

## Sri Guru Granth Sahib - A Virtual Ocean of Truth and Wisdom [What I have learnt from Gurbani]

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Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), the holy Sikh Scripture, is the greatest spiritual treasure which contains timeless TRUTHS for the entire humanity. It contains *Bani* (Sayings/ Writings) not only of six Sikh Gurus but also of thirty other Holy Souls/Saints (hailing from different parts of India and professing different faiths including Islam). It is, therefore, meant for the Good of not just anyone community, but for the entire Mankind.

Sri Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Guru (spiritual preceptor) of the Sikhs ordained in the Year 1708, that after him, there would be no Guru in person, and that the Holy Scriptures (SGGS) shall be the all-time living Guru for the Sikhs (Literally meaning-all Learners/Pupils/ Disciples/Seekers after Truth), who should implicitly follow the teachings contained therein. SGGS is the virtual ocean of TRUTHS AND WISDOM, which have molded my life.

I owe it to my saintly father, Late Master Sohan Singh Oberoi (Retired teacher of Khalsa High School, Sukho, Distt. Rawalpindi, now in Pakistan), who introduced me to this spiritual wealth, when I was a young boy. After seeking Blessings of *Waheguru* (GOD), with all humility, I am making an attempt to enumerate in simple words, a few of the Teachings / Truths, as felt and experienced by me, hoping to be pardoned for any mistakes which may have been made because of my limited intelligence and knowledge:-

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

1. GOD is ONE. He is Formless. Truth is HIS Name. HE is the Creator of ALL Universes. HE is beyond the cycle of Life and Death. HE is without Fear or Hatred. HE has been there throughout- BEFORE the Universes created by HIM, IS there now, and WILL always be there, for all time to come. WHATEVER we see, are the manifestations of GOD.
2. Contemplation on GOD and Searching and Cleansing the Soul. Thinking deeply to Discover the True Meaning of Life through *Gurbani* (the writings in SGGS) and Following the dictates in Full Faith.

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3. Remembrance of God (*Simran*), while engaged in normal household chores / vocations / jobs, etc. Body and Mind engaged in normal worldly pursuits, while the Spirit should be ever in remembrance of the Creator. *Simran* (remembrance of GOD and orally or mentally reciting the Word Divine - *Waheguru* or whatever other holy Name we give HIM) is BLISSFUL.

4. Death is only of the Body – NOT of Soul, which is immortal. The purpose of Human birth is ultimate Union with God: Merging of Light (*Jyoti*) of individual soul with the Source of ALL LIGHT, the Universal soul; Mingling of an individual drop of Water with the Ocean of Water.

Death is NOT to be feared; it is only a natural process and brings about the final union of the individual soul with the Creator, through the Grace of Word Divine. *Naam* (Word Divine) is the Remedy for all Illnesses / Maladies.

5. TRUTH is higher than everything else; but Higher still is Truthful Living. Importance of Honest Earnings and Sharing One's Earnings / Blessings, with others, the needy.

6. Essential Equality and One-ness of the Human race. We are children of the ONE COMMON God and we are all equal, without any distinction of any sort – country, language, race, colour, caste, creed, gender, or any other.

Entire humanity is family, we are all human beings, First and Last. The different Religions are different paths to the same GOD. The holy names, Allah (Muslim) and Par Brahm (Hindu), refer to the same ONE GOD. Religious conflicts are, therefore, utterly meaningless. PEACE and HARMONY must prevail in the world inhabited by people professing different Religions/Faiths.

7. We are High or Low, not by birth, or caste, or creed or colour or any other consideration. Only good or bad actions / deeds determine our real worth in the eyes of GOD. And we Reap what we Sow.

8. High respect for the Woman-kind. A Woman should be seen only as Mother, Sister or Daughter. She is the epitome of Truth, Love and Service. It is the Woman who gives birth to Saints, Kings, Warriors, etc. She has equal Human Rights as Man.

9. Marriage is a sacred union between man and wife-two bodies with one Soul. Undivided love and devotion to each other, Purity of Character and Respect for each other's feelings, ensure a blissful married life and family.

*Sati* (the ancient custom of Burning of wife at her husband's funeral pyre) is BARBAROUS, IRRELIGIOUS and CRIMINAL.

10. Love and affection for All. Enmity, Hatred, or Ill-will or Jealousy towards None. Praying for the Welfare of All. GOD can be reached through LOVE. Loving HIS creations is to LOVE GOD.

To treat everyone with respect – we should not hurt any person's feelings. Not to be rude to anyone or break his/her Heart, as God resides in every Soul.

11. Human birth is the biggest GIFT bestowed by God on us, after millions of lives spent in other life-forms. This rare privilege of Human Life, the most evolved (still evolving) and the Highest Creation of God, must NOT be thrown away or wasted in unworthy pursuits, but utilized for the all-round betterment / advancement of Life and ultimate Union with God, the Creator, through *Simran* (HIS remembrance), while leading an honest, truthful, peaceful and enjoyable life in the world.

The human body, the temple of SOUL, has to be looked after and maintained as a sacred duty to GOD through proper and balanced diet, hygiene, exercise / yoga, and honest earnings avoiding any evil thoughts and actions.

12. Contentment and being genuinely thankful to GOD for all HIS Blessings. This removes all Tensions / Doubts / Uncertainties and gives PEACE and TRANQUILLITY.

13. GOD is All-Pervasive. We need not go to deep forests or high mountains or shores of seas/rivers or torture ourselves in any other manner, in HIS SEARCH. HE lives inside our Souls.

14. Purity of Character – Body and Mind. Soul can be pure only if the Body (its transitory abode) is pure. Noble thoughts lead to Noble actions.

No SINS to be committed or wrong deeds to be done, under the false impression that no one would know of them. GOD being OMNIPRESENT sees all our Thoughts/ Actions. Nothing is hidden from HIM. Further, any evil thought / action lowers us in our own image, as the Soul inside sees and knows what we are thinking/ doing. To seek GOD'S LOVE, we have to be worthy of being loved.

15. Goodness and Purity of Intentions behind all Actions. It is the Intentions which define the true value of Actions – good or bad.

16. Strike NO Fear in anyone, or be Afraid of anyone. If we see God in everyone, there is LOVE and LOVE everywhere and NO FEAR or HATRED anywhere.

God is the SOLE Saviour / Protector, at all times. No harm can come to one who has full faith in HIM and is HIS Bhakta (devotee), who, therefore, is carefree and fearless.

16. All our material possessions, physical strength and mental faculties, intelligence, abilities and all other Blessings TRULY belong to HIM. We are merely HIS Custodians during our short Life in the world, to make proper use of HIS gifts for the benefit of HIS Creations.

We should be Charitable, especially towards those who are needy, disabled, or backward – financially, socially, culturally, in education, etc., without any show of personal ego. GOD is the only GREAT GIVER and BENEFACTOR. I am only an instrument in HIS HANDS.

GOD is the SOLE PROVIDER. One should live with Honour and Self-respect and not depend on unearned favours of human beings. Living as Mendicants on the Doles of others is a Curse. Living as a Householder is respectful.

17. HIS WILL IS SUPREME and must be accepted gracefully. All HIS ACTIONS are for our ultimate Good. Our limited mind cannot comprehend HIS GRAND PLANS. All Universes are functioning under HIS IRREVERSIBLE, ALL-TIME INHERENT LAWS of NATURE. Nothing is IMPOSSIBLE or BEYOND HIM.

18. One should always Think and Do Good / Noble Deeds and by making sincere Endeavours, without feeling Lazy or Indolent. One should always be in **charhdi-kala** (Rising Spirit) and be positive in thoughts and actions.

Service of Mankind is Service of God. Real Service is the one which is performed voluntarily / willingly / joyfully and without any personal or selfish motive.

Selfless Service purifies one's Body, Mind and Soul. It washes off all SINS of Thought, Word and Deed committed knowingly or unknowingly; and by seeking HIS Grace and Strength to forsake them in future. I should seek God's Grace that in the hour of crisis, I may never shirk from undertaking a Noble task.

19. We should try to consciously control the five temporal vices of LUST, ANGER, GREED, False ATTACHMENT and EGO; and Pray to God for HIS Grace to give us strength to keep them in check. True and Sincere Prayer never goes unanswered.

20. No smoking or consumption of intoxicating drinks or drugs. These lead to physical, mental, moral and spiritual decay; one even loses the sense to distinguish between Right and Wrong, under their influence.

21. There should be complete freedom to all to profess their own faith / religion as a Human Right. Guru Nanak said that one should be true to one's faith.

Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Ninth Sikh Guru laid down his life to protect the rights of the Hindus to profess their own religion and wear *Janeyu* and *Tilak* on forehead (though

he himself did not believe in these Rituals). He sacrificed his life for the protection of Human Right and against Religious conversion by force.

No Religion promotes hatred or violence. All True Religions promote love towards all and ultimate Union with God.

22. No belief in false superstitions and fake / empty / inane / meaningless rituals. Beware of Fake *Sadhus* (holymen), out to dupe and mislead innocent, simple souls, in the name of Religion.

23. For seeking God's Love and Grace, one should acquire the 3 qualities of Humility, Forgiveness and Sweetness of Tongue (Language). We should shun Vanity and back-biting / wickedness / deceit.

24. Singing praises of GOD, and reciting *Gurbani*, in the company of *Sadh-Sangat* (holy congregation). It brings Bliss and enables one to overcome the false Lure of base worldly desires.

25. Never usurp another person's Rights – by force or deceit / treachery. That is compared to eating carrion.

26. Standing up for Protection of the Weak and the Down-trodden.

Sri Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed everything, fighting most fearlessly against Tyranny, Oppression, Cruelty and Injustice to the people by their Rulers, all his Life. His fight was not directed against Islam or any other Religion. He infused the Depressed with the Spirit to fight for their Human Rights, Dignity and Freedom.

27. There should be complete accord between thoughts and actions. Duality / Pretence / Falsehood / Deceit are the cause of all sufferings, tensions, and physical and mental illnesses.

28. Protection of Environment is our moral duty. Treat and Respect Air as *Guru*, Water as Father and Earth as Mother.

Note: It is, generally, observed that the visitors to Gurdwaras, especially those who do not know Punjabi, seldom get to know what Sikhism really stands for. This small article briefly describes the teachings enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), and should meet that need.

It must be emphasized that True Sikhism lies in faithfully following the teachings as enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib. I may state, here, that I am a Sikh, not because I keep unshorn hair and wear a Turban on my head, but because I try to live my life as per dictates in Holy Guru Granth Sahib.

I feel great happiness seeing a large number of clean-shaven devotees, in Gurdwara Gobind Dham in Ahmedabad, with their heads covered with scarfs, who serve at *Langar* (free kitchen), at *Jodaghar* (shoe store) and rendering selfless service around, and also many of them sitting inside the Gurdwara, listening to and thoroughly enjoying *Kirtan* (hymn singing) with their eyes firmly glued to the screen which simultaneously displays the wordings with their meanings, in Hindi/English. They are real Sikhs and deserve all respect and regard as Sikhs.

It would serve a useful purpose if a copy of the above article (in the language of the area where a Gurdwara is situated) is distributed to those who visit the Gurdwara and are keen to know more about Sikh Faith.

In short, Sikhism is humanitarianism. '*Ek Pita, Ekas ke Ham Baarik*' (we are children of One Father, the Creator), is its basic doctrine. Humanity is family.

Sikhism is another name for Truthful Living!!!



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