

Faith & Reason: Dialogue between a son & Father

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My dear son,

I shall try to answer some of the fundamental questions you have raised about the Sikh faith.

1. Who was Guru Nanak?

Sikh History commences (should commence) from this line:

ਜੋਤਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹਾਯਉ ॥ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਭਯਉ ਤਤ ਸਿਉ ਤਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਯਉ ॥

[SGGS:1408]

Light of the Lord Himself was called Guru Nanak. From whom emerged Angad similar to him element by element?

To explain the above fundamental truth about Guru Nanak the following lines of Guru Granth Sahib provide ample supporting evidence.

ਆਪਿ ਨਾਰਾਇਣੁ ਕਲਾ ਧਾਰਿ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਪਰਵਰਿਯਉ ॥

ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰਿ ਆਕਾਰੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗ ਮੰਡਲਿ ਕਰਿਯਉ ॥

[SGGS: 1395]

The Lord Himself wielded His Power and made Himself manifest on the Earth of the Solar System.

ਤੂੰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਚਹੁ ਜੁਗੀ ਆਪਿ ਆਪੇ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ॥

[SGGS: 1406]

You are the True Guru of the Four Ages. You yourself are the Primal Lord.

ਭਨਿ ਮਥੁਰਾ ਕਛੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਨਹੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਰਜੁਨੁ ਪਰਤਖੁ ਹਰਿ ॥

[SGGS: 1409]

According to Mathura Bhatt there is no doubt that Guru Arjun is the visible Lord Himself.

ਰਾਮਦਾਸਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਗ ਤਾਰਨ ਕਉ ਗੁਰੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਰਜੁਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਧਰੀ ॥

[SGGS: 1409]

Thus we must accept that in the modern times the light of the Lord Himself was reflected in Guru Nanak and this light was passed on the successor Gurus. The Light of the Lord Himself, which entered Guru Nanak was passed on to the *young Gurus* who could act like Guru Nanak and thus it was the 'Light' which was acting in all.

If Guru Nanak came to the world with the Light of Lord Himself then it is clear that Guru Nanak came with a program for the whole world.

When did Guru Nanak learn about this fundamental truth that he had come with a special mission? Guru Nanak was working as a store keeper (*modi*) of the revenue department when he entered the rivulet *Bein* at Sultanpur and emerged after three days on the full moon day of *katik* (November 1499), repeatedly saying "*na ko hindu, na musulmaan*" meaning that everyone was equal in the eyes of the Lord. Nanak taught himself that he has been appointed a Guru with a special mission to preach the world. He resigned his assignment and proceeded on a tour of the world along with his childhood Muslim friend Mardana. Mardana used to play on the rebec while Guru Nanak sang the *bani* being revealed to him. The public also understood that he was not the *modi* Nanak but was now Guru Nanak. Everyone noticed a strange Light on his face instead of the usual facial

configuration.

Guru Nanak left Punjab and proceeded towards the northeastern corner of India zig zagging all along the route. From there he proceeded towards the South along the eastern coast of India right up to Sri Lanka. From Sri Lanka he proceeded North zig zagging his way along the western coast of India. He was singing Gurbani at all the religious places. Not only this, he was also collecting the celestial poetry or *bani* of the various local saints whose ideology was similar to his own, i.e. those who believed in the one Primal Entity and the oneness of mankind.

He noted down their *bani* in the special language in which he was noting down his own revealed *bani*. We can agree with the first director of education of the Punjab under the British period (Dr. R.W. Lightener) who concluded that **Gurmukhi is the name of that language which flowed from the mouth of Guru Nanak**. Thus Gurmukhi is that language, which was, synthesized by Guru Nanak by modifying all the different dialects and languages which he came across during his journey and in which he recorded his revealed *bani*. Later he proceeded West to *Mecca* by sea and returned by land traveling through Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan reaching back to Kartarpur on the Bank of river Ravi where he spent the last 12 years of his life (1527-1539).

Why keshas (or uncut hair) on the body is a distinctive feature of the Sikhs? Bhai Lehna, or the future Guru Angad met Guru Nanak at Kartarpur and imbibed his ideology. The Light of Lord Himself knew that for preaching a religion of humanity, it was not enough that he should record his teachings for posterity. He had been appointed with the special mission that he had to organize an organization or *Panth* and institute a new movement that would imbibe - and always stand for the truth, ready to sacrifice themselves for upholding it. The Lord Himself knew that whenever the progressing civilization learns about the secrets of atomic energy, the civilization destroys itself. This has been repeatedly mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Nanak commenced a program to organize the Khalsa or the Army of Akal Purukh, the Primal Lord. **In his tenth life (Guru Gobind Singh), Guru Nanak transformed the Sikhs of the Guru into Khalsa of Waheguru, and provided the Khalsa a distinctive uniform so that they can be recognized by one and all:**

KES, or the uncut hair is an essential element Sikhi distinguish the Sikhs from others. This was a unique concept of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. By this pristine identity, Guru Gobind Singh transformed the Sikhs into the Khalsa of Waheguru. The Khalsa is representative of the Primal Lord on this earth and he/she has to believe and act accordingly, i.e. action in his/her life has to be rooted in chivalry.

KANGHA or *comb* is meant to keep the hair in proper form and obviously cover it with a turban for dignity. Thus the hair of the Khalsa is very different than the long hair kept by some Hindu sanyasis or Muslims *faqirs*, who do not comb their hair.

KARHA: The iron *Karha* worn on the right wrist reminds the Khalsa not to perform any evil deed. We can recommend wearing of this iron bracelet to members of all religions. This is to remind all individuals not to commit any evil deed.

KACHHERA **or** **underpant:** **This ensures discipline and hygiene in sex.**

KIRPAN is a symbol of sovereignty of the Khalsa.

Guru Nanak has given the world a universal human being, true to God, Sikhs are now spread to 120 countries where they have built their *Gurdwaras*. The world is now on the brink of a crisis. There is no meeting ground between warring groups. Guru Nanak's philosophy alone can bring these warring groups to give up their confrontation. The UN has failed to send a million Tibetan refugees back to their home in Tibet from where they had

fled in 1959. The World Powers keep on debating as to how to keep up a sort of balance of power between the warring groups and avoid war. **Guru Nanak believed in truth and peaceful co-existence. Guru Nanak had stated that in the *kaljug* or the time period in which he came. “*Kal kati rajey kasai, dharma pankh kar udriya*” meaning that or Rulers have become butchers and dharma, or truth, has grown wings and flown away. We can explain the various conflicts all over the world on the basis of this statement of Guru Nanak.**

It is true that the Khalsa in uniform has forgotten its duty. Instead of leading the world the Khalsa today has imbibed many ills of the society. The Khalsa has to look within itself. The Light of the Lord Himself, in any Guru did not give any lecture or made any press statement. The Gurus only wrote, sang or listened to Gurbani. We can understand the intentions of the Gurus by contemplating on Guru Granth Sahib. The only other text written during the Guru period (1469/1499-1708) are the *Vaars* or odes of Bhai Gurdas who was the scribe of Pothis Sahib which later assumed the form of Guru Granth Sahib when the tenth Nanak passed on the Spiritual Light to Guru Granth Sahib. The sixth Nanak had divided this light into two parts, spiritual and temporal (*piri* and *miri*). The tenth Nanak passed on the temporal powers to the Khalsa Panth. **The unanimous resolutions (or *Mattas*) of the Khalsa Panth enjoy the blessings of God. The time is not far off when the Khalsa will play its role to save the world from annihilation.**

The Mysterious Universe:

Guru Nanak has stated in a unique composition describing the origin and structure of the universe: ਧਰਣਿ ਨ ਗਗਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥ ਨਾ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਨ ਚੰਦੁ ਨ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਲਗਾਇਦਾ ॥ (Maaru Mahal 1, SGGS: 1035)

For aeons of ages there was utter darkness. There was no earth, no sky. The infinite Lord's Will alone was pervading. There was neither day nor night nor Moon or Sun, and the Lord was in profound trance. There was no kind of creation, no sound, any air or water. Neither creation or destruction and no movement ... **Creating His own Self the Lord was in Absolute Bliss** ... When He so willed He brought the Universe into being and without any contraption upheld its Vast Expanse ... By His Will He created Solar Systems, Galaxies and Underworlds and from His Absolute Self He became manifest in His Creation. No one comprehends the extent or limit of the Lord. He is revealed to us through a perfect Guru. O Nanak: Imbued with His Truths, remaining in wonder and bliss keep on singing His Praise.

Guru Nanak has repeatedly mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib about the **four main modes of reproduction** in the universe. “From eggs, from placenta, self reproduction (as in bacteria viruses and primitive plant and animal life) and by seeds in the plant world.

No other religious or philosophy has brought out these two major facts of the evolution of the universe. Only Guru Nanak could do this because the Light of the Lord Himself revealed to him these basic facts of the Creator.

Unique response of the Tenth Nanak to Bahadur Shah's request to help him gain the Delhi throne because he was the eldest son of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb had been responsible for martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji as well as the killings of the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh. **Guru Nanak had mentioned “without enmity” as one of the attributes of the Creator.** Guru Gobind Singh dispatched a special army of Sikhs under Bhai Daya Singh to help Bahadur Shah in the battle of Jajjon. For this Bahadur Shah had honoured Guru Gobind Singh by presenting him with a gift of a precious scarf costing Rs. 60,000 at Agra (a fact mentioned in the records of Bahadur Shah).

These roles truly denoted Divine intervention.

