

“Hemkunt to Sachkhand’ - Pages from “*Kalgidhar Chamatkar*”

BHAI VIR SINGHJI
TRANSLATION BY BIMAL KAUR®

@ 5-G, Thacker Indl. Estate, N.M. Joshi Marg, Mumbai. 400 011.

A SCENE OF CELESTIAL BEAUTY. Seven of the tallest snow-clad Himalayan peaks surround a spot where an ascetic sits in deep meditation. All around an aura of peace and serenity.

Suddenly a voice from the beyond speaks : “You must go into the world and create the ideal man of ‘Charhdi Kala’.

‘I designated Man to be supreme in the world; he has fallen short. Now you must be the example – the ‘Guru’ who teaches, and the father who loves and guides his offspring.”

The ascetic opened his eyes and looked around. He was disturbed. After a long, long time of meditation and ‘*sadhna*’, he had felt himself to be in the presence of the Almighty, and now, these words telling him to go into the world and create an ideal man!

“How am I to carry out this task? And yet, it is His order. To disobey is to deny my love and faith. But I need guidance - His guidance! O Eternal Lord, I am not fit to do your bidding. But if you enter my being, and are with me, and this union that has occurred today does not break, then your servant would be capable of carrying out your orders.”

The Voice spoke again :

“I am in you and you are in Me. This union, this oneness is for all times. I shall be with you as a Father, who is always there to help his son -

‘Main Apna Sutt Tohe Niwajaa’

(I have designated you as my son).

Guru Gobind Singh Ji sat in a deeply contemplative mood at Anandpur Sahib. The people of the country were suffering under the foreign invaders. Harsh and rugged Pathans and Mughals had looted and plundered the nation’s wealth and had stayed on to rule the populace with iron control. To the peoples’ other woes had accumulated the terrible hardships of religious bigotry and intolerance. No one enjoyed the freedom to worship his god. All non-Muslims were under constant threat to either accept the religion of the rulers or die. People had lost their physical and moral strength and were unable to put up a unified resistance to this tyranny. Something needed to be done to ignite the spark of honour and unfold the self-worth in their hearts.

Guru Ji left Anandpur Sahib and went to the remote mountains to seek an answer. In the stillness, he heard again the words :

‘Main Apna Sutt Tohe Niwajaa
Panth Prchur Karbe Kahu Sajaa
Jahi Tahan Taiy Dharam Chalaye

Kabudh Karan Tei Loke Hataye.'

(I have given you the title of my 'Son' with the purpose of establishing the Khalsa Panth. Go into the world and create a kingdom of 'Dharam' or righteous living, by teaching the people to give up their wrongful thoughts.)

"Yes, the Almighty had blessed me with these words before I left Sachkhand. But I still do not know the way. O Father, my beloved Father, help me so that I can carry out your wishes faithfully," he prayed.

Guru Ji spent over eleven months in this remote place searching for an answer. Then one day, a sound burst forth and formed the word – **KHALSA**

This was repeated thrice. Suddenly there was a movement in the air. It was as if the invisible sound waves were vibrating and converging to form a living figure. It could be described in these words :

'*Sabat Soorat Dastaar Sira*' (A complete human form with a turban on his head).

He had a luminous face with classic, handsome features, strong physique, a beautiful soft beard, lustrous hair covered with an impressive turban; a heart full of compassion and courage; a sword in hand, but held up more as a shield; a pen in the other hand – as an instrument of fairness and justice. There were lines on the wide forehead bearing a celestial message :

CHARHDIAN KALAA

Guru Ji asked : " Who are you ?"

Figure : "I am the Khalsa."

Guru Ji gave him a penetrating look and asked : "Where do you live ? Who has created you ?"

Figure : "I am from your inner spiritual core and thus, I am your creation."

Guru Ji : "Why have you come ?"

Figure : "To ask you to grant me the boon to enter every man's heart and so bring alive the ideal of the 'Khalsa', who will lift the oppressive burden of pain and suffering from mankind."

Guru Ji was no longer pensive and grave. His eyes shone with a blinding light and as he looked around, he could see the reflection of the 'Khalsa' - on every tree, every branch, every leaf and from all around the sound echoed and re-echoed : **Khalsa – Khalsa – Khalsa!**

Guru Ji's efforts had produced a priceless gem!

In joyous and buoyant spirits, he returned to Anandpur Sahib.

Some days passed. One morning, after the *Kirtan* was over, the huge congregation of Sikhs waited in silence, for Guru Ji to speak to them. Suddenly, Guru Ji leapt from his seat, his countenance radiant and glowing. Holding aloft his flashing sword, he called out loudly, "My beloved Sikhs! My sword needs a head. Come, offer me your heads!"

There was a stunned silence. It was a daunting challenge. No one moved.

The call came again, "Is there no one ready to give up his head?"

From the gathering, a plainly dressed person stood up and with folded hands, said, "You are the giver of life eternal. This head is yours."

Guru Ji caught him by the hand and took him into a tent erected nearby. In a short while, he came into the 'darbar' with his sword dripping blood and called, "My Sikhs, one more head!"

Confused murmurs arose all around. Many people had already left and now, more slipped away, saying, "Guru Ji is not in his right senses." But one Sikh got up and humbly offered his head to his Guru. He too, was taken into the tent.

Once again Guru Ji appeared, with his sword scarlet with blood, and called, "One more!"

Through the watchful, stunned crowds, one more Sikh came up and prayed for his head to be taken. Guru Ji took him into the tent also. When he came back, his eyes were red and flashing fire, "Will one more Sikh come forward?"

And once again, a Sikh came up with a smile on his face and the humble request to take his head! He too was taken away by Guru Ji.

The Sikhs were confused and terrified, yet some semblance of faith and love for Guru Ji held them rooted to the spot. They watched in awe as yet once again Guru Ji came out and called for one more head. This time too, a man got up and humbly offered his head. He was also taken into the tent.

The congregation waited breathlessly to see what would happen next. In a while, the flap of the tent opened and Guru Gobind Singh Ji came out, exuding a spiritual vigour and radiance which stunned the 'sangat'. Behind him came the five Sikhs, who had so willingly offered their heads. Everyone was filled with wonder at this marvel! They could not believe their eyes!

Now, many moved forward. One of them said, "Guru Ji, please, forgive me. We have been your Sikhs for three generations and received untold blessings from you. Yet, when the time came to prove our faith, I hesitated," and he prostrated himself at Guruji's feet and began to weep.

Guru Ji saw that many more were crying out of regret at their lack of faith and courage. In a loving voice he said, "You are all mine and I am yours. These beloved five are 'Gurmukhs', those who ran away were the 'Beimukhs' (deserters), you all are 'Sanmukhs' (having belief in the Lord's presence), and those who are still undecided are 'Manmukhs' (slaves of their egos).

"Sikhi is truly wonderful for out of it have emerged five selfless ones.

A community, a nation is alive and vibrant because these Five Beloved (Panj Pyaaray) form its back-bone! I am elated that today, Five *Gurmukhs* and innumerable *Sanmukh* Sikhs are in front of my eyes, while thousands more are waiting eagerly. My dear ones, I have no wish to take your lives. I only want to end the self-love and worldly attachment in each of you and replace it with a divine entity to make you alive to a higher and fuller life."

After some time, Guru Ji left the 'diwan', accompanied by the Five beloved ones.

In Kesgarh Sahib, arrangements were made for a large gathering. Where yesterday there had been doubt, fear and suspense, today the atmosphere was full of joy and eager anticipation.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji arrived followed by his beloved Five. He sat down on his throne-like seat. Today, he was dressed all in white with his Sri Sahib (sword) thrust into the waistband. In front of him was placed an iron bowl full of water. In it rested a double-edged sword (Khanda).

Facing him stood the five selfless Sikhs with their hands folded. They too were dressed in pure white clothes and carried swords in their waistbands.

Guru Ji said to them, "Bhai, Guru Nanak Devji gave us the '*mantar*' to remember the Lord by and it is 'Waheguru'. Concentrate your minds and recite:

'Waheguru'

Then holding the 'Khanda' firmly, he began to rotate it in the water while reciting 'Gurbani' in a loud and measured tone. Just then Mata Jeeto Ji entered the 'diwan' and as the people moved aside respectfully, she slowly walked up to Guru Ji. Smiling faintly, she murmured, "My contribution," and she poured a heap of '*patasas*' (white sugar sweets) into the water. Then she sat down and watched as Guru Ji completed the recitation.

Guru Ji now stood up and made each of the five Sikhs recite the 'Mool Mantar' five times. Then he dipped his hand into the bowl and taking some 'Amrit' in his hand he splashed it five times in their eyes, making them repeat after him :

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa

Sri Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

Five times they drank the 'Amrit' from Guru Ji's hand, five times it was poured into their hair. Each time it was accompanied with the same words.

After the ceremony was complete, Guru Ji spoke: "You have partaken the 'Amrit' of the Eternal Lord, 'Waheguru'; you must have complete faith in Him always. You are now His 'Khalsa'. Victory (Fateh) is always His, and since you belong to Him, victory (*Fateh*) is now yours as well.

