

Veil of Illusion?

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What is the Veil of Illusion?

Veil of Illusion is nothing else but the Veil of ignorance, ignorance of SELF. Gurbani says: "*O my Soul, you are a part of the formless Lord. Realize this as the essence of your being*"
(Guru Amardas)

God is manifest in His creation and has twin forms *Nirgun* (without attributes) and *Sargun* (with Attributes). Having created this creation, God is manifest within it in all forms and at the same time is at a distance in its formless form. As per *Gurbani* our Soul is the part of the *Nirgun* form of God, while our body is the part of the *Sargun* form of God. Clearly, God in both the forms resides within us. Our body is the temple of Lord.

Removing the veil of ignorance means realizing that we are a part of God. The life of a person, who has succeeded in removing the veil of ignorance, changes. His Life is no more a part of the daily monotonous treadmill of eating, sleeping and working for a living, and living for eating, sleeping and working. Not charmed by the fascination of the materialistic world, he gives more importance to eternal values of life. The Sikh viewpoint does not encourage renunciation of the world. After all the universe is also the form of God in its *Sargun* form. However, what Sikhism teaches us is to live a life of equipoise. Materialism is important, but to the point where it helps us *realize* the eternal values of life. With regard to materialism, *Gurbani* rightfully demands from God the satisfaction of basic human needs, because if these are not satisfied then the ability to strive towards self-actualization is hampered. *Gurbani* tells us to control materialism and not let materialism control us.

Gurbani says: "*O self-willed man, don't get enticed by the attractive color of Safflower. Its color will last only a few days. Little is its worth. Through attachment to duality, the foolish and blind and persons rot to death. They are like worms in the filth who perish over and over again.*" (Guru Angad)

You may well ask: what is the purpose of Life? The purpose of Life is to achieve equipoise, contentment and merger with the Source. Just as water must flow back to the ocean from where it once came, so is the opportunity of Human Life, to realize oneself and merge with the source (God). Sikhism does not believe in the concept of Hell/Heaven after birth. Hell/Heaven lie in this world itself. Our daily actions lead to either satisfaction (which is Heaven) or dissatisfaction (which is Hell).

Gurbani says: "*The Human life is rare and precious. This is not obtained again and again. Ripened fruits once fallen, cannot be attached back to the tree.*"(Bhagat Kabir)

Under the influence of its own invisible centrifugal force, the Earth tries to run away from the Sun, but the invisible centripetal force of the Sun holds it back on its right elliptical path.

Similarly, humans are pulled away from their True path by invisible centrifugal forces of their individuality. Desire of self-realization generates a centripetal force, which is in the form of Guru – God. This force holds the individual on the path of realizing the True purpose of life. Some people, although rare, succeed in self-realization. In their case the centripetal force exceeds the centrifugal force and they collapse into the Guru – God and become apart of the *Nirgun* God. These self-realized persons then put the interest of society before their petty self. They become like radiant lotus flower, which grows amidst dirty pond (materialism) and is not effected by the dirt.

One may ask: How is the veil of ignorance removed? The key to the removal of the veil of ignorance lies in the removal of 'I' (EGO)

Gurbani says: "*Till 'I' exists, 'You' can't emerge. When 'You' emerge, then 'I' can't exist....(Bhagat Ravidas)*"

Till such time as Ego (I) exists in us, God (You) can't emerge. When we succeed in becoming God-Centric then Ego can't exist anymore. So the veil of illusion is caused by our inherent EGO. Removal of EGO results in the removal of evil from self.

We cannot get rid of evil by waging war against it. This method will result in despair and disappointment. An unintelligent blind effort is like trying to swim *against* high current of a river. To get rid of evil, we must first probe its origin and understand its underlying philosophy. Animal passions are ordained by God. Himself, Proper usage of these passions is not detrimental. In fact, proper usage helps us realize God. We all know that acid is harmful for body, but the same very acid is present inside our stomach to help digestion. Wrong usage of sex is harmful for self and society but the same very act is the key for survival.

The animal passion should not be allowed to get magnified in our Self as it would result in our becoming defeatists. Mind is more powerful than the passions. Victory has to be achieved first at the mental plane. By shedding defeatism and developing inner strength, we acquire a superior position in this fight. Prayer is an irresistible aid in this process. Majority of the fight is won by psychological process alone.

But evil can be totally removed only by intelligent reading understanding of Scriptures which, in case of Sikhs, is *Gurbani* (Gurus Hymns) and resorting to *Simran* (Name of God). The resulting satisfaction will result in reduction of mental ills, illusory pleasures, false values and evil impulses.

Gurbani says: "*Name of Lord is the panacea for all earthy illness*".....(Guru Arjun)

Till we attain this stage, we must strive, heart and soul. We must hate evil from the core of our heart and strive to conquer it.

A Celebration of Cultural Diversity in America*

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A gem of an hour-long TV program for PBS has been completed called "Discovering Sikh Americans" ... through the eyes of a lovely young American host, Amanda Gesine who discovers the plight of the Sikhs in America after 9/11. She explains to mainstream America - and worldwide TV audiences - what happened after the terrorists attacks, and the mistaken identity, racial profiling of Sikhs in her country simply because the male Sikhs wore turbans and beards.

The "young American" takes on the mission to "explore who are my Sikh neighbors", what Sikhism, by visiting Gurdwaras, discussing the history of Sikhs and Guru Nanak's universal teachings, the history of the early Sikh settlers over a hundred years ago and what Sikh entrepreneurs have contributed to the U.S. economy.

It is a celebration of the "first cultural diversity programing in US television" after 9/11 - where young people are questioning why the Attack on America happened, Who is to blame? USA? Israel? Middle East? and how ignorant they have become, with the mainstream American media giving no real answers to their questions.

This incredible TV program has just returned from MIP-TV in Cannes (15-19 April 2002) and is being invited to several of the leading TV program festivals around the world. We are attending the MITIL from 12-15 June in Vevey, Lake Geneva, Suisse (over 3000 tv broadcasters), Edinborough and London Film & TV Festivals, etc.

We want you to be one of the first people to know about this TV program - filmed in spectacular colors and present "as the first-ever TV program to eradicate ignorance of Sikhs living in America... within 58 min 30 sec space of time ... to offer a sense of concern and respect - beyond the persecution and suffering - as a proud hardworking ethnic group of some 500,000... living in USA.

We look forward to answering any questions ... on the first part of the Sikh trilogy "Discovering Sikh Americans" which is being distributed in the USA and worldwide television slated for September 9/11. DVDs/VHS/CD-RWs will be available from 26 May 2002.

[Courtesy: ksingh_india@excite.com

