

Central Gurdwara Resource Centre

Issue 11

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August 1996

The Newsletter for the Sikh Youth of Today

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

Welcome to our eleventh newsletter. We always do look forward to putting the newsletter together, especially when we can include the articles of our readers. So do please keep sending in your articles, no matter how long or short.

Some of you may have attended one or more of the Gurmat Camps this Summer, these camps are invaluable to those who want to find out more about the Sikh way of life - Gurmat. Those of you that did attend a camp I hope the experience will encourage you to attend the various events that are staged throughout the year.

This month we wanted to highlight a problem that always faces the Sikhs, but one to which there is a solution. Media disinformation about Sikhism. Whenever you read or hear something un-true about Sikhs or Sikhism in the media (newspapers or TV etc.), it is our duty to write to express our views and to counter any allegations. Recently in the Atlanta Journal (a major newspaper based in Atlanta, USA where the Olympics are being held) a report was printed that stated Sikhs were a terrorist group. Naturally there was an up-roar among the Sikh community locally and throughout the world and many many letters of protest were sent. The paper then apologised and a few days later published a half page report explaining Sikhism.

The media is an important tool and we as Sikhs must be able to get our point of view across. In this matter if you are interested in appearing in the audience of ITV's Many Questions TV programme please contact us. This is a religious current affairs programme and is on every Sunday morning in August.

Editors



August 1604 - First Opening of Guru Granth Sahib in Harmandir Sahib

Please do not throw away - pass on to someone else.

This is **YOUR** newsletter please do send us your comments, articles & poems.

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

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The Month of Bhaadon

16 August to 15 September 1996

This month Guru Ji is telling us how we can only have One love (that of Waheguru) and decorating ourselves or changing our appearance will be of no use and will only deviate us from the true path. Only those who truly love God will be saved from Hell.

ਭਾਦੁਇ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਣੀਆ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਗਾ ਹੇਤੁ ॥

Bhaadue bharam bhulaaneeaa doojai lagaa het
In the month of Bhaadon, she is deluded by doubt, because of her attachment to duality.

ਲਖ ਸੀਗਾਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਕਾਰਜਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੇਤੁ ॥

Lakh seegar banaa-1-aa kaaraj naahee ket.
She may wear thousands of ornaments, but they are of no use at all.

ਜਿਤੁ ਦਿਨਿ ਦੇਹ ਬਿਨਸਸੀ ਤਿਤੁ ਵੇਲੈ ਕਹਸਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਤੁ ॥

Jit din deh hins-see tit velai kahsan pret.

On that day when the body perishes—at that time, she becomes a ghost.

ਪਕੜਿ ਚਲਾਇਨਿ ਦੂਤ ਜਮ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦੇਨੀ ਭੇਤੁ ॥

Pakar chalaai-in doot jum kisai na denee bhet
The Messenger of Death seizes and holds her, and does not tell anyone his secret.

ਛੁਡਿ ਖੜੋਤੇ ਖਿਨੈ ਮਾਹਿ ਜਿਨਿ ਸਿਉ ਲਗਾ ਹੇਤੁ ॥

Chhud kharote khinai maah jin sio lagaa het
And her loved ones—in an instant, they move on, leaving her all alone.

ਹਥ ਮਰੋੜੈ ਤਨੁ ਕਪੇ ਸਿਆਹਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਸੇਤੁ ॥

Huth marorai tan kape siaahah hoaa set
She wrings her hands, her body writhes in pain, and she turns from black to white.

ਜੇਹਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਸੇ ਲੁਣੈ ਕਰਮਾ ਸੰਦੜਾ ਖੇਤੁ ॥

Jahaa beejai so lunai karmaa sandraa khet
She reaps what she has sown; such is the field of karma.

ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਰਣਾਗਤੀ ਚਰਣ ਬੋਹਿਥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦੇਤੁ ॥

Nanak prabh sarnaagatee charan bohith prabh det
Nanak seeks God's Sanctuary; God has given him the Boat of His Feet.

ਸੇ ਭਾਦੁਇ ਨਰਕਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਰਖਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੇਤੁ ॥

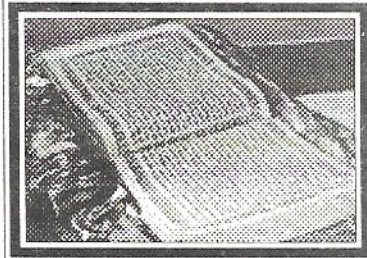
Se bhaadue narak na paeeah gur rakhan valaa het
Those who love the Guru, the Protector and Saviour, in Bhaadon, shall not be thrown down into hell

In the dark night of this age the moon of truth is no where to be seen... It can be found through the Guru (Guru Nanak Dev Ji)

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT

1/ Why is Guru Granth Sahib ji the only true scripture?

Guru Granth Sahib ji is the only scripture of which copies still exist signed by the Messengers through whom God revealed the Message. Sikhs believe that God has sent down many Messengers or Gurus to humankind. These include Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed. They were all men, and in the end, had to leave their bodies. After they died and returned to God, people collected their writings and stories and made religious books like Gita (Krishna), Dhammapada (Buddha), Torah (Moses), Gospels (Jesus), and Koran and Hadith (Mohammed). All of these were collected after the death of the Messengers. Thus, the Divine Message was corrupted and people began strange practises. So, in 1469 God sent down Guru Nanak who was followed by nine other human Gurus. They also returned to God, but at God's Command they had preserved the Revelation, Gurbani, Word of God, by writing it themselves. Guru Granth Sahib ji is not in the form of a man, but of a book. "Granth" means book. All previous Messengers sent by God had to return to God, otherwise people would have started to worship them. But when the Messenger/Guru had left people always started making stories about them. Since Gurbani is the Word of God, even the Gurus considered it higher than themselves. In 1708 God Commanded that the Guru Granth Sahib Ji becomes the Eternal Guru, the Living Messenger for humankind. While Sikhs follow the Living Guru and signed scripture, others follow stories about Gurus who have returned to God, stories written after they returned.



2/ Why is Guru Panth ji the only true spiritual community?

Unlike the earlier Gurus, Guru Granth Sahib ji does not die and return to God. However, it does not have the physical functions of the previous Messengers either. Guru Granth Sahib ji is the heart, mind, and soul, Guru Panth ji is the body. The Guru Panth ji is the whole body of Sikhs around the world. By acting according to the Guru Granth Sahib ji they bring Gods Message to change the world. Guru Granth Sahib ji is the master and guide of the lives of the Sikhs. Therefore, it is seated on a royal throne or Palki Sahib, with someone waving a fan or Chaur Sahib as a symbol of kingship. No one can tell you the spiritual discipline of Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Jesus or Mohammed. What time did they wake up? For how long did they pray? What prayers did they utter? No one knows today. But I can tell you Guru Gobind Singhs spiritual discipline. In 1699 he joined the Order of the Khalsa. Thus, whatever is the discipline of the Khalsa is what Guru Gobind Singh did and would have to do. Guru Panth ji was able to order Guru Gobind Singh ji to leave the fort and save his life. The Guru Panth ji made the Sikh Code of Conduct for the Order of the Khalsa which is the Akaal Takht Maryada.

3/ What is a Sikh?

The Sikh Code of Conduct defines a Sikh in Section one, chapter one, article one as: "Any human being who faithfully believes in One Immortal Being, Ten Gurus, Guru Granth Sahib Ji, teachings of Ten Gurus, baptism - Amrit - into the Order of the Khalsa, and does not belong to another religion." Sikhs are of two types - Amritdhari - those who have taken Amrit/ baptism and entered Order of the Khalsa, and sehjdhari - those who are "slow learners" on the way to baptism. Why baptism? Just like Guru Granth Sahib ji is the map to God, so the Khalsa discipline is the training which makes climbing the mountain of God easier. One can follow a map without training, but why? One can climb a mountain without a map, but why? Use the map, do the training.

4/ Why are there different religions?

Just as there is One God, there is one path - Gurmat. All the Gurus sent by God have taught the same message. All the other religions are deviations from Gurmat due to their scriptures having been written after the messengers returned to God. They are not reliable maps to God. Some details have been lost, others have been added. For instance, only Guru Granth Sahib ji teaches One God, one humanity. Christians and Muslims do not believe in one humanity - people of other religions will be sent to hell. Jews believe that they are the chosen race, and Hindus believe in caste, Buddhists and Jains do not believe in God. Also, only Guru Granth Sahib ji states that women and men are equal. No other religion allows women to carry out all religious functions. Just because Sikhs have the only true map/scripture this does not mean that people following other religions must be lost. A Sikh who does not use the true map is a worse person than someone with a corrupted map but who tries to find the destination: God. If someone really tries hard to find God, they will find God however inaccurate the map they are using. But one issue is why miss the true destination/God because of attachment to a corrupted map?

5/ Does it matter which religion you follow?

Those who find the Way to Waheguru are called mystics. They exist in all different religions but their message is always Gurmat - God is One, God is a Living Presence "Naam", this Living Presence fills all things and every heart, it is known only through the Grace of God which also fills God's Messengers "Gurprasad", and this Grace is best achieved through a simple life based on natural harmony and love "Rajya yoga" or "sahaj yoga". Mystics and saints in all religions generally have long, uncut hair and the other five Ks - bracelet, breeches, martial arts, comb. The Khalsa training/discipline has been used by all Messengers. Gurus, saints - prayers early in the morning, prayers at sunset and before sleep, five Ks, love with all. As a person follows God, the natural discipline comes naturally. However, these come from inner realisation of the Presence of Nature within our own nature, Cosmic Life in

our little lives, when the light bulb of the self joins the electric grid network, when the radio of the self tunes in to the unstruck melody of the Divine Court which sends the stars into dance and the birds into keertan. God's Grace falls like rain, but only if the bucket is open to it is it filled.

6/ What is a Gurmukh?

This is someone whose mukh or face is towards the Gur or Guru. The Supreme Guru is Waheguru. Waheguru sent the messengers, who we call SatGurus. Guru when mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib refers to Waheguru, not any SatGuru. The Gurmukh aims their life towards God, and celebrates the sacred gift of life, knowing God to be Mother and Father of all. To find Waheguru become a Gurmukh, to find God become godly.

7/ What is a Munmukh?

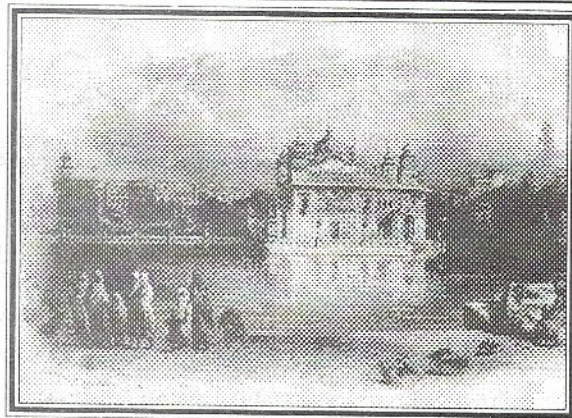
The Gurmukh is open to God, the munmukh has the mukh or face pointed to the "mun" or self. But what is a bulb without connection to a grid, a radio which does not pick up music, a bucket upside down? It is the same as a person unconnected to God, and not interested in connection. Someone who thinks that their worldly achievements make them important or that reduce others to objects of lust is far from the Way of God and the Way of the godly, the Gurmukhs.

8/ What are the five evil impulses?

These are the five basic impulses of pride, anger, lust, greed, and attachment which dominate the life of a man-mukh. These are supposed to be our slaves, but they usually take people over. Instead of using them, they use us. People are said to be out of control when they get angry, or in the grip of lust. We are not free. In the Gurmukh these impulses are restored to their natural state. Pride becomes self-respect, anger becomes assertiveness, lust becomes intimacy (into-me-see) and genuine friendship, greed becomes sharing, and attachment becomes friendship with all.

9/ What are the three states of mind?

Those untuned to God are in the three states of mind, full of cravings. They crave for things - desire, they crave that things do not happen - fear, they crave of things hopes. Desire, fear, and hopes are the three states of mind. Through craving they hope to make the fragile self firmer, this sandcastle on the beach of life. When the tide goes out, in good times, things seem fine and there is pleasure, but when the tide comes in, in bad times there is pain as the sandcastle crumbles. Though their lives are spent in craving, in desperate attempts to reinforce the sandcastle, the self cannot be made more than it is - a bulb, a radio, a bucket. Without the connection to the grid, not receiving music, not collecting the Naam-water of life, the self is a useless creation, unfulfilled in itself and disobedient to its Maker. Following its own path, it finds itself in more and more pain. Those who are tuned to God are in the fourth state. For them, life is a sweet gift, they ask no more than what it brings them - like twigs whirling in the wind to make a fire. Whatever comes, they accept gratefully, whatever goes is lost in the whirling roundabout of life. Filled with the Spirit they re-shape the cosmos with limitless



energy and love, but they force nothing. They work with the inner nature of all things - hence, every moment is a communion with God, each bit of life is a success.

10/ What is the Tenth Door?

There are nine doors of the physical body - the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, the mouth, the genital organs, the anus. These are the gateway to the world of maya, the physical world which we can hear, touch, taste, smell, and see. The tenth door is the Door to God. The munmukh looks through nine doors and gets attached to maya. The Gurmukh uses all ten doors and enriches maya with the Naam.

11/ What is a Brahm-Giani?

Brahm Giani means the Knower of God. A true Brahm-Giani is one in a million. It is someone who has found God, who has successfully climbed the mountain to God.

Recommended Reading

We now plan to regularly publish short reviews on books that will help you in your further study of Sikhism. If you have any trouble obtaining any books we will be glad to help you obtain them.

Introduction to the Sacred language of the Sikhs - Prof C Shackle - SOAS Publications. £10-00.

This book has been designed as a self contained introductory course to gain a knowledge of Gurmukhi, the language of the Guru Granth Sahib and assumes no prior knowledge of Punjabi or Gurmukhi. Prof. Shackle also runs a course at the School of Oriental and African Studies - University of London.

The Name of My Beloved: Verses of the Sikh Gurus - Nikki-Guninder Kaur Singh - Harper Collins. £11.99

This is a new book, very well produced and has translations of the Nit Nem banis and also other Gurbani such as the Lavan (Wedding Ceremony) and Barah Majh of Guru Nanak. The translation is in modern English and is very easy to read and understand.

The Sikh Missionary Society UK stocks a wide range of books from India and also produces a lot of free literature on Sikhism. Their office is well worth a visit:

10 Featherstone Road, Southall, Middx. UB2 5AA
Tel: 0181 574 1902

poets Corner

WE ARE THE CHILDREN

We are young and fearless
We drank the amrit-nectar
Now we wear the 5-Ks of
The mighty, mighty Khalsa

We never miss our prayers
They give us super power
When we meditate with
The mighty, mighty Khalsa

We are saint soldiers
We always stand together
We are Waheguru's Army
The mighty, mighty Khalsa

We are all equal
my sister and brother
There is no caste in
The mighty, mighty Khalsa

We don't hate anybody
We always help each other
Everyone's the friend of The mighty,
mighty Khalsa

We don't do drugs
We don't drink booze
God made us pure
And we wont lose
The Khalsa life
is what we choose
'Cause we get high
loving our Gurus!

The more we pray
The more we say
We love, we love
We love our Gurus!
Each 'n every day
We pray and say
We love, we love
We love our Gurus!

Listen to these views
They're headline news
We love, we love
We love our Gurus!
We don't drink booze
We will never lose
'Cause we get high
loving our Gurus!

WAHEGURU JEE KA KHALSA
Waheguru jee's Khalsa
WAHEGURU JEE KEE FATEH!
Waheguru jee's Victory!

Harjit Singh

Important dates in Sikh History August

- August 11 1664** Ascension to Guruship of
Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji
August 15 1947 Sikh Homeland handed
over to the Hindus and split into
East and West Punjab
August 16 1604 Installation of the Guru
Granth Sahib for the first time in
Harmandir Sahib
August 26 1669 Birth of Daya Ram one
of the Panj Payare
August 30 1574 Ascension to Guruship of
Guru Ram Das Ji
August 31 1581 Ascension to Guruship of
Guru Arjun Dev Ji.

Computer Corner

For any of the following items please contact
Bhupinder Singh contact number on front page.

Available Now

Gurbani CD - CD ROM with complete Guru
Granth Sahib and New English Translation
FREE - only 1 application per household

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Scriptures and Heritage of the Sikhs (PC- CD
ROM) available from H S Bansal 01203 581770

Khalsa-Net

The International Network of Sikhs on the
InterNet. If you have an Email account you can
subscribe now send a request to:

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National Sikh Network

Introductions service for Marriages
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Network P O Box 257, Middx UB1 1YZ

This months
Gurpurabs
7 Aug Birth anniversary
of Guru Har Krishan Ji

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newsletter among
young Sikhs please
contact us.

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