

# Central Gurdwara Resource Centre NEWSLETTER

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February 1997

The Newsletter for the Sikh Youth of Today



**Bhai Vir Singh**

**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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## Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

Well 1997 seems to have got off to a good start, I wonder how many of you have made and kept the resolution to "Jap" - remember Waheguru through regular simran.

This month we have a short extract from the writings of Bhai Vir Singh, who emphasises simran and kirtan throughout his writings. Following on from that is an article entitled "Who Am I?". In a world where moral values have fallen where do Sikhs stand today? a question that needs reflection, but the answer lies firmly in our religious tradition.

We go on to discuss the subject of marriage, all the views expressed are those of the younger generation. We will be happy to publish further replies from readers who wish to express their views on this topic which causes much concern to Sikh parents and children alike.

Finally, you will notice a subscription and donation form below, we are planning to expand and require volunteers, writers and monetary donations to expand the newsletter and undertake various other initiatives for Sikh youth.

Bhupinder Singh - editor

## Bhai Vir Singh

Bhai Vir Singh Ji is a renowned Sikh Theologian who has won the hearts and minds of Sikhs throughout the world with his wonderful writing and personal touch. In times of distress and crisis, many a soul has reached out to Bhai Sahib for solace and comfort. And Bhai Sahib, in return never failed them. Despite his busy life, he took the time to answer these calls for help and guidance. His writings have been extensively translated and several books are available a short extract appears below:

Dear One,

THERE is only one thing that is helpful to this being and that is the love for the feet of the Infinite Lord. Remembering the Master, this is *simran*. Either by meditating on the Naam, by reading the Bani or by doing or listening to kirtan.

Meditation means not getting lost in the appearance or disappearance of ideas, or in amusements and unexpected negativity. Instead, keep channelling the thoughts towards the Lord.

When love has matured through concentration, it continuously begins to reside in the Lord. This is called meditation

To perfect this and obtain speedy success in this endeavour, we first need to link up with Guru

continued on page 2

### Subscription/Donation Form

With your help we plan to expand and enlarge the newsletter. We are also planning the publication of small books on Sikhism with a youthful approach both for the Sikh market and also for our wider host community.

If you would like to receive the newsletter every month by mail we ask for a donation (minimum £10-00 for 1 year). Please complete this form and return to:

Bhupinder Singh, Central Gurdwara Resource Centre  
62 Queensdale Road, London W11 4SG

I enclose £ \_\_\_\_\_ as a donation to the Central Gurdwara Resource Centre (cheques should be made payable to "Central Gurdwara London")

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for your support



**Who is****Waheguru?**

This greatest question in the mind of man will remain ever unanswered because we can only know Waheguru, but cannot tell who Waheguru is. In Gurbani there is a simple example to help explain. A mute person, after tasting sugar, knows the taste, enjoys it and expresses it through a smile. But being unable to speak, he cannot tell a word about what sugar is like. Waheguru is love, hence immensely sweet, many times sweeter than anything in this world. Holy persons love Waheguru; they enjoy this sweetness, but cannot say anything by which we can know and understand Waheguru. There is no language and nothing available in this world which can be quoted to describe Waheguru.

continued from front page...

Nanak Dev Ji's feet. The rest of the job is to keep the mind detached. The physical body has to stay in the *ashram* of a householder and discharge its responsibilities. But the consciousness must stay detached.

Gurbani says: My mind is attached to the true Naam. With the people, I maintain a show (a surface dealing). This is the way. The more we are in it, the greater the bliss.

Those who attempt all this are the *satsangees* (disciples) of the Guru and are blessed. This is all that you have to do. Satguru is at hand. And does not desert his loved ones. His loved ones may run wild and drown themselves in play, but over their head, is the clam, Guru-Warrior.

He does not stop following you. Only after immersing you in the hue of Naam does the Guru let you go.

Partake Amrit and be proud that the *Kalgidhar*, the Father is at hand. He is ever loving and making us dwell on the Naam. We have nothing to fear.

Vir Singh - extract from Piarey Jio (selected letters of Bhai Vir Singh)

**Who am I?**

Three simple words, yet they cause much trouble.

Many of our brothers and sisters begin defining themselves first with the cultural/religious background of their ancestors. Many say Sikh, others say Indian, some say Punjabi. However, when you ask them to define these terms, they have no certain answers. Never have they given any thought on who and what they are. Lost in the materialistic culture of Western society, blinded in the desire to conform to Western Culture and "Ideals", they have forgotten their own cultural roots, religion and heritage.

Sadly, Sikhs today have lost touch with the most important mark of their existence; that being their religious principles and values. Today, Sikhs have full-heartedly embraced the evils of Western Society as well as the Indian caste-inflicted culture; thus forgetting the basic tenets of their religion's egalitarian teachings.

Sikhs today listen to blasting Bhangra music from stereos world over. The lyrics make popular, drinking, drugs, sex; as well as discrimination on basis of caste, colour and gender. When such is the psyche of Sikhs today- proud of imitating Western evils, losing themselves in greed and power. Living ignorant to the truth of their own religion, then how can anyone expect any good to exist in Sikh society?

The youth are lost in worldly material ways. The parents are lost in their greed and Ego. The leaders are fighting over power and wealth. While the saints have left to save themselves, whilst leaving the rest to burn in their desires of worldly pleasure.

How many Sikh guys/girls sleep around? How many broken marriages are there now? How many abused children live painful lives? How many parents live in old-age homes? How many children are aborted by Sikhs? How many Sikhs live in poverty? How many have become drugies & alcoholics? How many live without a purpose in life? Sadly there are too many! Too many Sikhs are lost... burning in this worldly flame, living life with empty souls, searching like addicts to get their next "shot" of happiness, from anywhere, from anyone!

How can Sikhs fill the gap in their heart? How can they find lasting peace and tranquillity and not lose themselves in this dualistic reality? Of pain and pleasure, happiness and sorrow, etc. How can Sikhs help cure the ills in our society? How can Sikhs make whole their being? How can Sikhs find bliss and peace? How can Sikhs cure their wounds and diseases?

Only one solution there is if you desire to believe. You must walk the path that Satguru Nanak Dev Ji preached. Without the remembrance of our Loving Creator, without the knowledge of Satguru's Wisdom (as enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji), without acting upon these God-sent teachings, none can save themselves from the ravaging fire that is burning in everyone's heart all over the world.

How can the ignorant help him/herself? How can the Egotistical save him/herself? How can one save themselves from Worldly Lust, Anger, Greed, Attachment, Pride? Without the knowledge of knowing the falsehoods in life, one can never save themselves. Apply the wisdom of Satguru Ji with love and sincerity. Make Truth your speech, make Humility your expression. Give selfless love and friendship and charity too the weak, poor, needy if you can. You need to spend time with yourself, in honest reflection and thought. Do not be afraid to confront the evils that live within us all. Only after facing your real-self, knowing your inner-most secrets, can you then wash away the evil that lives in your mind, using Satguru's divine wisdom and God's loving remembrance.

I urge everyone to try, to walk the path of truth that leads to enlightenment. One day we will all go from this world, what worldly riches, what



*"When the Lord casts His Glance of Grace, then I see Him with my own eyes. He is indescribable, and cannot be described. With my ears, I continually listen to the Word of the Shabad, and I praise Him; His Ambrosial Name abides within my heart. He is Fearless. Formless and absolutely without vengeance; I am absorbed in His Perfect Light. O Nanak, without the Guru, doubt is not dispelled; through the True Naam, glorious greatness is obtained.*

Guru Granth p597

*"A religious person is devout in the sense that he has no doubt of the significance and loftiness of those super personal objects and goals which neither require nor are capable of rational foundation"* .....

*"Possibly we shall know a little more than we do now. But the real nature of things, that we shall never know."*

Albert Einstein

friends and family will then help us after death? Our soul will be judged according to our actions. Salvation can only occur while living, not hence after. Why suffer from worldly pangs? When one can live a blissful existence? Try, I urge you my brothers and sisters, to walk the path of our Satgurus.

Let lasting bliss fill your heart and peace saturate your mind. All sorrows will vanish away, all sufferings will cease to cause pain. When the balm of Satguru's love touches your heart, his teachings enlighten your mind, then you will become a sea of serenity, the wind of ecstasy, the earth of true happiness and the fire of bliss.

Jaswinder Singh.

### **Single & Seeking**

"All I want is to fall in love and be loved in that special way and feel that wonderful feeling of being at the core of someone's life" - Anon

I remember my aunty asking me if I wanted to meet this nice girl she knew. She then asked me what I was looking for in a girl. She burst out laughing and looked at me like I was from the X-files when I said character and personality were more important than look, family, breeding, education and job. "That (character & personality) can be settled during your marriage," she said with a wave of her hand.

But her words chilled me to my core. I could not afford to find out if a person's character and personality traits were compatible to mine AFTER we had vowed to spend the rest of our lives together.

If I am going to share the rest of my life with someone, I should have the major say in who it should be. Isn't it logical? I don't want to get into a situation where I wake up every morning and look at the person next to me, wondering "IS she really the one for me." That would be extremely unfair, to both, but is a distinct possibility in an arranged marriage.

I won't wade into that quagmire of "Arranged marriages worked for your parents and their parents before them and will work for you." All I will say is that times have changed tremendously. Women have progressed and compete with men on equal terms, there is intense pressure on both spouses to be working - not just to make ends meet but to get all the material symbols that we crave for that will herald our arrival as having "made it" in the world.

To me marriage should be a beginning. It is a situation where both parties are able to help the other reach further, achieve higher and experi-

ence more that they would have on their own. Call me a dreamer but that is how I see it.

Right now in my situation (where none of the kids are married), it seems marriage is for the sole purpose of giving my parents grand kids. I love my parents dearly but do not think I can "sacrifice" my search for my life journey's partner to appease their desire for grandkids. I hope this does not come across as being harsh and cold. No doubt my parents think kids will bring joy and warmth into my life too. Of course they will, but with the right person I keep telling them.

My mum says my ears need a good pulling. My dad just turns his eyes skywards, sighs and says, "I hope you are looking high and hard son because I am not getting any younger."

I am, but as any Singh Sikh adult will attest to, it is not easy to meet and strike up a friendship with a Sikh of the opposite sex, unless it happens to be at the place of work or in an organisation both belong to.

Karamjit Singh

This article has highlighted many points that young Sikhs worry about when Marriage is discussed. In fact I may have written similar views only a short while ago, but having gone through an arranged marriage recently, I would like to add a few points that seem relevant.

- ⊕ Faith in Waheguru - many times it is said your life is mapped out already. I was very sceptical when such language was used, but from personal experience I have seen several arranged marriages of people my age when I have thought, "WOW they were made for each other."
- ⊕ Being in love is a process which continually changes and grows. It is impossible to know someone for 1 month, 3 months or even a year and completely know them. I have known cases where the 2 concerned have been "dating" for 4-5 years, but their marriage has not even lasted 1 year! Having an arranged marriage gives the chance to start with a clean slate and really get to know a person inside out, in this way lasting marriages are made.
- ⊕ However, things are not always rosy, as we all know, and I would like to take this opportunity to encourage parents to take the initiative to know their children and take care and understanding when introducing a partner.
- ⊕ Finally we must all work towards a fair system of marriage for all our brothers and sisters, based on GURMAT and not on ritualistic practices, including the degrading system of dowry.

Bhupinder Singh - editor



# poets Corner

## God's Message

I got up early one morning  
And rushed right into the day  
I had so much to accomplish  
That I didn't take time to pray.

Problems just tumbling about me -  
And heavier each task :  
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered.  
He answered : "You didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty -  
But the day toiled on, gray and bleak:  
I wondered why God didn't show me,  
He said : "But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence  
I used all my keys at the lock;  
God gently and lovingly chided:  
"My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning  
And paused before entering the day;  
I had so much to accomplish  
That I had to take time and pray.

*Unknown*

## The Deceiver of Men

The Deceiver of Men  
and their best friend,  
Hidden from view  
yet absolutely true :  
Wonderful, Wonderful  
Waheguru!

Far away in space  
closer than your face,  
Sitting right in you  
watching what you do:  
Wonderful, Wonderful  
Waheguru!

The Giver of Grief  
destroying your belief,  
Yet still loving you  
leading you to the Guru:  
Wonderful, Wonderful  
Waheguru!

Your curtain of pride  
will be opened wide,  
Revealing to you  
the Absolutely true:  
Wonderful, Wonderful  
Waheguru!

Harjit Singh Lakhani

## Important Dates in Sikh History February

- Feb 5 1792** The Great Holocaust - the forces of the Afgan Ahmed Abdali Khan attacked the Sikhs an estimated 30-50,000 Sikhs were killed.
- Feb 21 1849** The last battle of the Anglo-Sikh War was fought at Gujrat.
- Feb 21 1921** Massacre at Nankana Sahib, a group of 200 devotees were killed by Mahant Narain Das who did not want to give up control of the Gurdwara to the SGPC. The next day he was forced to hand over the keys.

## Sikh Youth Groups and Gurmat Workshops/Discussion Groups

Shepherds Bush Gurdwara Sikh Studies plus Punjabi classes every Sunday 7pm.

The **Akaal Purkh Ki FAUJ** (an organisation for Sikhs of all ages organised being developed and promoted as the way forward by the Takht Sri Akaal Takht Sahib),

Sunday's at Siri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Reading and also at Hounslow.

Contact: Bhai Autar Singh: 0118- 926 1350

## SIKH RESOURCES

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

### GURBANI CD ROM (for PC or MAC)

- Ⓢ Guru Granth Sahib and Nitnem in Gurmukhi
- Ⓢ Complete English translation
- Ⓢ Many Gurmukhi Fonts
- Ⓢ Gurdwara Photos and essays

Minimum donation £10-00

### Cultural Roots Multimedia Knowledge Base

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

### Books by Santokh Singh of Canada

**Shabad Kirtan** - beautifully produced book with many Shabads in Gurmukhi, Romanised and in English Translation £10-00

**Fundamentals of Sikhism** especially written for Western Sikh children £6-00

**Brain Washing**- washing of societies specious values £6-00

## Khalsa-Net

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

[Khalsa-request@maboli.com](mailto:Khalsa-request@maboli.com)

This months  
Gurpurabs  
**20 Feb** Birth Guru  
Har Rai Ji  
**22 Feb** Birth  
Bhagat Ravi Das Ji

If you are part of any Sikh organisation and can distribute this newsletter among young Sikhs please contact us.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Editors or Management of the Gurdwara