

Central Gurdwara Resource Centre

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The Newsletter for the Sikh Youth of Today

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

Vaisaki Vadyia - Many congratulations to all our readers on the auspicious occasion of Vaisaki - The founding of the Khalsa Panth - Sikh Faith. Vaisaki also marks the Khalsa New Year. This year marks the beginning of the 298th year of the Khalsa.

Sikhism is one of the world's youngest religions and is a progressive and modern faith. We must not forget this fact when describing ourselves to others who are interested by the unique Khalsa identity. Because we have a separate identity does not mean that the Khalsa is backwards in any way, which seems to be the impression of many. Quite the opposite, the teachings of Sikhism are very modern and forward thinking, while religious leaders of other faiths, have to think and re-think their views on various current occurrences, the Sikh Guru's gave their authoritative word many years ago. The Khalsa form that was given to us by Guru Gobind Singh Ji on Vaisaki 1699 is also one of these foresights. Sikhs play an active role in all worthwhile activities and professions, from sportsmen to army Generals there is no field where a Sikh cannot excel.

As promised last month, we bring you a transcript of the question and answer session given by Singh Sahib Prof. Manjit Singh, Jathedar of Akal Takhat. Along with the usual slots I hope you enjoy the newsletter and your feedback is always appreciated. Let me once again wish you all the best for Vaisaki and I urge you all to take part in the events organised by your local community and Gurdwara.

Chardhi Kala!!

Bhupinder Singh - Editor

The Month Of Vaisak

The Month of Vaisak this year runs from 13 April (Vaisaki) to 13 May 1996. Vaisaki marks the first day of the Khalsa Calendar.

ਵੈਸਾਖਿ ਧੀਰਨਿ ਕਿਉ ਵਾਢੀਆ ਜਿਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਬਿਛੋਹੁ ॥

Vaisakh dhiran kio vadhia jina prem bichhoh
In the month of Vaisakh who can comfort those brides who are far from their husbands?
ਹਰਿ ਸਾਜਨੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਕੈ ਲਗੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਧੋਹੁ ॥

Har sajan Purukh visar kai lagi maia dhoh
Discarding the true friendly God they have attached themselves to Maya (wordly things)
ਪੁਤ੍ਰੁ ਕਲਤੁ ਨ ਸੰਗਿ ਧਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ਓਹੁ ॥

Putar kalatar na sang dhana Har avnasi oh
Neither son nor wife, nor wealth accompany the man to last. Only God is immortal
ਪਲਚਿ ਪਲਚਿ ਸਗਲੀ ਮੁਈ ਝੂਠੈ ਧੰਧੈ ਮੋਹੁ ॥

Palach palach sagli mui jhuth dhandhai moh
The whole universe is involved with false illusions and is moving towards destruction
ਇਕਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਗੈ ਲਈਅਹਿ ਖੋਹਿ ॥

Ikas Har ke nam bin agai laieh kokh
Only God's Name is safe everything else is robbed on the way.

ਦੁਖੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਵਿਗੁਚਣਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

Duu visar viguchana Prabh bin avar na koc
To forget God is ruinous. Without God there is nothing else.

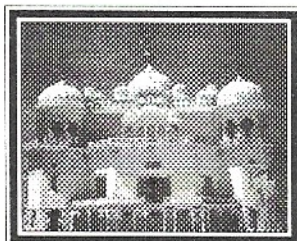
ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਚਰਣੀ ਜੋ ਲਗੇ ਤਿਨ ਕੀ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸੋਇ ॥

Pritam charani jo lage tin ki nirmal soe
Who in devotion are attached to the feet of God, their praise is virtuous
ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥

Nanak ki Prabh benti. Prabh miloh prapat hoe
Nanak prays. "Oh God grant me union with yourself at my hearts content"

ਵੈਸਾਖੁ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ ਤਾਂ ਲਗੈ ਜਾ ਸੰਤੁ ਭੇਟੈ ਹਰਿ ਸੋਇ ॥

Vaisakh suhava ta lagai jan sant bhete Har soe
The month of Vaisakh seems pleasant only if the Saint Lord meets His devotee.



Takhat - Sri
KeshGhar Sahib,
Anandpur Sahib

This is **YOUR** newsletter please let us know what you would like to see in these pages and please do send in your articles, poems even anecdotes.

If you are organising an event please let us know if you would like to publicise it in the newsletter

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A short story from Guru Nanak's second journey relevant to this months Hukam.

Guru Nanak stopped at Lahore where he met Duni Chand, a rich man who was proud of his wealth. Duni Chand came to pay his respects to Guru Nanak, but before they parted Guru Nanak asked a favour of Duni Chand. He handed him a needle and asked him to keep it safe for he would ask for it back in the next world. "But how can I carry this needle to the next world?" asked Duni Chand. "Then why spend your life gathering riches which too cannot go with you" replied the Guru. Duni Chand learned this simple lesson and changed his ways.

Singh Sahib Prof. Manjit Singh's visit to the Central Gurdwara, London

This is a translated transcript of the answers Singh Sahib gave on a recent visit to London.

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!

I am very happy to sit among you all today. Actually I have the opportunity to sit among Gursikhs everyday, but when I sit among young Sikhs and see that they want to know something about their religion and history, it gives me tremendous pleasure.

Question 1:

What is the role of Women as given in the Guru Granth Sahib?

The role is that of a Gursikh, not of a man or woman but of a Sikh. Sikhism is a way of life and this code is the same for men and women, and so it is their role in the family, and in the community. Sikh men and women are to see their roles as the same. Nature has given male and female bodies different forms and so their functions are slightly different; a man can never become a mother and a woman can not be a father. Nature has also given different instincts. A mother carries a child inside her for 9 months, and afterwards feeds and nurses the child as only a mother can. On this point the role of a Sikh woman features highly in Gurbani. If a woman, during pregnancy, is always upset, of bad thoughts this will have a bearing on her child, this has been proven by Psychologists today. Guru Gobind Singh's mother, Mata Gujri Ji meditated with Guru Tegh Bahadur for 27 years before she gave birth to Guru Sahib.

Question 2:

Is it essential to take Amrit and keep long hair?

To be a Gursikh this is essential. A Sikh can only be a Sikh if he/she lives in the Guru's discipline. Like in a school, if a student does not behave within the school's discipline, he cannot take part or is not admitted. The school has a particular uniform, timetable and syllabus. A student must obey these rules or is expelled. Imagine if a parent took a child to school and were told that the child must wear a

white shirt, black trousers and a school jacket and must be here at 8.30am. The parents do not say we are just sending our child here to learn the ABC and 123, so why must he wear a white shirt? Why not a blue shirt? A headmaster will say, well this is the discipline of the school and these rules must be obeyed here to take part here.

Just like that, in a religion or community or even a family if there is no discipline then that family or community will not move forwards. Guru Sahib said that I wish to see you all in this discipline:

1. Take Amrit
2. Wear your Kesh (Hair)

This is the Guru's command. The rest is for you to sit among Gursikhs, sit among the Panj Payare - You have the right to ask Why must we do these things and you will find the answers, but if we do not wear this uniform, the same will happen if we went to school without our uniform.

So when a Sikh asks the Guru "How can I live my life with spiritual awareness? How can I live a blissful life?" The Guru gives us this discipline. And part of this discipline is to wear our hair with pride.

Takhat means Throne, the Five Takhats are the Supreme Thrones of Sikh Religious Authority:

- 1 Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar
- 2 Takhat Sri Kes Garh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib
- 3 Takhat Sri Sach Khand Hazoor Sahib, Nanded
- 4 Takhat Sri Harmandar Sahib, Patna
- 5 Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib, Bathinda

Question 3:

How should we regard those who do not practice Sikhism properly?

First of all remember that a Sikh must not think that "I am a good Sikh because I follow Sikhism properly and you are a fake Sikh". No, a Sikh must not think like this, but a Sikh must hold out his hand, like a big brother to his younger brother, with Love, not a boss like attitude. We must not look down upon others, speak badly of them, but must give them great amounts of Love. We must lead them on the path so that they may gain the love of the Guru and of Sikhism and gain the Blessing of the Guru and so lead a blissful life.

Question 4:

Which Reht (Code of Conduct) should we follow ?

Remember that our Supreme Authority on these matters is the Akal Takhat. The five Takhats form the highest authority and it is their duty to determine the code of conduct. It is true that due to a lack of discipline many people have made their own conducts, but we should follow only our Supreme Authority, the Akal Takhat and the decisions of the community leaders. Some say that my Amrit is superior, theirs is inferior, this causes confusion and so we should only follow the Rehat of the Akal Takhat published by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak Committee, Amritsar.

The Sikh National Anthem - Sikh Kaumeeh Sohila

Dayh shivaa bar mohe chai, subh karman tay kab-hoon na taron
Na daron ar so jab jaae laron, nischai kar aapnee jeet karon
Ar sikh ho aapnay hee man kau eh laalach hao gun tao ucharon
Jab aav kee a-odh nidhaan banai at hee ran mai tab joojh maron

Grant me this boon, O God, that from righteous deeds I may never refrain
May I fight without fear, all evils in life's battle, with courage may I attain victory
May my highest ambition be singing thy praises: And may thy glory be gained in my mind

When this mortal life reaches its limits: May I die fighting with limitless courage

Bole So Nehaal - Sat Sri Akal

Question 5:**What actually happened on Vaisakhi 1699 when Guru Gobind Singh Ji initiated Amrit at Kesh Ghar Sahib?**

Guru Sahib sent messengers to call all Sikhs to Anandpur Sahib on the day of Vaisakhi in 1699. The reports of the Moghul newspapers and reporters or Emperor Aurangzeb stated that 80,000 Sikhs had gathered at Anandpur Sahib on that day.

Asa Di War was sung in the morning. After this was completed Guru Gobind Rai appeared from a tent wielding his Sri Sahib Kirpan (sword) and said "Today I need the head of a Sikh. Is there a Gursikh who loves the Guru and who follows the Guru's command, who will give me their head? There was much commotion, normally the Guru gives Blessings and Happiness and people could not understand why the Guru was asking for someone's life. But a Gursikh who lived in the love of the Guru, Daya Ram, who understood the Guru got up and offered his head.

Guru Sahib took Daya Ram into the tent and only Bhai Daya Ram and Guru Sahib knows what happened inside the tent. Guru Ji told nobody nor was there an eyewitness. With a lack of knowledge people have dreamt up theories, such as the Guru Ji killed lambs. But Guru Ji nor Daya Ram ever told anyone what happened inside the tent. All that we know is that, when Guru Sahib came out of the tent his Kirpan was dripping with blood. Guru Ji did not want to tell anyone what he did, so what right do we have to make guesses as to what might have happened. In doing so the teaching of the Guru is left behind and arguments continue.

So in turn 5 people presented their heads to the Guru Sahib. Afterwards, Guru Sahib brought all the 5 together dressed up in Saffron coloured clothes, with long Kirpans. On their faces they had a special glow, a special happiness. It is with the Guru's grace that their whole lives changed. Guru Sahib also gave them all the name Singh(lion). After he initiated the 5 he asked them to initiate him, and from Guru Gobind Rai make me into Guru Gobind Singh. In this world this is a unique event, that a leader asks his followers to initiate him into thier order. This tradition was started with Guru Nanak Dev Ji, when he passed the Guruship to Guru Angad Dev Ji and bowed before him.

In this same tradition Guru Gobind Singh gave Amrit to the Panj Payare and asked them to give him Amrit. After this, Gursikhs in great numbers took Amrit on that very day. So, many people ask, "if so many people took Amrit that day were 50 to 100,000 Kachare(shorts) prepared and 30-50,000 Kanga's and Kirpan's brought in especially?".

No, these "5 K's" were kept by Gursikhs before this day. Guru Gobind Singh gave his stamp of authority onto the 5 K's and the Reht (code of conduct) of the Sikhs. Gursikhs followed this way of life already, just after this day Guru Gobind Singh Ji said that whoever does not follow this way of life will not be a Sikh of the Guru.

**Question 6:****How can we assess the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh?**

This period of about 40 years is known as the Khalsa Raj. The main point I would like to make now, is that Ranjit Singh did not call himself Maharaja or King, but was called Singh Sahib, he called himself a Sikh, a Sewak. This point is unique, when a king does not wear a crown or sit on a throne. Here in an English museum is the throne of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, but he did not sit on it, this was presented to him, but he said that I am a Sikh, it is the Guru who sits on a throne, my Guru is the King, I am his sevak (servant).

In his darbar when he was presented with valuable gifts, he would in turn present these to Darbar Sahib (Harmandir Sahib). Even the coins that were struck during his reign did not have his portrait, this currency was known as "Nanak Shahi" and imprinted with the words "Deo Tego Fateh" (Victory to the langar and the sword).

The Panj Payare are:

- Bhai Daya Singh Ji (Kindness)
 - Bhai Dharam Singh Ji (Principles)
 - Bhai Himmat Singh Ji (Courage)
 - Bhai Mohkam Singh Ji (Order)
 - Bhai Sahib Singh Ji (Leader)
- Singh means Lion
Kaur means Princess

Question 7:**What is being done to unite Sikhs?**

Recently the World Sikh Samelan was held in Amritsar, for 5 days up to 500,000 Sikh gathered to discuss matters relating to Sikhism in the 20th and 21st century on an international and religious scale. And to discuss the different problems being faced by Sikhs in different countries.

It was discussed how Sikhs around the world can unite under the one flag of the Akal Takhat. From these discussions it was decided to establish the World Sikh Council (WSC), a parliament for the Sikh Community. Also a World Sikh University will be established in Anandpur Sahib by 1999 - the 300th anniversary of the Khalsa. Further details about these projects will be passed on to all Gurdwaras and organisations and a WSC office will soon also be opened here in England.

We do have to finish now, but I urge you all to spend a little time to study and understand your religion, Gurbani and our history and to establish your own identity. You should question and learn from each other, from older people and your parents. If there is anything further you need to ask of me or the Akal Takhat please do write to us, we will answer your letters.

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa; Waheguru ji Ki Fateh!

poets Corner

This months Gurpurabs:

1 Apr - Gur Gaddi
Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji
1 Apr - Joti Jot Guru
Har Krishen Ji
8 Apr - Birthday Guru
Tegh Bahadur Ji
10 Apr- Birthday
Guru Arjan Dev Ji
13 Apr - Vaisaki
18 Apr - Birthday
Guru Angad Dev Ji

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can distribute this
newsletter among
young Sikhs please
contact us.

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expressed do not
necessarily reflect
those of the Editors or
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Sanctity of Work

Gobind was enthroned
in the Guru Darbar
Many a Sikh
were seated there

The Guru felt thirsty
and made a request
for a drink of water
to the Sikh sangat

a khatri youth
was rather fast
he stood up quickly
and paid respects

may he be allowed
to fetch the water
may he be granted
this honour

the Guru looked
saw the young lad
he seemed tender
rather well bred

your hands are soft
and seem tender
have these been used
ever for work

the youth replied
hardly before
we have servants
for every chore

when the youth
brought the water
the Guru refused
the boy was shattered

the Guru declared
the water was impure
though the youth
vouched it pure

the Guru explained
water wasn't pure
for it was handled
by hands impure

he now addressed
the Sikh sangat
on the sanctity of work
in the Sikh context

hand and body
are purified
by honest work
service unqualified

the khatri youth
had learned
the purity of body
has to be earned

he got busy now
in the langar
working and serving
for endless hours

whenever now
he brought the water
the Guru drank it
relished it as sweeter

worship too is wasted
unless you work
work is a must
don't ever shirk

Jaswinder Singh Chadha , London

Important dates in Sikh History - April

- 1 Apr 1621** Birth of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji
3 Apr 1775 Foundation stone of 2nd Harmandir
Sahib laid by S. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia
11 Apr 1762 Ahmed Shah Abdali destroyed
original Harmandir Sahib
13 Apr 1559 Vaisaki - Guru Amar Das Ji Held
celebrations in Goindval
13 Apr 1911 Jalianwala Bagh massacre
14 Apr 1634 Battle of Amritsar against Moghuls.
15 Apr 1469 Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
15 Apr 1501 Guru Nanak began preaching new
religion - Sikhism
15 Apr 1563 Birth of Guru Arjan Dev Ji
25 Apr 1635 Battle of Kartarpur against Moghuls
30 Apr 1688 Guru Gobind Singh fought his first
battle at Bhangani near Paonta Sahib

We're on the Internet:

<http://www.demon.co.uk/charities/sikh/home.htm>

We are now the UK agent for:

Khalsa-Net

This is an Internet mailing list for the discussion
of Sikh issues. If you have an Email account you
can subscribe now send a request to:
Khalsa_request@maboli.com

Resource Centre SHOP

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