

# Revolutionary Message of Guru Nanak Dev

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Guru Nanak found the Indian subcontinent suffering from centuries of subjugation by foreign invaders and a lack of will-power to stand up against religious, social and political oppression. He thought over this degraded condition of India and was convinced that a grass-root revolution was necessary.

He openly raised his powerful voice against the despotic and cruel rulers of his time in inspired poetry that is a part of the Sikh scripture: Sri Guru Granth Sahib:

*'The kings are like tigers, and their underlings like dogs: they prey upon innocent unwary people, plundering them.'*

[SGGS:1288]

He called his contemporary rulers 'butchers' (SGGS:145) About Babar, the mighty Mughal invader, he remarks: 'Bringing the 'marriage party of sin', Babar invaded from Kabul, demanding our land as his wedding gift, O Lalo.' (SGGS:722)

He protested against the prevalent system of taxing places of worship: **'Temples dedicated to gods are subjected to entertain taxes: Such is the decreed practice in vogue.'** [SGGS:1191]

The corrupt officials have been roundly rebuked for taking bribes (then - as now).

'The rulers administer justice only if their palm is greased. No one is moved by the name of God.' [SGGS:350]

He even protested in the court of God: *'There was so much slaughter that the people agonized. Didn't You feel compassion, Lord?'* [SGGS:360]

Guru Nanak's revolutionary nature did not spare the second most powerful section of the society: Qazies and Brahmans.

'Pretending to be judges, they sit and administer justice. chant on their rosaries, and call upon God, but accept bribes, and block justice. If someone asks them, they quote from holy books.' [SGGS:951]

'The Qazi tells lies and eats filth; the Brahmin kills and then takes cleansing baths! The Yogi is blind, and does not know the Way. All three devise their own destruction.' [SGGS:662]

Guru Nanak's philosophy of social revolution and universal brotherhood focuses on purity of life: 'Truth is higher than everything; but higher still is truthful living.' [SGGS:62]

*The philosophy of Guru Nanak for a social revolution with universal brotherhood, is relevant more than ever before. Guru Nanak set out to empower the poor by identifying himself with the downtrodden.*

*'I, Nanak seek the company of those who are of low caste among the lowly, nay rather lowest of the low. Why should I rival the lofty?'* [SGGS: 15]

He refused to recognize the man-made distinctions of religion, caste with creed, His slogan that there is no Hindu and no Musalman implied that he refused to accept any discrimination between man and man. His idea of fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man became the bedrock of his revolutionary teachings. He started the practice of '*Pangat* and *Sangat*', not hitherto practiced. This created a deep impact on the people of all castes. This was a thing unimaginable in the traditional Hinduism and those belonging to higher

castes called him misguided and mad:

*'Some say poor Nanak is a spirit. Some say that he is a demon.'* [SGGS:991]

His revolutionary nature electrified the masses and infused in them the sense of self-respect and confidence. He propounded his philosophy of life through a simple dictum "*Kirat Karo, Vand Chhako and Naam Japo*": Earn your livelihood by honest creative labor, share the fruit of your labor with others and practice the discipline of Naam. He undertook four long journeys to propagate his revolutionary ideas among the masses. His method was non-aggressive, practical and dramatic, which worked like magic

Worshippers at Hardwar realized the futility of their ritual without any lengthy discussion. His rejection of invitation of Malik Bhago, a rich landlord, for a feast, while accepting the simple food of Bhai Lalo, a poor carpenter, made him a people's prophet. He brought a wonderful change in the life of Sajjan, a notorious robber, by uttering a few words:

He preached - and practiced - simple living and high thinking and insisted on the life of an honest house-holder, rejecting renunciation. His revolutionary teaching elevated the masses and instilled in them an honorable philosophy of life:

*'He who controls his desires becomes a true renouncer.'* [SGGS: 356]

As a social revolutionary, he glorified womanhood and wrote to raise their status: 'Why call her inferior, from whom are born kings?' [SGGS:473]

He preached against decadent customs and rituals; and condemned them in his writings. He advised us not to quarrel over our eating habits: *'The foolish ones quarrel over flesh and don't know about wisdom or meditation.'* [SGGS:1289]

