is.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, “Usually the people from the west are in a hurry to get results. They want results very fast. But they never ask themselves this question: How pure are we? How much effort are we making? How ready are we?”

This is my own experience: that we have so many thoughts only when we give up meditation, stop filling out the diaries, and stop living a true life. So we should always check our life by keeping the diary; and often I have said that we should not repeat our mistakes. What is the use of keeping the diaries, if we go on putting in the marks of the same mistakes we are making every day? It should not be that, whenever we are told something, we say, “Okay, we will not do it,” but later on we do the same thing. So that is why we should always keep a check on our life by writing the diaries.

**Everyone is in His Remembrance;
Graciously He makes people work under His vision.**

Now Guru Nanak Dev Ji sings the praise of Almighty God and describes His glory. He says, “Dear ones, you should remove this thought: that God has forgotten you.” He says, “No, that is not the case: He has never forgotten you; He always remembers you; your

names are written on His heart; and under His vision He is seeing everyone and making them go through the karma they are supposed to. He Himself is taking care of them.”

It is our mistake if we say that God does not see when we are committing sins. He sees everything. You know that no one wants to commit sin but everyone commits sin; everyone wants to do good deeds, but no one does them.

The Mahatmas Whose eyes are open tell us that God Almighty can see us whether we are sitting on top of a mountain or under the earth; and He nourishes us no matter where we are. You know that He also sends nourishment to the creatures who live in the stones; even there He protects them. He takes care of everyone and He sees everyone.

**He Himself praises;
He Himself makes them do karma.**

He Himself makes the gurumukhs search for Him. He Himself puts the gurumukhs on the path of His devotion, and He Himself makes the gurumukhs realize Him. And then He Himself gives the glory to the gurumukh: “You have done a very good karma.” He Himself makes the manmukhs; He Himself chooses whom He should make forget the Path, and He Himself makes them forget the Path.

When some dear ones asked Guru Nanak, “Master, when you say that everything is in the hands of God, and God Almighty Himself makes us do the karmas, then why it is so that people go to the hells or heavens? Why do some people suffer sicknesses and others enjoy good health? Why it is so when God Almighty does everything and everything is in His hands?” Guru Nanak Sahib said, “This is a unique and surprising thing, and you should try to understand it. You will have to go within to understand this.” The thing is that when any good thing happens, then the person says, “I have done this. This is only because of my efforts that this good thing happened.” And he forgets that everything is happening in the will of God, and that in fact God Almighty is doing it. And his I-hood, his ego, is the thing which makes him get involved in pain and suffering, because whenever any moment of pain comes, whenever anything goes wrong, he blames God Almighty for that: he has forgotten that everything is happening in the will of God.

**He Himself is the highest of all in this highest creation;
He Himself attaches people to their works.**

God Almighty is highest of all. The creation which He has created is also highest of all. He Himself has attached people to their jobs. And He Himself has given them intellects according to their karma, and He Himself inspires them according to their intellect.

**If He withdraws His grace, He makes a king eat grass:
Even if he begs from door to door, he does not get any
alms.**

Now he says, "God is endless. No one can describe His glory. If God Almighty withdraws His grace, if He takes away His gracious eyes from a king or an emperor, He can make that emperor go from door to door and beg. He can make that emperor cut grass to earn his livelihood, and even if he begs, still no one is ready to give him anything if God has taken away His grace from Him."

Dara Shikoh was the son of Shah Jahan, the Mogul emperor. He was an initiate of the Sufi saint, Sarmad. Dara Shikoh was a very good initiate of Sarmad; he used to meditate and go within. So when Sarmad was teaching him the bani of Guru Nanak, and when it came to this particular bani which we have just read, Dara Shikoh said, "Master, I agree with every other thing which Guru Nanak has written, but I do not agree with this. How can an emperor become a beggar? Even if he did become a beggar, why would his people not recognize him? Why would they not give him something if he begs from them? And would an emperor have to eat grass? I do not agree with this." Now the Sufi saint Sarmad was a very good mahatma and He knew the inner secret, so He did not reply to Dara Shikoh; He just kept quiet. Dara Shikoh was an adored son of Shah Jahan, who wanted to give him the throne; but Aurangzeb, the other son of Shah Jahan, didn't want that. *He* wanted to become king. So Shah Jahan was imprisoned by Aurangzeb, and Dara Shikoh was not made king. You know that in politics, when it is a question of obtaining power and rule, no brother or sister is considered. He who wants to become the king or ruler is worried only for his own self; he does not consider whether one is his brother or sister or not. So Aurangzeb did not recognize Dara Shikoh and he did not give him the throne; instead he gave him a hard time. So Dara Shikoh ran away from Delhi, and came to the seventh guru of the Sikhs, Guru Hari Rai, and requested Him to help him reach Lahore safely. So the Master helped him go to Lahore.

In Lahore he was accompanied by one of his servants, and he also had a little money; at one place he collected some firewood, and when he was cooking his food, he blew some air in the fireplace, and that

brought all the ashes on his face. Looking at that his servant laughed and said, "You are a king, but since you were spending so much time in the company of a fakir, you have also become a fakir: the ashes are all over your face!" Dara Shikoh told that servant, "Dear one, you do not know what I have gained in the company of the fakirs. It is only because of the time I have spent in the company of the Masters that, even though I have lost my empire, still I do not mind; I am not worried; I am able to face all this happily in the will of God."

Dara Shikoh was afraid of Aurangzeb and his forces, because they were looking for him everywhere in order to kill him; so he ran from forest to forest, hiding from the forces of Aurangzeb. One day, because he was a meditator, this came in his mind: he thought, "I am running from place to place only to save my body — this body which is not going to go with me. Why not do the devotion of the Lord, and surrender to the king my brother? This body is not going to live forever. Why run here and there to protect this useless body?"

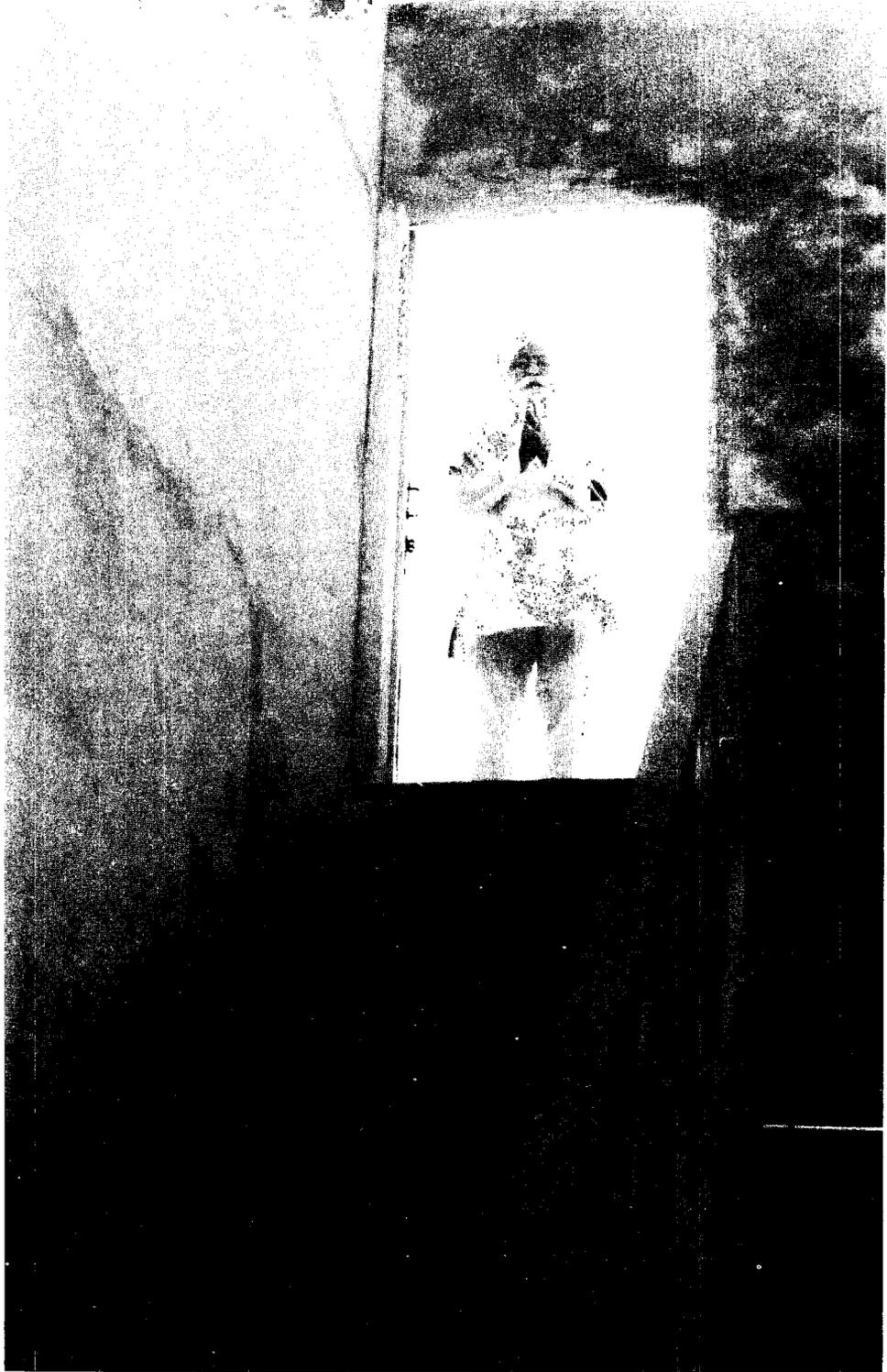
So from Lahore he came back to Delhi, where Aurangzeb captured him, imprisoned him, and decided that he should ride through the capital on an ass and then be killed. But his advisors told him that he should not do that: Dara Shikoh was, after all, the son of his father, his brother, so it would not be good to make him ride on an ass around the capital: he should ride on an elephant. So he was taken everywhere on that elephant.

Later he was very weak, as he had not eaten food for many days, and when he was brought near a chickpea field, he tried to eat some of the grass or leaves of the chickpea plant; but the soldiers were under the orders of Aurangzeb, not to allow him to eat anything, not even grass; so even though he tried, he could not eat the grass. At that time he remembered what his Master Sarmad had said, quoting Guru Nanak's bani: "If God takes away His gracious sight, if God does not shower grace on a person, the emperor can become a beggar and may have to eat grass." So then he realized, "Once I was a king; I was going to become an emperor, but I have not become an emperor; and I cannot even eat grass. So whatever the Masters have said is true."

Later they came to another place where a woman was cooking food, and since he was very hungry, he asked for something; but that woman replied, "Don't you know the orders of Aurangzeb? If I give you any food, he will kill me." So he did not get any food from that woman even though he begged from her. So then again he remembered the words of his Master about Guru Nanak's bani, and was convinced that whatever the Masters have written was completely true.

Eventually he was taken to the place where Sarmad was kept, because his Master had also been imprisoned by Aurangzeb on the grounds that he was helping Dara Shikoh to get the throne. But you know that Saints and Mahatmas do not have anything to do with worldly power and rulers, and Dara Shikoh did not get any help from his Master Sarmad for getting the throne; it was just a useless allegation. So when Dara Shikoh and Sarmad came face to face, the Master said, "Dara Shikoh, now the door of Sach Khand is open; why don't you sacrifice your head? Why don't you give up your body, and come to the real Kingdom of God and get the real throne?" So hearing the words of his Master Sarmad, Dara Shikoh gave himself up: he sacrificed his head and went to the Real Home.

Guru Nanak Sahib did not criticize anyone, and we should not understand what he said about these people as criticism: we should not argue with any community or any religion, and we should not criticize them. Because Guru Nanak said these things according to the condition of the society of that time, and in the end He said, "God Almighty is such a Power Who does not forget anything. After creating the creation He does not become careless, He has not forgotten anyone; and under His vision, His gracious sight, He is making everyone do things in this world: everything is happening under His guidance, and under His power." And He said, "The liberation from this suffering world can be obtained only by doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, because God Almighty is within all of us, and God Almighty is showering grace on everyone." He also said, "If He showers His grace on the poor beggar, He can make Him the king of the whole world; and if He withdraws His gracious sight, if He stops showering grace on the emperor of this world, He can turn him into a beggar and make him wander here and there."



The Pure and the Impure

EVEN NOW in India, in Hindu families, people believe that if their elders have left the body, and they do something on their behalf—if they give a donation in their name to the poor and the needy, or feed someone—as long as it is done through the brahmins, they believe that their departed elders will get the benefit.

This practice is called *Sharad*, which means “the practice done with faith,” and Sharad is usually done at the end of August or the beginning of September. There are fifteen days at that time during which Sharad is performed.

In Sant Mat such superstitions are not believed. The Masters tell us that we should serve and take care of our parents and grandparents while they are in the body. After they have left the body, if you feed the brahmins, saying that in this way your parents or grandparents will get the benefit of it, that is not going to happen. Even here, if we feed someone on behalf of somebody else, or if we eat food, saying that we are eating on behalf of another person, the person in whose name we are eating will not feel anything in his stomach even though he may be sitting right next to us. So that is why Masters tell us that feeding a brahmin or doing good deeds to benefit your parents or grandparents who have left the body will not work.

Baba Bishan Das Ji used to say, “This practice was started by some greedy person. Not even a letter reaches a person if the address is not written correctly; how can we expect food to reach our parents when we do not know in which body they are, or where they are living?” Our parents or grandparents who have left the bodies have not told us where they are: how can we expect the food which we are feeding the brahmin to reach them?

In Lahore there were two brothers who were traders by profession. They had to perform the Sharad of their parents (it is supposed to be done once a year), but they were poor and did not have any money. They told the brahmin this, but he said, "I don't care whether you have the money or not. It doesn't matter to me if you steal it or get it any other way, but you should give me a donation in the name of your parents, and you should perform the Sharad and do everything required in that practice." So those brothers did every possible thing to perform the Sharad. Guru Nanak Sahib was in Lahore at that time, and in the bani which will be presented to you now, Guru Nanak is addressing that brahmin.

Once an initiate of Guru Nanak named Duni Chand was also performing the Sharad of his father. When Guru Nanak Sahib came there and saw all the people eating the feast, He asked Duni Chand, "What are you doing?" So he said, "Master, I am performing the Sharad of my father." Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj was all-conscious; He told him, "Duni Chand, you are doing all this for your father; you are thinking that by feeding all these people you are feeding your father; but you don't even know in which body your father is now. I'm telling you that your father is in the body of a tiger, and he is not going to eat all this rice pudding you have made, because it is not good for him; it is not his food." Duni Chand believed in Guru Nanak, so he fell at His feet and said, "Master, since You have removed this illusion, kindly tell me where my father is, so that I may go and take care of him, and liberate him." So Guru Nanak, Who was all-gracious, told Duni Chand that his father, in the body of a tiger, was in some bushes nearby; and Guru Nanak gave him some water and told him, "Go and sprinkle this water on the body of the tiger, and he will leave the body"—because the tiger was very old, and could not hunt, and he had been hungry for the past two days. So with grace, when Duni Chand went there and sprinkled the water on the tiger, he left the body. So Saints and Mahatmas are all-conscious, and whenever They come in this world, They remove such illusions from us.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj assumed ten bodies in the Sikh community, and I'm very sorry to say that while such Mahatmas, when They come, remove so many illusions from us, still, after They leave, even in the Sikh community itself, we revert to the same kind of practice. Instead of inviting the pundits and brahmins, the Sikhs invite the Granthis and collect everyone; and instead of serving rice pudding they make halva; but it is the same practice.

Once in 77RB a close relative of Pathi Ji came to invite me to have food in his home; he said that he was going to feed five Sikhs. I said,

“But we are more than five, we are six or seven people here.” But he said, “No, I am inviting only five Sikhs.” Later Pathi Ji told me that it was their tradition of doing Sharad to invite only five people and feed them. When I told that person about the reality of this practice, then he understood.

Kabir Sahib says, “When the parents are living, no one takes care of them; when they leave the body, other people are fed on their behalf. But what do those poor parents get from their children’s feeding other people? That food is eaten by the crows.”

In India, people don’t even turn away their animals when they become old and useless, they take good care of them until they leave the body; but now gradually the effect, the impact, of western countries is coming to India also. In India now, you can find many homes for old people. When our parents were alive and we were infants, what did we not expect them to do for us? They do every possible thing for us, but when they become old and are not able to support themselves, we send them to old age homes.

After our elder one has left the body, we perform so many deeds supposedly in his name, but in reality it is only to glorify our own name. We do those things so that people may be impressed with us and praise us.

**If a thief robs a house and gives his plunder for his
deceased ancestors,
It is recognized in the other world and the ancestors are
called “thieves.”**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib lovingly tells that brahmin who had told the two brothers to steal the money if they had to: “O brahmin, you told them to deceive others and to steal. Just consider: the people whose things they would have stolen to perform the Sharad of their parents, they also have parents; and when you are performing Sharad in the name of the parents of the thieves, the parents of the people whose things were stolen will recognize those things and they will not only blame the thieves, but they will also blame their parents on whose behalf you are making them feed you.”

**The hands of the broker are cut: the Lord does this justice.
Nanak says, One gets only that in the Beyond which he
himself has earned and given.**

Guru Nanak Sahib lovingly says, “The Lord of Judgment, who has been appointed by the Almighty Lord, cuts the hands of the broker or middleman.” The person who inspires other people to steal – such as that brahmin – will be treated as a thief.

Guru Nanak says, “What reaches our parents? He who himself works wholeheartedly and earns his livelihood with the sweat of his brow, and out of that earning donates in the name of his parents – that which he has earned honestly and with sincere means, only that reaches our parents.”

Bulleh Shah, a Sufi saint, says, “They steal a lot and donate a little; then, on the roof of their homes, they wait for angels to liberate them.”

**As the woman has her periods again and again,
So does impurity abide in the mouth of the impure: con-
tinually they are disgraced.**

In India, especially in the past, women were treated like sandals on the feet of men. They were considered as lowly beings, and were always confined to the home. No matter how good the woman may have been, she was always treated as a slave. This is because in the olden days, scholars, writers, and “great people” were always men. But whenever Saints and Mahatmas came into this world, They gave equal status to women: for Them, it does not make any difference whether one is man or woman. They give the same respect and appreciation to women as they give to men.

Guru Nanak Sahib discussed this with the pundits, who argued with Him a lot about the status of women. They said, “How it is possible for women to be of the same status as men? How can they be pure? Every month they lose their dirty blood!” So Guru Nanak Sahib lovingly told them, “No doubt they have their monthly periods, but still you cannot say that they are not pure. We are all impure if our attention is not towards God. Anytime we look away from God Almighty, we have become impure. Our mouth is impure, our eyes are impure. Anything which diverts our attention from Almighty God is an impurity.”

Kabir Sahib says, “O Kabir, only those people are pure who understand the Reality and live up to it.”

**Those who sit and clean their bodies are not called “pure
ones”;**

Nanak says, The pure ones are those within whom He resides.

The pundits said, "Master, we wake up every morning at three o'clock and we bathe; and we always keep two *dhotis* to wrap our body; and we always wear new clothes. So why do you call us contaminated or impure? We are always purifying our body!" Guru Nanak replied, "Just by bathing the body you cannot become pure: water can remove only the dirt of the body. It cannot remove the impurities from within you. I call only those people pure who manifest the Naam within them and have cleared up all their sins. He who meditates on the Naam all the time, whether he is sitting or standing, sleeping or awake, I call him pure."

**The saddled horses swift as the wind—
The harems decorated colorfully—**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib describes the condition of this world. In those days they didn't have the means of transportation that we have now: trains, cars, airplanes. The best means of transportation in those days were horses, or camels, or elephants; and people used to have many different kinds of comfortable seats on such animals. The horses would run very fast: as swift as the wind. So here Guru Nanak says, "Not even those people who own so many horses, camels, and elephants, and whose horses run as fast as the wind blows — not even they lived in this world forever. They also left it one day."

He says further, "Not even those kings who had so many queens, and whose queens were very beautiful, who used to wear so much jewelry — not even those kings, who enjoyed so much of the worldly pleasures, remained in this world: they left all their queens and their pleasures."

**And the houses, halls, mansions—
Making which the entanglements were spread—**

He says, "Not even those kings who had so many palaces, and so many other homes besides their palace" — kings used to have pleasure gardens and hunting parks, with beautiful homes in their midst — "not even those kings whose orders were carried out right away by so many people, not even they lived in this world forever."

They indulge in things as they wish.

They lose as they do not recognize God.

Now He says, “Everyone obeys the orders of kings who have a lot of power: they give the orders and they are carried out by their servants. They have so many worldly things; but since they did not recognize Almighty God Who came in human form, and they did not do His devotion, they were not welcomed and appreciated in the Court of the Lord. Whatever they had in this world, they lost; they left this world like a defeated gambler.”

They order and eat; looking at their palaces, they forget death.

Then old age comes and they lose their beauty.

Guru Nanak Sahib says, “Those kings and emperors did not collect all that wealth by working hard with the sweat of their brow. They collected it just by imposing taxes on the people, punishing them, and taking things from them.” They have servants and they order them, “Bring this thing or that thing,” and in that way they are enjoying the pleasures. They are living in a luxurious way. But Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “When their youth goes away and their old age comes”—you know that death does not spare anyone and we do not know when death is going to come—“so when old age comes and death follows, they leave everything here.”

Guru Nanak Sahib means to wake us up, we who are sleeping in the deep sleep of illusion and misunderstanding. He tells us that we have been given this precious human birth only to do the devotion of God, and we should do that devotion in this human body.

**If we believe in “impurity,” then everything is impure:
Even in dried cow-dung and wood there are worms.**

When a child is born into a Hindu family, it is called *sutak* or “the impure one”; and if a death occurs in the family, they consider that house to be *patak*—again “the impure one”—and for a few days people don’t like to visit such families or eat anything there, because they believe that that house has become impure.

In Delhi there were two people who were performing the Sharad of their parents and they had invited the pundits to come and eat food. They had prepared many good kinds of food for the pundits, but meanwhile in their home a child was born. So the pundits thought that the house had become *sutak* or impure, and they did not accept any

food, nor did they perform the Sharad there. So those two people were hurt. When they came to know about Guru Nanak Sahib visiting Delhi, they went to Him and requested Him to come and have food there; and they told Him how their feelings were hurt because the pundits would not eat their food, and because they were saying that their home had become impure. So Guru Nanak told them, "Well, I will send my dear ones to eat food in your home," and in that way He consoled them. In this brief hymn, Guru Nanak is addressing those two pundits who refused to eat food in the homes of those people who had invited them to perform the Sharad. Guru Nanak is lovingly explaining to them the real meaning of *sutak* and *patak*.

He says, "O dear one, if you believe in *sutak*—if you believe in this business of becoming impure—you should know that you have impurity in your own home every day. Every day many creatures take birth in your home and die: in the firewood which you burn, there are so many ants and other creatures which are born, and which you kill, and again they are born."

As many as are the grains of food, not one is without life.

He says, "All the seeds of grain which you eat every day have souls in them." All fruits, all grains, all seeds—souls enter into those grains and fruits and vegetables through the sun rays; nothing is without the presence of the soul. Everything is living. That is why when you roast grains, they make a cracking noise when the souls go out. So Guru Nanak says here, "If you believe in this business of *sutak* or becoming impure, you should give up eating grains and fruits because they also have souls; they die when you eat them; and again they are born."

**First of all the water is alive—
Because of which is all this life.**

He says, "Everyone drinks water, and gets life from water. They live because of water; and in the water also, many creatures take birth and die there, they indulge there, they do everything there; and when we drink the water we do not know how many creatures we are eating. So if you believe in this business of *sutak* only because someone has taken birth or someone has died, then, O Pundit Ji, why do you drink the water? You should also give up drinking water."

How can we believe in "impurity" when our kitchen is full of impurities?

**Nanak says, Impurity cannot be removed like this: Only a
Wise One can clean it up.**

Guru Nanak says, "The food which you prepare everyday in your home is also *sutak* or impure because you prepare the food with the help of all these things: water, grain, and other living things. Just by giving up all those things you cannot get rid of impurities. We can get rid of this impurity only by doing the devotion of God, by getting the knowledge of God. And we can become pure ones, and get rid of our impurities, only when we manifest that Naam which is all-pure within ourselves."

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj does not mean to criticize any community. He is not against any rites or rituals or practices of any particular religion. He is lovingly explaining to us what real impurity is, what *sutak* really means, and how by doing the devotion of Shabd Naam we can get rid of that *sutak* or impurity.

In the coming lines, Guru Nanak tells us how we become *sutak* or impure.

**Greed is the impurity of mind;
Falsehood the impurity of tongue.**

He says, "To understand other people's wealth as your own, and to have an eye on that wealth, is *sutak* or impurity of mind. To speak lies and to criticize others is impurity of your tongue."

**To see another's woman, beauty, and wealth is the impu-
rity of the eyes;
To hear and carry on criticism is the impurity of the ears.**

He says, "The impurity of the eyes is looking at other people's women with bad intentions. And the impurity of the ears is when we listen to unbelievable things and accept them as true."

**Nanak says, Even those like Hansas are thus bound to
impurity;
They also go to the City of Death and Judgment.**

Now He says, "The souls were pure and holy. They were like the *Hansas* or swans, and their food was the pearls of the Limitless Sound. But because of living in the company of the dirt of this world, and the company of the mind, they have also become dirty and

involved in this world, and they have lost their purity. And because of their impurity, the souls which were holy and pure once are now taken by the Lord of Judgment and according to their deeds, they are given the punishment of other births.”

The impurity which one gets from someone else is all illusion.

Birth and death is in His Will; in His will one comes and goes.

Guru Nanak Sahib explains to that brahmin, “Dear one, all these are your illusions: everything is in the will of God. Birth is in the will of God; death is in the will of God. The *jiva* or soul takes birth into this world in the will of God, and she leaves this world in the will of God.” Now He says, “God Almighty has given food to every human being, and that food is prepared in the will of God; so it is pure. And by going in the company of *Gurumukhs* or Mahatmas who have manifested God within them, we also become pure ones; and as for those Gurumukhs who do the devotion of the Lord and manifest God Almighty within them, no *sutak* or *patak*—no impurity—bothers them: those who have molded their lives according to the teachings of the Masters, and those who have manifested that Naam within them, are free from all impurities and become pure ones.”

Praise the great Satguru, Who has great qualities in Him.

Guru Nanak Sahib sings the glory of his Master, the Satguru; He tells the brahmin, “Who is worth appreciating and respecting in this world? Why should we respect and appreciate the Satgurus and Masters? We should respect Them—and They are worth appreciating—because They have given us the Naam initiation, the path of devotion. They have not only given us the path of devotion, but They have helped us on the path and made us meet Almighty God; that is why They are worth glorifying.” He says, “The Master, the Satguru, has many great glories in Him. The greatest is that He has kept Himself pure even while living in this world of impurities. And not only has He kept Himself pure, but He inspires His disciples to remain pure. He always tells them to keep their thoughts pure, because if our thoughts are pure, our mind will become pure; the purer our mind is, the purer the soul will be; and when the soul becomes pure, it rises above the body, and the Shabd at once pulls the soul up.” So that is why Mahatmas

always inspire us to keep our thoughts pure: so we can keep our mind and soul pure.

**One sees Him only when He Himself unites with us;
His Will dwells in one's mind.**

When God showers grace on us, He makes us meet such Masters. And when the Masters give us Naam initiation, and after that, when we dive into the ocean of Their love and do the meditation, we bring out that pearl of Naam which is in the depth of that ocean; and as we go on progressing inwardly, we go on seeing the glories of our Master: then we come to realize how many great qualities God Almighty has kept within the Master.

**By putting His hand on our head, He orders and chases
out all evils.
One gets the Nine Treasures if He is pleased.**

When such a pure being graciously puts His hand on our head, if we have real love for Him—if we have real faith in Him—then at that time, the real treasure of Naam is opened within us, and the Shabd starts sounding within.

Regarding my beloved Master, I have often said that whenever He would embrace me, the people who would see that would say, "Fortunate are the souls who are embraced by the Satguru." Masters, whenever They come in this world, embrace all the souls. For Them, all the initiates are alike, and They embrace and love everyone. But the question is of our love and faith in Him. It depends upon how much love we have, and how much faith we have in the Master. Do we understand Him as the Almighty One? Do we understand His hand as the hand of Almighty God? Or do we understand Him only as a human being? If we understand Him as God Almighty, then we get the benefit of that.

Just as the Masters were very pure, and had risen above the level of mind and the organs of senses, we should also rise above our mind and organs of senses, and we should also become pure: we should also go within and develop and create those great glories and qualities which the Masters had.

The Bond That Holds Us Together

FROM THE very beginning, India has been a spiritually minded country. In India, more souls are inclined towards the devotion of God Almighty. From the very beginning, in all the villages, people had some sort of holy place, such as a temple, where they could go and worship God. It was a saying, “If God wants to shower grace on any soul – if He wants any soul to come to His feet – that soul will be born in India,” because in those days, just by a little bit of attention, souls would come to the path of devotion. But gradually, as the effect of the western countries started coming to India, things began to change here also. But even now you will find more people inclined toward spirituality and the devotion of God in India. Now in the west, many souls have been awakened. This is also a special grace of God Almighty: that many souls in the west have been awakened in respect to spirituality, and they are also awakened to do the devotion of God Almighty.

Our mind always accepts the effect of the company in which we live. In the early days, the souls who were born in India got the company of the Saints and Mahatmas, and their thoughts were pure; they easily came to the path of doing the devotion of God, because in India there were many Saints, Mahatmas, Rishis, Munis – so many that this country was called “The land of the Rishis and Munis.”

In the Bhagavad Gita it is written, “Neither by performing any austerities, nor by doing any worship, and not by doing any donation or any other good deed, can one meet Me.” Lord Krishna says, “A devotee can reach Me faster by doing satsang”: spending time in good company.

Once, Sukdev Muni and Narada had a discussion about the importance of satsang. Sukdev Muni had realized in his lifetime that the

glory of satsang, the glory of spending time in the good company of the Masters, is much more beneficial than any other deed, and he was saying that to Narada: the glory of satsang is higher than anything. But Narada had done austerities for sixty thousand years, and he understood that the glory or importance of performing austerities is higher than anything. They were arguing and could not reach any conclusion, so they went to Lord Vishnu and asked him, "Lord, kindly tell us which is higher: satsang or performing the austerities." Lord Vishnu thought, "I should send them to Shesh Nag; he will be able to answer them in such a way that they will understand it easily." So he told both of them to go and see Shesh Nag. When they came to him, they told him about their problem, and they asked him to solve it. Shesh Nag was carrying the burden of the whole earth on his head and he told them, "I will answer your question only if you release me from this burden of the earth." So Narada agreed to give Shesh Nag the benefit of all the *tapas* or austerities he had performed: he gave away the benefit of the entire sixty thousand years of austerities, but he could not release Shesh Nag from the burden of the earth which he was carrying. But when Sukdev Muni agreed to give him the benefit of only one moment of the satsang he had done, Shesh Nag became free from the burden of the earth. When he still did not say anything, both of them asked him, "Why don't you answer our question? We have been to so many Rishis and Munis, and no one has answered us! Now we have come to you, and even though you are free from the burden of the earth, still you are not doing anything for us. Why don't you tell us the answer to our question?" Shesh Nag said, "Your question has already been answered, but you have not understood. You see that Narada gave the fruit of all the sixty thousand years of austerities he has done, but still he could not liberate me from the burden of the earth. But when Sukdev Muni gave the fruit of one moment of the satsang he has done, I was freed from this burden. So which is higher? the satsang? or performing austerities?"

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Our mind always indulges in the sensual pleasures of the world, and involving himself in the dirt, he dries out. But great is our Master, Guru Ramdas Ji: because coming in His company, our dead mind becomes alive, he becomes green like dead trees become green." He says, "O my Lord, by coming in Your company, one gets the liberation. Just like a dead piece of wood becomes green by getting water, in the same way, O my Lord, in Your company, our dead minds also become alive."

History tells us, and it has been the experience of the Saints and Mahatmas, that many people with demonish intellect came to the

Saints and Masters and their lives were changed. Our forgetful mind comes to his senses, we come back to the path, when we come in the company of the Masters.

We were religious-minded people: the Saints and Mahatmas told us about the importance of doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, and They also told us many other things to do, but we misunderstood them and started performing rites and rituals; whatever They told us, we forgot. We did not understand the reality, and we started doing the outer rites and rituals, which were originally given for our own benefit. For example, They told us that it is very good to keep our body clean, and we should bathe—it maintains good health if we bathe daily—but we misunderstood them and started bathing, thinking that bathing will give us liberation; and in that way we did not understand the teaching of the Masters and we started performing outer rites and rituals, believing that by doing them we could achieve liberation. And these rites and rituals, these outer practices, became the cause of our jealousy and dispute with other communities. We fight with the people of the other community because their outer practices are not exactly the same as ours, and we say that our practices are superior. We do not recognize or approve of other people's rites and rituals, so we fight and are jealous.

A few months ago, two people came here. They had read the writings of Master Kirpal Singh, and they had prepared some questions to ask me, reading from those writings; they had also read the teachings of Guru Nanak, and they had prepared so many questions that it would take at least two or three days just to read them out. When they came to me they asked for some time. Outwardly they looked like very good people, and when they told me about the purpose of their coming, I was very pleased to see them. But when they told me that they were perfect ones who went within, and they had all these questions to ask me, I told them lovingly, "Dear ones, if you are really perfect ones and you go within, I would like to ask you why you need to argue with anyone or discuss these things outwardly with anyone? You should go back to your homes and devote yourselves to meditation, and go within. If you keep quiet and sit in one place and do the meditation of the Lord, if you are going within as you have said, people will come to you and will appreciate you and respect you. If you are perfect ones, you should not come out and argue with other people, and you should not have all these questions." So they went home and met with one of my initiates, and they told him that they had gone to see me. My initiate asked them, "Why did you go there? What happened?" So they said, "We went there to argue

with your Master, and to ask him so many questions; but in just one line he satisfied us, and now we have learned that lesson: we will never go to argue with anyone, and we will never go to ask such questions to anyone.”

Kabir Sahib says, “O Kabir, he who is filled up to the brim will not say anything. He who is not filled, he who is imperfect, will always talk a lot.”

This is how people of one religion fight with other religions. This is how we go to criticize other religions, other communities, because we do not understand, and we do not think what we talk about. No one says that he is imperfect. Kabir Sahib says, “No one says that he is less than others.” Those who go within, those who are perfect ones, their tongue gets stopped, they do not say anything: those who have achieved anything within keep quiet.

When Guru Nanak Sahib came into this world, the brahmins or pundits were very important: people invited them to their homes, they fed them, and they did outer rites and rituals through them. And the brahmins kept outer purity: they ate very good foods and kept everything clean and pure. Once some dear ones asked Guru Nanak, “Master, the pundits and brahmins keep so much cleanliness and purity outwardly, and they eat only pure foods: so why does all this pure food become dirt when it goes into their stomach?”

Guru Nanak Dev Ji did not want to hurt anyone’s feelings. He did not criticize anyone. He went into all different religions and communities, including the places of pilgrimage of the Hindus. Whatever He saw in this world, and whatever He wanted to explain to the world, He included in His writings. This bani, the hymns of Asa ji di Var on which I have been doing satsang every day, is a very special bani. Saints are also reformers of society because They know that unless people are reformed and changed, they cannot practice the path of spirituality. That is why Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj gave this bani of Asa ji di Var, in which He tried to reform society according to what was happening at that time.

**First he makes himself clean, then sits in a clean place:
He places the clean food in front of him: “May no one
defile it!”**

Guru Nanak says, “First of all the pundit bathes and becomes pure, and then they clean the place where he is to sit; then they put very clean clothes under him. Then the pundit makes the food himself, in a

very pure way. He does not allow anyone to come near the place where he is cooking the food, he does not want anyone to even look at the food, because he is afraid that it will be contaminated. Then, when the food is prepared, before he eats it, he recites some *shlokas* from the scriptures, so that the food which he has prepared with so much cleanliness and purity may become still purer."

**He ate it, becoming pure and reciting shlokas.
The food was thrown into a foul place—whose fault is
that?**

Guru Nanak says, "After making the food in such a pure way, and after reciting the shlokas and making the food even purer, he has thrown the food into a dirty place. Who is to be blamed? Why did he throw the food in such a dirty place after he had made it in a very pure way?"

**For the grain is God; water is God;
Fire is God; salt is God.**

Now He explains that the food, the fire, the water, and the salt are all God.

**Fifth, he added the ghee:
Thus the food becomes pure.**

The fifth thing they add — the ghee or clarified butter is also God — and in this way the food becomes still purer.

**By putting this pure food in the sinner body,
It is spat at every day.**

Now He says, "When this pure food, consisting of all these pure things, took the company of the sinner body, it also became a sinner — it became dirt — and when they throw that dirt in the latrine, people spit at it. No one wants to sit there. No one wants to sleep there." You know that no matter how clean we keep latrines, how many chemicals and perfumes we throw over them, still no one wants to go and sit there forever. No one would go and want to sleep there, because that place is meant only for throwing dirt.

**The mouth which does not utter the Naam and without
the Naam eats delicacies—
Nanak says, Understand that mouth to be worth spitting
at.**

Why did the good food, the pure food, become worth spitting at? Why did that food become dirt? Only because one did not eat that with the meditation of Naam. He says, “Our food becomes worth eating, our food remains pure, only if we eat it with the meditation of Shabd Naam.”

God Almighty has created our body in a very good way. You see how He has made the eyes, the nose, the mouth, and the organs below, and how in a very good way, He has attached all those things where they are required. If we would use the things which God Almighty has given to us in the body for their real purpose, the purpose for which they were given to us, we would never get lost into this world. But since we misuse all the organs which we have been given, we do get lost; we invite all the troubles and problems and fall into them.

**We are born of woman; we are shaped in woman; we are
engaged and married to woman.
Woman is our friend: the Path of Creation continues
through woman.**

Yesterday in the satsang, I said that Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj came into this world at a time when women were not respected—they were always rejected—and people understood women as not worth more than the shoes on our feet. In some of the Hindu shastras, women are believed to be impure beings, and even now the Muslims don't allow women to go to the mosque to offer prayers. But when Guru Nanak came into this world, and He saw the condition of women, He said, “Look here, O dear ones, why do you understand women as impure? Why do you reject them? Because right from the beginning, you are involved with women. First of all, the child is prepared in the womb of the mother; then the child takes birth from the woman; when a man grows up, he gets engaged to a woman, then marries her; all the dealings in this world are through woman; nothing happens without the help of a woman. When you are doing so many things with women, why do you reject them? Why do you understand them as inferior?”

**If one dies, we search for another;
 Woman is the bond that holds us together.
 Why do you call her bad
 Who has given birth to kings and more than kings?**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji is telling the people of His time: “When your wife leaves the body, you search for another woman, you marry her, and you have the same relation with her. Also: woman has given birth to you; she has given birth to all kings; to all Rishis and Munis; she has become the cause of the birth of all these great people; why do you call such a being inferior?”

**Every woman is created from woman; No one exists without woman.
 Nanak says, Only One—the True Lord—is different.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “No one in this world is born without woman. No one has been born into this world like the grass is grown. Everyone, all human beings, are given birth by woman. If there is anyone who was born by himself, that is the Almighty Lord, Who is permanent, Who is the same for all time. All other beings, all humans, were born from woman.”

**In all the Four Ages, the mouth with which we sing His praises—Nanak says,
 Faces with such mouths are brightened in the True Court.**

Only if it is written in our fate, only if our fate has been awakened, can we sing the glory of God Almighty, do the meditation of Shabd Naam, and sing the glory of Those Who become one with Shabd Naam, Those Who manifested Shabd Naam within them. He says, “Those who go in the Court of God, who sing the glory of God Almighty and meditate on the Shabd Naam, their faces become brightened; and they are the only ones worth appreciating.”

**He calls everyone His own;
 But he who is not is picked out.**

God makes everyone His own; but those who do not do His devotion, no matter how much they may be showing outwardly, when they go in the Court of the Lord, they are not accepted there; they are thrown out.

Everyone settles the account of all they have done themselves.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Why are we worried about other people? We are all going to get what we deserve according to our own deeds. If anyone is doing anything bad, he will pay for it. Why worry about them? We should worry about our own selves."

Once there was a mahatma who used to beg just enough for his survival; he would not beg for anything extra. He used to go into villages and beg his food. Once when he went into a village to beg, he said, "Do good, so that others may do good to you. Good always happens, in the long run, to those who do good to others. In the name of God, O mother, give me some food." There was an old woman there who heard all this, and she thought, "These beggars make up very good sentences only to attract people's attention and get things from them"; and she thought of making poisoned chapatis: "Let me see what will happen to me, if I do this to the mahatma." So she made four poisoned chapatis and gave them to the mahatma. He brought them back to his hut, which was outside the village, and he left the chapatis there in the hut and went bathing, thinking that he would eat them later. When he came back, four people came to his hut: they were the sons of that old woman who had given him the chapatis, and they were very hungry. They requested the mahatma to give them any food if he had it. That mahatma was very gracious, and he said, "Okay, you take these four chapatis. You can eat one each, and I will go and beg from somebody else for my own self." So those four sons of the old woman ate those poisoned chapatis; and when they got back home, the poison began to affect them. When their mother asked them what they had eaten, they said, "We did not eat anything; we went to one mahatma and he had four chapatis, and he gave them to us to eat, and since we have eaten them, we see this earth changing into black and yellow. The poison has started affecting us." That old woman repented, and cried, and said, "I have done this. I made the poisoned chapatis and now I see that it is true: if you do good, goodness is done to you, and if you do bad to others, others do bad to you."

**When we do not have to live in this world,
Why should we waste away in pride?**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “No one is going to live in this world forever; then why have ego? Why are we proud of the things of this world? One day everyone’s turn to leave comes.”

**Call no one bad: understand this word after reading.
Do not fight with a fool.**

Now He says, “God resides in everyone. Why should we call other people bad? God is residing in everyone; so we should not call anyone bad. And those who do not do the meditation of Shabd Naam, the devotion of God, we should not argue or fight with them. Instead of wasting time in arguing with them, why not do the devotion of Shabd Naam? We should always devote ourselves to the path of the meditation.”



Heaven on Earth

ONCE Guru Nanak Dev Ji was going somewhere when He saw a person talking very rudely to somebody else. So looking at him, Guru Nanak lovingly explained to him, “Look here, O dear one: by speaking rudely, we become rude. It hurts the feelings of others, and it brings a great loss to us also.”

Once in a marketplace, a person was calling someone names, and he was using very bad words. A father and a son came there. The father paid no attention to the rude behavior and the bad words of that person, but the son was innocent and he told his father, “Look here O father, look here dear father, how that person is calling bad names, how rudely he is behaving!” The father replied, “Dear son, in this world, which in fact is a marketplace, everyone has come to sell his own merchandise, to do his own work. You should not pay any attention to what other people are doing; we should mind our own business.” No one else was paying any attention to the rude behavior and the bad words of that person because everyone was doing his work.

Kabir Sahib says, “If someone understands how to speak, speech is priceless.” Only if someone understands and knows how to speak, can speech be priceless: if we are speaking good words, if we are speaking sweet words, we can even turn our enemy into our friend. But if we do not know how to speak, if we are speaking rude words, bad words, then we can even make our friend an enemy.

Kabir Sahib lovingly tells us, “Those who speak sweet words, those who work in this world humbly, they do not lose anything.”

Guru Nanak says, “O ignorant mind, by speaking tasteless or rude

words, we hurt our own heart, our own inner self, and those words are not accepted. The words which are spoken sweetly, the words which are accepted in the Court of the Lord, are the only words which are appreciated.”

This is something which all the satsangis should consider and think about patiently. Almost one hundred percent of our problems, all the problems which happen in our lives, in our homes, are due to our rude words: the tasteless words we speak. Only because of our rude behavior and rude words, husband and wife do not get along with each other, father does not get along with son, and we have all these problems. But the problems are created only because we do not speak in a good way.

Once there was a husband and a wife who always had difficult times together, because the husband was proud of doing his devotion; he was a very devoted person. He used to welcome dear ones who would come to his home, and he would do satsang, and talk about meditation, and things like that. He would inspire people to do meditation and to keep their lives pure. The wife had other things to do, and she was proud of her own practices. One day the wife told the husband, “Every day you tell people that they should keep their lives pure and do meditation—you tell them so many teachings and so many good things, and you try to make them good—but it doesn’t affect anyone! No one accepts your teachings. No matter how much you try, no one does exactly as you tell them to do. But I am so competent, whatever I tell people to do, they will accept it in a minute, and they will do it.” So he said, “Well, let me see how that is possible.” She said, “Okay, tomorrow I will show you how words spoken by me will have an effect, and how people obey me.”

So next day, the husband went out to do his worldly work, thinking that after finishing it he would come back to his home, meet the dear ones, do satsang, and talk about meditation, as usual. But just before he came back to his home, some dear ones came for satsang, and they asked his wife, “Where is the devotee?” She said, “Well, what should I tell you? He has gone crazy, and whoever comes to see him for satsang, he ties them with ropes and beats them with a stick. So if you want to be spared that, you should run away as soon as possible. If you don’t, he will treat you the same way he has the others.” Now nobody wanted to stay there and get a beating, and they all ran away. After a few minutes, when the devotee came back to his home, he asked his wife, “Didn’t any dear ones come?” She said, “Yes, they came, but they asked for some rope and a stick, and when I didn’t give

it to them, they got upset, and left.” The husband said, “Well, dear one, you should have given them what they wanted, because they are the devotees of God, and my life is dedicated to God. So you should have given it to them.” She said, “But my dear husband, how could I do anything without your permission? I didn’t want to do anything against your wishes. That is why I wanted to wait until you told me to do it.” So the husband said, “Okay, give me the rope and the stick, and tell me in which direction they have gone.” So, carrying that rope and stick, he went after them.

When the dear ones saw him coming with the rope and the stick, they were afraid; they thought, “What the wife said is true! Now this devotee has come to tie us up and beat us.” So they started running, and the devotee who was carrying the rope ran behind them, shouting, “Dear ones, please wait, take the rope and the stick. Don’t be upset with me!” but they would not listen to him. They thought, “He has definitely gone crazy, and that is why he is chasing us.”

After a long chase, the dear ones who were running thought, “Well, there are more of us than him; let us see what he does to us.” So when they stopped, the devotee said, “Dear ones, why you are running away from me? I welcome you so much. I respect and appreciate your coming to my home so much. I enjoy your company, and every single step you take towards my home, I understand that you are honoring me. I value your coming to my home so much—why are you upset at me? Just for the sake of this rope and this stick? You can have them.” Now they were surprised, because it was a totally different story than his wife had told.

So this is what happens when the husband and wife do not get along with each other. If both the husband and wife walk on the same path, get along with each other, are in tune with each other, only then can they become successful in the path of spirituality; only then, in their worldly lives, can they make their home like heaven on earth. Otherwise, what happened to that devotee of God can happen to them also.

Whenever Saints and Mahatmas come into this world, They tell us that we should maintain peace in our home. We can maintain peace in our home only if we learn how to forget and forgive the faults of each other. We people find faults in each other just for little things, and that is why we create trouble. When we do not forget the faults of others, when we do not forgive the faults of others, how can we expect to maintain peace and harmony in the family?

And when we do not maintain peace and harmony in the family, how can we progress in spirituality or in worldly life? A hymn of Guru

Nanak Dev Ji, from Asa ji di Var, is presented to you. Listen to it carefully.

**O Nanak, by speaking tastelessly, the body and mind
become tasteless:**

He is called tasteless, and his glory becomes tasteless.

Guru Nanak says, “By speaking rude or tasteless words, our body and mind become rude and tasteless. And by speaking rude or tasteless words, our glory fades out: people say, ‘He does not know how to talk.’”

**In the Court of the Lord, a tasteless one is thrown out;
The face of the tasteless is spit at.**

He says, “Even in the Court of the Lord, a person who speaks rude or tasteless words is not accepted. There the angels of death curse him and spit on his face.” Even in this world, those who speak rude words are not welcomed or appreciated by people: everyone curses and blames them, and everyone spits on their face in the form of curses and blame, and no one glorifies them. Everyone says, “He cannot get along with anyone.”

Baba Bishan Das Ji used to tell about an incident he witnessed himself. Once he was going somewhere, and he saw a person hurriedly coming out of a home; he had something in a piece of cloth which he was carrying, and some water was dripping out of that. Baba Bishan Das was curious, and he asked him, “Dear one, what is this which you are carrying, and why is water dripping out of it?” That person replied, “This is the taste of my tongue.” So Baba Bishan Das asked him, “What do you mean? What is your story?” Then that dear one told Baba Bishan Das his story. He said, “I am a trader, and I had come here in this village to do some trading, and I was carrying some wheat flour.” (In those days, there were not many hotels or restaurants, so people used to carry wheat flour; and whenever they went to any village they would request some woman to make chapatis for them, and in that way they would eat.) So he said, “I was carrying some wheat flour with me. I went to this home here and requested the old lady who lives here to make some food for me. I gave her my wheat flour, and while she was making dough—you know the quality of the mind, he cannot remain idle, he cannot sit there without making mischief—I saw that the door of that home was very narrow, and I saw a buffalo coming in through that door, and suddenly a thought

struck my mind: I thought, ‘While this buffalo is alive, he can come through the door; but suppose the buffalo dies! Then how will they carry the dead body of the buffalo outside? Because then this door will be too narrow for the dead body of the buffalo.’ I could not control myself, and I asked this question to the old lady. I said, ‘Dear mother, if this buffalo dies, your door is too narrow to take the dead body of the buffalo outside—how will you do it?’ She rebuked me: ‘Dear one, don’t talk like that.’ She was upset, but since she had already promised to make the food for me, she thought, ‘Let me make the food quickly so that this person may go.’ So she continued making the dough, but another thought came in my mind, and I asked her how many sons she had. She replied, ‘I have only one son.’ I asked her where he was. She said, ‘He has gone on his job, he is serving somewhere.’ So the thought came in my mind: suppose her son dies! Then what? So I asked her, ‘Dear mother, if your son dies in the service where he has gone, then what will happen?’ She got upset and said, ‘Dear one, are you all right? Are you normal or crazy? You should not ask such questions. You should not say such things. At least you should talk in your senses, speak good words.’ But she had already promised to make the food for me, so she continued making the dough. Then a thought came in my mind to ask her about her husband. So I asked her where he was, and what he was doing. So she replied, ‘My husband is also gone for service.’ So I asked her, ‘What will happen if your husband also dies in that service?’ Then she really got upset at me! By that time she had put some water in the dough, and she gave the dough back to me and slapped me, and told me, ‘At least you should have spoken good words.’ And she told me to leave the home right away. So this is how, by speaking rude words, I hurt her feelings, and I hurt myself. The water which is dripping from the dough is the taste of my tongue. I was saying all those words only to please my tongue, and as a result I did not get any food.”

**The tasteless one is called foolish;
He gets beaten with shoes.**

Now He says, “Those who speak tasteless or rude words, people say they are foolish; and sometimes such people even get a beating with shoes.”

**Those who are false from within but who outwardly show
honor:
They are only show-offs in the world.**

Now Guru Nanak Sahib talks about those people who are false from within but outwardly show that they are very good people. They do not show outwardly what they have inside. With the help of a party and other people, they call themselves “good ones,” but inside they are false: they do not have any goodness in them. Guru Nanak says, “Such people may be able to impress the people of the world, but they cannot deceive God Almighty Who is sitting within them. We can deceive our own selves; we can deceive the people; but God Almighty cannot be deceived because He is sitting within us and He is seeing everything: how much goodness we have, and whether we are false or true within. And since He is sitting within us, and whatever service we do for Him He pays us for, there is no way we can deceive Him. Even if we are able to deceive other people, we can never deceive God Almighty, because He is sitting within us.”

**Even if they bathe in sixty-eight places of pilgrimage,
Their dirt will not be removed.**

In India, much importance is attached to the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage. Whenever people manage to collect some money, they go to all these places and say, “We went to this place of pilgrimage, we went to that place of pilgrimage; in this way, we are now free from all the burden of our sins.” But Guru Nanak says here, “Your sins cannot be removed by bathing in any place of pilgrimage. Instead of removing sins by going to all those places, you have taken up more sins.”

When Guru Nanak raised His voice against this practice of going to places of pilgrimage, the people who believed in pilgrimages, and who inspired others to go on pilgrimages, opposed Guru Nanak a lot; and once some of them came to Guru Nanak, and invited Him to go with them on a pilgrimage. Now, whatever the Masters do, there is always a secret in it, a reason behind it. So Guru Nanak Sahib gave them a bitter squash, and told them, “Dear ones, I cannot go with you on this pilgrimage, but you should take this squash with you, and make sure that you bathe it in the holy waters; and when you come back, I will make a dish with it, and serve it to you.” So those people went to all the places of pilgrimage, and when they came back to Guru Nanak, He cooked that squash; but when it was served to them, they did not like it, they spat it out because it was bitter. So Guru Nanak then uttered this hymn, and told them, “Dear ones, this squash has only seeds and fruit, and it was bitter. You could not remove the bitterness of the seeds even though you made this squash bathe in so many different holy places. How can you expect to remove the bitterness

within you, the poisons of your body which are many in number? Your body has the poison of lust, anger, greed, attachment and egoism, and so many others: How can you expect to remove all that poison just by bathing?" Then He lovingly told them, "If you want to remove the poison from within, you should do the meditation of Shabd Naam; because that is the only way."

The pilgrims went for bathing; their minds were false and their bodies were thieves. They bathed the squash from outside, but within it there was very serious poison. It is better for sadhus not to bathe than to bathe everyday and not remove the dirt. Nanak says, "The thief will still be a thief, even if he bathes in holy waters."

Kabir Sahib says, "What to speak about getting liberation just by bathing in holy waters! Even if you make a home on the bank of the river Ganga, and everyday you drink the holy water, still you cannot get liberation without doing the meditation of Shabd Naam."

Kabir Sahib even says, "Look at the condition of those creatures who live in those holy waters! They bathe there everyday, they eat there everyday, and still they do not get liberation!" He says, "If just by bathing in the holy waters one could get the liberation, then the frogs should be liberated; but they're not. Just like the humans beings who go there for bathing, the frogs again and again come back into bodies."

**Those who have soft silk within though rags outside—
They are the good ones of the world.**

Who are glorified in this world, and who are glorified in the Court of the Lord? Only those who are clean and pure within: whose hearts are sincere and pure. No matter if they don't know how to speak well outwardly: if they are pure within, if their hearts are pure, they are glorified in this world as well as in the Court of the Lord.

**For they are attuned to the love of the Lord;
They always yearn to see Him.**

Such beloveds of God, who do not do outward devotion to impress other people, who do not create outward activities to impress people, such beloveds of God are united with Him.

Kabir Sahib says, "He who says, 'I know everything,' is in fact the ignorant one. He who knows everything cannot remain hidden." He says that those who say that they know everything and have realized God, in fact have not done so; they are ignorant. But those who have

realized God, those who do know everything, even if they don't tell people, still, they never remain hidden. The beloveds of God, the devotees of God, always find out that God resides in him.

**In His color he laughs; in His color he cries;
In His color he even keeps quiet.**

Now He says, "Such a Mahatma laughs in the color or will of God. Such a Mahatma weeps in the will of God, and sometimes in the will of God, such a Mahatma even keeps quiet."

**For they don't care for anyone—
Except for the True One.**

After achieving God Almighty, such a devotee does not remain the servant of the world. He is not afraid of lust, nor of anger, greed, attachment, and egoism. We people are afraid of all these things, and only because we are afraid of them, we follow them, and we get involved in them.

**At the door of the Lord he asks for sustenance:
He eats when He gives him.**

What does he ask from God Almighty after going to His door? He does not ask for any worldly things, or worldly riches, or the comforts of this world. He only asks for sustenance—the devotion of the Lord. He only asks for His darshan.

**Your Court is one; Your pen is one;
Justice is equal for low and high.
Nanak says, In His Court when He asks to settle the
accounts,
One gets the pain of seeds in an oil mill.**

He says, "Such a Mahatma knows that in the Court of the Lord, the word or pen of that God Almighty is effective." Whatever He wants, only that happens. But we people, giving up such an Almighty Lord, get attached to the love of our children, our family, and to all worldly things.

He Himself asks for the accounts. Whatever account we have made of ourselves after doing our karma, we ourselves have to settle that;

and He Himself asks for it. At that time the pain which we feel is like the pain the sesame seeds feel when they are churned in the mill to make oil.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, “The Creator Himself is the One Who asks for the account of your karmas, and He will churn you in the mill like the sesame seeds are churned.”

**You Yourself have created the Creation;
You Yourself are sustaining it.**

The Mahatmas, the Gurumukhs, sing the glory of Almighty God. They say, “O Lord, You Yourself have created this world, and Your power itself maintains this world and makes it function.”

**You see what You have created:
You take care of the immature as well as the ripe.**

Now Guru Nanak says to Almighty God, “O Lord, only You know which crop is ready and which crop is not ready: when it’s time for You to bring someone home, and how much longer You have to keep someone here.”

**He who has come has to go:
Everyone’s turn comes.**

Now He says, “O Lord, no one lives in this world forever. We all come according to our turns, and we leave this world also according to our turns.”

Those who are created will be destroyed one day, whether today or tomorrow. Nanak says, “Giving up all the entanglements of the world, remember the Almighty One.”

Rama went; even Ravana, who had a big family, had to leave this world. Nanak says, “This world is no more than a dream.”

Sheikh Farid has said, “If anything of this world is broken, we try to repair it: we push nails and put that thing together. But this body is such, that when it is broken and the time is up, we cannot put it together. And no matter if one was a great saint or fakir, or if whatever he said always came true – no matter how powerful one was, when his time came, he also had to leave this world.” Further he says, “Whether one is king or a pauper, when their turn comes they leave this world.”

**Why forget such a Lord
To Whom life and pranas belong?**

God has given you this soul. God has given you this beautiful body to live in, He has given you this beautiful earth to live on; He has given you food and so many things—why are you forgetting such an Almighty Lord, Who has given you so much? Why you are not remembering Him? Why, falling in laziness, are you not doing His devotion?

**With your own hands,
Accomplish your work.**

Now He says, “Do not postpone the work of today till tomorrow. Don’t procrastinate.” Baba Sawan Singh Ji also used to say, “When the Master has given you initiation, you also have some responsibilities. It is your responsibility to come to the eye center. When you come to the eye center, you will find your Master waiting for you there, and He will perform His duty well. But it is your responsibility to vacate the nine openings and come to the eye center.” So here Guru Nanak Dev Ji says, “You have to do your work yourself.” That is why Masters always say that our work is to reach the eye center. Our work is to rise above our body and reach the tenth door; once we are there, then the Master’s duty starts. As I said earlier, the Master never becomes lazy in doing His work. Before you reach there, He is always there to help you. But we also have certain responsibilities to attend to, and it is our job to rise above the body and come to the eye center.

In the Palace of Love

IN SANT MAT, the Masters lovingly explain to us that we should mold our lives according to the laws of Nature. If God Almighty has showered grace on us we should not show it outside; we should not tell people that we have been given such a grace by our Master. The fact is that we should not even let the steam come out if God Almighty has showered grace on us. If He has given us some experience, some grace in meditation, we should keep that within, and we should not go on showing it outside to people. Because when we do not keep these things to our own self, when we go on telling people, "I am something," or "I have got this thing," then whatever we have gained, we lose. Up until now, those who have said that they are something, those who have become egotistic about their achievements, have always been reduced to a pile of bones and ashes: because in the palace of love one has to be very quiet, and only when he is quiet can he enter that palace of the Lord. In that palace there are many of our dear friends, dear souls who have reached there. We can become one of them only if we make our heart like theirs. We do not know how many dear souls have reached the palace of love, or how superior they are to us; but we can become one of them only if we become like them. Guru Nanak says, "In the palace of the Lord, there are many souls who are superior to others, who are superior to me. O Lord, who knows my name over there?"

He is not a satsangi, or a dear one, or a real lover, who keeps accounts with the Shabd Guru, Who is our real Master. If some comfortable moments, some happy moments, come in our life, and we glorify and thank the Master, but when, according to our karma, a

bad or painful moment comes and we blame Him—that cannot be called discipleship; that cannot be called love for the Master.

Lovers remain in their senses. They never lose their senses in the way that the hemp addict or the drunkard does—that they lose their senses while they are intoxicated with their drinking, but when that intoxication goes away it becomes even more painful for them. The real lovers of God remain intoxicated in the love of God but still they remain in their senses: they understand that they have to live in the will of God and that they have to accept happily whatever comes in the will of God.

The lover of the Master, the lover of the Shabd Guru, the lover of God Almighty, does not want any rule or power of this world: he only wants the glance of his beloved Master.

In the life of such a lover of the Master only one moment is painful, and that moment is when his beloved Master removes His physical form from his eyes. When the Master leaves the physical body, then for such a lover of the Master it becomes very difficult to live in this world. His condition becomes like that bird who looks at the sun when the sun rises, and all day long she goes on looking at the sun; but when the sun sets she loses her heart. All night long she waits for the sun to rise again, and she finds no peace until she sees it. The real lover of the Master feels like that bird: he does not find any peace when the physical body of the Master has gone away from his sight, nor does he find any peace after that. Such a lover of the Master says, “It is better to die before your lover leaves the body because whatever time you live after your lover has left is illegal. Curse on that living.”

Those who do Bhajan and Simran for worldly things, those who become lovers only to achieve worldly things, they are not real lovers; they are just wandering around near the Master, and they can be called “spoons.”*

Guru Nanak has said, “O Lord, to ask anything from You other than You is asking for pain.” Because we do not know how much pain we will get from the things of the world which we are asking from our Master.

In my life I have gone through many experiences. All Saints and Mahatmas, who have risen above their physical body and astral body and who have met Almighty God, have gone through many experiences. When I was initiated by Baba Bishan Das into the first Two Words and I did the meditation of the lower planes—it was only

*Just as a spoon is in the midst of a pudding without tasting it.

because of the grace of Baba Bishan Das that I was practically successful in doing the meditation of the first two planes, and when you do the meditation of the lower planes, you acquire many supernatural powers (*riddhis* and *siddhis*) and since you do not have the real appreciation of what you have been given, you waste it. Those supernatural powers are always wasted in getting name and fame, in that the dear one who has done the meditation and who has acquired supernatural powers does not get anything except the glory and name and fame of the world; and the worldly people also do not get any benefit out of it. To misuse the supernatural powers is just like wasting the capital which your father has given to you. If a father gives some capital to a son to open a business, but the son does not realize the value of that capital, and loses it all to gamblers, then comes back to his father weeping and asking for more—it is up to the father to decide whether he wants to give him more capital or not. In the same way, those who do the practices of the lower planes do not have a competent Master and they do not know how valuable the supernatural powers they have acquired are; when they misuse it they repent and again come to their Master asking for more, but then it is up to the Master to see whether he wants to give them more or not.

I have been going to Bombay for many years now, and there is one dear one there who according to his practices acquired some supernatural powers; one of my satsangis had told me about his powers and what he was doing with people, and whenever he would tell me about that dear one, I would laugh and tell him, “Well, dear one, the time will come when he will realize what he is doing.” Last time when I went to Bombay, that dear one came to me and sat in front of me like a gambler who has lost everything, and he told me that now he had lost everything he had. He said, “Now even the people for whom I used to use my supernatural powers are upset with me: because now when I cannot do anything for them, they think I have become greedy; but the fact is that I don’t have any powers left and I cannot do anything for them. I am also very sorry because now I have lost everything.” I told him, “Dear one, if you had realized this a little earlier, and if you had saved the capital which you were given, and if you had received the holy initiation from the perfect Master, it is possible that you would have increased this capital and perfected yourself in the meditation. Why didn’t you take the initiation?” He told me, “I went to see your beloved Master, Baba Kirpal Singh Ji also, and He told me that I was a perfect vessel.” I laughed and I told him, “Saints are very wise people. Baba Sawan Singh Ji used to say, ‘A Saint knows what a person expects when he comes to see Him, and

according to the desire of that person, He says the words which may satisfy him,' and since you went to Him expecting name and fame and praise, my Master gave it to you. But you should have looked within yourself and seen if what He was saying was true, or He was giving you what you wanted. If you had looked within yourself at that time, you would have known whether you were perfect or not, whether you went within or not, or whether you have become one with the Almighty Lord or not; and you would have realized that you needed a competent Master. And if you had received initiation from my Master, it is possible that instead of wasting all the capital which you were given, you would have increased it; and it is possible that you would have perfected yourself in meditation."

Once when Guru Angad Dev Ji was living in the place called Goindwal, there was a person who used to practice supernatural powers and show miracles, and people called him a lover of God. We people have such a kind of intellect that we do not have any discriminative power: we do not know who is a Saint and who is not, and usually we follow the person who shows supernatural powers and miracles without knowing whether he is a real lover of God or not. So when someone told Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj about this man and his supernatural powers, Guru Angad replied, "What kind of lover of God is he? Instead of devoting himself to God Almighty, he has devoted himself to ghosts and miracles! How can you call him a real lover of God when he has left God Almighty for the lower entities?"

What sort of love is that which is attached to others?

Nanak says, He who always merges in Him is called the Lover.

The Master says, "Look here, O dear one: what kind of lover of God is he who, giving up God Almighty, is loving ghosts and spirits? He who is always attached to the real Shabd Master, who always keeps in touch with the Shabd, whether he is sitting or standing, whether he is sleeping or awake, is the real lover of God."

In good times, he does good; in bad times, he becomes bad.

Don't call him a Lover who keeps accounts with Him.

Now Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj says, "What kind of lover is he if when, because of his good karma he gets comforts, he praises God

Almighty and loves Him; but when, according to his karma the bad times come, he blames Him: what kind of lover is that?"

He says, "Such people—those who after joining this path of devotion, keep accounts with God Almighty—cannot be called lovers of God."

**He who does both—greet and questions—is gone astray
from the start;
Nanak says, Both are false and are counted nowhere.**

The disciple who bows down to the Master when he gets good things—even though he may be getting those things because of his own karma—and finds fault with Him if he gets bad things, if something goes wrong—of that disciple, Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Neither such a disciple's bowing down nor his finding fault are accepted in the Court of God; he cannot be called a real lover."

Guru Angad says, "Such a disciple has forgotten and lost right from the beginning."

**Always remember the Lord, serving Whom we get
happiness.**

Guru Angad says, "We should do the devotion of that God wholeheartedly, Whose devotion gives us real peace, contentment, and the return to our Real Home."

**When we reap what we have sown,
Why do bad deeds?**

Since we have to pay for our own deeds, then it is not in our interest to do bad deeds; we should do only good.

**Never do anything evil:
Have farsightedness.**

Now He says, "Before doing any bad deed look for its consequence in the future. Always realize that whatever you are doing you will have to pay for it; you will have to reap what you have sown."

Throw the dice in such a way

That we do not lose before the Lord.

Work only for that which will bring the true profit.

We should do only that which will bring us glory and be accepted in the Court of the Lord. We should always mold our life according to that.

Understanding the Will of God

**If a servant's service is accompanied by pride and quarrels,
If he talks too much (or makes a fuss), he is not accepted
by the Lord.**

THIS BANI is from the Asa ji di Var of Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj. Once a gurumukh dear one came to Guru Angad Dev and asked Him, "Master, is there any disciple of yours who understands the will of God in its real meaning? Is there anyone who, even after knowing everything that will happen in his lifetime, still remains content in the will of God? Is there any disciple of yours like that?" Guru Angad told him lovingly, "Yes, dear one; in Gujarat, there is an initiate of mine named Bhai Bukhari. Go to him and you will find all these qualities in him."

So that gurumukh dear one went to Gujarat, and when he arrived at Bhai Bukhari's house, he found him weaving a mat. Bhai Bukhari welcomed him there, but he continued his weaving. After he finished, he asked that gurumukh dear one, "Yes, now tell me: why have you come?"

So the gurumukh dear one told Bhai Bukhari, "I was told by Guru Angad Dev to come and see you, so I have come to have your darshan." Bhai Bukhari welcomed him to his home, but he told him that he was very busy because his son was going to be married soon. Bhai Bukhari showed him all the sweets which they had prepared for the people who would come there to attend the wedding. He also showed him the clothes which they had made for the bride, and the

jewelry and ornaments which they had prepared and collected for the wedding. After showing him all this, Bhai Bukhari also showed him a white piece of cloth which usually people use to cover dead bodies, and he showed him a piece of wood. Bhai Bukhari told him, "After my son gets married, in a few days he will leave the body; so I have kept ready this white piece of cloth to cover his body, and on this piece of wood I will take him to the cremation ground."

Now that gurumukh dear one who had come to see Bhai Bukhari was very surprised; he thought, "maybe Bhai Bukhari is saying all this just for the sake of saying it; maybe what he is saying is not true,"—because usually when we do not have faith in our own selves, we do not have faith in other people either. We think that other people are like us, and they are not saying the truth. But since that dear one had come all the way just to see reality, he thought, "I should wait here and see what happens, and see how real the words of Bhai Bukhari are."

So after a day or so the wedding of his son took place, and they had the wedding procession. The groom went to the bride's place, and everything happened according to Indian tradition. The parents of the bride did everything as they do in weddings, and after all the rites and rituals, the bride came to Bhai Bukhari's home; and after a day or two, his son left the body. Since Bhai Bukhari had everything all prepared, it was not difficult to do what needed to be done: he took the body of his son to the cremation ground, and after the body was cremated and they came back home they sat on the mat which he had been weaving when that gurumukh dear one had first seen him. In India it is a tradition that when people come back from the cremation ground, they sit in sympathy and mourn the death of the person. The people sitting there were talking according to their own understanding, saying, "It is very bad that your son left the body. If God wanted to take him back, He should have taken him before he got married. Why did He let him get married? And you spent so much money on the wedding!" But Bhai Bukhari did not say anything; he just kept quiet.

After some time that gurumukh dear one took Bhai Bukhari into a corner and asked him, "Dear one, what is all this play? I don't understand what is happening. If you had known from the very beginning that all this was going to happen, why didn't you try to avoid it? Since you go within and you knew that your son would first get married and then leave the body, and you made all the arrangements beforehand—even this mat on which people are sitting to mourn the death of your son—if you had known all this from the

beginning, and you were going within, why didn't you do something to avoid it? Even if you were not capable of doing that, at least you should have told the Shabd Guru, Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj—He is all powerful, and if you had requested, He would have definitely done something so that you didn't have to go through all this suffering." Bhai Bukhari replied, "Look here, dear one: the disciple who tells the Master to put life into a dead body—the disciple who tells the Master to change the Will of God for him—is not in fact a disciple of the Master. If he is doing the devotion of God only for fulfilling his own interests and desires, he cannot be a devotee of the Master."

So here in this hymn Guru Angad Dev is talking about the qualities of the lovers of the Master: He says, "If one is a servant of the Master, he will not make any excuses; he will remain content and happy in the Will of God." A servant of the Master cannot make excuses. If a devotee is doing things for the Master only for fulfilling his own desires, his own self-interest, he cannot be called the lover of the Master. Such a disciple, such a servant of the Master, can never please Almighty God.

Saints and Mahatmas live in this world according to the laws of Nature, and They tell Their disciples also to live according to the rules and regulations and laws of Nature. They tell us, "If you have stepped onto this path of devotion, and you want to become successful, then you should always accept the will of the Lord; you should always live according to the laws of Nature. You should never go against the will of God." Both Master Sawan Singh and Master Kirpal Singh Ji used to say in Their satsangs, "Those people who come to the Masters and attend satsang with the desire that they should win their lawsuits, or that their son should be healed, or who request only worldly things—they have not yet understood the meaning of spirituality or the teachings of this path." They used to say, "We are very sorry to say that such people should stay home." What can such people gain from the Master? Pain and comfort, sickness and health, poverty and riches—these six things are written in our fate even before our body is created. All the things which are going to happen in our life, must happen—and they do happen on the exact time, and there is no way we can avoid them. Tulsi Sahib says, "O Tulsi, before this body was created, our *pralabdha* or fate karmas were written down. This is a very unique play, but our mind does not become patient."

Baba Jaimal Singh Ji used to say, "Many dear ones get the darshan of the Master at times; but when they are sick they do not get it." The reason for that is that if the disciple gets the darshan of the Master when he is sick, it is possible that he may request the Master to take

the burden of his karmas; and in that way it may be that his *pralabdha* or fate karmas may remain unfinished. The Masters never want their disciples to come back into this world of suffering again, so sometimes during the sickness of the disciples, Masters do not give them darshan.

Not even worldly parents are happy looking at the pain of their children; how can we expect our Master to be pleased when He sees us in a painful condition? The Masters have love of more than thousands of parents. They do extend feasible help; but we people do not know what we should ask of Them, what kind of help we should seek from Them.

In the lives of disciples and Masters, many incidents take place where the Masters have extended help to Their disciples. We receive many letters and cables in which people tell how the Master came there to help them, and I always reply, "Yes, I am very grateful to my Master Who took care of you and helped you."

Satgurus also save the children of many people from death. We receive many letters like that, and Pappu reads them all; I always write back, "I am very grateful to my Master, because this is all His glory and His grace."

**If one does seva eliminating himself,
Only then does he get honor.**

Now He says, "If one does the meditation and then does seva, works for the Master, after removing or eliminating himself – only then does he get honor and glory in the Court of the Lord."

**Nanak says, He who does that which the One he loves
makes him do—
Such a one is accepted.**

Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Even if the Master makes us cut grass or carry water for the langar; even if He makes us do meditation; even if He makes us do any kind of seva for the sangat or for Himself, without any excuses we should do that. The disciple who does the seva of the Master without presenting excuses is accepted in the Court of the Lord; and only such a disciple's seva is accepted."

He says, "Only that seva is successful which which the Satguru is pleased."

**Whatever he has within him bears fruit—what he says
with his mouth is air!**

He sows poison but asks for nectar! Is this justice?

Lovingly He says, "Whatever a jiva has in his mind is what comes out. Whatever he is speaking from his mouth is blowing air." That is, what he is speaking from his mouth does not have effect; it is what he has within, in his mind, that is effective. We people do meditation and write in our diaries that we meditated for two hours or three hours; but in those two or three hours, how much time did we do Simran? How many times did our mind wander here and there? How many times did we criticize others? When we get up from meditation we say that we have meditated for two or three hours and write that in our diaries, but we do not realize, we do not pay enough attention to our mind so that we can realize, how much time in the meditation we really meditated.

I have often told how I used to do the practice. Before I met Baba Bishan Das, in my childhood, I always had the habit of doing the repetition of one or another word, and I used to repeat them for eight hours at a stretch; but when I met Baba Bishan Das he asked me, "Does the one who is within you remain still?" He meant, does my mind remain still? I told him, "I don't know about that. I remember that I remain aware either in the beginning when I start doing my repetition or towards the end when I am about to finish the repetition. But I don't remember what happens in between, and I don't know whether my mind remains there or not. But I do have this ego, this pride, that I sit for so much time."

Those who do Bhajan and Simran, and who introspect themselves, those who minutely see what is happening when they are meditating, never complain that they are not progressing. But those who do not do Bhajan and Simran, and those who do not minutely watch the activity of their mind, always complain that they are not progressing in meditation. If I listen to them for a couple of minutes, they themselves tell me about their faults and mistakes and lackings, and then I lovingly ask them, "Dear one, do you meditate?"

So here He says, "Whatever is in our mind, only that is effective. Just by talking about things, we do not get anywhere; in Sant Mat it is not a matter of talking, it is a matter of practice."

Guru Angad Dev says, "Look at the justice of a man who is sowing seeds of poison, but expects to harvest nectar." Sheikh Farid has also said, "A farmer weaves wool but expects a piece of silk! He is sowing seeds of bushes but expects to harvest raisins! How is that possible?"

Friendship with the immature can never succeed;

He deals as he understands, determines as he sees.

Now He says, "Your friendship with a child can never become successful because whatever qualification or competence he has according to his age, he will do things from that level only; he can never walk along with us."

This is an outer example. In Sant Mat our mind is also like that child, and if we try to develop friendship with our mind, we can never become successful; we can never get along with him. Even if he does one or two things right, he will not be able to do them all right, and whatever he has done earlier, he will destroy that.

**God can be put into our selves
Only if we have a place for Him.
With the Lord, commanding won't do:
With Him, only prayer works.**

Sheikh Chili used to live in the forest and do his Bhajan and Simran. Once a wealthy person saw, "This mahatma does not have any place to live—he's doing his Bhajan and Simran sitting outside—why not make a house for him? In that way I may earn some virtue." So he went to Sheikh Chili and said, "Mahatma Ji, I feel like making a home for you." Sheikh Chili replied, "As you please. If you want you can make a home for me." So that wealthy person made a very nice home for Sheikh Chili so that he could do his Bhajan and Simran comfortably. Sheikh Chili used to go in the forest everyday, and he started bringing pieces of wood and putting them in the house, thinking that by putting pillars in the house, he would make it stronger. Eventually he filled the house with pillars, and on a cold and rainy day, Sheikh Chili was standing outside of his house. One person came there and said, "Mahatma Ji, why don't you go inside your house? It is very cold and rainy!" Sheikh Chili replied, "Dear one, if I had any room left in my home I would have put another pillar there." So the meaning of saying this is, as Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj says, "God Almighty will come and reside within you only if you have left some place for Him. If your inner self is filled with all the worldly things, where is the place for God Almighty to come and reside?"

If we are working for someone, and we go on ordering him around, we can never become successful; he will fire us. We should always be humble in front of him; only then we can gain his pleasure. In the same way, we are the servants of God Almighty and we can become successful only if we go on praying to Him.

**One becomes dirt by earning dirt;
Nanak says, By praising Him one blossoms.**

Now He says, "If we love dirt, we become dirt. We can get real happiness only by singing the glory of God Almighty."

**Friendship with an immature one or with one higher than
yourself in status
Is like a line drawn in water: It does not have any sign or
place.**

Now He says, "To make a child your friend is like drawing a line in the water." A line drawn in water does not remain there; in a second it goes away when the water moves. In the same way, a friendship which you may develop with a child or an immature person can never last.

Our mind is a child in spirituality: he is an ignorant one. The height of spirituality is unknown to him, and that is why we get involved in all the passions, all the pleasures, all the desires, which are created in the mind. Men love women, women love men, they indulge with each other, and you know that after you have indulged in these passions and pleasures, a moment later you do not find any pleasure from them: their impressions or effect is erased as though it were a line in the water.

Mahatmas tell us, "O friend, indulging in the five passions you have spent all your life, and still your mind has not gotten any contentment. If he has not gotten contentment up until now, when will he?"

**If an immature one does the job, it doesn't come out right;
If he does one thing right, he does another wrong.
If a servant serves his Master and walks in the will of the
Lord—**

Now Guru Sahib lovingly tells us, "Which servant gets glory? Which servant is honored by his employer? Only he who pleases his employer, only he who works according to the instructions and commandments of his employer." So that is why here he says, "Only that disciple gets honor and glory from the Master who does his Bhajan and Simran and who always follows the teaching of the Masters." Master always lovingly tells us, "Mind creates such a fire within you of the passions, that in that fire you get consumed, and you never get any contentment." So that is why lovingly He says, "The disciples, the satsangis, should do only those things which may please the Master;

whatever the Master has told them to do, only by doing that can they please Him.”

**He gets honor in the other world
And double wages.**

If the servant pleases his employer, he will definitely get paid for the work he is doing. But if he pleases his Master, he will get much more.

I am very grateful to my beloved Master, Gurudev Kirpal, with Whose grace I was able to carry out His orders to do Bhajan and Simran. Before He held the Unity of Man Conference, He told me to sit here and do the meditation. He made me sit here for Bhajan and Simran; He told me not to come out, and not to go to see Him. He said that whenever He wanted to, whenever He felt the need, He would come here to give me darshan. When the Unity of Man Conference was being held, some dear ones came and told me that they wanted to take me to attend that conference; they said, “Many people from abroad are coming and there will be a lot of people there; if you come with us, we will make all the arrangements for you. We will take good care of you.” But I told them, “Dear ones, did my Master send you here to take me there?” They told me, “No, He didn’t say; but we want you to come.” I told them, “No, dear ones; this can never happen. Whatever orders my Master has given me, it is my first duty to carry them out. I will not go with you. Even though many more people come to take me, still I will not go there; because for me the orders of my Master are more precious than anything, and my Master is higher than anybody.” Lala Ji, who used to live here, told me, “If you don’t want to go alone I can send my son, Ajeet Singh, with you.” I told him, “No, I don’t want to go. My work is to obey the commandments of my Master; and my Master has told me that I should not go anywhere, I should not attend any conferences, I should just sit here and do the work of Bhajan and Simran. This is the work my Master has given to me, and I am happy sitting here and doing it.” So I mean to say that if you give first importance to your Master’s orders, and you carry them out, then you will definitely get the benefit of what you are doing. You will definitely get the reward of whatever efforts you make; but if you become successful in carrying out the orders of your Master, then Master Himself will sit within you and receive all the riches. He Himself will manifest within you.

When Munshi Ram, a long time initiate of Master Kirpal Singh, asked Bachan Singh of 23PS, when Master Kirpal would be coming to Sri Ganga Nagar, he replied, “Master Kirpal is controlled by Ajaib

Singh: whenever he wants, he can bring Him here.” You see, I did not run after Master Kirpal Singh Ji outwardly, I did not go to see Him so many times. Whenever He wanted, He Himself came to see me; He Himself gave me His darshan. But still, because of carrying out His orders—He gave me the orders to do Bhajan and Simran, and with His grace I was able to do that—only because I followed His orders He gave me so much love that everyone talked about it; people said that I controlled Him in my love. This is why my family members used to say, “Kirpal Singh has done some kind of magic on Ajaib Singh. Maybe He has put some magic in his head.” That is why they even offered to take me to the doctors and even give me electric shocks: because they thought I had gone crazy. So I mean to say that if you have obeyed the orders of your Master you definitely get the reward for doing your meditation, plus you also get the meditation of your Master: because the Master does not hesitate to give away His own earnings to such a disciple whom He knows will protect His earnings; He will keep them in the safe. That is why, if you obey the orders of the Master, you not only get the result of your work, you get the meditation of your Master as well.

**He who competes with his Master becomes poor within;
He loses his wages in the other world and is beaten on his
face with shoes.**

Now He says, “The servant who tries to compete with the Master, who says that he is equal to the Master, can never get glory and honor, and sometimes he even gets humiliated.”

**He Whose gifts we eat, say to Him, “All Hail!”
Nanak says, With the Master, commanding won't do: it is
prayer that works.**

Now He says, “God has given you so many good things. What has He not given you? He has given you all these riches: so many different kinds of food to eat; the different beautiful parts of your body; without taking anything from you, He has given you eyes, nose, mouth; He has given you all these things of this world, and you should be grateful.” We can never become successful if we try to order the Almighty Lord around. Only our prayers to Him can bring us success. So that is why here He says, “We should be grateful to the Almighty Lord Who has given us this precious human birth, and then with the grace of the Master, He has given us the holy initiation.” He has given

us this opportunity of doing His devotion, so here the Master says, “We should be very grateful to our Master Who after coming into this mortal world threw away all its pleasures. He Who Himself did meditation and became the liberated one, Who has given us the initiation, and has put us on this path of liberation – we should always be grateful to such a Lord Who has come into this world to rescue us and give us liberation.”

The Glory of the Almighty

**What kind of gift is that which we get for ourselves?
Nanak says, Only that is a blessed gift which we get when
He is pleased.**

SOME dear ones came to Guru Angad Dev Ji Maharaj and told Him about a yogi who had acquired some supernatural powers, who performed miracles, and controlled ghosts and spirits. They told Guru Angad Dev that he was a very competent person, but the Master lovingly told them, "Dear ones, what kind of competence does he have? What kind of supernatural powers does he have? One can get such powers just by concentrating his mind." Often I have said that when we concentrate our mind even a little bit, we can achieve all the supernatural powers. These things can be achieved just by doing a little bit of meditation. The devotees of God, those who do the devotion of Naam, do not pay any attention to the supernatural powers, even though they can acquire them just by concentrating their mind a little bit. So that is why here Guru Angad says, "He cannot be called competent; his supernatural powers do not prove that he is competent; because the real miracle is if God Almighty Himself blesses him and showers His grace on him." Supernatural powers are slaves to those who do the meditation of Naam; yet those who do the meditation of Naam do not pay any attention to them, nor do they make any use of them.

Often I have said that such Master-souls come into this world prepared: They are perfected before coming, but They live according to the laws of Nature and practice very hard. Right from the beginning They have sincerity and truth within, and They always search for the

Master. When They meet the Master They work very hard in meditation only to give us a demonstration of what meditation really means, and how one can achieve success by doing meditation.

Regarding Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj, Bhai Gurdas has written, "First Guru Nanak got the blessing of Almighty God, and then He worked hard in meditation. He made pebbles and stones His bed, and working very hard He achieved success."

When supernatural powers came to Hazur Maharaj Kirpal in His childhood, He requested them, "Please stay away from me"; and He told Almighty God, "I am searching for the Master and I don't want any of these things."

What kind of service is it when the fear of the Lord does not go?

O Nanak, call him a servant who merges in the Lord.

Now He says, "What kind of devotion or service is it, if after doing it, fear does not leave us?" He says, "Fear can go away from within us and we can become fearless only by doing the devotion of God; when we become one with Almighty God, then fear goes away."

Only Satguru knows which soul belongs to Him, and He Himself takes that soul out from the other souls. And He meets only that soul who desires the Master.

We all wonder—since we were all born in different places and belong to different places—how our Beloved Master has brought us together. How did He take us out from other people? How do the Masters go to Their disciples or call Their disciples to Them?

So that is why Guru Sahib here says, "Within such great personalities two things—fear and love for the Master—work side by side." If you love the Master, you will definitely be afraid of Him; if you are afraid of Him, you will definitely love Him. Why? Because if we have love for the Master we will not do anything which might embarrass Him in front of others. Since the master is always blamed when the dog goes mad, if we have love for the Master and are afraid of Him then we will not do anything which might become a cause of embarrassment to Him.

If we have love for the Master we will not understand the work which our Master has given to us as a burden. We will do it lovingly, understanding it as worship.

Nanak says, No one can know God's limits or end.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “No one can know the end of that omnipotent Almighty Lord. No one can know about this or that end of Him because He is endless; He is limitless.”

His glory is also limitless. Sehjo Bai has said, “Even if I turn the whole earth into paper, and make pens out of all the trees of Creation, and even if I make ink out of all the waters of the oceans, still if I wanted to write the glory of my Master I could not do it.”

**He Himself creates;
He Himself destroys.**

He says, “God has not given this work into anybody else’s hands, He has kept everything in His own hands. He Himself becomes strict with us, He Himself punishes us for our bad deeds, and He Himself gives us the rewards and fruits of our good deeds. He does everything Himself.”

**Around the necks of some there are chains;
Others ride in luxury.**

He says, “Around some people’s necks there are chains: it is because of their bad karma. And there are some people who ride on beautiful mares or in comfortable cars because of their good karma.”

**He Himself makes it happen, He Himself does:
To whom shall one go to cry?**

Now He says, “The jiva is happy in His will, the jiva is unhappy in His will. He suffers in His will, he enjoys in His will. The jiva comes into this world in His will, he leaves this world in His will.”

He says, “Our intellect and our brain are formed according to our own karma. Even our body is formed according to our own karmas of the past. To whom can we complain? Everything is in His hands. He Himself is keeping the accounts of our karma, and He is giving us rewards and punishments accordingly.”

**Nanak says, He Who has created this Creation takes care
of it Himself.**

God Almighty, Who has created this whole Creation with its creatures, Himself recognizes those whom He wants to unite with Him. He

Himself makes them unite with Him, and when the appropriate time comes, He Himself makes the arrangements for them to come and meet Him.

He Himself shapes the vessels, He Himself fills them up.

He Himself creates these vessels, these souls, and He Himself puts the ray of the Shabd, His light, within them.

I have often said that our body is just like an engine: we put all of the parts of the engine together, and we attach whatever we need to it. We even make provisions for fuel and other things; but unless we flow current into it, unless we supply the power which can run the engine, that engine is useless. It will not function, it will not move, until we have supplied the power or current. In the same way our body is that engine in which God Almighty has put everything; but unless He puts the current, the power which is in the form of the soul, this body cannot function. Only because of the presence of the power of God, only because of the presence of the soul within our body, is our body functioning. Our eyes open and close only because of the presence of the soul. Our mouth also opens and closes, and we speak, only because of the presence of the soul. We breathe in and breathe out only because of the soul. We can move our body around, we can do anything we want with our body, as long as the power of God is present within us. When that power of God is withdrawn from our body, when our soul is taken away, our body also becomes useless—like that engine which does not have any current or power in it. When the soul is withdrawn from the body, we still have all the parts of our body, but they do not function. Our eyes are there but they do not open. Our nose, our mouth, are there but they do not function. We can neither speak sweet words nor harsh words because the power of God has been withdrawn from our body. We still have our feet but they cannot walk. Unless the power of God, the soul, is present within our body, our body is useless.

**Into some He pours milk;
Others are burned.**

Now He says, “The potter makes many pots: there are some in which people store milk and *ghee* (clarified butter) and things like that, and they are not put on the fire, they are not given that burning. But there

are other pots which are made to be burned, because they are used for cooking food.”

This is a worldly example which Guru Nanak Dev Ji is giving to make us understand. He means that there are some vessels, some bodies, some people who are very peaceful and quiet, and when the Master installs the Shabd Naam within them, they remain quiet and peaceful while doing the meditation of Shabd Naam; in that way they live their lives very comfortably. But there are other vessels, other bodies, other people who are always subject to the fires of lust, anger, greed, attachment and egoism. These passions are always burning within them; all day long, just like the vessel which is put on the fire, they burn in the fire of jealousy.

**Some sleep on cushioned beds,
While others guard them.**

Now lovingly He says, “There are kings and emperors who live in palaces and sleep on very comfortable beds, who enjoy their life, who live in luxury. And there are people who guard those palaces, who suffer cold winds and stay out standing all night long guarding the palaces.” Both the kings and the guards are human beings, but because of their karma, they have been given different duties.

In the same way, there are people who eat very good food and go to bed early; in the middle of the night when lust bothers them, they indulge in it. There are other people who stay awake all night, keep a very strong vigil against the mind, and as soon as the thought of lust comes, they at once make their mind sit in meditation; and if their mind bothers them, if the mind does not want to meditate for one hour, they make him meditate many hours, and in this way they rise above lust, anger and the other passions. They keep a strong guard against those passions, and they always try to combat the mind. So here he says, “There are people who easily give into passions, and there are people who stay awake in meditation all night long, fighting with their mind.” Dear ones, to fight with the mind is what we call meditation.

**Nanak says, Those upon whom He showers grace are
perfected by Him.**

Now He says, “Who are perfected by Him? Only those upon whom He showers His gracious eyes are perfected. It does not matter

whether one is king or subject, poor or rich: anyone on whom Master showers His gracious eyes, He makes that person do the meditation of Shabd Naam.”

He became gracious on the Shah of Balkh-Bukhara; that is why he came to Kabir Sahib and for twelve years he worked on the loom, and whatever dry or simple food he was given, he ate, and whatever Kabir Sahib told him to do, he did, and in that way he made his life.

In the same way Ravidas was a cobbler—He used to mend the shoes; but King Pipa came to him and received the initiation into Shabd Naam from Him. His wife also received initiation from Him because God Almighty showered grace on him; that is why he came to Ravidas the cobbler and in his lifetime perfected himself. He purified his life and achieved the highest status.

It happens in the life of every Saint that many great people, people of very high status, come to the Masters and start doing the meditation of Shabd Naam. Those people, who used to say that they could not give up the pleasures of the world—eating meat and drinking wine and things like that—when God showers grace on them, they come to the Masters and give up everything, and start doing the meditation.

Those who have manifested that Power within them, those who have seen that Power within them, those who have become one with that Power within them—only those Mahatmas bow down in front of that Power and only those Mahatmas can sing the glory of that Power. All those Mahatmas who have witnessed that Power within them have called that Power “limitless.” So here Guru Nanak Dev Ji says, “Only those who have gone within know the glory of the Almighty Lord. He is such a Power that if He wants He can make the meat-eaters eat grass; if He wants He can do anything.”

**He Himself shapes, He Himself does;
He Himself creates the world and maintains Himself
within it;
After creating the creatures, He Himself sees creation and
destruction.**

He Himself creates this earth; He Himself has created the stars, suns and moons; He Himself has kept all these things at the places where they belong; and He Himself makes them function. Whatever He is, He is Himself.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “If there was someone else equal to you, O Lord, then we might have said, ‘There is someone else like you.’ ” He says, “He does not have any equal. No mother gave birth to

Him, He does not have any brother, He does not have any friend, He does not have any enemy, and He enlightened Himself. He was created by Himself.”

**Nanak says, To whom should we complain?—
When He is all in all Himself.**

He says, “Where can we complain about Him? To whom should we complain about Him? Everywhere there is only Him. He resides in the cotton, He resides in the thread, He resides everywhere. So we can only pray to Him and request from Him.”

**One cannot say anything in praise of the Lord.
Great is the praise of the Great One.**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “If we start singing the glory of that great Almighty Lord our Master, — what can we say about His glory? How can we praise Him? If we say that He showers grace on us, He is very merciful to us, — how can we know that we are glorifying Him, that we are singing His praise completely? We don’t know how many more people there are on whom He is showering His grace!”

When this poor soul Ajaib got the understanding, he said only this: “O Lord, I will not find even one like You. You will find millions like me. Millions like me will be standing at Your door folding their hands to You.”

Sincerely this poor soul Ajaib made this request to Almighty Kirpal: “O Lord, my boat is stuck in the storm, in this whirlpool, and I do not find any ferryman other than You who can take this boat of my life across, and I cannot do anything. Only if You shower grace on me, only if You wish, only You can take my boat across.”

I even said, “I do not know how intense, how difficult this whirlpool is, in which my boat is stuck; I don’t know how many dangerous alligators are there, who can upturn my boat in a moment; there is no one who can take my boat across except You, O my beloved Kirpal. If You shower grace on me, if You come to rescue me, only then can I be saved.” Whenever we make such a prayer to the Master, that prayer is accepted; but rare are the souls who can make such prayers to the Masters. Yesterday in the satsang I said, “Whatever the jiva has in his mind, only that is sown, only that is expressed. If he just goes on making prayers from the mouth, that does not have any effect.”

People have the intoxication of their worldly possessions. They say, “I am a learned man. I own this. I own that. There is no one in this

world equal to me.” They are proud of all the worldly riches they have. If you don’t have anything of this world—if you are poor, and you are compelled to behave like a poor one—then it cannot be called your greatness because you don’t have anything; you are humble because you have no choice, there is nothing else you can do. But if have been given everything by God Almighty, and even after receiving the riches of the world and possessing so many comforts and conveniences—if you then become humble and behave like a poor one, then it can be said that you are a great person. If you show humility only because you do not have anything to be proud of, it cannot be called real humility. If you have been given everything and still you become humble, then you can be called humble. Dear ones, it is very easy to say that we are humble even after receiving everything from God Almighty; but it is very difficult to give up the possessions and riches of the world and become humble.

**He is the Creator, almighty and merciful;
He gives sustenance to all creatures.**

He is the Doer; He is the Creator. He creates all the creatures; He sustains and maintains all the creatures. He gives food to all the creatures He has created: whether they live in stones or in water, whatever their food is, wherever they are, He Himself supplies food and necessities to those creatures.

We see how many things a man stores, but still he is hungry. If he has fifty, he wants a hundred. If he has a mare, he wants a car. If he has one car, he wants hundreds of cars. If he has a small business, he wants a big business.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “The hungry man cannot be satisfied even if you give him all the vegetation and materials of this world.”

Have you ever noticed that birds, no matter how much food you spread in front of them, will eat only as much as they want for that time and after eating that much food they will fly away? They do not worry for the next day. Even if a storm comes on the next day, or something happens, they are not worried. They are worryless: they remain content in the will of God, and in their own language, they sing the glory of God Almighty.

Bhagat Dhanna Jat says, “When the tortoise lays her eggs, she lays them on dry land, and she herself lives in the water. She does not have breasts with which she could feed the babies, and the baby tortoises do

not have wings, with which they could fly to their mother; still, whatever food they need, God Almighty has arranged for, and He Himself feeds them.”

Farid Sahib says, “I sacrifice myself on those birds who live in the forest, who pick up small stones and things like that, and live on what they find—but not for one moment do they forget God Almighty.”

In the time of Guru Amardas Ji Maharaj, it used to be like this: all those who came to have His darshan were first told to go and eat at the langar, and then they could have the Master’s darshan. Whatever He received from the dear ones for the langar, and whatever He would earn Himself, was used for the dear ones who would come there to see Him. At the end of the day they used to clean all the vessels and put them upside down, and they would say, “Well, God Almighty Who gave us today, will give us tomorrow also.”

**One does only what is written;
One gets what he has left in the Real Home.**

The jiva works in this world according to what he has been given from the Court of the Lord. He who has been given the work of doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, will do the meditation of Shabd Naam no matter what happens. He who has been given some other work—for example, the work of doing bad deeds, he will do bad deeds. God does not have any enmity towards anyone, and He does not give bad works to some and good works to others. It all depends on our own karma. Our intellect and brain are formed because of our good and bad deeds of the past, and according to them we have been given work; and whatever work we have been given according to the karmas of the past, we do that in this world.

Guru Nanak says, “No one is foolish and no one is wise. Everywhere Your will is functioning.”

This does not mean that we should sit idle and say, “Well, if God wants, He will come and make us do good deeds.” We should not have such an attitude because God never inspires us to do bad deeds. Whatever is in our control—whatever we can do—we should do.

One day in the satsang, Prophet Mohammed told his disciples, “Everything is done by God Almighty.” So one of his disciples who took care of his camels, always had a hard time tying the camels’ feet and guarding them, so he told Prophet Mohammed, “Master, if, as you say, ‘Everything is done by God Almighty’, then why should I tie the legs of the camels and guard them?” But Prophet Mohammed said, “No, dear one, it is your job to tie their feet, and it is your job to

stay awake during the night to guard them. If after doing your part, someone comes and steals them, then you should understand that it is the will of God.”

No, it is the work of the disciple to improve himself. It is the work of the disciple to do his meditation, and then Master will shower His grace on him. The Shabd will open with the grace of the Master, and the soul will be pulled up by the mighty Master. It is our job to sit for meditation, it is our job to improve our life, and if we do our meditation everyday, then Master will not delay in coming and pulling our soul up.

**Nanak says, Without the One, there is no one to go to;
He does whatever is in His will.**

Now He says, “There is only one place for our soul to go, there is only one destination: because there is only one God, and there is only one place from where our soul has come down, and unless our soul goes back to her source, she cannot get peace.” Further He says, “Everything which happens, happens in the will of God, and we can accept His will and become happy in His will only if we mold our life according to His will. If we improve our life and do our meditation understanding it as His will, then we can become happy in His will.”

Since December when Russell Perkins came here, I started commenting on these Asa ji di Vars, and as I did with the Gauri Vars, I have given a series of discourses on them. As before Russell Perkins worked very hard and made it possible for the discourses of the Gauri Vars to be published and dear ones benefited from it, I hope that this time also he will work hard and will make every effort to publish these talks; and I hope that the dear ones will get this in the form of a book, and that they will take advantage of it. I hope that the dear ones will understand the feeling and intention with which I have given these discourses on the Asa di Vars, and that they will read the discourses and understand them with the same feeling with which they were commented upon.

In this writing, Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj did not mean to criticize anyone or any religion or community. Masters never criticize anyone, nor do they allow even their disciples to criticize anyone. Guru Nanak spoke according to what He saw happening in different communities and religions in His time, just to make the people understand reality.

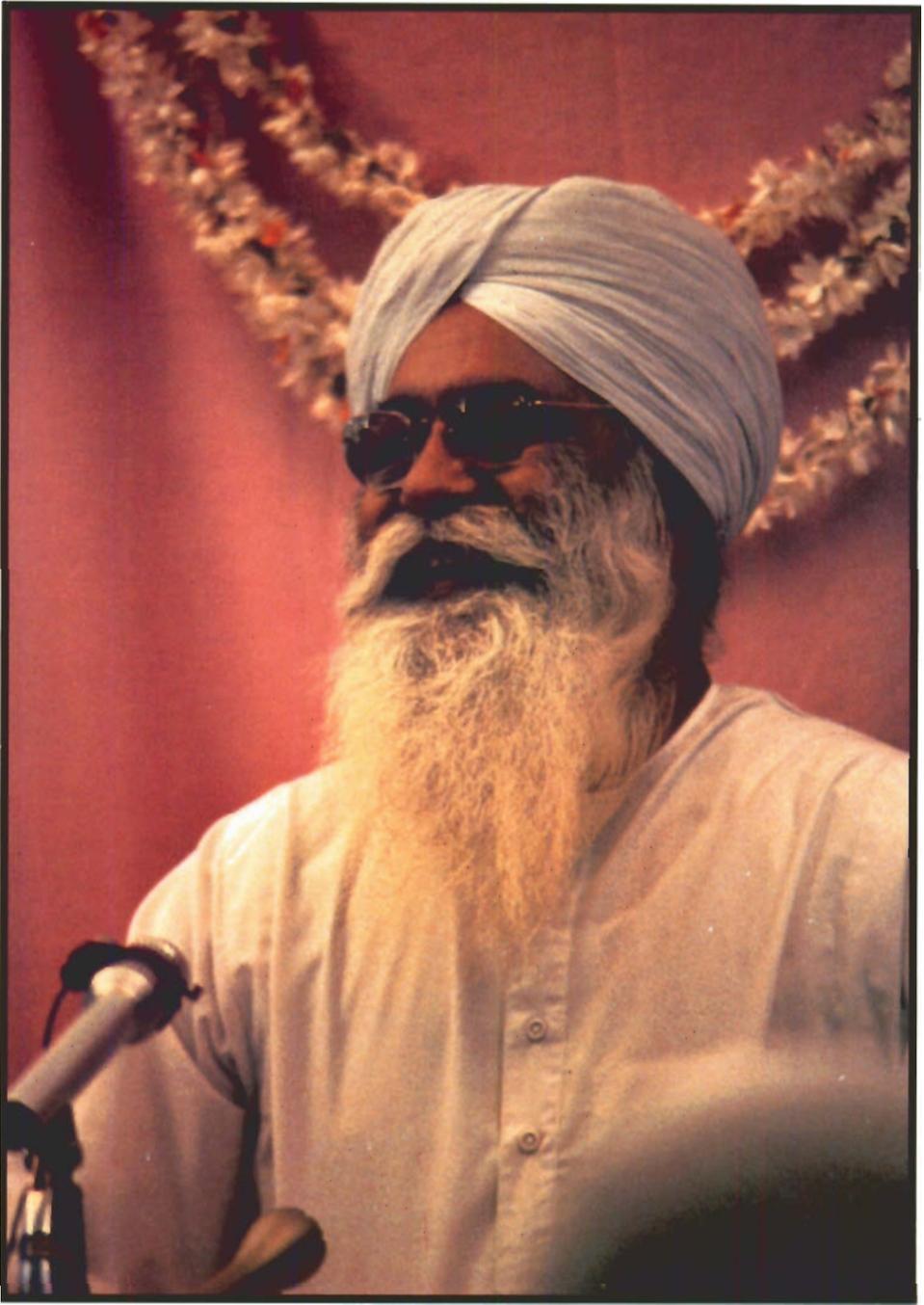
Guru Nanak Dev did not accept that purity could be obtained just by bathing in the holy waters; He approved of that purity which one

gets by doing the meditation of Shabd Naam. He said, "By reading the books and doing outer rites and rituals we cannot become pure. We can become pure and we can do the devotion of the Lord only by going to the Masters, getting the initiation from Them, and by going within. We can achieve the status of a *Sadh* only by doing the devotion of the Lord."

I will try to give you one more discourse tomorrow on the subject of, "What is Satguru, and who recognizes Him?" Whenever the Satguru comes into this world, He brings His own staff with Him, and only He knows to whom He has to give the ability to recognize Him, and from whom He will take work. Those souls are fortunate who come to the Master and recognize Him.

Saints and Mahatmas do not exhibit their qualities in this world. They do not say, "You call us Guru or Pir or Master." They say, "It does not matter what you call us—brother, baba—whatever you want." They are not attached to those kinds of words, so they say, "Whatever we tell you to do, you should do that; then, after going within and seeing what the Satguru really is, you can call us whatever seems right."

Masters come in this world to make us free from the attachments and the bounds of religions and communities. They do not come in this world to attach us to any particular religion or community. They do not tell us to give up any religion or community; but They do tell us to do the meditation of Shabd Naam and rise above all these things, because except for the devotion of Shabd Naam, there is no practice doing which we can achieve the liberation. They always teach us the importance of the meditation of Shabd Naam. They tell us, "The person who does the meditation of Shabd Naam lives in this world like the lotus floating on the water, who, even though he lives in the water is not affected by it. He lives in this world like a waterfowl who lives in the water, but when she flies, flies with dry wings." That is why They always teach us the meditation of Shabd Naam: because there is no other practice by which we can achieve liberation.



SANT AJAIB SINGH JI