

Writings of Bhai Nand Lal Goya: As Tribute to Gurus *Dr. Kuldip Singh, FRCS**

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Guru Arjun Dev, incorporated in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS:966) the ode (Vaar) of *Rai Balwand* and *Safai Doom*. These balladeers had recited this 'Vaar/ ode'. If the word 'Aakhee' had not been written, then it would have meant that these singers had composed the same 'ode'. Bhai Gurdas does not mention them in his Vaars. Agreeing with the strange story, written in "*Gurpartap Surya Granth*" or "Suraj Parkash" by Kavi Santokh Singh (SP-KSS), that this *Vaar* is the result of an 'apology' recited by the 'Doom singer-duo as an appeal' for their reinstatement as singers of Gurbani at Amritsar. The scholars did not comment as to the contents and their meanings given in this important ode 'Vaar'.

Similarly, the Sikh Scholars have been ignoring the meanings of the 'sawiyas' of Bhattas given in [SGGS : 1385 to 1409]. Most scholars agree that Guru Arjun did not include any writings of Bhai Gurdas in the *Pothi Sahib*, but remarked that a study of the *Vaars* of Bhai Gurdas would provide 'the key for understanding SGGS'. No scholar has explained as to what can be learnt from a study of the *Vaars* of Bhai Gurdas regarding the understanding of SGGS. Following an in-depth study of the *Vaars* of Bhai Gurdas, I venture to suggest two important conclusions:

Firstly

, Bhai Gurdas mentions the essence of "*Ramkali Ki Vaar*". (SGGS: 966-68) at eight different places in his *Vaars*, that, while alive, Guru Nanak bowed to his disciple Bhai Lehna, installing him in his place as the Guru. The other Gurus maintained this, and Guru Arjun Dev Ji keeps the tradition. Bhai Gurdas mentions that Guru Arjun 'changed his body' and installed Guru Hargobind. It is pertinent to give one example Var 24, Pauri 25 : "*Nirankaru Nanak Dev nirankari akar banaia...*" i.e. the formless Lord assumed the form of Guru Nanak Dev who is beyond all forms. In turn, he blessed Angad 'as his limbs', as the waves are created by oceanic Ganga. From Guru Angad came Guru Amar Das, and the miracle of the transference of the light was seen by all. From Guru Amar Das, Ram Das came into being in such a way as if the Word was created from the unstruck music. Guru Arjun Dev was 'created' by Guru Ram Das as his 'mirror image'. Likewise created by Guru Arjun Dev, Guru Hargobind made himself famous as the form of the Primal Lord. In fact the physical body of the Guru is Word of the Guru, which becomes perceptible only in the holy congregation. Thus the Guru has liberated the whole world by making people bow at the Lord's feet.

Secondly

, the Gurus disapproved that anyone should write the contemporary history of the Gurus. We can easily reach this conclusion when we find that Bhai Gurdas, in his first *Vaar*, describes ten events from the life of Guru Nanak, which he had not witnessed. Life span of Bhai Gurdas Ji extended from that of Guru Amar Das Ji to Guru Hargobind Ji, but he does not record any event which he had witnessed concerning these four Gurus. When we discuss this point that the Gurus were opposed to the contemporary

recording of the historical events connected with their worldly life, then nobody is prepared to accept this contention or conclusion. The scholars feel that the times were so turbulent that no one could record the happenings. The long period of 239 years of the Guru period (209 years, if we agree that the Guru Nanak learnt about his being the Guru when he emerged from the rivulet *Vein*) is obviously against this view.

Truly the light of the Lord shone in Guru Nanak, from whom emerged Angad, "similar to him element to element." Guru Nanak received the Light of the Lord Himself. This does not mean that Guru Nanak has become a God, like Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva.

Bhai Nand Lal lived in Anandpur with Guru Gobind Singh Ji for several years before 1705

. According to the commonly accepted view, when he met Guru Gobind Singh for the first time, he showed him his Persian poetry called "*Bandagi Nama*". Guru Gobind Singh remarked that the more appropriate title of the book should be "*Zindagi Nama*". Three compositions of Bhai Nand Lal Ji are about the ten Gurus: *Ganj Nama* or Panegyric Discourse, *Jote Bigas* (Persian) 'Bigas' means *Vikas* in Punjabi, and *Jote Bigas* (Punjabi) *Vikas* means dissemination of Light.

The Persian writings of Bhai Nand Lal have been translated into Punjabi by Dr Ganda Singh, and published by the Punjabi University, as *Bhai Nand Lal Granthavali*, about 30 years ago. The English translation: *Kalaam-e-Goya* was published by Institute of Sikh Studies in 2003. Both these translations are worth reading as to what was recorded by Bhai Nand Lal who was with Guru Gobind Singh for more than ten years. Some selections from the English translation deserve special attention.

Ganj Nama

:- In Persian is a (Panegyric Discourse— In praise of the Gurus. It broadly speaks of: The Almighty is Omnipresent (In the presence of the omnipresent Primal Lord) Guru Nanak as the perfect mentor, is the sustainer of the earth and inhabitant of all hearts. He is kind and potent, and redeemer of sinners. (p. 162) Sovereign Nanak is his name and he is pervaded with righteousness, No other holy-man, as distinctive as he, has ever been in the world. (p. 164) (13). When the Almighty himself eulogises him, what tribute can I render, and how can I expound his worthiness? (p. 164) (16). All angels from the metaphysical world pay tribute to him, And all the angels from the spiritual universe bow at his feet. (p. 164) (18). When the Lord of both the worlds addressed Him, through his benevolence, (p. 165) (22), he responded, 'I am your man, I am your slave, and I am the dust from the feet of both, the high and the low.' (p. 165) (23) [*refer to Raag Tilang Mohalla I, p. 721, SGGS*]. From one end to the other, the whole world, is wailing and revelling in cruelty. (p. 168) (41). I have manifested you, (Nanak) So that you may become the kindly light for the whole world. (p. 169) (48). The True Preceptor responded, 'How am I worthy, That I may motivate all the hearts towards righteousness? (p. 170) (50) (*The translator has used the word the 'true preceptor' in place of the text mentioning Patshah Nanak*). But still your command is my honour, And I will never be neglectful; not for a moment. (p. 170) (52). 'You are enlightener and great teacher, You show the righteous path and direct all the minds.' (p. 170) (53)

Guru Angad

is the one 'who is the preceptor of both the worlds. Through the grace of One Supreme Being, he is benevolent to the sinful ones.' (p. 171) (55) His manifestation is the magnanimity of the Almighty, He descends from the Almighty and then blends into the

Almighty. (p. 171) (57). One, who exalts him, is the true admirer of the Almighty, As his being comes straight from the celestial book. (p. 171) (59)

Lineage of **Guru Amar Das** is pre-eminent, and has been blessed with the boon of grace and benevolence. (p. 172) (64). In view of the acclaims and honors, he is the loftiest of all, as he has occupied the celestially resolute seat. (p. 172) (65). **Guru Ram Das**, is a 'treasure for the whole of humanity,' and is the protector of the truthful domain. (p. 173) (69). He embraces both, the temporal and the celestial, emblems. He is the emperor of the ones who support the crowns. (p. 173) (70). **Guru Arjun** is the embodiment of benevolence and compassion, and he is the searcher of the reality of the celestial superiority. (p. 174) (75). Through him come the godly sermons, and the celestial grace attains its resplendence. (p. 175) (79). **Guru Hargobind** is the embodiment of benevolence, through whom the unfortunate and withered ones get emancipation. (p. 175) (81). He is renowned through his saintliness as well as regality, and all, high and low, remain under his obligation. (p. 175) (84). **Guru Har Rai** nourishes truth, and adheres to veracity, and Guru Har Rai is a sovereign as well as a preceptor. (p. 176) (87). The Creator gratifies in applauding the generousities of Guru Har Rai, and all humanity succeeds in its ventures due to Guru Har Rai. (p. 176) (89). **Guru Har Rai**, the annihilator of the rebellious and the arrogant, is also the benefactor and the shelter of the weak and the destitute. (p. 177) (91)

Guru Har Krishan

is the manifestation of kindness and benevolence, and, he is the most admired of God's nearest adherents. (p. 177) (93). The separating distance between him and the Almighty is just as much as the thickness of a leaf. All of his entity is due to the divine compassion. (p. 177) (94). Both the worlds succeed under his generosity, And due to his goodwill, even an iota attains sun-like splendour. (p. 177) (96).

Guru Tegh Bahadur

is the treasure of benevolence and honour. and he embellishes the Godly court with splendour. (p. 178) (99). His honour among all the chosen ones is the highest, and, through his generosity, he has denoted him as worship-worthy in both the worlds. (p. 178) (102). The defender and the protector of the poor is **Guru Gobind Singh**, Embraced by the Almighty is Guru Gobind Singh. (p. 179) (105)

Guru Gobind Singh

is the 'monarch of both the worlds'. Guru Gobind Singh is the annihilator of the enemies. (p. 179) (108). He is the shower of divine light. Guru Gobind Singh is the unraveller of celestial secrets. (p. 180) (109). The Almighty, himself, is the protector of Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Gobind Singh manifests ideal traits. (118-p181). The infinite one kisses the feet of Guru Gobind Singh. Victory-drums of Guru Gobind Singh are beaten in both dominions. (121-p182).

The whole universe is under the command of Guru Gobind Singh , and the splendour of Guru Gobind Singh is magnificent. (148--p186). The benevolent hand of Guru Gobind Singh is over both the realms. All the gods and the angels remain humble in the presence of Guru Gobind Singh. (156-p187)

'KALAAM-E-GOYA: (Farsi) JOTE BIGAS' or Evolution of the Light.

Guru Nanak is the embodiment of the Almighty. No doubt, he is immaculate and formless. (1-p190). The Almighty, himself, has designated him as the preceptor of the world. Without any doubt he is the emancipator and the quintessence of benedictions.

(4-p190) Thousands of Brahmas revel in his adoration, His magnificence is greater than that of all the great ones.(11-p191)

Thousands of Ishars and Indras pay their obeisance at Guru's feet. The status of Guru Nanak is loftier than all others(12-p191)

Nanak is He Himself, He is also Angad,and His embodiment, too, is Amar Das the benevolent, (23-p 193)

He is Ram Das and so also Arjun, and supreme and kind Hargobind is Himself too. (24-p193)

God dwells as creator in Guru Har Rai to whom all the noble and the base are evident. (25-p 194)

He too is Harkishan the lofty one, by whom everybody's wishes are fulfilled. (26-p194)

He too is Guru Tegh Bahadur , from whose Light Guru Gobind Singh was revealed. (27-p194).

KALAAM-E-GOYA (JOTE BIGAS, OR EVOLUTION OF THE LIGHT)

Bhai Nand Lal repeats the same attributes to Guru Nanak and other Gurus once again in different phraseology. In all the three compositions, he reiterates the same attributes to the Gurus ,their relationship to Primal Lord and other Gurus which is described in Guru Granth Sahib:

Hail, hail the Guru, who provides sustenance to all. Hail, the Guru, who is the embodiment of the Almighty. (18 –p223) Hail, the Guru, who promotes the truthful-living. Hail, the Guru, who is free and bestows the total emancipation, (21-p224)

Nanak passed on the Guruship to Angad, Then Amar Das served Hari, the Almighty.

Then Ram Das to Arjun, and then Hargobind worshipped the Almighty. So the Almighty blessed HarRai, who made Har Krishna, infinite and inaccessible. Then Tegh Bahadur who was the epitome of Truth. *So was Guru Gobind Singh, the embodiment of Hari.*(27to30-p225)

Conclusion:

We can conclude that Bhai Nand Lal imbibed these ideas about Guru Nanak and other Guru from his proximity to Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Nand Lal does not relate any historical event either concerning Guru Gobind Singh or about the other nine Gurus. He does not mention even the *shahidi* of Guru Arjun and Guru Tegh Bahadur. To sum up Bhai Nand Lal described three times in his three separate composition i.e.

1. *Ganj Nama* (Persian) 2. *Jote Bigas* (Persian) 3. *Jot Bigas* (Punjabi). The same idea regarding the personality of Guru Nanak and other Gurus, which is described in the *Vaar of Raag Ramkali* (p-966 –968 of SGGS) and in the *Sawaiyas of Bhatta* (p1387-1409)

Bhai Gurdas ji in his *Vaars* repeatedly reiterates the ideals described in the Guru Granth Sahib. The most important attribute of Guru Nanak given so clearly is:

Jyot roop Har aap Guru Nanak kahayo

, i.e. the Light of the Lord Himself was called Guru Nanak.

Let us imbibe the devotion and loyalty to Guru Granth Sahib as demonstrated by Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal.

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