

Central Gurdwara Resource Centre NEWSLETTER

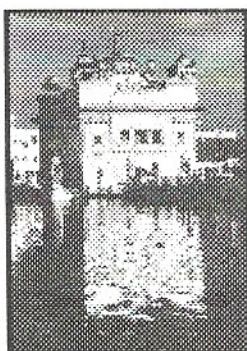
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May 1997

The Newsletter for the Sikh Youth of Today

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh



**Harmandir
Sahib
Amritsar**

Many great philosophers have spent lifetimes pondering over the Purpose of Life, but is it a question you have thought about? Do we need to think about?

When asked "What is the aim of your life?" What would you answer? Many people say they would like to be Healthy, Wealthy and Happy. But does Health plus Wealth equal Happiness? Evidently not.

Let us look at what Gurmat has told us about the purpose of Life and what our aim in life should be.

We believe that the Soul has been given by God. So who or what is God? Gurbani tells us that God cannot be described. Imagine the following situation. If you give a mute person (someone who cannot speak) some sweets - the person will be happy and satisfied. We can see that he is happy, but he is unable to tell us what he feels. In the same way if we meet a Gurmukh (a highly spiritually aware person) we can see that the person is happy and care-free, but if we ask why, he cannot answer. It is a feeling of inner peace that they have. This state of mind, I call it God Realisation or Self Realisation, a state of being totally

content with one's life, being without worries. This is the state that we must aim for. Gurbani tells us about Moksha - merging with God - this can be described like a drop of water merging with an Ocean. God is the Ocean. So the soul came from God and ultimately wants to merge back with God.

So now that we have decided that the aim of our lives is to attain God Realisation and ultimately for our soul to merge back with God - how do we go about this?

I shall try to answer this next month with my limited knowledge, but I hope this short introduction will get you thinking and if you have the answer please do drop me a line!

I hope I haven't started off on too serious a point, but I normally just write the first thing that comes to me. Anyway, I hope you enjoy the rest of the newsletter in which you will find a review of some Computer CD Roms that have recently come out along with our regular features on Gurbani, a wonderful poem about Vaisakhi and the historical dates for this month.

Bhupinder Singh

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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Subscription/Donation Form

With your help we plan to expand and enlarge the newsletter and also to publish small books on Sikhism with a youthful approach both for the Sikh audience and also for our wider host community. We are also regularly organising events and your help and attendance will be greatly appreciated

If you would like to receive the newsletter every month by mail we ask for a donation Please complete this form and return to:

Bhupinder Singh, Central Gurdwara Resource Centre

62 Queensdale Road, London W11 4SG - If you require a receipt please send an sae

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Sohila

Translation of the 3rd shabad of Kirtan Sohila is presented below, followed by a short explanation.

ਰਾਗੁ ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥

Raag Dhanasri Mahalla 1

ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਬਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ ॥

Gagan mai thaal rav chand deppak banay tarikua mandal janek motee
The sky is our platter, the sun and moon our lamps, it is studded with pearls, the starry galaxies.

ਪੂਪੁ ਮਲਾਨਲੋ ਪਵਣੁ ਚਵਰੋ ਕਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਬਨਰਾਇ ਫੁਲੈਤ ਜੋਤੀ ॥੧॥

Dhoop mul-aun-lo pvan chavro kray sagal bunraa-e phoolant jotee
The wafting scent of sandal wood is our incense, the gentle breeze, our wisk, all vegetation, the bouquet of flowers we offer to you
ਕੈਸੀ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਭਵ ਖੰਡਨਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਆਰਤੀ ॥

Kaisee artee ho-e. Bhav khandnaa teree artee.

What an act of worship! This truly is Your worship,

You who sunder life from death

ਅਨਹਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਵਾਜੰਤ ਭੇਰੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Unhtaa shabad vaajunt bhe-ree. Rahao(Pause).

The unstruck sound within is the drum to which we chant.

ਸਹਸ ਤਵ ਨੈਨ ਨਨ ਨੈਨ ਹਹਿ ਤੋਹਿ ਕਉ ਸਹਸ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਨਨਾ ਏਕ ਤੋਹੀ ॥

Sahas tuv nain nun nain h-he tohe kou sahas moorit n-naa ek touhee

You have a thousand eyes yet without eye are You,

You have a thousand faces yet without face are You

ਸਹਸ ਪਦ ਬਿਮਲ ਨਨ ਏਕ ਪਦ ਗੰਧ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਹਸ ਤਵ ਗੰਧ ਇਵ ਚਲਤ ਮੋਰੀ ॥੨॥

Sahas pud bimal nun ek pud gundh bin sahas tuv gundh iv chulat mohe

You have a thousand feet yet without foot are You, You have a thousand

noses yet without nose are You, I am enchanted by Your wonders

ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਦੈ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

Subh meh jot jot hai so-ee. Tisdai chaanan subh meh chaanan ho-e

There is a Light in all, and the Light is You,

By that Light we are all illumined

ਗੁਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੁ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥

Gur saakhee jote pergat ho-ey. Joe tis bhaa-vae su artee ho-ey

The Light is revealed through the Guru's teaching,

Whatever pleases You is worship of You.

ਹਰਿ ਚਰਣ ਕਵਲ ਮਕਰੰਦ ਲੋਭਿਤ ਮਨੋ ਅਨਦਿਨੋ ਮੋਹਿ ਆਹੀ ਪਿਆਸਾ ॥

Har churn kwal mukrund lobhit mno undinoe mo-he au-he piaasaa

My mind is greedy as the bumble-bee,

Night and Day I long to drink the ambrosia of Your lotus-feet

ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਜਲੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਰਿੰਗ ਕਉ ਹੋਇ ਜਾ ਤੇ ਤੇਰੈ ਨਾਇ ਵਾਸਾ ॥੪॥੩॥

Kripaa jul deh Nanak saaring kou ho-ey jaatay terae naaey vaasa.

Nanak says, grant nectar to this thirsty bird,

Grant me a dwelling in Your Name.

How can we worship God? Is there any harm in making an idol to symbolise God and then offering things to that God which is what the Hindus do in their Aarti? In this shabad, Guru Nanak reveals that WaheGuru is Living, not a piece of stone and that nature offers itself to God. Thy Worship happens automatically - our choice is to join in or not, but there is no try. Any attempt to create our own form of worship is a sad joke replacing the Living Power with the dead stone, the Gurdwara of the universe with a small building. (1st pauri)

This months Gurburabs

& important dates

May 4 Janam Din Baba Ajit Singh Ji

May 7 Avtar Purab Guru Angad Dev Ji

May 21 Avtar Purab Guru Amardas Ji



Our minds can think in only one direction. We can only understand Reality by simplifying it. Thus, either God has eyes or not? So we make an idol with eyes. But WaheGuru is beyond our power. We should not reduce WaheGuru to the limits of our minds - this is not worship but insult. Thus, the Guru gives us paradoxes - God has eyes but no eye, forms but no form, feet but no feet, noses but no nose. The Guru is bewitched in these plays of God. These paradoxes cannot be answered. We might think they mean that God is all-seeing but without our type of eyes, etc. and that they can be understood like this. Perhaps they mean that God is Present just here, seeing, smelling and yet Absent, beyond us. Both maybe right, but the end of them all shows our inability to master the Master. We are lost in thinking about God, but can never fully understand God. (2nd pauri)

The Light of God is in all, but appears as shadows in the mazes of our ego-minds. The Guru shows us the Way Out. Following the Way pleases God and pleasing God is the true worship. (3rd pauri)

We knock on the Exit Door (Dasum Duar) and WaheGuru will open it for us. Light will fill the tunnels and mazes. Then the mazes are seen for the beautiful thing that they are. The Way of worship is not mechanical bowing to stones invented by our minds but drinking nectar-sweet Words Given to us. We thirst for them as a little bird for water, and drinking/singing we can join the natural, spontaneous cosmic worship. (4th pauri)

Kanwar Ranvir Singh

Read of the Lord's Glories and reflect upon the Lord's Glories. Listen continually to the Sermon of the Naam, the Name of the Lord, Har, Har. Joining the Sat Sangat, the True Congregation, and singing the Glorious Praises of the Lord, you shall cross over the treacherous and terrifying world-ocean. p.95

Desires

The fact is our desires continue to be desires, and the more we get, the more we need, the more we want, the more we ask for. Then it becomes a web of desires and we get trapped.

After all, we can handle a certain amount, but after that we cannot handle it and we lose our priorities, and that makes us suffer.

you may be shocked to hear that happiness is not a priority. The life is not a priority, richness is not a priority. To be beautiful, sexy and charming is not a priority.

The priority is that you should find the truth and live it.

As far as all humans are concerned, they all want to find the truth, but they do not want to live it. This is called duality.

Nobody can live in this body forever, "Raaj naa koe jeeva-aa". Anyone, whom you feel, according to your understanding was a godhead; couldn't live in his/her body forever. We were given this body to use our senses in a correct way.

You can have the experience of God through the mental body, through the subtle body, through the pranic body or you can get it through the radiant body and you will always be in a bliss. You will have no problem whatsoever. Your insanity is that you want to win and you want truth to lose.

Adapted from lectures of Yogi Bhajan, 1983



CD Roms on Sikhism

Ever since the first issue of the newsletter we have been promoting and distributing various CD Roms. It started with the **Scriptures and Heritage** CD ROM from AMS in California, USA, which was the first Multimedia CD ROM about the Sikh Religion. It combined a complete English translation of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib along with several other features such as photographs of historical Gurdwaras around the World and a quotations from the Guru Granth Sahib section. Soon afterwards a different product designed for children and also for use in schools was introduced by Trilby Multimedia from Birmingham, England. This was the **Cultural Roots Multimedia Knowledge Base Vol. 1(CRMKB)** and covered the Sikh Diaspora as well as the African Diaspora. This is a beautifully produced package ideal for younger children to learn basic facts about the Guru's and their history and included a fun Punjabi language section as well as quizzes to test the child's knowledge.

In the meantime the **Gurbani CD** became available, produced in California. This features the complete text of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib in Gurmukhi and English Translation written by Sant Singh Khalsa as well as other essays on Sikhism and photos of Gurdwaras. Distributed by the Sikh Center of Orange County for a suggested donation of \$10-00. To date they have distributed over 10,000 Gurbani CD's.

Recently a batch of new CD Roms have been released a short review of each follows:

Ithaas - Sikh History Stories. This is produced by the same team who produced the CRMKB CD and is a true multimedia experience. There are 5 major sections of the CD ROM:

1. 5 historical stories about Guru Arjan Dev Ji, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, The Hero's of Chamkaur, Nawab Kapur Singh and Sharanagat Kaur. These stories are spoken and accompanied by lovely pictures and animation's. The stories are followed by games, which test the knowledge of a child who as just listened to the stories in a fun and imaginative way.
2. The next section is on the Punjabi Language and is designed for youngsters to learn the alphabet and simple words again with the use of games and quizzes.

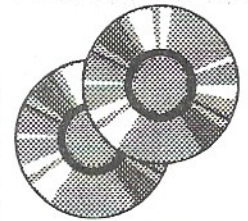
3. Video and pictures - a Virtual tour of Harmandir Sahib is presented, simply click on the part of the Gurdwara you wish to see and a short video along with sound will appear. There is also a slide show of pictures of Historical Gurdwaras.
4. The Histories of the Battles of Guru Har Gobind and Guru Gobind Singh Ji are given in the fourth section.
5. Finally you may read all the past Central Gurdwara Resource Centre Newsletters from November 1995 to February 1997 and also view the catalogue of DTF Books from the CD ROM.

Overall this is a beautifully produced product and is well worth the reasonable price tag of only £15-00.

Sikh Dharma History and Culture - This is a CD ROM produced in Singapore and present a brief history of the lives of the Gurus and also of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Each section also has a quiz to test the knowledge of the reader. The text is complimented with many photographs and a different shabad (all by famous Ragi's) is played as the reader looks through the various sections. Again a well produced multimedia package.

All about Sikhism - This CD ROM is an updated version of the original Scriptures and Heritage of the Sikhs CD ROM and presents the complete text of the much respected Manmohan Singh Translation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Line by line the original Gurmukhi, romanised text, explanation in simple Punjabi and English translation is presented. The text of the well renowned book of questions and answers about Sikhism "Introduction to Sikhism" by Gobind Singh Mansukhani: Other features include: Lives of the Sikh Gurus; Sikh Reht Maryada (SGPC); Datewise Events in Sikh History; Gurdwara photographs; Quotations from Guru Granth Sahib; Religions of the World; Screen Savers and Games. The package is let down a little by the help file style interface, but this is more than made up by the extensive content.

Bhupinder Singh



"Oh Man, you have this lovely body. This is the time for you to meet the Lord Any other work that you do will not bring benefits to your soul"
p12 SGGs (Sodar - Rehraas)

poets Corner

The following poem is one of the winning entries in a poetry competition held at Watford Gurdwara during Vaisakhi.

In the month of Vaisakh falls a very special day
It is on the 13th of April, with gratitude to God
we pray

For on this day, the Khalsa was born
Never again need a Sikh mourn

By the hands of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
Were the fruitful seeds sown for Sikhi
Through the years our Khalsa has grown
Millions of followers from one man alone

The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji,
Wanted the Sikhs to be brave and free
Into a brotherhood the Sikhs became
fearless saint soldiers living in God's name

Who can comprehend the faith in the Panj
Payare on that day?

Who sacrificed their lives in such a way
Could you and I do the same again?
To withhold our faith for such pain

The Guru gave us our unique identity
Allowing Sikhs to live with love and equality
Our holy uniform - the Panj Kakkars
To remind ourselves of who we are

Never again need we fear our opposors
For we are an army of saint soldiers
Forever onwards we shall strive
To keep our Khalsa up and alive

Vaisakhi to the Sikhs is not the day alone
But the whole event to be known
Pride and joy to be a Sikh
Brave and strong, not a coward; weak

Vaisakhi is a time to remember who we are
To keep Waheguru close to us, not far
Continue the faith of those who gave their lives
In order to allow Sikhi, our Khalsa to strive

Vaisakhi is a time of great celebration
Throughout our great casteless Sikh Nation
It is a time of joy and peace
And so the strength of the Khalsa shall never
cease

Rapinder Kaur (Watford)

Since one is not destined to remain
in this world anyway, why should
he ruin himself in pride? p473

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Historical Dates

For the month of MAY

- May 1 1635 Guru Hargobind arrived at Kiratpur.
- May 1 1837 Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa fatally wounded in Jamraud battle.
- May 3 1705 Siege of Anadpur was initiated.
- May 3 1718 Janam of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia.
- May 4 1479 PRAKASH UTSAV Guru Amardas Ji
- May 4 1686 Janam Utsav of Sahibjada Baba Ajit Singh Ji.
- May 5 1723 Janam Din, Jassa Singh Ramgharia.
- May 7 1665 Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visits Kiratpur.
- May 8 1705 Battle of Mukatsar and Martyrdom of Chaali Muktey
- May 12 1710 Battle of Chaaper Chheri in which Nawab Wazir Khan was killed.
- May 13 1665 Guru Tegh Bahadur reached Bilaspur.
- May 13 1673 Gobind Rai married Jitan at Chak Nanaki.
- May 14 1710 Banda Singh Bahadur conquered Sirhind.
- May 15 1765 Conquest of Lahore by the Khalsa Forces.
- May 16 1748 Misl Bhangian was organised.
- May 16 1848 Maharani Jind Kaur imprisoned in Fort Benaras.
- May 17 1762 Jassa Singh Ahluwalia defeats Jain Khan.
- May 18 1711 Battle of Batala between Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and followers of Saekhul Hind.
- May 20 1704 Anandpur Sahib attacked by combined forces of Hindu Rajas.
- May 23 1606 Jahangir received false reports on Guru Arjan's blessing Khusrau.
- May 23 1914 Guru Nanak Jahaz (Koma gata Maru) reached Vancouver port, Canada.
- May 24 1710 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur enters Sirhind city.
- May 25 1606 GUR GADHI Guru Har Gobind Ji
- May 25 1675 Kashmiri Panditsi, led by Kirpa Ram, arrive in Anandpur Sahib to meet Guru Tegh Bahadur
- May 26 1886 Maharaja Dalip Singh reentered Sikh faith.
- May 27 1710 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur announces the establishment of Sikh rule in Sirhind
- May 28 1948 SGPC came under the control of Congress Sikhs
- May 30 1606 Guru Arjan Dev Ji is tortured in Lahore

SIKH RESOURCES

- To order any item please send a cheque for the relevant amount payable to "Central Gurdwara London" to:
- Central Gurdwara Resource Centre,
- 62 Queensdale Road,
- London W11 4SG.
- All funds raised will go towards the newsletter and Sikh Youth activities ONLY
- Gurbani CD - Complete text of Guru Granth Sahib and English Translation CD ROM for PC or Mac- **Suggested Donation £10**
- Ithaas - multimedia CD ROM for Windows/Mac £15
- Sikh Dharma - History & Cultrue - multimedia CD ROM for Windows on Sikh Gurus and SGGS. £35
- All About Sikhism - multimedia CD ROM for Windows £45
- CRMKB Vol 1 - multimedia CD ROM for Windows/Mac £15
- CRMKB Punjabi Language windows floppy disk £5