

from within. Doesn't this mean that the divine grace must come from the manifested God within each one of us? Clearly, then the manifestations of God as True Guru, and divine grace are within each one of us, and that they are not separate from one another. **Just as we have longing for God we have the same longing for Guru, and for the divine grace.** No wonder, then the grace of a True Guru is no different from God's grace, and this is what we ought to be seeking. The hymn below succinctly describes that every thing is within our-self, we just need to realize it and focus on it.

siB ikCu Gr mih bwihr nwhl, bwihr toIY so Brm Bulwhl

gur prswdl ijnl AMqir pwieAw, jo AMqir bwihr suhylw jIEu mwJ mhlw 5, pnw 102

"Every thing is within the home (body), nothing is outside. (One) searching outside is lost in doubt. Through Guru's grace, the one who found (God) within, that person is happy inwardly and outwardly".

majh mahala 5 [SGGS: 102]

Now **if God resides inside our body, then it follows that God's grace must also flow from within.** This can only happen if our inside, especially our mind and heart, is clean and free from all kinds of garbage, especially the five deadly evils of lust, anger, greed, worldly attachments and arrogance. The latter evils are our hidden enemies and are also described as five thieves since they are robbing us of our morality, spirituality, and divinity. These **destructive elements build a wall of separation between our inside and outside thereby blocking the flow of grace.** Remember once the grace is able to freely move both inside (within) of you and outside of you, then your inside becomes fully enlightened, and then your outside is also able to experience divinity and spirituality, leading to God consciousness. Guru Arjan Dev illustrates this in the hymn:

kir ikrpw pRB Gr mih pwieAw

iblwvl mhlw 5, pnw 805

"Through divine grace, (I) have found God in home (within)".

bilawal mahal 5 [SGGS: 805]

Another important edict from our holy SGGS is that God's Word (Gurbani, divine hymns) is our Guru. This is beautifully illustrated by the hymn:

bwxl gurU gurU hY bwxl

nt mhlw 4; pnw 982

"Word is Guru and Guru is Word".

nut mahala 4 [SGGS:982]

It is now easy to see how **God, Sat-Guru, Guru, and Divine Word are all symbolically intertwined as one and the same.** It can be thus safely concluded that we need the divine grace through our living Guru, SGGS. **Since Guru Nanak Dev was the first of the ten Sikh Gurus to be one with God, it is only logical to believe in him as our True Guru.** Rightly, then Guru Amardas, in the following representative hymns, extols the supremacy of Guru's grace.

gur prswdl eyko jwxw

mwJ mhlw 3, pnw 119

"Through Guru's grace recognize One (God)". *majh mahala 3 [SGGS:119]*

gur prswdl scu ndrI Awv, Y scy hl suK pwvixAw

mwJ mhlw 3, pnw 120

"Through Guru's grace (one) sees the True One (God), (and) through that true one, bliss is obtained".

majh mahala 3 [SGGS: 120]

Divine Grace and Divine Order

HOPE, the acronym for, ***Higher Order Prevails Eternally***, is the most dominant universal law. It is the Divine Order, which controls every natural process in the universe. The sun, the stars, the earth, the sky, the oceans, the underworlds, the nether space, and the mystifying cosmos are all playing their roles under this most marvellous, yet mind-boggling,

supreme Order. Guru Nanak Dev illustrates this concept in the hymn:

hukmY AMdir sBu ko bwih hukm n koie jpu jl, pnw 1

“Every one (thing) is under (God’s) Order, nothing is outside (His) Order”.

Jap jee [SGGS: 1]

Since we know that God’s spirit, the Divine Life Current, is within each one of us. It is the **spiritual understanding of this fundamental concept, which can then lead us to experience, to comprehend, to realize, and to get united with the Divine.** We are repeatedly instructed in SGGS that this is only possible through divine grace, as is explained in the hymns below:

gurprswdl hir pwelAY, mq ko Brim Bulwih rwmklI mhlw 1, pnw 936

“Through Guru’s grace, (one) is united with God. Let no one doubt this”.

ramkali mahala 1 [SGGS: 936]

nwnk ndrI ndir pCwxu

pRBwql mhlw 1, pnw 1343

“Nanak, (through) Divine grace, realization (of Divine) comes”.

purbhati mahala 1 [SGGS: 1343]

It is pertinent to point out, how beautifully Guru Arjan Dev in Sukhmani (rosary of peace, psalm of life) describes the many aspects of grace, which God has bestowed on each one of us, and for which we need to be graciously ever grateful. The greatest blessing is that of human form, and therefore its subsequent obligation to the creator, God. Thus we read:

ijh pRswid pwel dRIB dyh nwnk qw kl Bgiq kryh gEuVI suKmnI mhlw 5, pnw 270

“Through whose grace (you) have obtained, with great difficulty, the human life, oh Nanak, worship that Creator (God)”.

guari sukhmani mahala 5 [SGGS: 270]

ijh pRswid qMU pRgtu sMswr iqsu pRB kEu mUil n mnhu ibswir

gEuVI suKmnI mhlw 5, pnw 270

“Through whose grace you are manifested in this world, that God, you must never forget even for a moment”.

guari sukhmani mahala 5 [SGGS: 270]

It is just not only the marvelous human form, but its many other tangible components, along with their precise functioning and working, awe inspiring as they are, that demand our most revered contemplation. Undoubtedly, **human life is a priceless blessing and a very special gift from God. What we make of our life is a gift back to God.** It is for this reason alone that we must make our deeds in our present life worthy of presentation to God. No other objective is more meaningful, or more desirable than this. It is precisely for this reason that Guru Arjan in the verse below stresses the importance of the need of grace for eliminating the evils of anger, greed, lust, worldly attachments and arrogance from our life so that we will carry out worthy worldly actions in our present life.

kwm kRoD Aru loB moh ibnis jwie AhMmyv

nwnk pRB srwngql kir pRswidu gurdyv gEuVI suKmnI mhlw 5, pnw 270

“Nanak has come to God’s refuge, bless Thy grace oh Gurdev, so lust, anger, greed, attachments, and arrogance get eliminated”.

guari sukhmani mahala 5 [SGGS: 270]

When you look around you can easily see how, we human beings are being affected with a variety of mundane problems, including but not limited to anxiety, stress, and sickness. Almost every one of us at one time or another runs into some problem(s). Even when a person is deeply religious and is trying to lead a truthful lifestyle, one can encounter a

problem, which at that time may appear to be insurmountable. Perhaps, that is what makes us human – fragile and susceptible to tribulations of life. But you must never forget that **your current problem(s) are not necessarily the result of your present lifestyle rather they may be the result of your previous life for which you are paying the price now.** The following hymn reminds you not to let down on your faith, and don't let your current problems deter you from following the truthful lifestyle even at the most troublesome times.

suAwml ko igRh ijEu sdw suAwn qjq nhl inq

nwnk ieh ibiD hir BjEu iek min huie iek iciq slok mhlw 9, pnw 1428

“(Just) as a dog never abandons the home of the master. Oh Nanak, in the same way, worship God with focused mind and attentive heart”.

slok mahala 9 [SGGS:1428]

The idea behind this hymn is that a dog does not leave the house of the master no matter how much the master ridicules or curses the dog – the dog has faith in the master and is very faithful to the master. The same way Guru Tegh Bahadur tells us that we need to become like dog, completely faithful to our master (God) under all circumstances, only then we will be worthy of Divine grace.

A sure remedy for all our worldly afflictions is through Divine grace. This is nicely illustrated by the hymns:

gey klys rog sB nwsy pRB Apuny ikrpw Dwrl

sorT mhlw 5, pnw 619

“Through God's grace, all sufferings (anxieties) and diseases have disappeared”.

soruth mahala 5 [SGGS: 619]

Acquiring Blessings of Grace:

Since SGGS is our revered Guru, it is here in SGGS that we should, and can, find God's grace. But we **must first become worthy of grace.** The question is then, how do we accomplish this. In order to acquire God's grace we need to have a warm, loving, and healthy relationship with God. Let us examine for a moment as to what kind of relationship you may currently have with God. Are you always asking and seeking favors from God? In so doing, **are you approaching God as if you are telling God, you are my Master, but at this time you become my servant and do my work.** What you are doing is really ordering God around to solve your problems, whether personal, social or financial. Is this the kind of relationship you want to have with God? The answer must be emphatic NO. The question then is, **how should you relate to God.** This is a very important question, for it will determine whether you are capable, and therefore, worthy of receiving divine grace. You must develop a totally devoted relationship with God by surrendering your self completely to God. This must be done in deep humility, with completely clean mind, especially free from arrogance and with a child like innocence, and a most loving heart. **Your heart is a very sacred inner temple of Gods sanctuary, which needs tender, loving care.** It is necessary to nourish your heart so that it can nourish your mind, body and spirit. Here is, then, a **five-fold recipe for you to make your heart the most beautiful and the most sacred place** in your body:

1. **Nurture your heart with divine knowledge, love,** positive deeds, contented and relaxed mind, divine praises, and divine contemplation.
2. Plant **your heart with altruistic kindness,** caring concern for others, truth, gentleness, contentment, compassion, forgiveness, and patience.
3. Fill **your heart with altruistic service** so that your blood can freely flow throughout your body to provide nourishment to every cell of your body.
4. To calm your heart it is necessary for your mind to **get rid of the five hidden enemies of lust, anger, greed, worldly attachments and arrogance.** It is this pure

mind, which enables your heart to perform its functions without any stress, and thus provides it with calmness.

5. Most of all, **love your heart most tenderly by breathing deeply so that it is able to expand fully**. This will help eliminate any built in fears and negative emotions, which might otherwise make it work harder.

It is a common day observation that you feel close to your family and friends through your heart, and not through your intellect. Shouldn't that mean **that it is through your heart that you find a convenient way to God?** When you are close to someone through your intellect, chances are it is for selfish reasons. When your motives are selfish your head (brain) may tell you to say nice things to others in order to accomplish your own purpose. But, your heart is pure, innocent, and free from selfishness. It is your heart, which is the source of your selflessness. **Any relationship through your heart is then necessarily pure and free from desires**. Therefore, your relationship with God should be through your heart. You won't be able to love God unless you first develop a relationship with God. That is why in SGGs God is frequently referred to as beloved, spouse, father, mother, brother, friend, companion, guide, and/or protector. Keep your intellect away from interfering with your heart in as much as possible so that it won't become a barrier in developing the right relationship. Your intellect can help when you want to discuss God, but you cannot feel God through your intellect. **Your heart is the most beautiful inner eye through which you can visualize and see God**. Therefore, it makes perfect sense to relate most passionately to God with all your heart, and with utmost sincerity. Your heart will then feel the joy of a special connection with God, in as much as it will also feel the effect of pain, suffering, animosity, friendship, love, and hatred. Guru Nanak in the following hymns advises us that when the treasure of truth and the True one (God) is in our heart then we are able to taste and enjoy the divine nectar, and thus obtain great bliss. He further instructs us that when God resides in our heart and we are truly absorbed in God's Naam, it is then, that the person is fully emancipated and thus able to move to eternal home with respect.

iciq scY ivqo scw, swcw rs cwiKAw

mwrU mhlw 1, pnw 1011

“(When) the treasure of truth of the True (One) is in the heart, (then) you relish the nectar of the True One”.

maru mahala 1 [SGGS: 1011]

iciq vsY rwcY hir nwie, mukiq BieAw piq isau Gir jwie rwmkll mhlw 1, pnw 932

“In whose heart God resides, and who is absorbed in God's Naam, that person is liberated and goes to eternal home with honor”.

raamkali mahala 1 [SGGS: 932]

The question may be raised, **how can God reside in our heart**. The answer to this question is again provided by Guru Nanak, who says that it is only through complete understanding, and assimilation, of divine knowledge that God fully manifests itself in our heart. This is beautifully illustrated by the hymn:

iciq mih Twkur sic vsY Bwel, jy gur igAwn smoie

sorT mhlw 1, pnw 637

“When divine knowledge is deeply ingrained within, then oh brother, the true One (God) resides within the heart”. *soruth mahala 1 [SGGS: 637]*

It is of utmost importance to remember that it is only through and with your Guru that your heart will be able to develop this linkage with God. What this therefore, really tells you is, that you have to first develop an intense desire to envision God, and that this is possible through your Guru since it is the later who shows your heart the way to visualize God. We see this illustrated in the hymn below.

myry AMqir pRliq lgl dyKn kEu

guir ihrdY nwil idKwieAw

gEuVI pUrbl mhlw 4, pnw 172

“Within me is a loving desire to see God, Guru has shown me (that) with heart (my)”.

gauri poorbi mahala 4 [SGGS: 172]

Indeed, it is through same intense desire that you wish to see your true Guru because it is only on union with the true Guru that you will find culminating union with God. All this requires of you is to ensure that truth and truth alone lives freely in your heart. Guru Nanak beautifully explains this in the hymn:

siqgur imilAY scu pwieAw ijn kY ihrdY scu vswieAw slok mhlw 1 pnw 467

“Those in whose heart resides the truth, they, through meeting with the true Guru, have obtained the True One (God)”.

slok mahala 1 [SGGS: 467]

The real immense joy you, then, experience with such a direct connection of your heart to God is truly beyond human description. It is, spiritually speaking, a profoundly and divinely ecstatic inner consciousness of pure joy, peace, bliss and tranquility. Guru Arjan describes this state in the following hymn:

iciqih icqu smwie q hovY rMgu Gnw Punhy mhlw 5, pnw 1362

“When (one’s) heart is merged in God’s heart, then one obtains supreme bliss”.

funhai mahala 5 [SGGS:1362]

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