

Central Gurdwara Resource Centre

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The Newsletter for the Sikh Youth of Today

ਸੰਤ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ
Saint Soldier

Congratulations
on the Birth
Anniversary of
Guru
Gobind
Singh Ji

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.

Editor: Bhupinder Singh
Tel: 0171 460-2020
BSingh@liaison.demon.co.uk
Central Gurdwara Resource
Centre
62 Queensdale Road
London W11 4SG

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

The start of another year, this is normally a time to reflect on the year that has been and also to make resolutions for the new year. The most important resolution that we can make is to remember and Love God. Let us all together - all the readers make a collective resolution - "To Jap the Naam" as much as possible and to do this from the bottom of our hearts and really express our Love for God Almighty.

Waheguru - Waheguru - Waheguru

This month, we took a Hukam Nama at random, and I urge you all to spend some time and reflect upon the Word of the Guru and ultimately take the meaning inside of you. The One command is to Remember God "Jap" - so let us do this and never stop.

As usual I hope you all enjoy the newsletter, forgive us for any mistakes and do let us have your feedback.

Bhupinder Singh

Hukam Nama

ਸੂਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ - Shuhee Mahalla 5
ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਪੁਕਾਰਨਿ ਪੋਥੀਆ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ
ਸਭਿ ਕੂੜੁ ਗਾਲੀ ਹੋਛੀਆ ॥ ੧ ॥

*Simrat baid puran pukaaran potheean. Naam
bina sabh koorh gaalee hoshian*

Many holy scriptures proclaim that without the Naam, everything is false and worthless.

ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਅਪਾਰੁ ਭਗਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ॥ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ
ਮੋਹੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੰਗਿ ਨਸੈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

*Naam nidan apar bhagtan man vasai Janam
maran mohu dukh sadhu sang nasai. Pause*

The infinite treasure of the Naam abides within the minds of the devotees. Birth and death, attachment and suffering, are erased in the Saadh Sangat

ਮੋਹਿ ਬਾਦਿ ਅਹੰਕਾਰਿ ਸਰਪਰ ਰੁੰਨਿਆ ॥ ਸੁਖੁ ਨ
ਪਾਇਨਿ ਮੂਲਿ ਨਾਮ ਵਿਛੁੰਨਿਆ ॥ ੨ ॥

*Moh badh ahankaar sarpar runaian. Sukh
na paian mool naam vichhunian.*

Those who indulge in attachment, conflict and egotism shall surely weep and cry.

Those who are separated from the Naam shall never find any peace.

ਮੇਰੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਧਾਰਿ ਬੰਧਨਿ ਬੰਧਿਆ ॥ ਨਰਕਿ ਸੁਰਗਿ
ਅਵਤਾਰ ਮਾਇਆ ਧੰਧਿਆ ॥ ੩ ॥

*Meri meri dhaar bandhan bundya. Narak surg
avtaar maya dhandhya.*

Crying out, "Mine! Mine!", he is bound in bondage. Entangled in Maya, he is reincarnated in heaven and hell.

ਸੋਧਤ ਸੋਧਤ ਸੋਧਿ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਿਆ ॥ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸੁਖੁ
ਨਾਹਿ ਸਰਪਰ ਹਾਰਿਆ ॥ ੪ ॥

*Sodhat sodhat sodh tat bicharya. Naam bina
sukh nahi sarpar hariaa.*

Searching, searching, searching, I have come to understand the essence of reality. Without the Naam, there is no peace at all, and the mortal will surely fail.

ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਅਨੇਕ ਮਰਿ ਮਰਿ ਜਨਮਤੇ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਬੂਝੇ
ਸਭੁ ਵਾਦਿ ਜੋਨੀ ਭਰਮਤੇ ॥ ੫ ॥

*Aavhe jahe anek marr marr janamtai. Bin bujhai
sabh vaadh jonee bharmatai.*

Many come and go; they die, and die again, and are reincarnated. Without understanding, they are totally useless, and they wander in reincarnation.

ਜਿਨ੍ ਕਉ ਭਏ ਦਇਆਲ ਤਿਨ੍ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੰਗੁ ਭਇਆ ॥

Jin kau bhey diyaal tin sadhu sang bhyaa.

They alone join the Saadh Sangat, unto whom the Lord becomes Merciful. They chant and meditate on the Ambrosial Name of the Lord. ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਤਿਨ੍ ਜਨੀ ਜਪਿ ਲਇਆ ॥ ੬ ॥

Amrit har ka naam tinee jani jap lyaa.

Uncounted millions, so many they are endless, search for Him.

ਖੋਜਹਿ ਕੋਟਿ ਅੰਸਖ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਨੰਤ ਕੇ ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਬੁਝਾਏ
ਆਪਿ ਨੇੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਹੇ ॥ ੭ ॥

*Khojai kote asankh bahut anat kay. Jis bujhaay
aap naira tis hay.*

But only that one, who understands his own self, sees God near at hand.

ਵਿਸਰੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਹੁ ॥ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਾ
ਦਿਨੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਚਾਉ ਏਹੁ ॥ ੮ ॥

*Visar nahe daatar aapna naam deh. Gun gavan
din raat Nanak chaau eayh.*

Never forget me, O Great Giver — please bless me with Your Naam. To sing Your Glorious Praises day and night — O Nanak, this is my heart-felt desire.

The Universal Man

"The Sikhs are creations of Guru's universal Love. They are by their very birth of His spirit, citizens of the World," writes Professor Puran Singh, an eminent exponent of the Sikh religion.

Professor Puran Singh visualises universality in the message of Sikhism. He perceives the same soul in everybody. In fact, the human body is one in the perception of Prof. Puran Singh. Our perception of the Beautiful One is one. Our pursuits are akin. There is no difference in our outlook. Our feelings, enjoyments and sufferings are similar. Our Guru ji says the ear, the eyes, the speech of man are congenial all the world over. The guru also traces the angelic and the divine in all human beings. He emphasises this feature of human nature, in the realm of angels. The heartbeat of man is alike all over the world, all human beings are created by Him. He does not discriminate while creating. The Guru emphasises on this point by writing:

"Thou art the spirit that pervades all. It is thy light, that lights all hearts." P.13

Prof. Puran Singh gives example of Abraham Lincoln's fight for the freedom of slaves in America that gives him the dignity of a prophet among statesmen. That large sympathy of man for man is the recognition of the same heartbeat. These contradictions of feeling only show that something nobler is stirring in the human mind and man has begun to visualise his universality, Guru Nanak says;

"Religion consists not in mere talk He who looks on all alike and considers them as equals, is acclaimed as religious." P.730

Bhagat Kabir Ji expresses the same lofty thoughts;

"Firstly God created light and then, by his omnipotence, made all the mortals. From the one light has welled up the entire universe. Then who is good and who is bad? O men, my brethren, do not stay in doubt. Creation is in the creator and the creator is in the creation. He is fully filling all places." P 1349

All the higher tendencies of civilised and cultured men are inclined towards universal brotherhood. All desire peace on this earth, the small sweet home of man. This is the spirit of the Guru. Guru Nanak fascinated Bhai Mardana. After seeing Guru Nanak for the first time Bhai Mardana never called himself a Muslim. After seeing Guru Gobind Singh Ji Bhai Nand Lal never called himself a Hindu. They were absorbed in the lofty galaxy of humanity.

Guru Nanak gave a universal message to the world. It is written at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib. It says:

"He is the sole supreme being; of eternal manifestation; creator; without fear' without rancour; timeless form; un-incarnated; self-existent; realised by the grace of the holy preceptor."

The message itself is a message of one human race having one source; one caretaker and sustainer. Thus, there is indeed no justification for man of the Guru to hate and satiate thing, far less a man. The ideal of brotherhood of man starts with the Guru. Universality has its roots in the ideals of the Guru. When carefully scrutinised the ideals of the Guru put us to shame. The Guru expects his Sikhs to think good and contribute goodness everywhere and in every corner of this world. But we are not among ourselves full of love for each other; we have not yet

dropped selfishness and given ourselves wholly to love. We are engrossed in empty talk. If we have not acknowledged love as the only substance of human life, we have not yet risen to Guru ji's ideals. Guru Nanak says;

"Man without love is an empty shell which crumbles down and is reduced to dust." P62

We have yet to develop this universal love envisaged and revealed to us by our Guru. If we ever get a glimpse and taste of this universal love, then we can see people from amongst ourselves serving the helpless, the poor and weak with their lives. Sikh history will repeat. It is a manifestation of universal love. We have never experienced such love and we have never played the game of love. Guru ji says;

"If you are fond of playing the game of love, enter my path with your head on your palm. Once you set your foot upon it, lay down your head without any fear or hesitation.

This can only be done when there is true love; when there is truth and contentment. These are universal virtues. Let's inculcate in ourselves truthfully and practice them. Let us learn to speak the truth and all our problems will be solved. Do not fall into traps set by others. Speak the truth, practice the truth and live a truthful life.

"Truth is realised through purity of the heart" P.472

Let our hearts be pure and this purity will purify all the impurities around us and make us loveable and universal in the real sense of the world.

Principal Amar Singh, Vancouver

Banda Singh Bahadur

Banda's original name was Lachhman Dev. He was born around 1670 and was a Rajput cultivator. During his teens he had a reputation of being a great hunter, but at the age of about 20 he renounced worldly life and became a bairagi sadhu or a wandering hermit and ultimately settled at Nander in Maharashtra. He won great fame as a sorcerer under the name of Madho Das and commanded thousands of followers.

Guru Gobind Singh went to his hermitage. While Madho Das was away, the Guru ordered his disciples to kill and cook a few goats. When Madho Das returned he was enraged to see the Guru sitting on his seat - he tried his magic to push the Guru but to no avail - the Guru asked him who he was. Madho Das, realised that he was speaking to a great man, and replied, he was Banda or Guru's slave. The Guru encouraged him to give up his present way of living and resume the duties of a real Rajput (warrior). He agreed and Guru ji, conferred the title of Banda Singh Bahadur on him and appointed him his military lieutenant to punish the Moghuls, who had killed his two youngest sons, and thousands of other Sikhs.

Guru ji gave Banda Bahadur his own sword, green bow and Five arrows from his quiver. He was also given a council of advisers of Five Sikhs who on their arrival in Punjab were to assure the Sikhs that Banda was Guru's nominee and deputy to organise them in order to lead an expedition to occupy Sarhind. The dispatch of Banda to Punjab infuriated Emperor Bahadur Shah.

On October 7 1708 Guru Gobind Singh left for heavenly abode. Banda had not gone far when he heard the sad news. This did not discourage him. On the contrary it doubled his zeal and set the fire of vengeance ablaze in his heart.



Banda arrived at Narnaul. There he saw the complete destruction of the town. In Hissar he was well received by Hindus and Sikhs as a leader of the nationalist movement and deputy of Guru Gobind Singh. Liberal offerings were made to him in the cause of the country and dharam which he distributed among poor and needy. In Tohana, Banda issued letters to Malwa Sikhs to join him in his crusade against Wazir Khan of Sarhind. Banda then directed his attention to the east towards Delhi.

At Sonapat, 50 Kms North of Delhi, early in November 1709 Banda commanded about 500 followers. He attacked the government treasury plundered it and distributed it among his retinue. This was his second success against the government and it considerably raised his prestige. Again at Kaithal, Banda seized a Government treasury. He kept nothing out of it for himself and gave it away to his rank and file. By slow marches he advanced towards Sarhind.

On November 27 1709 Banda and his army attacked and conquered Samana. This was the first territorial conquest and the first administrative unit of Banda. This was a major town and home to Jalal-ud-did Jallad, the professional executioner, who had beheaded Guru Tegh Bahadur. It was an accursed place in the eyes of Sikhs.

Several other towns were then taken including Kunjpura, Ghuram and Sadhaura. The contemporary historian Khafi Khan wrote: "In two or three months time four to five thousands pony-riders, and seven to eight thousand warlike footmen joined him. Day by day their number increased, and abundant money and material by pillage fell into their hands. Numerous villages were laid waste and he appointed his own police officers and collectors of revenue.

The ultimate aim of Banda was to conquer Sarhind. It required time to consolidate his material and territorial gains. He therefore established his headquarters, in the beginning of February 1710, at Mukhlispur. His fort stood on a hill top. All the money, gold and costly material acquired in these expeditions were deposited here. He struck coins and issued orders under his seal. The name of Mukhlispur was changed to Lohgarh, and it became the capital of first Sikh state.

Banda ruled over the region bounded on the north by Shiwalik hills, on the west by river Tangri, on the east by river Jamuna, and in the south by a line passing through Samana. He abolished the Zamindari System of land prevailing under the Mughals and declared the actual cultivators as the owners of land. So Guru Gobind Singh's vision of political sovereignty was realised within a year of his Joti Jot.

Wazir Khan the ruler of Sarhind had proclaimed a jihad or a holy war against Banda. He was joined by many other Muslim chiefs. The majority of his soldiers were trained and well armed. The Sikhs on the other hand were not well armed. The Battle of Sarhind was fought on May 12 1710 at Chhappar Chiri, 20 kms from Sarhind. It was a particularly bloody battle, but eventually Wazir Khan was killed. The Sikhs reached Sarhind by nightfall and laid siege to the place and the town and entire province came into Sikh hands.

Banda then visited Kiratpur, Anandpur, Dera Baba Nanak and Amritsar. Many new people embraced Sikhism. Banda then marched towards Lahore. Sayyid Islam Khan, the Governor mounted guns on the walls of city. Banda laid a siege, but was unable to force upon the walls of the fort.

Banda Singh's rule, though short-lived, had a far-reaching impact on the history of the Punjab. With it began the decay of Mughal

authority and the demolition of the feudal system it had created.

Emperor Bahadur Shah returned to Delhi and issued an order on December 10, 1710 to "kill the worshippers of Nanak, wherever they are found." Banda was chased out of Every corner of Punjab and he took refuge in the Shivalik hills.

He got married to a daughter of one of the hill chiefs and it was few years before Mughals could trace him down. He again started his campaigns against the Mughals and came out of hills to the plains of Punjab. But was overwhelmed by the superior numbers of Mughal forces. The massive imperial force drove the Sikhs from Sirhind and other places to take shelter in the fort of Lohgarh in the hilly region. "It is impossible for me," says Khafi Khan a muslim historian of that time, "to describe the fight which followed. The Sikhs in their faqir's dress struck terror into the hearts of the royal troops. The number of casualties among the latter was so large that for a time it appeared as if they were going to lose."

Farukh Siyar, who came to the throne of Delhi in 1713, launched against them the sternest proceedings the Mughals could. They were hounded out of the plains of Punjab. Banda Singh and about 4,000 men were subjected to most stringent siege at the village of Gurdas-Nangal. For eight months the garrison resisted the siege of 100,000 Mughal troops under gruesome conditions.

Banda Singh issued a hukamnamah, showing the spirit which swayed the Sikhs during those arduous times.

"Deg O Teg O Fateh o nusrat bedirang Yaft Az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh" - The kettle and the sword (Symbols of charity and power), Victory and blessing have been obtained from Guru Nanak-Gobind Singh. God is one! Victory to the Presence!! This is the order of Sri Sachcha Sahib (The great master) to the entire Khalsa. The Guru will protect you. Call upon the Guru's name. Your lives will be fruitful! You are the Khalsa of the great immortal God. On seeing this letter, repair to the presence, wearing five arms. Observe the rules of conduct laid down for the Khalsa. Do not use Bhang, tobacco, Poppy, wine, or any other intoxicant... Commit no theft or adultery. We have brought Satyug (the golden age) Love one another. This is my wish. He who lives according to the rules of Khalsa shall be saved by the Guru.

The royal army at last broke through and captured Banda Singh and his starving Sikhs. Banda Singh and around 700 Sikhs were taken to Delhi. Without any sign of dejection or shame, they rode on, calm, cheerful, even anxious to die the death of martyrs. Life was promised to any who would renounce their faith, but they would not prove false to their Guru, "kill me first," was the prayer which constantly rang in the ears of the executioner. For a whole week the sword of the executioner did its butcher work. It was not until June 9 1716 that Banda himself was led out to execution and to a barbarous death.

Two British men, John Surman and Edward Stephenson, who were in Delhi witnessed some of these massacres and wrote "It is not a little remarkable with what patience Sikhs undergo their fate, and to the last it has not been found that one apostatized from his new formed religion.

With his end Sikhism did not die on the contrary Sikhism came out strong and the torch of Banda Singh Bahadur was carried with new Warriors like Nawab Kapur Singh Virk, Sardar Budh Singh, Sardar Charat Singh, Baba Deep Singh ji Shaheed, Sardar Jassa Singh ji Ahluwalia and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Edited from an article by Sandeep Singh

poets Corner

Bhai Kanhiaya

Yet another battle was fought
in high spirits like the rest
the Sikhs, the soldier- saints
swung into action, full of zest

The dazzle dazed the men deployed
the weapons glared in the sun
the battle cries were deafening
angel of death, hovered on everyone

The swipes of swinging swords
swept swiftly, inflicting fatal blows
the arrows aimed at the enemy
tore through the wanted foes

Dead and the wounded had fallen
as muskets fired the rounds
smoke and dust obscured the vision
heat and blood fouled the ground

Hours later, as the horror settled
the nature was rendered mute
when the peace and quiet returned
the demand for water was acute

Some soldiers had fallen dead
but the wounded needed tending
from the injured and the exhausted
the cries for water were unending

There moved a lonesome figure
amidst the injured and the dead
Bhai Kanhiaya, a Guru's soldier
served water, in this dread

Deftly, the man drifted around
nursing the wounded he was tending
you could see him serve them water
watch him, his tall frame bending

Lost in the love of his Guru
Bhai Kanhiaya served everyone
he served the enemy injured
as he would serve his brethren

Kanhiaya's strange behaviour
was brought to the Guru's attention
when the Guru summoned the man
he showed no fear or apprehension

"I did serve them all," he said
"as I didn't see any Sikh or enemy
all I could see in those faces, Lord
were you, a picture of thee"

The Guru smiled for he was pleased
the burden on his mind had eased
Bhai Kanhiaya had understood
whatever is bad and what is good

Jaswinder Singh Chadha

continued from front page.

In this Hukam Nama Guru Ji is stressing upon the importance of Naam and the company of Sadh Sangat. He says that his own research and all the religious books of all religions proclaim this truth that God's Name is the real thing and all other talks are mere prattle. Then Guru Ji tells that this treasure of Name is only obtained in the company of the sadh sangat. Guru Ji observes that while the Godward persons contemplate on His Name, the egocentrics are involved in Maya's strife, they gather no peace and die without realizing the Lord and are born to die again. Therefore Guru Ji prays to God (and advises us accordingly) to bless Him with His Name, because that is his biggest desire.

Important Dates in Sikh History - January

Jan 3 1588 Foundation Stone of Harmandir Sahib
laid by Mian Mir (a Muslim Saint)

Jan 14 1704 Battle of Muktsar

Jan 16 1630 Birth of Guru Har Rai

Jan 17 1661 Birth of Bhai Himat Singh - one of
the Panj Payare

Jan 26 1682 Birth of Baba Deep Singh Ji - Great
Sikh Warrior and Martyr

Jan 28 1520 Guru Nanak arrives in Mecca

Jan 28 1846 Battle of Allival against the British

ITEMS FOR SALE

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

Cultural Roots Multimedia Knowledge Base
Vol. 1(PC/Mac CD-ROM) covering The Sikh
and African Diaspora. For ages 5+ £35-00

CRMKB Sikhism Disk 1 (PC-Windows-floppy)
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The International Network of Sikhs on the
InterNet. If you have an Email account you can
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Khalsa-request@maboli.com

This months
Gurpurabs
January 15 Birth
Anniversary Guru
Gobind Singh Ji

Your help needed
Sikh women (all
ages) required to take
part in an important
survey; write to:
Jatinder Singh
172 Spackmans Way,
Slough SL1 2SB
to receive a question-
airre all replies will
be confidential

If you are part of any
Sikh organisation and
can distribute this
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