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Ik Ounkar Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

Gurmat Elementary Course

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 4



PUBLISHER

GURMAT GIAN MISSIONARY COLLEGE

Punjabi Bagh, Jawaddi, Ludhiana Ph.: 0161-2521700

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Karta Purakh (k r q‡ p r K)

Akal Purakh (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖੁ) is the creator of our universe. Whatever we see today, he created all this with his wish and will and the creator merged in his creation himself. Truthfully, he exists in each particle of our universe. Now the question is, how can we possess this quality of our creator? To answer, when we create/do something with the aims and objects of "welfare of all", definitely, we shall be possessing this quality of Akal Purakh in some amounts (may be little). We must make our best efforts to do good for all (whatever we can do), as it is our present life only when we can do something good. Whatever we do, it must always aim at "welfare of all". If we devote our life for the welfare of all, we shall be able to feel much nearness with our creator. We are all children of Akal Purakh and can mold our life in a direction, we like. Whatever we think, we sow and water, our life would be likewise. What the life had been in the past, must not be the cause of much worry, more important is the way we make our life in future. If we think and practice good all the times, life will definitely be good. On the contrary, it will end up in miseries. Hence, we must always choice good over evils. Henceforth, we must practice a good and truthful life.

Ik Onkar Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

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GURMAT ELEMENTARY COURSE

(Correspondence Course)

Lesson No. 4

Translated by: S. Bikram Singh Majhael (New Zealand)

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Published By:

GURMAT GIAN MISSIONARY COLLEGE

Punjabi Bagh, Jawaddi, Ludhiana-141 013

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Email: gurmatgian@rediffmail.com

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January, 2020 **Rs. 30/-**

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Note:- Dates mentioned in the history are according to Nanakshahi Calendar 2003.

DISCLAIMER:

The historical dates in this booklet are taken with the difference of 15 days from the old English dates. Reason being that the present Nanakshahi Calendar differs with old dates by these many days. In fact, Britishers in 1752 AD, adopted international calendar by adjusting their own dates by two weeks.

HISTORY

1. Guru Ram Das Ji

Guru Ram Das Sahib Ji was born on 9th October,1534 in Chuna Mandi Lahore (now in Pakistan). His Father's name was Baba Hardas Ji and mother's name Mata Daya Kaur Ji. As he was the first son of his parents, hence he was addressed as JETHA (elder one) and was known by this name. When he was only in an early age, his mother left for her heavenly abode. His father also died when he was barely seven. His maternal grandparents (nwnk) lived in village Baserke District Amritsar-Punjab. His maternal grandmother took him to her village Baserke where he met third Guru of Sikhs Guru Amar Das Sahib, who consoled him in difficult times.

While in village Baserke Bhai Jetha ji started selling boiled grams (GgxlA). He stayed with his maternal grandmother (nwnl) in Baserke for five years. When under the direction of Guru Angad Sahib, Baba(Guru) Amar Das Ji founded Goindwal Sahib in 1546, He took several of his relatives and close people with him to Goindwal Sahib. Bhai Jetha Ji along with his maternal grandmother also settled in Goindwal Sahib. At that time Bhai Jetha Ji was twelve years old. At Goindwal Sahib also he continued his job of selling the boiled grams beside serving the Sangat with supreme devotion. Thus he came close to Guru Amar Das Sahib and in 1552 Guru Amar Das Sahib was enthroned as successor of Guru Angad Sahib and third Guru of Sikhs.

In 1553 AD Guru Amar Das Sahib got his younger daughter Bibi Bhani to marry Bhai Jetha Ji. At that time Bhai Jetha Ji was nineteen. Bibi Bhani gave birth their three sons – Baba Prithi Chand, Baba Mahadev and Baba(Guru) Arjan Dev Ji.

When, in Lahore, Kazi (Islamic judge), Maulvi (Islamic religious head) and Hindu Brahmans complained to Emperor Akbar against Guru Amar Das Sahib, Bhai Jetha Ji under instructions of Guru Amar Das Ji went to Lahore, where he met Emperor Akbar and explained the principles of Sikhism in such a polite manner that Emperor Akbar not only got convinced with his explanation but also paid a speacial visit to Guru Amar Das Sahib in

Goindwal Sahib.

Even though Bhai Jetha Ji was son–in-law of Guru Amar Das Sahib Ji, he served Guru Sahib and Sangat with supreme devotion by forgetting this worldly relation with Guru Amar Das Sahib. When the service/Seva of construction of Baaoli Sahib was going on, he served like other Sikhs for removal of mud, earth etc. With his devout service Bhai Jetha Ji was able to win over the mind/heart of Guru Amar Das Sahib. He was able to understand the principles of Sikhism fully and moulded himself as per Sikh tenets.

Observing the popularity and growth of Sikhism, Guru Amar Das Sahib Ji decided to shift the central place of Sikhism from Goindwal Sahib to some other place. Guru Amar Das Ji assigned Bhai Jetha Ji to found a city of Guru Ka Chakk in Majha (area between two rives of Raavi and Beas, the place of present Sri Amritsar Sahib).

Bhai Jetha Ji alongwith Baba Budha Ji laid the foundation of this new city in 1570 AD. To meet the requirement of water for construction of new centre of Sikhism, Santokhsar Sarovar (Tank) was dug first and other sarovar were also established afterward. Later, Guru Arjan Sahib changed the name of Guru Ka Chakk to Chakk Ram Das or Ram Das Pur. On completion of Amritsar Sarovar in 1588 Guru Arjan Sahib renamed the city as Amritsar.

In 1574, Guru Amar Das ji enthroned Bhai Jetha Ji as his successor and fourth Guru of Sikhs and the Pothi containing the Baani pronounced by himself, Guru Nanak Sahib, Guru Angad Sahib, Baani of all Saints(Bhagats) delegated to him in presence of whole family and sangat,. When Guru Amar Das Ji bowed before Guru Ram Das Ji, emotionally he felt detachment and spoke that I was wandering in the streets of Lahore as an orphan and there was none to take care of me. It were you who showered your love and affection on me and today took me to the sky high.

On becoming Guru, He emphasized more for preaching Sikhism in Majha region and apart from 22 Manjis (22 mjIAw qy ielwvw) He also started Masand tradition. msd* pQ kwiem klql) (*msnd-gdI nwl sbD rKx vwlw). True Sikhs, beside their honest earning, also worked as Masands . Collections and delivery of

Donations (Kaar Bhet) from Sikhs to Guru Sahib and preaching Sikhism was a part of their duty. Guru Sahib invited people from far and wide to get settled in Guru Ka Chakk (old name of Amritsar). Every type of trade and profession started flourishing in the city. In 1577 Guru Ram Das Ji constructed the Sarovar which was later completed by Guru Arjan Sahib.

The Baani of Guru Nanak Sahib, Guru Angad Sahib, Guru Amar Das Sahib and the Saints(Bhagats) was in his possession. He also pronounced Baani and he kept preserving it. Apart from the 19 RAAGS narrated by Guru Nanak Sahib in Baani, he pronounced Baani in 11 more RAAGs. Thus from music and rhythm point of view Guru Ram Das Ji blessed Sikhism and Sikh heritage greatly.

Guru Ram Das Sahib had three sons. His eldest son Baba Pirthi Chand was able in maintaining accounts of income and expenditure, taking care of visitors and in day to day worldly affairs but he lacked the quality of spirituality. Second son Baba Mahadev remained detached from everything and never kept interest in worldly affairs. His third son (Guru) Arjan Sahib possessed all qualities of GURSIKHI. He was able in every sphere of life. On 16 september,1581 Guru Ram Das Sahib Ji enthroned Guru Arjan Sahib as fifth Guru of Sikhs at Goindwal Sahib and handed over the Baani pronounced by himself, by earlier Gurus and the Bhagats. Guru Ram Das Sahib left for his heavenly abode on 16 September, 1581.

2. Tapaa, the Renunciate

According to myths it is believed that the renunciates are great people and by undergoing renunciation (qp) they can attain heaven. Under this illusion laymen start worshipping such people. Such people undergo a great pain on their body like sitting in sun or to sit close to fire, to sit in icy places in cold nights, standing in cold water for hours together, to observe silence, sitting in underground places (BirA॥ ivc bTx॥) etc. Harder the tap (qp) one undergoes, more is his acceptability, recognition and his worship among common people. When such people get bored by sitting at one place for a longer period, they leave for the pilgrimage. But such tap (qp) is not acceptable in Gurmat and to follow the path of Guru only is tap (qp)

in Sikhism as :

gr sv, qp isir qp sr] (pn 423)

There is a mention in history that once a renunciate (Tapaa) came to Goindwal Sahib. Keeping free availability of food at Goindwal Sahib and his old age in mind he camped on the bank of River Beas. He felt that the Sikhs, without doing/undergoing any tap(qp), feel going on the path of salvation and pray God while living in happiness and serenity. At the same time they keep on doing their household business. He got surprised and jealous for Guru Sahib that even after such a long tap (qp), he could not get such acknowledgement, recognition and acceptability in the society. One day under the influence of anger and jealousy he came to Guru Sahib. Respecting him as a saint, Guru Sahib made him to sit close to himself. After knowing his wellbeing, Guru Sahib asked him for any service. The discussions/conversation that took place between him and Guru Sahib is enough to open our eyes, provided we analyze it with open mind;

Tapaa: If you kindly permit me I want to ask some questions.

Guru Sahib : This body and knowledge are blessed by God. Everything is dedicated to congregation/Sangat. Whatever

God wishes me to speak, I will speak. You may ask Without any hesitation.

Tapaa: I have done a lot of tap (qp) and accumulated vast Knowledge but I feel your Sikhs are very proud and Arrogant. They do not follow Puran (Hindu Scripture), tap (qp) or go on pilgrimage. They always recite Waheguru and follow your instructions. This is not a religion. How they can get salvation ? They are just wasting their lives.

Guru Sahib: Tapaa Ji, what is the motive behind doing Tap (qp) or going for pilgrimage ?

Tapaa : By doing this one goes to heaven at last where one enjoys umpteen luxuries.

Guru Sahib: In this way it is very costly bargain. The comforts of Heaven are also not ever lasting. It is really a costly bargain to bear distress in the hope of comforts in the heaven, which

are also to vanish away like the worldly comforts. We teach our Sikhs to follow the path of Waheguru, the giver of all happiness instead of chasing the perishable comforts, so that everlasting happiness could be attained. A Sikh recognizes the Universal Waheguru in himself by becoming self centred. (Awqm iDAwnI). To follow the path of truth is the true religion. You just tell that such long Tap and distress, that you have undergone, did not created ego and jealousy in your mind ? Have you ever remembered Waheguru with love and devotion ? Your total attention is merely to get your recognition enhanced by your stubbornness. Under such situation how you can remember and feel thankful to Waheguru ? Only haughtiness is in existence.

Tapaa : Whatever you say is true but being busy in household for the whole day and working for livelihood, how your Silkhs can remember Waheguru and be self centred (Awqm iDAwnI)?

Guru Sahib : This is what we teach our Sikhs that this world is the Place where Waheguru dwells and He exists in every creature. All people living in this world are His form.

So, whom we have to search by abandoning our Homes? So we do not have to abandon anything rather have to find the way to feel the presence of Waheguru by controlling our aspirations.

Tapaa : This is true but human mind is unstable and it is Difficult to control it. What about it ?

Guru Sahib : It's solution is to attend the congregation regularly. Attending the congregation regularly works as Light tower for the people searching the truth and on the other hand it directs the people towards Waheguru in odd and difficult times by controlling their wandering and unstable mind. We inspire our Sikhs to be name practitioners and not to be stubborn. Even to Call Waah to Waheguru and praise Him during day to day working is the prayer for Sikhs. This is devotion and the state of serenity can be attained by this way.

Tapaa : But to practice it, one needs to be inspired repeatedly.

Guru Sahib : For this Sikhs have Baani pronounced by their Guru. This Banni is helpful for them to regularize their prayer. Sikhs sing this Baani collectively early in the morning and the pleasure

what they get out of Raag and sense of Baani is beyond explanation.

Tapaa : After knowing all this I have felt the sense of devotion but still I have one doubt in my mind. Whether the importance of pilgrimage written in Hindu scriptures is totally vanity and false ?

Guru Sahib : Saint Kabir pronounces : "kih kbIr ha BieAw adws] qIrQ bfw ik hir kw dws"

Tapaa : Yes, it is absolutely true that the people with devotion Of God in their heart are the real pilgrimage. People With fear and devotion of God in their heart do make The pilgrims pious and holy.

Guru Sahib : Then why not we become devotees of God ! We must not torment our body. This body is also a place where God resides. To remember Waheguru always by living in the state serenity is the path of truth. Nothing can be achieved by tormenting the body. Rather :

qIrQ prw siqgr j Anidn hir hir nwm iDAwe]

Eh Awip Ctw ktb isa d hir hir nwm sB issit Cfwe] (pnw-140)

Tapaa held the feet of Guru Sahib anxiously and begged for a truthful life. Thus Guru Sahib got acquainted the stubborn Tapaa with the greatness of the state of serenity and he learned to live within the wish and will of Waheguru. In reality this is the aim and object of life of the whole humanity but what is needed is to follow the path of truth.

* * * * *

3. Bhai Handaal Ji

For preaching Sikhism in a broader way Third Guru, Sri Guru Amar Das Sahib established 22 cots (22 mjIAw sQwipq klqIAw) . These cots were the central places of preaching Sikhism. The chief of that central preaching place was known as MANJIDAAR or chief preacher. All these preachers had deep knowledge of Sikhism and its philosophy. They used to spend a high quality religious life and delivered the message of the mission of truth of Guru Nanak Sahib in their regions under guidance of Guru Amar Das Sahib. This way these preachers were making their life successful by following the path of Waheguru. Before assigning the duty to these preachers Guru Amar Das Sahib himself trained them fully. Among them

there was one preacher named Bhai Handal Ji. Bhai Handal Ji was a true devotee of Guru Amar Das Sahib. When his training of Gurmat (Sikhism) was over, Guru Sahib assigned him the duty of a preacher(Manjidaar).

About Birth of Bhai Handal : The name of mother of Bhai Handal was Mata Sukhi Ji and father Gaazi. He was married to Bibi Uttami Ji, the daughter of Bhai Hamza Chahal. They were blessed with one son who was named as Bidhi Chand. Bhai Handal belonged to Jandiala near Amritsar.

Once Bhai Handal came to Goindwal Sahib to pay a visit to Guru Amar Das Sahib after which he became a devoted Sikh of Guru Sahib. Bhai Handal was a gentle, polite and devoted Sikh. After arriving at Goindwal Sahib he learned the philosophy of Sikhism from Guru Amar Das Sahib and now service to humanity and prayer to God became the only motive of his life. Whatever he listened in Guru Darbar, he observed it in his life and simultaneously he used to serve in Langar (community kitchen). Under guidance of Guru Amar Das Ji, Bhai Handal Ji had learned Sikhism to his level best. After observing his devotion, Guru Amar Das Ji assigned him the responsibility of preaching Sikhism in Jandiala region . Jandiala was the place where Bhai Handal Ji belonged. He preached Sikhism there with complete devotion and brought a large number of people in the spectrum of Sikhism. After Guru Amar Das Ji left for his heavenly abode, Guru Ram Das Ji was enthroned as 4th Guru of Sikhs. During this period all the preachers (MANJIDAARS) were preaching Sikhism nicely. From time to time these preachers used to visit Guru Ram Das Sahib Ji and submitted their progress reports to him. Bhai Handal also visited Guru Ram Das Ji at Goindwal Sahib to submit his report. He was joyous to see Guru Sahib and submitted his report. In the meanwhile he attended congregation for some time and served in langar there.

Guru Ram Das Ji supervised the Langar himself. One day Guru Ram Das Ji went in the Langar where he found that Bhai Handal was preparing the flour for langar and was reciting Niranjan-Niranjan with complete devotion in the memory of Guru's feet. He was completely lost in Guru's memory and could not feel his arrival

/ presence. Suddenly on seeing Guru Sahib before him, he fell on his feet. Guru Sahib knew it well that Bhai Sahib apart from his deep knowledge, has complete devotion and faith in Sikhism and in him. Guru Sahib lifted him by his shoulder, embraced him and praised him for his efforts in preaching Sikhism in his area. After few more days he left for his place Jandiala. Bhai Handal preached Sikhism to the extent that Jandiala was known as Jandiala Guru Ka. After Preaching Sikhism for his whole life Bhai Handal Ji left for his heavenly abode in 1648 AD.

4. Mata Ganga Ji

Guru Sahib not only let the women feel their equality with men but also made them the equal contributor for serving in Guru Ghar and gave them such a status that other women could not get in the world. Resultantly, the women in Guru Ghar demonstrated their wisdom, foresightedness and presented a proof of being good human beings. Whether it was to serve in Langar, construction or serving the sick, from Mata Tripta Ji to Mata Sahib Kaur Ji, all women in Guru Ghar have been discharging the duty to their fullest responsibility. In this list Mata Ganga Ji, wife of fifth Guru sri Arjan Sahib also has an important and worth mentioning place. She was born in the family of a devoted Gursikh Bhai Sangat Rai in village Mau, tehsil Phillaur, district Jalandhar.

Considering her ability and qualities in view, she was engaged to Guru Arjan Sahib. When Guru Sahib along with his marriage party reached village Mau for marriage, the people from upper caste of that village didn't like it because several Sikhs from so called lower castes were also included in the marriage party. The upper caste Brahman and village heads told Guru Sahib that we allow to get the daughters of our village married to someone only when the bride groom digs out a wooden log with spear from earth by running the horse.(it is a sport in Punjab when a rider on the horse back runs his horse with full speed and takes (digs) out a small wooden log from earth by a spear) Guru Arjan Sahib took out the wooden log in his very first attempt and defeated nefarious plans of so called upper caste people. (basically it was a stem of small tree with its live roots in earth, which brahman didn't disclose). Thus the marriage of Guru

Arjan Sahib was ceremonised on 20th June,1589.

With the blessings of Akaal Purakh, with virtuous and serving nature, the life of Mata Ganga Ji is the source of inspiration for the women in the world.

SOME SPECIAL QUALITIES OF HER PERSONALITY

SERVICE AND DEVOTION : After marriage, when Mata Ganga Ji joined Guru Ghar as a life partner of Guru Arjan Sahib, she got love and affection from Bibi Bhani Ji as well. Just think, after getting the affection and love from a Mata like Bibi Bhani, can one girl abstain from serving others? This is what happened with Mata Ganga Ji. Whilst she herself was from a family of devotees, further she got mother like Bibi Bhani and companion like Guru Sahib, which enhanced her commitment of serving others. Resultantly, Mata Ganga Ji performed, contributed and collaborated in all big jobs of Guru Sahib.

In 1595 there was a great famine in the Punjab. Crops failed and people started dying out of hunger. Under such situation due to illiteracy and ignorance, generally people get trapped in the net of Muslims doing rituals or brahman to perform Yagya (a Ritual performed by Hindu Brahman by chanting the slokas of Veda). At this juncture it was imperative to educate the ignorant people and arrange the means of irrigation to deal with the famine. Hence Guru Sahib planned to visit the famine affected areas. He started his preaching tour along with the members of congregation. Wells were constructed at several places. Chheharta well (a well on which water could be brought out by using six different chains of buckets), established near Amritsar is one of those wells. Mata Ganga Ji also accompanied him, though she was passing through a critical stage of health at that time. The time of birth of Sahibjada (Guru) Hargobind Sahib ji was approaching fast even though she preferred to serve the people over her health. During this tour on 5. 7. 1595 (according to Original Nanakshahi calendar) Sahibjada (Guru) Hargobinbd Sahib Ji was born in Guru Ki Vadali near Amritsar. On this auspicious occasion Guru Arjan Sahib pronounced a Shabad thanking Akal Purakh (God) which is written on page NO 396 of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in Rag Asa as :

"siqgr swc dlAw Bij .....gr nwnk qTw klnl dwiq"]

Baba Pirthi Chand, the elder brother of Guru Arjan Sahib sent a maid to Guru Ki Vadali by applying poison to her breast to kill Sahibjada but due to the effect of strong poison the said maid died herself and before her death she disclosed it to Mata Ganga Ji. Later Baba Pirthi Chand sent a snake charmer to kill the sahibjada by snake bite. Generally snakes do not harm the children hence Sahibjada could not be harmed. Moreover, people saw the snake and they got alert. The snake charmer disclosed the whole planning of Pirthi Chand to Guru Sahib.

In 1597, Guru Sahib again shifted from Guru ki Vadali to Amritsar. At Amritsar also Pirthi Chand tried to kill Sahibjada by feeding the Curd mixed with poison through a servant who was taking care of child but the sahibjada started crying due to his force feeding and thus his life was saved again. The servant was caught red handed and died then and there because of severe stomach pain by feeling insulted. Guru Sahib could not stay at Amritsar for a longer period because of shortage of food grains in the cities especially. Guru Sahib planned to visit Lahore because the situation in Lahore was so grave that the people were dying out of hunger and streets we filled with dead. Without complaining the nefarious designs of Pirthi Chand, again the whole family of Guru Arjan Sahib left for serving the victims of calamity. For a longer period of three years the whole family of Guru Sahib kept serving the needy people.

Poverty and physical weakness are the root cause of disease which happened in Majha region(the area between river Beas and Raavi, that include Gurdaspur, Amritsar etc) The disease of smallpox was prevalent everywhere. Guru Sahib got this disease cured. Mata Ji remained busy for day and night in serving the patients along with Guru Sahib. This was some sort of being alive martyr because there was fear of death on every step but the whole family served the patients without caring for the that disease. Sahibjada (Guru) Hargobind Sahib also caught smallpox. To meet the requirement of water during this period a well was constructed in Kartarpur in 1600 which still exists in the name as Gangsar.

Apart from all this she never lost any opportunity to serve the

Sangat at Amritsar and sometimes she used to go to Putlighar (a locality in Amritsar towards Lahore on G T Road) or in the places where sangat used to stay to serve them. One day Guru Sahib took Mata Ji along and after serving them Langar, both started massaging the sangat. Guru sahib massaged men and Mata Ji to women. When next morning sangat came to know all this, they felt ashamed. Numerous incidents like this are associated with her life. During her life time, projects like construction of Darbar Sahib, publishing of Sri Guru Granth Sahib etc were carried on and in all such works Mata Ji contributed a lot in a direct or indirect way.

As a leader: Mata Ganga Ji was not only sincere to serve the sangat but she also led the sangat with ability on several occasions. When Sri Guru Arjan Sahib was martyred by emperor Jahangir at Lahore, she was ready to face any situation. She took care and nourished the tree of Sikhism. She preached and consoled the bereaved Sangat to observe peace after the martyrdom of Guru Sahib and gave them the message of Guru Sahib not to weep / cry and recite Baani. This incident has been described in Suraj Parkash as per following :

ies ibr l wpiq Awviq nwrI[pivS ggw sdn mJwrI[
sl Ar jn k gx bh khI[kml ibl cn q j l bhI[
siB ihin k snmwn mhwn[pQm rwK pn k rih bKwn[
sl ggw SB mq mih sXwnI[k rh n Sk snwvh bwnI[
j g gr kl AwigAw i j m hie[ks k rih a l Gx sie[

As a guardian of sixth Guru Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, she contributed a lot in meeting the responsibilities of guruship. Just imagine there were their two bitter opponents, Prithi Chand in their own house and Jahangir as an emperor but Mata Ji faced the whole situation without fearing. Preparing / making the personality of sixth Guru Sri Hargobind Sahib as great, is an example of her able guidance. Apart from this she also guided the sangat and led them with ability during the period when Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji was in the custody of Mughal emperor Jahangir at Gwalior Fort.

Forgiveness : On one hand whereas Mata Ji was a committed personality, she also had the quality of forgiveness. She never had

any ill will even against Prithi Chand who made frequent attempts to kill her son Guru Hargobind Sahib in his childhood and contributed in the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib and always pardoned him. After freeing Guru Hargobind Sahib when emperor Jahangir came to her to seek her pardon, only personality like Mata Ganga ji was there to forgive the killer of her husband Guru Arjan Sahib.

Mata Ganga Ji was a Wife of a Guru and mother of a Guru and thus she was a respectable Mata. She stayed alive for 22 years after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib (her husband). During her life time itself, the Holy Book of Sikhs, Guru Granth Sahib was published, Sarovars (holy tanks) were constructed, code of conduct of Sikhism came into existence, cities developed as business centres, Sikhs became good citizens and traders, Sikh army was raised and Sikhs became brave soldiers. Internal and external structure of Sikhism was finalized in her life time. She had the honor to see the Sikhism developing as an independent religion.

She left for her heavenly abode in 1628 at Bakala when she was there to visit the newly built house of Chaudhary(village head) Mehre.

5. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur

Early life and meeting the Guru : In search of the motive of life when an able person, after wandering and passing through various false rituals, reaches close to the truth, whatever changes take place at that time in his personality are a kind of revolution in itself. The life of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur is a source of inspiration for the whole humanity. A brave person (Baba Banda Singh Bahadur) felt detached after hunting a deer but when he came in contact with Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, same detached person fought with bravery and killed the cruel.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur is one of the great personalities who led the Sikh community with ability after Guru Gobind Singh sahib. Baba Ji led the Sikh Community in such a hard time when rulers wanted to finish them. At this juncture Baba Banda Singh Bahadur broke the illusion of Mughal Rulers who considered themselves as unbeatable and implemented several social reforms. He established Khalsa Raj and made Lohgarh as its capital and unfurled the flag of

Khalsa. He minted coins in the name of Guru Nanak Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh Sahib and started Sikh era.

Such a devoted Sikh, able leader and fearless General of Sikh army was born in the village of Rajauri of Punchh state Jammu on 16 october,1670. His childhood name was Lachhman Das. His father, Ram Dev was a Rajpoot. So, he got the art of horse riding, hunting and wrestling in heritage over other education. Also he had some interest in farming. One day he hunted a pregnant deer which died after giving birth to its calves and its calves too died in grief and torment. After this incidence he became too desperate and started living in the company of renunciates. During this period he happened to meet a detached Sadhu Janaki Das. He changed his name from Lachhman Das to Madho Das. After this he met another Sadhu Ram Das on Baisakhi in 1686 who was from Udasi Sect but all these Sadhus could not provide peace to his mind and thus he left towards Southern part of India and reached a place near Nasik. Here he happened to meet Yogi Aughad Nath at Panchvati. Aughad Nath was very happy with the devotion and service of Madho Das (Baba Banda Singh Bahadur) and trained him with all his expertise. After the death of said Yogi, Madho Das established his Ashram on the bank of Godavari River near Nanded.

After the death of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, there broke out infighting among his sons. Guru Gobind Singh Sahib helped Shah Alam Bahadur Shah to occupy the Delhi throne and thus Bahadur Shah became emperor of India with Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's help. He had very high regards for Guru Sahib. Guru Sahib asked him to punish the Mughal commissioners and officials who were committing atrocities on the subject/people, which he agreed. At this time his younger brother Kaambaksh revolted in south India. So he requested Guru Sahib to accompany him to the south. Guru Sahib left for south in his company. On their way to south the discussions continued but under the impression of religious head of Islam (Maulvi and other advisers), he started pretending for not punishing the officials under commitment. So Guru Sahib parted his ways with Bahadur Shah and left for Nanded. In this city Guru Sahib reached the Ashram of Madho Das. Earlier also in 1687,

Madho Das had met Guru Sahib at Haridwar. At that time Ram Das, an Udasi was his Guru and already Udasis had good relations with Sikh Gurus. After the death of Yogi Aughad Nath, he became the chief of the Ashram and he was in the habit of scaring others. Because of this practice people worshipped him in fear. The mission of Guru Sahib was to bring the crooked people on the right path. When Guru Sahib reached his Ashram, he was not present there. Guru Sahib sat on his own Cot. The Sikhs accompanying Guru Sahib ate the fruits of his Ashram and tied their horses with the trees. In order to bring Madho Das on the right path, Guru Sahib asked his Sikhs to slaughter (Jhatka) the Goats. The disciples of Madho Das got very annoyed and finally they informed Madho Das. He considered himself very powerful but he had to bow / give up/surrender before the personality of Guru Sahib. Whatever discussions took place between Madho Das and Guru Sahib on that day of 03 september, 1708 are as per followings:

Madho Das : Who are you ?

Guru Sahib : Whom you know well.

Madho Das : What do I know ?

Guru Sahib : Just remind and think deeply in your mind.

Madho Das : (After thinking) Are you Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Guru Sahib : Yes.

Madho Das : What is your motive of coming here?

Guru Sahib: I have come here to take you on the right path because you are wasting your life in vain.

Madho Das: I am at your service. I am your Sikh.

After listening about the martyrdom of Guru Sahibaan, four Sahibajada and numerous Sikhs, his mind moved and changed all of a sudden. After baptizing him by administering Amrit, Guru Sahib named him as Banda Singh. After becoming an Amritdhari Sikh, Banda Singh felt a new energy in his body and mind and committed himself to punish the cruel people responsible for the martyrdom of Sikh Gurus, Sahibjade and the Sikhs.

Guru Sahib was injured in the attack of dagger by two pathans sent by commissioner of Sirhind, Wazir Khan. Though His wounds

were stitched well but Guru Sahib was not able to take on any battle. He was also not able to return to Punjab. So Guru Sahib sent Banda Singh to Punjab by awarding him the title of Bahadur and five Sikhs named Bhai Binod Singh,Bhai Kahan Singh,Bhai Baz Singh,Bhai Bhagwant Singh and Bhai Koir Singh were also sent to accompany him and take part in his battles. He was given five arrows and twenty more Sikhs were also sent along with him. Banda Singh was also instructed to act under the advice of five piaras and to remain good in character.

Social Reforms : While Banda Singh was moving towards Punjab by facing several difficulties / odds, he heard the news on his way that Guru Gobind Singh Sahib had left for his heavenly abode. With this news his mind further got more zeal to take on the enemies. On every step he was proving more sympathetic to poor and weak. By the time he reached near Delhi, he had become quite popular in common masses owing to the sympathy he had for poor and weak. He was quite liberal for the down trodden people.

Secondly he was protecting people from dacoits and invaders on his way to Punjab. He made an important announcement that we have come here to protect people from the persecution of professional invaders and cruel rulers/officials. We don't need anything other than eatable goods. Come all, be Khalsa and we will make you the ruler of the country.

The Sikhs accompanying Baba Banda Singh also wrote letters to their relatives and friends to join him. When Sikhs came to know the conspiracy of Wazir Khan to kill Guru Sahib, they joined Baba Banda Singh in large number, considering him as a representative of Guru Sahib. All the Sikhs gathered and waited for Banda Singh Bahadur at Kiratpur. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur captured Samana (a city) and punished the Amirs and wazirs(rulers) and the persons who martyred ninth Guru and the Sahibjade. At Sadhora (a city) Sikhs killed the Mughal official Usman Khan who killed Peer Budhu Shah. Common people were also fed up with this official so they also joined Sikhs.

Hearing about the gathering of Sikhs at Kiratpur, Wazir Khan sent Nawab of Malerkotla (a city) to stop them from reaching

Sirhind. But he could not face and stop the Sikhs. The Nawab of Malerkotla and his nephews were killed in fierce fighting with Sikhs near Ropar (a city). Sikhs moved in hurry to join Baba Ji. Both parties met at a place between Banoor and Kharar (both cities) on the road from Ambala to Ropar(both cities) and celebrated their happiness for taking over the enemy.

Wazir Khan was very desperate on this development. He gathered a large number of his religious fighters (Jihadi). Baba Ji told Sikhs to fight with great zeal to capture Wazir Khan alive. On 12fth May 1709 both armies met in the battle field of Chapar Chiri. Baba Ji took the command of this fierce battle in his hands. With the encouragement of Baba Ji, Sikhs started beheading the Nawabs by climbing their elephants. The elephants started retreating along with the Mughal commanders riding on them and thus there was great human loss of Mughal army. Now Wazir Khan came to face Baz Singh. Bhai Baz Singh snatched his spear and hit at the head of the horse of Wazir Khan. At the same time Bhai Fateh Singh drew his sword and hit with such a force that it cut the body of Wazir Khan from his shoulder to loin. On hearing the death of Wazir Khan, all his forces ran away from the battle field.

Sikhs started demolishing and looting Sirhind in the feeling of revenge and courage. But Baba Ji prevented the Sikhs from this loot. S. Baz Singh was appointed the commissioner of Sirhind. After the defeat of Sirhind, Mughal Nawabs and high officials accepted the supremacy and several people converted to Sikhism. Common people were already persecuted by the Mughal rulers hence they felt obliged to adopt Sikhism as their religion.

By this time, due to untiring efforts of Bhai Baz Singh the whole region from Sadhora to Raikot and Machhiwada to Ludhiana (all cities) were under control of Sikhs. Henceforth Baba Banda Singh Bahadur started concentrating on the process of State management and social reforms. He made Mukhlis garh, a village between Sadhora and Nahan as his capital and named it as Lohgarh. Houses were constructed and issued coins in the name of Guru Nanak Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. He also started a new era from the date of capturing Sirhind.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur abolished the system of Jamidari (a system prevailing during Mughal rule wherein farmer was not the owner of land) and farmers were made owner of land, they were farming on. Centuries old down trodden people got sigh of relief and learned to live a life of self respect. According to historians if a person considered as low caste, reached to Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, he used to return as owner of his land and people of so called upper castes gathered there for his welcome waiting for his command.

The continuous winings of Baba Ji in the battle fields boosted the moral of Sikhs. Whichever place he won, he removed the officials there and took control in his own hands. He established his own Tehsil and police stations. About eight thousand Sikhs gathered at Amritsar and passed the Gurmatay(resolutions) and captured Batala, Kalanaur and Pathankot. On the other side they attacked up to Shalamar Garden, Lahore. In all these invasions they generally killed the corrupt and cruel officials, and were able to win over the common people sympathetically. The king of Chamba state Udai Singh got his daughter married to Baba Banda Singh Babadur who gave birth to his son Ajai Singh. He also attacked and killed Ajmer Chand, an enemy of Guru Sahib. Keeping the rising power of Baba Ji in mind, the maulvis declared JIHAD (as per muslim tradition it is a holy war and all muslims are supposed to take part in it) against him. A large number of Muslims joined this front and their army power increased many folds and after a battle Baba Ji had to vacate Fort Lohgarh.

After a gap of three months, when infighting was going on for the occupancy of throne of Lahore, again Baba Ji came out of hilly areas and captured Batala and Kalanaur. Due to sudden attack by Mughal army, Sikhs converted the haveli (a big house) of Bhai Duni Chand at Gurdas Nangal and faced Mughal army. The Mughal army continued the siege of this fortress for eight months and even food grain were also not allowed to get in. Contemporary historians write that during this eight months siege Sikhs had to survive by eating the leaves of trees and the animals. At last, some differences cropped up between Bhai Binod Singh and Baba Ji. Bhai Binod

Singh left the fortress leaving Baba Ji with some Sikhs there. Some Sikhs developed sickness and were not even able to walk. Under these circumstances the Mughal army captured the fortress on 7 December, 1715. Three hundred Sikhs were martyred in the Fortress and their abdominals were cut expecting some Gold coins in them and their head were hanged on spears. 200 Sikhs were arrested to take them to the royal court. Whole village of Gurdas Nangal along with the fortress was demolished. On this place there is now a mound which people know by the name of Banda Singh Bahadur.

To take the arrested Singhs to Delhi : Jakaria Khan was deputed to take the arrested Sikhs to Delhi. He felt that the number of arrested Singh was too small. So thousands of innocent Sikhs were killed and their heads were loaded in 700 bullock carts and 740 alive Sikhs were tied and loaded on camels. All these Sikhs were tied like Baba Bandha singh, with ropes at their neck, hands and feet and were taken in to the bazars of Sirhind.

Further, they were taken to Delhi in a very bad shape. In the front of this march the soldiers were carrying the heads of 2000 Sikhs on spears with their hair in the air. Following them there was a dead cat hanging on a bamboo. This was just to show that even a cat has not been spared in the Sikh camp. After this 700 bullock carts were moving loaded with the heads of Sikhs. An elephant on which arrested Baba Banda Singh Bahadur sitting, was following them. Just to laugh at him, he was made to wear a red colour royal robe and a glazed cap. His cage was being guarded by a soldier with naked sword. 740 Sikhs were loaded on camels (two on each camel). Their faces were blackened and caps made of the skin of sheep were put on their heads which were decorated with beads. Some prominent Sikhs were made to wear the skin of sheep with its hair outward so that they may look like a bear. The three Amirs, Muhammad Ameen Khan, Kamruddin Khan and Jakaria Khan were at the end of this march. Sikhs accepted all this by living in the will of Waheguru. They were reciting Gurbani even being tied on the camels. They were not feeling ashamed or sad on this behavior met out to them.

On 5th March, 1716 the killing of these Sikhs started on a platform near Tripolia Gate in Delhi under the supervision of

Sarbrah Khan. 100 Sikhs were martyred daily but none of them agreed to change their faith from Sikhism to Islam. Rather they were in the race to be martyred first. After three months of the martyrdom of these Sikhs, on 9th June,1716 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur along with his son Ajai Singh and other Sikhs Baaz Singh, Ali singh, Fateh Singh, Gulab Singh etc. were taken out of Red Fort and they were shifted to the place of Khwaza Kutubuddin Bakhtiaar Kaki near Kutub Minar under supervision of Sarbrah Khan Kotwal (equal to police inspector in those days) and Ibrahimuddin Khan in the shape of public parade. At this time also Baba Ji was tied in chains and made to wear glazed red turban and costume and was made to sit on an elephant. Remaining 26 Sikhs were with him in chains. Baba Ji was made to sit on earth who embraced his death like a true Sikh.

First, he was asked to kill his own 4 years old son Ajai Singh. Baba Ji refused to do so. After that a killer martyred the child by cutting him into pieces with a long dagger and his heart was put in the mouth of Baba Ji. Well done! Baba Banda Singh Babadur, who underwent all this in calm and quiet.

Now, Mughals had understood/ realised that Baba Banda Singh Bahadur would not change his religion and thus they started torturing him. Firstly, the man torturing him took out his both eyes and then his both hands and feet were amputed/cut. Pieces of his flash were removed from his body by hot iron tools and lastly he was beheaded and body was cut in to pieces. During this whole torturing, Baba Ji remained cool and calm and thus stood in the line of martyrs by making supreme sacrifice in his life.

6.Saint soldier Bhai Tara Singh Vaan ('vW')

Jamidara (izmldwr) system of farming was in practice in Mughal period. Under this system the village heads used to exploit the farmers extensively. Sahib Rai was the village head of Naushehra. He was very arrogant/ haughty and cruel. He used to leave his horses in the agriculture fields of Sikhs to feed them on. One day Sikhs requested him to hold his horses and not to leave in their fields. Sahib Rai replied that I will cut your hair(Kesh) and

would make rope out of those hair to tie my horses. This reply of Sahib Rai hurt the feelings of Sikhs. How the Sikhs could bear such derogatory remarks about their hair(Kesh). They discussed the matter with Sardar Amar Singh and Baghel Singh of nearby village Bhusay.

Sardar Amar Singh and Sardar Baghel Singh captured the horses of Sahib Rai and sold them to Maharaja Ala Singh of Patiala and the amount they received in return was deposited in the Langar of Sardar Tara Singh of Village Vaan ('vॗ).

Sardar Tara Singh was a true Gursikh and always used to recite the Gurbani. He had constructed a Gurdwara on his land on the outskirt of his village where Sikhs from far and wide used to come and take rest after having Langar. He was a brave Sikh and had taken part in various battles in the times of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur.

When the Village head Sahib Rai came to know that Sardar Baghel Singh had taken his horses, he enquired about him and got information that he was present at the place of Sardar Tara Singh Vaan. Sahib Rai took some of his men and reached at the place of Tara Singh Vaan and started speaking insulting words about Sikhism. Sikhs asked him to refrain from such acts but he heeded it not. Finally Sikhs caught hold of him and gave him a fierce beating. Feeling his great insult, he approached the Faujdaar (a local official of subedaar of Lahore) of Patti (it is a small city about 40 kilometer from Amritsar, where there was a small military camp in Mughal period) Jafar Beg, who attacked on Tara Singh Vaan with his 200 soldiers. Sardar Baghel Singh who was away in the fields for his morning services, saw Jafar Beg and his soldiers. Sardar Baghel Singh challenged them to face him. He shouted in loud voice – "BOLE SO NIHAAL, SAT SRI AKAAL" and started firing from his gun. Enemies also fired on him. On hearing it Tara Singh Vaan and other Singhs rushed to help Baghel Singh. There was a close fight. Though enemies were quite big in number even then they could not face Singh and ran away. In this encounter Sardar Baghel Singh was martyred. Two nephews of Jafar Beg and 10 other Hindus and Muslims were killed in this encounter. Faujdar had a very narrow

escape and ran away. He reached Lahore and complained to Jakaria Khan, the commissioner of Lahore (lwhr d sbdwr). Jakaria Khan was already a bitter enemy of Sikhs. He ordered Momin Khan to attack on Tara Singh Vaan and bring him dead or alive. Momin Khan attacked on Tara Singh Vaan with his troop of 2000 Soldiers.

One Sikh informed Bhai Tara Singh well in time about this attack. Though the Sikhs were merely about 50 in number, they got ready to fight. Neither the Sikhs seek pardon nor they fear with the number or strength of enemy. On his way to village Vaan, other Village heads also joined Momin Khan with their men. He attacked the place of Bhai Tara Singh early in the morning. Sikhs knew that this battle cannot be avoided hence they had already prepared themselves for it. A large number of soldiers of enemy fell to the bullets of Sikhs. It was very close and fierce fighting. Momin Khan directed Taki Beg to move ahead to attack . Bhai Tara Singh Vaan aimed his spear at the mouth of Taki Beg and the blood started flowing profusely from his mouth. He retreated instantly. On seeing blood coming from his mouth, Momin Khan joked Taki Beg and said "Khan Sahib are you chewing Paan?" (In Indian subcontinent Paan is a green leaf which people chew by applying lime, tobacco and other spices on it. When someone chews it, he spits red like blood). Taki Beg replied Momin Khan that Tara Singh is distributing Paans, go ahead and you also have one.

Now, Momin Khan sent his another commander, Murid Khan. He wanted to have direct fight with Tara Singh Vaan but how could he approach Tara Singh Vaan while other Singhs were on his way! On seeing Murid Khan moving towards Tara Singh Vaan, Sardar Bheem Singh advanced his horse and stood in his way. He challenged Murid Khan and (person who instructs and moves elephant, he sits on the neck of elephant) killed his mahout in his first two attempts. Bheem singh's sword cut the mahout into two pieces, his ele[hant ear was also cut and tooth was broken. The elephant ran backward in pain. Bheem Singh was a very active young man. He climbed the elephant from its tail side and beheaded Murid Khan instantly. Now Momin Khan ordered his whole army of 2000 soldiers to attack jointly. Now there was hand to hand fight

with swords and at last Bhai Tara Singh Vaan made his supreme sacrifice by getting martyrdom in that fight after killing a large number of enemy soldiers. This happened in 1726 A D.

Lesson learned: A Gursikh never tolerates the insult of his hair (Kesh) and he never cares for the strength/number of enemies while teaching them lesson of self respect.

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PHILOSOPHY

7. LANGAR

Langar and congregation (lgr Aq sgq) are two important institutions which played an important role in preaching and spreading Sikhism. For the important role played by these institutions in spreading the unique philosophy of Sikhism and implement it in reality, these institutions are to be considered as two pillars of Sikhism. The institution like Congregation is serving/ distributing the PARSAAD (Sbd rpl pSwd vf k) of Shabad/ Gurbani for the spiritual development of human being, and at the same time Langar of food is fulfilling the basic essential needs of body.

Though the tradition of Langar had already been in practice but as we see it is definitely a lesson for teaching the way of life. The tradition of Langar was prevalent in Yogi sect also where it was distributed without any discrimination but the basic difference between the Langar served in Yogi sect and Sikhism is that the Langar of Yogi sect was only for the follower of their sect and while serving Langar the difference between Guru and his disciple was maintained. Similarly the tradition of Langar was also prevalent in Sufi sect where it was distributed indiscriminately. But it was distributed on some particular days only. So the tradition of Langar initiated by Guru Sahib is peculiar in nature which is served every day to every one indiscriminately. The responsibility of management of Langar was assigned to Sangat so that it may continue without any scarcity/shortage of funds. The basic principle of sharing with others (vf k Ckx) came into being in Sikhism merely because of this tradition. To inspire for sharing with others, Guru Nanak Sahib pronounced:

Gwl Kwie ikC hQh die] nwnk rwh pCwxih sie] (pnw-1245)

From the above views it is worth analyzing that:

1. Are we following the tradition of Langar, initiated by Guru Sahibaan to meet the basic needs of human being and to abolish the discrimination of upper /lower caste, rich/poor in the society?

2. Are we not deviating from the principle of Langar started for the orphans or the needy?

3. Are we serving Langar in the same spirit as Guru Sahibaan initiated?

4.Do we differentiate for color, casteism or race while serving Langar?

5. Do we not go to Gurdwara for having Langar only?

These are certain important questions about Langar which management and every member of Sangat must know, only then the importance of Langar tradition will be established.

Mr. Surinder Nath Banerjee has described Guru Nanak Sahib as the spiritual leader of Sikh kingdom (isK bwdSwhq dw Awqmk mFl disAw h[) At that time people were facing the calamity of persecution, casteism and financial disparity in the society. These were the chronic diseases at that time. To uproot these diseases, Guru Nanak Sahib laid the strong foundation of Congregation and Langar (sgq q pgq). In the congregation one gets the true knowledge from his Guru while to partake meal in a row (Pangat) so that all may develop the feeling of members of one family. During the preaching Tours in four directions, Guru Sahib preached the people to pray to God, to promote brotherhood, to abolish the social disparity of casteism, to earn the livelihood with honesty, to share essentials with the needy and live fearless without any enmity with anyone. The instance of SACHA SAUDA (sc sd vwll swKl, lVvdw dl svw) is like a light house in Sikh history. He preached the people that begging is like a stigma in the life of any one. Plundering/ robbery must not be the motive of life. Earn your own livelihood yourself, eat well and be prepared to help the needy.

"ikriq ivriq kir Drm dl l pswid Awix vrqdw[

grisKw f die kir ipCl bicAw Awip Kvdw[" (Bwl grdws)

Gursikhs must earn livelihood himself and help the needy means they must not earn their livelihood through evil means. During his four preaching tours, wherever Guru Sahib appointed his preachers, he introduced the concept of Pangat and Sangat also there. Guru Sahib established Kartapur as the central place of preaching Sikhism. At this place he spent his last 18 years of his age. He did farming there and the grains so produced in farming, were consumed in Langar. This was such a great first Dharamshala (in olden days Gurdwaras were not there and the place of preaching Sikhism were known as dharamshala) in which Gurbani was preached and recited as food for spirituality and a properly managed Langer was served as food for body. Sikh Intellectuals claim the following five big signs of a Gurdwara:

1. Nishan Sahib, 2. Gurbani (Guru Granth Sahib), 3. Congregation, 4. Community Kitchen (Langar), 5. Big Drum (Nagaaraa)

1. inSwn swihb, 2. Dr kI bwxI (gr gQ swihb), 3. sgq, 4. lgr, 5. ngwrw[

At Khadur Sahib, Guru Angad Sahib established wrestling arena for healthy youth. There also, two great Langars were started - one for spiritual need and the other for the need of the body. The Dharamshala (Gurdwaras) of Guru Nanak Sahib have become an integral part of Sikh way of life. Guru Angad Sahib distributed the langar of Shabad in the Sangat.

lgr cl gr sbid, hir, qit n Awvl KtlA]

Krc, idiq Ksm dI, Awp Khdl, Kir dbtlA] (pnw-967)

Means; In congregation(Sangat) langar of Shabad is being served which is never in shortage. Guru Sahib himself is serving the langar of Shabad (Gurbani).

Guru Sahib's wife, Mata Khivi Ji has a mention in the history for serving langar to the people coming at Khadur Sahib as a great service to the humanity.

Some of the upper class and caste people were not feeling comfortable with the langar tradition in which people from all classes, upper castes/lower castes, rich and poor used to partake

langar in one row. Such people did attend the congregation to listen the preaching of Guru Sahib but after the congregation was over, they used to move out without having meal in langar. Finally, Guru Amar Das Ji issued a Hukamnama stating that whosoever wishes to see him or attend the congregation has to have Langar first. This was a firm rule to abolish the untouchability, haughtiness and caste system in Sikh community. Even when Emperor Akbar and the king of Haripur along with his queens visited Goindwal Sahib to pay a visit to Guru Sahib, they had their langar first and then only they could see Him. Whenever some Sikhs like Bhai Laloo Ji, Durga, Uggarsen, Sohan etc. requested Guru Sahib to grant them salvation, he preached them to serve the visitors by serving them with Langar. There is not any other donation better than food which keeps the man alive. Share your earnings with needy people. It is better than thousands of Havan and yagya to serve needy with food and clothing. (Havan and Yagya are two very old and prominent rituals in Hindu mythology wherein valuable food grains, Ghee and spices are put on fire and animals are sacrificed in the name of religion and for getting salvation) . Apart from Kartarpur Sahib, Khadoor Sahib and Goindwal Sahib, Guru Sahib Started the tradition of Langar under his supervision at Guru Ke Chuck (Amritsar) also for which Sikhs and Masands (Preachers in different regions) from far and wide also used to send Seva/contribution. During the period of fifth Guru Sri Arjan Sahib ji, there used to gather a big Sangat at Amritsar Sahib owing to the construction of Amrit Sarovar and Sri Darbar Sahib. At this time Guru Sahib and his wife Mata Ganga ji used to serve the Sangat and established an example of Service/seva for the sangat. Akbar the great visited Amritsar also and witnessed the construction of Sri Darbar Sahib, collection of Gurbani and other works underway for the welfare of humanity. He also had a glimpse of the glorifying personality of Guru Sahib and was impressed with all this. He wished to contribute for Langar but Guru Sahib declined it politely and firmly. Keeping in mind the failure of crops due to the great famine at that time, Guru Sahib got waived off the tax of the common people and peasants. Whenever the kings of Kullu, Mandi, Suket, Haripur, Chamba (these were all hill states at that time) visited Guru Sahib, all they partook Langar and enjoyed it.

Sixth Guru, Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji introduced the practice of having food in Langar for his army. His army comprised pathans also, who too never hesitated to have food in Langar.

Bhai Gadiaa Ji was appointed as preacher in Kashmir region. As per contemporary practice of Dashvandh (10% of the earnings or one tenth part) in Sikhism, whatever Dashvandh he collected, he used to spend it on poor people there instead of sending it to Guru Sahib. Once while he was leaving for Amritsar, there was a great famine in Kashmir. He had collected thousands of rupees from Sikhs as Dashvandh, which he spent there on the needy for their help and after reaching Guru Sahib at Amritsar he offered Rupee One and Four Anaa i,e, rupee one and a quarter to Guru Sahib and narrated him the whole episode of famine. Guru Sahib was very happy to listen this and said that he had already received his Dashvandh directly. Now you go to your village, start Langar to feed the needy, recite the name of God and make others to recite it. Guru Sahib started Langar not only at Kiratpur but also instructed Bhai Gonda to go to Kabul (now in Afghanistan) for preaching Sikhism and start Langar there also.

It was also a standing instruction from Guru Sahib to beat the big Drum (Nagara) before distributing the Langar so that no one may claim that he was not invited/intimated to have langar. It had thus become the habit/ practice of Sikhs that before having their meal they used to call in loud voice if there was any one hungry !

After inhabiting / founding of Anandpur Sahib in 1665, there also it was made mandatory to start langar. During the period of Guru Gobind Singh Ji the number of army and Sangat grew manifolds and Anandpur Sahib developed rapidly. Resultantly the number of Langars also increased with improved quality of food. One day Guru Sahib decided to take test of different Langars running at Anandpur Sahib. So Guru sahib disguised as visitor/pilgrim and visited all langars pretending for having food. Persons In charge of some langars told to wait for some time as the langar was being prepared, while others said langar is ready but we have yet to do Ardas.

At last, Guru Sahib reached in the Langar being run by Bhai

Nand Lal Ji. Bhai ji served the Langar as is how is" and thanked with folded hands for giving him the opportunity to serve him. Next day, Guru Sahib narrated the whole instance in the congregation and blessed Bhai Nand Lal Ji. It was clear instruction from Guru Sahib to serve Langar to the visitor/pilgrim/needy at all times considering it as pious duty. Turning away to anyone without serving langar is like he has turned away to me.

"Serving the poor is like serving the Guru". It is mentioned in the code of conducts of the Sikhs, written during the life time of Guru Sahib that if some Sikh visits the house of another Sikh, he must accept cloth and food but not like a greedy person.

The tradition of Langar attained the status of firm practice during the times of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The Bread (Chapati) started to be called as wet diet or Prasada. New ideas/philosophy emerged at that time when the thinking of Langar before sword, worship before power and arms before a soldier came into consideration. After Guru Gobind Singh ji left for his heavenly abode and at the time of Maharaja Ranjjit Singh, the coin as minted and circulated had the following inscription on it :

dg qZ &iqh E nsriq b-idrg] X&q Az nk gr gibd isG

Khalsa obtained the concept of "DEG TEG FATEH" from Guru Nanak Sahib and Guru Gobdind Singh Ji. The inter relationship between Deg Teg and their importance can easily be assessed by the fact that these words have been included in the daily Ardas of Sikhs as :

"...dg qg Piqh ibrD kl pj, K l s jl k bl b l , bl jl v ihgr ..." dg qg &iqh d B v ArQ h ik l gr c ld rh Aq ikp n dAr &iqh ppq hv, An Q d p l x Ar dSt d nS hv["

By the time Khalsa will remain to be the follower and committed to the principal of Deg Teg, earns his livelihood with honesty and community kitchen (Langar) keeps on serving food to needy till then Khalsa will remain in supremacy in the world.

It is inherited from our glorious past history that wherever far wide, in remote areas and overseas countries like England, America, Canada, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, New Zealand etc. Sikhs are settled, Gurdwaras have been established there and in each

Gurdwara free food from Langar is served without any discrimination. This tradition of Langar is present in Sikh families also irrespective of their settlement in big cities like Mumbai, Kolkata etc. or a small village.

Thus Guru Sahibaan have taught us the principle of shared interest (sWJlvwlqw) through the tradition of Langar where people from all religions partake langar by sitting in a common row without any discrimination of castes, rich and poor. In Gurdwaras, people from different communities, race and countries sit together and praise God for His mercy, at the same time they feel proud of being the part of human brotherhood.

8. KIRTAN

There are two words used in the praise of God: Keerti and Kirtan. Keerti means magnificence or popularity while kirtan means to narrate or sing in the praise of God. But in Gurmat singing Gurbani in rhythm and in a particular musical order (Raag as included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib) is better known as Kirtan. Guru Sahib has pronounced:

klrqn inrmlk hlrw] (pnw 893)

(kirtan Nirmolak Heera) (Page 893)

Kirtan is a unique and very good means for attaining spiritual peace. In Sikhism Kirtan is sung in all ceremonies. Fifth Guru Sahib (Guru Arjan Sahib) pronounces:

klrq pB klgwa, mrlrsnw] Aink bwr, kir bdn, sqn,

ahW, crn gibd jlk bsnw] (kwnVwmhlw 5, 1298)

Bwelgrdws jlPrmwaid hn :-

krbwxliqnw gr isKW, grbwxlinq gwie sxd] Aq

Gr Gr Adir Drmslw, hv klrqn sdwivsA] (vwr 2)

With the above examples it is evident that kirtan is an integral part of prayer in Sikhism. Guru Sahibaan pronounced the Gurbani in 31 Ragas (musical order).

It is a truth that singing in rhythmic order has a great power/influence. Scientifically it has been proved that singing in Raag plays an important role in the growth of plants. Cows and other animals yield more milk under the influence of music. Great

thinkers and philosophers of the world are of the opinion that music leaves good influence/ effect on our mind. With music, mind gets peace and concentration.

At the time of Guru Nanak Sahib the culture, traditions and skills of Hindus and Muslims were not harmonious. In Islamic world music is not considered as a good art, while in all temples and religious places of Hinduism there used to be kirtan in the praise of their Gods. Dev Daasi (it was and to some extent now also Dev Daasi system prevailed in Hindu temples, under which people used to donate their daughters in the temples in the service of Gods, who are called Dev Daasi) worshipped idols as living gods. At that time the standard of music had gone so low that it was limited up to brothels where people visited for entertainment only. Guru Nanak Sahib transformed it in the prayer of God. The main reason of Bhai Mardana to remain in the company (associated) of Guru Nanak Sahib for his whole life was his expertise in playing Rabab(a musical instrument).

By doing kirtan Guru Nanak Sahib preached the way of God/truth to the people of the Punjab, Hindu pilgrims and the people of Arabian countries, Iran, Afghanistan, Tibbet Bhutan etc. The hearts of evil souls like Sajjan Thug, Kauda Rakhas, Vali Kandhari, Hamza Gauns and noor Shah witchcraft melted and became good human being. In view of his co-operation and support in kirtan, Guru Sahib honoured Mardana with the title of Bhai. Guru Nanak Sahib pronounced his Baani in Raags and established the tradition of kirtan. During Guru Angad Sahib's period, Bhai Sadhu and Bhai Baadu used to do kirtan. Guru Amar Das Sahib, the third Guru also liked kirtan. He also pronounced his Baani in Raags. There used to be kirtan in the congregation during the times of Guru Ram Das Ji also. Guru Arjan Sahib was expert in doing kirtan in Raags and he invented a musical instrument too which is called Sarandaa. Satta and Balwand, the famous Gurbani Singers used to do kirtan in his times in Darbar Sahib. He preached Sikhs to do kirtan themselves.

Guru Arjan Sahib fixed a schedule for kirtan (ckIA‖ kwiem klqlA‖) at Sri Darbar Sahib Amritsar which are as per following:

(1) Aimq vl Aws kl vwr dl (2) sv pihr idn cV crn kvl dl, ies f ibl vl dl ckl vl kihd hn[(3) Sm f sdr dl (4) cr GVl rq ge kl Ax dl ckl[ien q ibn sl Aimqsr ivc Sm f hr vl ckl A hn, ijn ivc pml isG prqn rlq nl pm Br Sbd pVd hn[

These evening Chowkis were started by Baba Budha Ji and Bhai Gurdas Ji at the time when sixth Guru Sri Hargobind sahib Ji was in the custody of Mughal Emperor Jahangir in the fort of Gwalior (a city in the province of Madhya Pradesh in India) which are still in practice. In Ardas too kirtan chowkis are remembered. For singing the hymns of bravery, Guru Hargobind Sahib ji introduced two new musical instruments named Dhadd and Sarangi (Ff swrgl) in the kirtan. Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib also pronounced Baani in Raags. Guru Gobind Singh Ji was a great admirer of soft arts/skills and several singers and poets were present in his court. Taaus, a musical instrument with strings was invented by him. Thus, in order to purify the soul more emphasis has been laid on kirtan, for religious freedom and to abolish rulers' tyranny. Sikhs have been instructed to carry a sword in their hands and thus the principle of saint and soldier has been made firm in the mind of Sikhs. By doing or listening kirtan, one overcomes mental worries/stress, gets mental peace, attains self confidence and there is improvement in his personality.

Flared notes/pitch /tunes of singing (BVkll qrz):

Light music and tunes of cinema songs have adversely affected Gurbani kirtan. The mind of a person involves in evil thinking by listening such music and makes distance with God. It is prohibited to do kirtan under such tunes. For this Guru Arjan Sahib writes :

mr mhn! svnl ieh n sne]

skq glq, nd Din gvq, blq bl Aje] (page-820)

Qualities of a person doing Kitan :

1.He must be a follower of Sikh tenets, fulfill his commitments as a devout Sikh in his mind, words and acts.

2. Must do kirtan in dire peace.

3. Must be able to pronounce Gurbani correctly.

4. While doing kirtan the tone of musical instruments must be

so low that devotees may listen Gurbani easily.

5. Efforts must be made to use string musical instruments to the maximum in kirtan. With these instruments sweetness of kirtan prevails.

6. Tabla must not be played in a very high tone. This disturbs the mind.

7. If possible, kirtan must be done in the same raag in which shabad has been pronounced/written. It is better to explain the meaning of the Shabad before singing it. It is generally observed that the members of congregation return to their homes by enjoying the Raag only without understanding /knowing the meaning of the shabad. Guru Arjan Sahib pronounces:

BI BI, r klrqnlAw, rwm rmw, rwmw gn gwa Cif, mwieAw k DD sAwa]

(Page-885)

Shabad Vichar Sbd-vlcwr

9. Jis ke sir upar tu swami...

shI mhlw 5 (Page 749)

ijs k isr apir q sAwmI, s, dK ksw pwv]

bil n jwx mwieAw mid mwqw, mrxw cliq n Awv]1]

mr rwm rwie, q sqw kw, sq qr]

qr svk ka, Ba ikC nwhI, jm, nhI Awv nr]1] rhwa]

j, qr rig rwq sAwmI, iqn kw jnm mrx dK nwsw]

qrI bKs n mt kel, siqgr kw idI wsw] 2]

nwm iDAwiein sK PI pwiein, AwT phr AwrwDih]

qrI srix qr Brvws, pc dst I swDih]3]

igAwn iDAwn ikC krm n jwxw, swr nw jwxw qrI]

sBq vfw siqgr nwnk, ijin, kI rwKI mrI]4]

acwrn sDw :- sqw-sqw[nwhI-nwhI[bKs-bKS[AwrwDih- AwrwDih[srix-Srix[dst-dSt[swDih-swDih[

pd ArQ :- mid-hkwr ivc[mwqw-msq[nr-nV[qr rig- qr pm ivc[AwrwDih-AwrwDd hn[Brvws-Aswr nwI[pc dSt- kwmwidk pj vrI[swDih-vs ivc kr I d hn[swr-kdr[ijin-ijs n[kI-iejq[

Man is wandering in doubts and superstitions. A vast knowledge is available and is being preached to abolish this

wandering. But Guru Arjan Sahib on the basis of the knowledge passed on to him by Guru Nanak Sahib, tells the world that he is not bothered for the rituals prevailing in the society. He further says that he has understood the fact that the only source of knowledge is to move on the path shown by Guru Nanak Sahib and thus by following that path all his fears and doubts have disappeared.

Meaning : Guru Sahib tells us that no trouble of evil thinking /doings can touch the person whom Almighty God has blessed with his mercy. Such person never gets involved in worldly affections of wealth and remains away from vanity. He is not afraid of death too. Oh! my great Lord; you are so close to the people who pray for you and they are your children. Person living in your shelter is not scared of any fear or death. No power can finish your blessings. This is the confidence a worshipper gets from the true Guru. People who always imbude in your memory, are blessed with every comfort of life i,e, they get above the feelings of mental or physical pains and trouble. They always feel happy and thankful for your blessings. They are able to overcome their mental or physical weaknesses. Oh Waheguru, I don't have any wisdom and thus I am unable to concentrate in your sweet memory. I don't have the understanding of good deeds. Also I don't have ability to understand or feel your presence. Guru Arjan Sahib further tells that Guru Nanak is great who has saved and blessed me with spiritual understandings.

Conclusion: The persons who follow the teachings of Guru Nanak Sahib and by virtue of his blessings become able to seek the kindness of God, they are enriched with good qualities in abundance. No fear or trouble can harm such persons. So it is essential to remain in the shelter of Guru/ Gurbani.

10. Ae sarwanh merioh sache...

rwmkl ll mhlw 3 And (Page-922)

e svxh mirh, swc snx n pTwe]
swc snx n pTwe, srlir lwe, sxh siq bwxl]
ijq sxl, mn qn hirAw hAw, rsnw ris smwxl]
sc Alk iv fwxl, qw kl giq khl n jwe]]
kh nwnk, Aimq nwm sxh, pivq hvh, swc snx n pTwe]37]

pd ArQ :- svxh-kn[pTwe-Bj ge h[siq-scI[ris-rs ivc[sc-sc rp pmwqm[AlK-smJ q\ pr[ivfwxI-Ascr j, AnKI[giq-AvsQ[

Introduction: Guru Amar Das Ji alerts all the senses of human being to pray for God. In this shabad Guru Sahib inspires the ears of a person to listen the Baani pronounced in the praise of God.

Meaning: Guru Sahib tells us that all acts of God are wonderous. One can explain or listen the greatness of God but it is not possible to know everything about him. By listening Gurbani if our ears make firm concentration in our body, our mind and body fills with real happiness. The tongue also starts speaking truth by reciting the sweet Gurbani. So we must devout all our senses to sing in the praise of God.

Conclusion : According to the teachings of the above shabad we must try to follow the path of truth by listening and understanding the praise of God for his greatness. By doing so our mind and body will always remain in happiness.

* * * * * *

11. Gur Satgur ka jo Sikh Akhaye...

m: 4 (gaVI kI vwr) (page-305)

gr siqgr kw, j isK AKwe, s Blk aiT, hir nwm iDAwv]

adm kr Blk prBwql, iesnwn kr Aimq sir nwv]

apdis gr hir hir jp jwp, siB ikl ivK pwp dK lih jwv]

iPir, cV idvs grbwxI gwv, bhidAw aTidAw hir nwm iDAwv]

j, swis igrwis iDAwe mrw hir hir, s grisK, gr min Bwv]

ijs n dieAwl hv mrw sAwml, iqs grisK, gr apds sxwv]

jn nwnk DiV mg iqs grisK kI, j Awip jp, Avrh nwm jpwv]2]

acwrn sD\ :- iesnwn-ieSnwn[apdis-apdiS[cV-cV[bhidAw-bhidAw[aTidAw-aTidAw[

pd ArQ:- Blk-Aimq vl [Aimq sir-swDsg rpl srvr[

Introduction : In the above shabad Guru Ram Das Ji has explained the greatness of God (Akaal Purakh). By reciting Sloka, one feels that remembering the name of God, reciting Gurbani and listening the teachings are altogether different from each other. But

after reading/reciting the whole Gurbani we find that all these are not different or independent rather they are the links of the same process. In this sloka it has been explained how a man becomes wise, hardworking and able to receive the blessings of God by following the teachings of true Guru !

Meaning : In the above Shabad, Guru Ram Das Ji preaches that the person who follows the teachings of a True Guru, spiritually his life becomes very pious. Guru Sahib further says that the person who claims to be a true follower (SIKH) of Guru and is always engaged in reciting Gurbani, the dawn of spiritual knowledge starts screening in his life. He makes continuous efforts to feel the presence of Waheguru and ultimately takes a dip in Amrit Sarovar (praise of God).

A sikh praises the qualities of God by following the preaching and teachings of a true Guru, resultantly he is able to shun all his sins and miseries. It is purely because of praising God that all dirt of five evils is washed away. Finally he is enlightened with the dawn of knowledge of spirituality and sings in the praise of God all the time.

Sikh who sings in the praise of God with every breath is loved by Him. But all such qualities are blessed to the Gursikh who is eager to feel the presence of God and makes efforts to come close to such qualities. Servant Nanak also longs such vision, for improving own life and the life of others.

Conclusion : With the blessings of God the daily life of the followers of truth must be very disciplined and according to the qualities of Akaal Purakh. A gursikh spends his whole life as he is participating in a congregation and feels the presence of God everywhere.

12. Ghar bahar tera bharvasa...

Dnwsrl, mhlw 5 (677)

Gir bwhir qrw Brvwsw, q jn kh sig]
kir ikrpw plqm pB Apn, nwm jpa hir rig]1]
jn ka, pB Apn kw qwx]
j q krih krwvih sAwml, swms liq prvwx] rhwa]
piq prmsr, giq nwrwiex, Dn gpwl, gx swKl]

crn srn nwnk dws hir, hir sqI, ieh ibiD jwqI]2]

acwrx sDW:- q-q[h-h[jpa-jpa[krih-krih[krwvih-krwvih[prmsr-prmSr[srn- Srn[sql- sql[

pd-ArQ :- jpa-m jp[qwx-Awsrw[msliq-slwh[prvwx-pmwixq[sql-sqwn[gpwl gx swKI-pmwqmwd gxwdl swKI[

introduction : In the above Shabad Guru Sahib preaches that the devotees have deep faith and confidence in their God. Whatever God blesses to them, they accept it with open heart and grace.

Meaning : Oh God ! I am your servant. I am always under the shelter of the teachings of your Gurbani. I always feel your presence. Oh God! bless me so that I may always stay connected to you through the affection of Gurbani. I, the servant of thou, am proud of my master Waheguru. Oh my master Waheguru! I am happy to follow your commands. The prestige and pride of a servant lies in his master. God is also the source of salvation. Singing with devotion in praise of God are the wealth and property of a devotee. Servant Nanak pronounces in the above shabad that the devotees have invented the way of a true life by following and implementing gurbani in one's life.

Conclusion : Devotees who pray /worship God (feeling presence of God universally) are not afraid of any worldly fears. They feel themselves under shelter of God and lead a disciplined spiritual life.

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13. Manukh ki tek birthi sabh jaan...

gaVI, sKmnI, mhlw 5 (pnw-281)

mwnK kI tk, ibQI sB jwn] dvn ka, ek Bgvwn]
ijs k dIA, rh AGwie] bhir, n iqsnw lwg Awie]
mwr rwK, ek Awip] mwnK k ikC nwhI hwiQ]
iqs kw hkm biJ, sK hie] iqs kw nwm, rK kiT prie]
ismir ismir, ismir pB sie] nwnk, ibGn n lwg kie]1]
acwrx sDW:- iqsnw-iqSnw[
pd-ArQ:- tk-Awsrw[ibQI-bPwiedw[rh AGwie-rijAw rihdwh[
rK prie-hr vI Xwd kr[

Introduction : In the above shabad Guru Arjan Sahib persuades us to follow the rule of God by leaving/abandoning worldly cleverness. One, who has firm faith in One God and leads a true life, all sort of fear, illusions and superstitions disappear from his life.

Meaning : Fifth Guru Sri Arjan Sahib preaches us that it is in vain to seek any help/ shelter from a man as no human being is self sufficient and is a beggar in front of God. It is only God who gives all gifts to human beings. We can only be satisfied with the gifts of God and once we are satisfied, there is further not any wish left to get more. We must always bear in mind that only God is capable to kill or save us. Man at his own cannot do anything without the will of God. An Order/the will of God is the only source of comforts. Preserve the name of God in your heart like you care for the beads of a rosary. Oh man! always remember the name of God. Guru Arjan Sahib pronounces that there will be no trouble in your life if you ever remember the God by your heart.

Conclusion: To conclude, Guru Sahib preaches us that we must not depend on others for our wishes and must always remember and pray to God. Only God is all powerful and we must follow His orders. This is the only secret of the successful life of a man.

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The Progress of Life

14. Gurmat and Healthy Body

Telling a way of good life, more emphasis has been laid on healthy body in Sikhism from it's very beginning. There is a very beautiful and inspiring quote in Gurbani :

Gt vsih crxwribd, rsnw jp gpwl]

nwnk, s pB ismrIA, iqs dhl ka pwil] (page-554)

Meaning : Guru Sahib pronounces that it is imperative to care for the body with which we recite the name of God.

For a healthy body exercise is also as necessary as we get up early in the morning, take bath and eat healthy diet. In Sikhism apart from rendering the volunteer physical service, more emphasis was

laid on wrestle in arena, horse riding, exercises like armed struggle, martial arts and sports.

When we analyse the practical life of Guru Nanak Sahib, the founder of Sikhism, we get amazed as he spent about a quarter of his life in extensive travelling far and wide. Of course, only a healthy person could undertake such irresistible efforts. Apart from the long journey to the far off places, only a healthy body can climb high mountains like Sumair. During last days of his life when he founded the city of Kartarpur, even then he spent his remaining life (about 18 years) there by doing hard labour in farming.

Guru Angad Sahib also promoted the same ideology of healthy life and established wrestling grounds and engaged youth to wrestle there. Guru Amar Das ji himself enjoyed a long healthy life because of his untiring efforts and service to the humanity. He founded the city of Goindwal Sahib, constructed Baoli and other wells and taught the Sikhs about the importance of hard work.

It is imperative to propagate the selfless service and physical hard work undertaken by Guru Ram Das Ji in finding the cities of Amritsar (earlier known as Chakk Ram Das), construction of markets there and inviting people and artisans / technicians to settle in was not possible without hard work. Guru Ram Das Ji was constantly engaged in physical Labour and it was because of his healthy body, physical hard work and politeness to pass the tests while he was offered Guruship. If the body of a man is weak and tired, sometimes he may delay in executing the order. Baba Budha Ji, the teacher of fifth Guru Sahib, was a great personality who also possessed a healthy and disease free body. The effect of constant hard work performed by Mata Bibi Bhani ji also impressed the personality of fifth Guru sahib. It was due to his healthy body that fifth Guru Sri Arjan Sahib Ji could complete the construction of Sri Darbar Sahib, complete the Amrit Sarovar, write the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (AAdi Granth). The Story of pulling a peg with spear at the time of his marriage is an evidence of his physical strength. In the view of prevailing circumstances, Guru Arjan Dev Sahib got sixth guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib trained in horse riding and the use of weapons apart from the teachings of Gurmat by Baba Budha

Ji.

Untiring physical and mental efforts made by Guru Har Rai Sahib to promote Sikhism in very odd circumstances is a unique example in itself. He established big clinics with all contemporary amenities for the upkeep of good health of the society.

Eighth Guru, Guru Hari Krishan Sahib, though he was in a very young and tender age and his period of Guruship was also not very long, served the common masses in Delhi who were suffering from smallpox, was an exemplary deed. One cannot expect such a daring task from a person who is not in good health.

Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib undertook long and exhaustive preaching tours and bore the atrocities of Mughal empire and sacrificed his life. All this is not possible without good physical and mental strength.

As far as Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji is concerned, his whole life is the synonym of untiring efforts and struggle against state tyranny. He fought several battles and made extensive travelling in a short span. All this paved a way to the Sikhs to be firm, strong and armoury. The Khalsa so imagined by Guru Nanak Sahib and finally shaped / created by Guru Gobind Singh Ji was not possible without a healthy body and mind.

After Guru Gobind singh Ji left for heavenly abode, Sikhs were able to over throw the Moughal empire and blocked the passage for ever of Afghan invaders like Abdali and Durani for ever who were invading India for about One thousand years. This way due to their physical and spiritual strength Khalsa was able to reciprocate the invaders in their own coins. All this was not possible without healthy bodies.

Healthy body maintains a healthy mind in it. Both are complementary to each other and so cannot survive without each other.

Prldw, brdwBlwkir,gswminnhFwie]

dhl,rgnlgel,pl,sBikCpwie] (Page 1382)

For a Gursikh way of life, It is essential to wake up early in the morning and have bath for a healthy body. After all, this is

improtant for healthy mind that one must sit and concentrate in the memory of Almighty Waheguru for some time. According to Gurbani :

JwlwG, aiT, nwm jip, inis bwsr AwrwiD]

kwrw, qJ n ibAwpel, nwnk, imt apwiD] (Page 255)

and

kir iesnwn, ismir pB Apnw, mn qn Be Argw]

kit ibGn lwQ, pB srxw, pgt Bl sjgw] (page-611)

The true message / knowledge of Gurmat can be obtained with healthy body and mind only . This is the basic teaching of Sikhism to help / serve the needy while performing our worldly affairs. Without a healthy body and mind it is not possible to feel the existence/light of God in every human being and be ready to help indiscriminately. A weak person cannot even look after himself. Such person cannot help others too.

On one hand, in Sikhism four restrictions and five Ks, are made essential part of the life of the Sikhs, by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Make them mentally firm and determinant and these are helpful these, in making the body strong on the other hand.

So, if a man longs to serve the humanity, it is the foremost requirement that he must possess a good health. Come ! Let us analyse how capable we are to serve the humanity and how healthy our body is !

Exercise :

Are you healthy ?

1. Can you touch fingers of your feet in standing posture ?
2. Can you lift a heavy bag easily ?
3. Can you wear your clothes / garments comfortably ?
4. Don't you feel breathless while climbing the stairs ?
5. Are you in right weight according to your age and height ?

If your reply for any of the above questions is in NEGATIVE, surely you need extensive exercise.

WHY IS EXERCISE NECESSARY ?

People who are physically healthy :

1. They are very active and hard working.
2. They have more physical and mental confidence.
3. They can easily handle the mental tension.
4. They enjoy better sleep.

Exercise make the look of the body beautiful . Regular exercise is helpful in maintaining the right body weight which is very essential for good health. People who do not undertake physical labour and keep away from exercise, they feel more tiredness. Such people get easily victimised of various diseases like Diabetes, heart disease, back pain, tension and low moods. Thus it is imperative to keep our body full of energy by doing regular exercise.

FACTORS OF A HEALTHY BODY: There are following essential factors of a healthy body :-

1. PHYSICAL STRENGTH : - Body must be strong and all this depends on the strength of your Heart. Heart is the only one for the whole life time which circulates the energy of oxygen in the body by pumping blood. We get oxygen through lungs, so lungs must be healthy. Walking, jogging, cycling, swimming etc are helpful for the healthy lungs and heart.

2. FLEXIBILITY OF BODY :- Body must be flexible which can be achieved by undergoing various stretching exercises. Body loses its flexibility and becomes hard by remaining in standing posture for a longer time.

SUGGESTIONS ABOUT EXERCISE :

By doing excessive exercise one cannot make his body strong instantly. So one must bear the following suggestions in mind to get maximum advantage of exercise.

1. WHAT MUST BE THE FREQUENCY OF EXERCISE : At least 3 to 4 times a week exercise is suggested to keep body tuned.

2. HOW INTENSIVE MUST BE THE EXERCISE : One must exercise with full strength.

3. DURATION OF EACH EXERCISE :

At least 30 to 40 minute exercise per session is essential. Initially one must do light exercise to warm up the body and then with full strength and slowdown in the end to cool down the body.

4. SELECTION OF EXERCISE :

A large number of exercises are available such as Aerobic Dance, cycling, swimming, weight lifting, different sports like hockey, Basket Ball, walking, running etc. Each person must choose right exercise keeping his age, health, interest and other factors in mind. Walking and yoga are good exercises for older people.

TESTS FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH :

Our normal pulse rate is about 70 per minute. If it exceeds this limit, it indicates that the body is not healthy. The pulse rate reduces up to 60 or even less with regular exercise. Heart Rate is another test for checking health of a person.

HOW TO ENHANCE ZEAL AND INTEREST FOR EXERCISE !

1. Increase the duration of exercise slowly.

2. Maintain the duration of exercise as per your health condition.

3. Choose right and convenient place and time for exercise. Preferably take a friend along with you for exercise. This will enhance your interest in exercise.

4. Bring changes in your exercise. Daily similar exercise may cause boredom in your mind. So, keep changing the exercise daily.

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR MENTAL TENSION !

A HEALTHY BODY IS FREE FROM TENSION.

To get rid of tension, lie down on floor. Maintain distance of about 1 to 1.5 feet between your feet. Keep your hands face upward towards sky about 4-5 inches away from your body. Let your body lie on the ground like a dead person. At least one should remain for 5-10 minutes in the same posture. Take deep and long breathing. This will insert oxygen in to your body which will make your body healthy and free from tension.

DIET AND WEIGHT : Healthy diet is also as important as good exercise, which must have balanced amount of carbohydrates, protein, fat, minerals and vitamins. Fruits and Salads are also important constituents of healthy diet. Diet must be taken as per the requirement of the body and the weight of the body must be

maintained in right proportion. Over weight is an indicator of bad health.

15. Care for Time

The life span of human being is described in time factor which is divided in years, months, days, hours, minutes and seconds. The life span of a person is a time which he spends on this earth. He can spend it in good or bad deeds. A person can develop his personality by utilising his life in good deeds. On the other hand, one has to face disappointment and frustration.

The time lost can neither be restored nor it will be purchased by money. Time is the costliest asset of human being which is available to everyone equally, it means, the time slot of 24 hours a day is available to each of us but we generally observe the wastage and misuse of this time slot. According to Burnard Shah -" People who misuse and waste their time, generally they complain for the shortage of time" . Those who know the way of best utilisation of time, achieve success in life.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CARING ABOUT TIME

Some suggestions for the best utilisation of time are as follows :

1. Target : We must have some target / aim in our life and its achievement must be our purpose. Without any target no big achievement is possible. Utilisation of our time must be aimed at the achievement in our life.

2. Planning : Always plan for your daily tasks. Choose some 2-3 important tasks which you think are more important. Note down tasks of less importance. Spare some time every day for such planning. This will help you in completing your tasks in a very planned manner and with lesser amount of time. Analyse your whole day tasks before going to bed and think how you could utilise your time in a better way.

3. Concentration : People who try to undertake several tasks at a time, they cannot concentrate on any particular task and ultimately end up without any desired results. Undertake one job at one time and concentrate on it with full devotion to complete it. Concentration of mind leads to early and accurate completion of work.

4. Arrange your items in order : Arrange your articles scattered on the table etc. Such scattered items will disturb your concentration and create tension in your mind. Divide your articles, files and books in three parts-

(1) Important (2) less important and

(3) unimportant.

Arrange all your important articles / files / books in front of you on the table. Keep unimportant and remaining things on one side and away from your sight. Always remember that we can do only one task at one time. So firstly, concentrate and complete your important tasks . After this choose other less important tasks based on their priority. Make it a habit to clean your table in the evening every day. By doing this you will feel more energy to take up other tasks the next day.

5. Learn To Say No : Of course, one must help others in their work but always remember that your task must not suffer by doing so. If you feel that helping others can hamper your own work, politely SAY NO to others instead of making false excuses. In this way you can easily avoid the wastage of your time.

6. Do Not Delay your work : Delaying the work is a common habit in people which is quite difficult to change. But all bad habits can be changed by our sincere efforts. First thing to change bad habit is to search the cause of the bad habit. If task is difficult, try to understand it or divide it in parts. Give inspiration to your mind and start the work with concentration. After you make a move to complete it , your mind will automatically get more inspiration. At this juncture of time attend the remaining work with more concentration. By adopting this method one can easily get rid of his bad habit of delaying the tasks.

7. Division of Work : Instead Of doing the whole work by yourself, divide the work in parts and you must assign some parts of work to others as per their ability of doing it. Keep supervision of work with you and guide your co-workers from time to time. This way you will be able to save your time and encourage your co-worker and create a sense of responsibility among them. This is an important factor for a big and well organised institution. Always get

your co-workers acquainted with the work/working and keep on improving their ability. This way you will be able to save your time with better output and feel less burden upon you.

8. Avoid " Time wasting jobs" : Always avoid such jobs which deviate you from your target. Watching TV, books, friends, meetings, social gathering etc. are basic causes for the wastage of your time. Avoid them and be cautious about these. Avoid low moods and evil thinking. Jealousy, irritation, worry, enmity, telling a lie etc affect the thinking of a person and disturb his balanced thinking and deviate him from good deeds.

9. Rest : Rest is very important for our body . Body gets tired by working continuously for long hours and efficiency / energy of body is reduced. To re-energise body we should get up from our seat and walk for few minutes in the office and do light exercise / stretching. This will provide freshness to body and mind and we will get ready to work again.

10. Maintenance of body : If our body is well maintained and healthy we feel energetic enough to work. Daily exercise, simple and nutritious food keep the body active and energetic. Sound sleep is an utmost requirement of our body but we should sleep only as much as is necessary for our body. About sleep, what matters the most is the quality of sleep and not its duration. By taking small portion of food during day time / noon we do not feel sleepy rather we feel energetic to work. Setting a fixed routine to eat and sleep / rest, our body gets accustomed to this time frame. Sometime take a leave from your work and spend few days with your family at romantic site. This will provide a new energy to your body and mind. Work related to our hobby like painting, gardening, photography and music also recreate our mind and body. Always think good and positive and for this read good books.

11. Know yourself : Do I take more time in doing work ? Have I forgotten to do some work because I could not note it down ? Do I generally misplace / forget important letters ? Do I ready same letter several times ? Do I face difficulty in searching some thing when I

need it ? Do I try to perform several tasks at a time ? Do I lose heart in doing a particular task ? Do I not praise myself for my good job ?

If the replies of most of above is in positive then you do not make justice to your thinking. Change your habit and thinking and try to reply above Questions in negative. This will improve your personality. The basic principle of utilising the time is " Be conscious For Today " Each day must be Utilised in a nice way. Bhai Veer Singh has rightly described as :

rhl vwsq Gq, sm n iek nw mnl [
PV PV rhl Drlk, sm iKskwel knl [[
h ! A j sBwl ies *sm *n, kr sPl afdw jwvdw [
ieh Tihrn jwc nw jwxdw , lG igAwn mVk Awvdw [[

16.Question paper - Lesson 4

1. Write a brief note about life of Guru Ram Das Sahib.

2. Why Guru Amar Das Sahib chose (Guru) Ram Das Sahib as his son- in- law ? What did Guru Ram Das Sahib say to Guru Amar Das Sahib at the time of enthroning him as 4th Guru ?

3. Write in brief - important works undertaken by (Guru) Ram Das Sahib during times of Guru Amar Das Sahib and what did he do for preaching / spreading Sikhism during his times as 4th Guru ?

4. Describe in details the conversation between Renunciate (Tapa) and Guru Ram Das Sahib. What lesson do we learn from this conversation ?

5. Write in brief the life story of Bhai Handal. Why Jandiala was named as Jandiala Guru ?

6. What inspiration do present preachers of Sikhism get from the life of Bhai Handal ?

7. Write in brief the life of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur before he met Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Describe the changes in the life of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur after his meeting with Guru Sahib.

8. What inspirations do we get from the incidents in the life of Mata Ganga Ji ?

9. Describe - The social reforms done by Baba Banda Singh Bahadur.

10. How Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was arrested ? How was he taken to Delhi ? Write about his martyrdom.

11. Write a brief Note about The life of Bhai Tara Singh.

12. Why Momin Khan attacked Bhai Tara Singh with a force of 2000 soldiers? Write a brief note on the battle between Bhai Tara Singh & Momin Khan.

13. Give brief information about the tradition / history of Langar.

14. What revolution Guru Sahib wished to bring in the society by initiating the tradition of Langar ? What are the principles of Langar, a Sikh must follow ?

15. Is the present system of Langar as per the tradition initiated by Guru Sahib ? Describe.

16. Write a brief note on the importance of Kirtan in Sikhism .

17. Write qualities of a good Kirtaniya (person singing hymns of Sri Guru Granth Sahib) . How these qualities can be obtained ?

18. Describe in your own words the Gurmat principles and teachings in the SHABADS in this lesson.

19. Why is good health important for life ? What inspiration do we get from the life of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji ? Write in brief.

20. Why is exercise important for our body ? What are the factors of a healthy body ? How exercise must be chosen for our body?

21. Why "care of time" is important for a person ? Which activities waste our time ? Write in brief.

22. What steps must be taken to CARE FOR TIME ? Write a brief note.

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Quotes

There is a kingly lion deep within each of us.
This is our Best Self.
When you are fearful and empty, you are your “poor me” self.
When you are fearless and loving, you are your “lion”self.
It is YOU who have the power, to create which one you'd rather be.

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We are what we think.....
And as we think, our lives will be.
When a person enjoys happy thoughts on his walk, wonderful things happened to him When he began to be nervous and afraid, he allowed the dreadful tiger of his thoughts to appear.
Only you can shut the door on your harmful thoughts
And only you may let your best ones in!

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We will always find the truth within us, When we pay close attention to what is really happening when we are Aware.
Sometimes, like the big man, we are so caught up with how important we are that we don't see or hear anything but our stubborn pride.
As for the big man's group of supporters, when we are like that, we are people who follow what the loudest voice says.
The one purpose of our lives is to seek the Truth.
In all that we Think Do and Say.
Your Best Self is full of Love.
When you feel this to be true, You also feel good about the person you are.
you have began to love the world...
This is what happens to the person.
As he starts loving himself, he finds enough love for everyone and everything.
It is the love inside his Self that gives him every blessing and happiness he would ever need!

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Forgiveness makes you light and free! This is the most loving act you can do for yourself.
When you forgive, no one has the power to hurt you...
No one can disturb you for there is no more hatred and confusion. Instead

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of pain and anger at another, you are now full of peace and love.
Forgiveness creates happiness wherever it goes!

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Unhappy things sometimes do happen.
Accidents. Mistakes.
Things we cannot control from the outside.
We can only change the way we feel about them inside.
We can face difficulties with either Trust or we can face them with fear.
When we have Trust we are protected by its power.
And we turn our hurt into Strength.

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Black, white, rich and poor, we are all from the One Source.
The same power that directs the movements of the planets and the changing seasons flows through all of us. we are all connected.
What we give out to the world,will come back to us...
For there is nowhere to go !
When next you admire the boundless beauty and generosity of nature, Know that this too is how you really are.
Listen to your Best Self and you will hear it say: We Are All One.

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Whoever we are, whatever we are doing, if we live our Truth, we are said to be Free.
Being free does not mean being uncaring an unkind to others.
when you are Free, you set others free To be the best that they can be!
Everyone of us must follow our path, What feels best and right for each?
You move towards Freedom When You know within your self that there is your Truth.
Worth Living For!
You were born to create. Whether it's planting a garden, cooking a meal, writing a letter, building a friendship or painting a picture, your Best self wants to be expressed through you.
We all have talent. Each of us has been given something special to offer the world. It doesn't matter if its big or small, we ther you are a genius or not, the act of creation brings out the best in you.

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