

The Inimitable Baba Farid

*PROF. HAZARA SINGH**

Austere in habits but fascinating in speech
Steadfast in actions led by fervent belief
Tolerant and consistent in words and deeds
Was the sage and saint, reverend Baba Farid.

Farid-ud-Din Masud adored as Ganj-i-Shakar
Led life consonant with his glorious name
Farid-ud-Din means rare defender of faith
Ganj-i-Shakar symbolizes godown of sweets.

Masud was the pen-name, he selected later
But Sheikh or Baba, other modes of address
Adopted by the growing number of votaries
Overshadowed the pen as well family names.

The faith, he professed, was service of man
The path, he chose, was disciplining of self
The conquest of mind rid him of bitterness
Implanted by anger, conceit and attachment.

The approach was new for its being pragmatic
Highlighting unity of man and oneness of God
Laying stress on harmony among human beings
Denouncing communal conflict as devilish act.

Despite his grooming in Arabic and Persian
Chose to sermonize in the native language
Plain truth expressed in the homely words
Installed him as pioneer of Punjabi verse.

He never knocked at royal court to seek position
Rather, princes queued to invoke his blessings

Shared his humble food and edifying thoughts
With the down-trodden to ameliorate their lot.

His foreign origin created no detraction
His message of love won devoted attention
The caste-ridden alien to human equality
God stirred by his concept of fraternity.

Time could not fade the lustre of his gospel
His hymns and sermons enshrined in Guru Granth
Erect bridges of amity for global brotherhood
Urging that religion unites, not divides mankind.

The campaign against religious bigotry

Ushered in an era of communal harmony
Hailed in history as Bhagti Movement
Which strove for a humane way of life.

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Farid-ud-Din (1125-1265) a pioneer of Chishti Silsilah of Sufis. 112 sholakas and 4 shabads by him enshrined in Adi Granth. His aagman purb celebrated during September every year by Faridkot District Cultural Society.

