Chapters from:
Philosophy of the Masters
(Gurmat Sidhant)
by
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

Part 2 of 4

Gurmat Sidhant is a book written by me--through my hands I would say, not by me, but by the God-Master within me. I used to write it down and take it to Master to read it to Him so that He may give the final yes.
(Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj)
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Introduction

In 1939 Sant Kirpal Singh began writing *Gurmat Sidhant - Philosophy of the Masters*, a comprehensive treatise on the science of spirituality, which on the request of Master Kirpal Singh was published under the name of His Master Hazur Maharaj Sawan Singh. The books comprise a complete encyclopedia of basic information on Sant Mat, the Teachings of the Saints.

“*Gurmat Sidhant* is a book written by me--through my hands I would say, not by me, but by the God-Master within me. I used to write it down and take it to Master to read it to Him so that He may give the final yes.”

“When I was writing that book *Gurumat Sidhant*, one writer came to visit and was sitting by me at night. I started at nine o’clock, went on writing, writing as fast as possible. He was sitting watching me. It was ten, it was eleven o’clock, it was twelve midnight, one o’clock. ‘From where are you writing?’ he said. ‘There’s nothing before you to copy.’ I told him, ‘My Master dictates to me. I’m writing so fast because I cannot keep up to Him.’ (chuckles) Whatever thoughts come up without thinking are always perfect.”

Sant Kirpal Singh – 1930’s

Book 1: http://kirpalsingh.org/Booklets/Philosophy_of_the_Masters_1.pdf
Book 2: http://kirpalsingh.org/Booklets/Philosophy_of_the_Masters_2.pdf
http://kirpalsingh.org/Booklets.html
What is God? Is there any such Being in reality? What is the power that enlivens this universe and makes it carry on according to a plan? Is that power conscious or inert? If it is really inert, how then are the sun, the moon and the stars all revolving according to law? How are we related to that power? Whence did this universe originate, when did it come into being and how did such a thing happen? Such questions always face every individual. Book after book has been written on the subject. Many a man has had his day here and has departed. Many are still pondering over these questions but they remain ever fresh.

“Centuries have passed in wrangling over the hows and whys of philosophy. But the discussion about God is still where it was in the beginning.”

The mind of man is capable of great flights of imagination but the doubts it does not shed. The subject of God is not comprehended, and man continues to wander in the dense forest of his intellect.

There are theists and atheists. According to the latter, the existence of God is a mere fabrication of the timid. It is just a device to hide their cowardice, and a prop to lean on. Because God is not visible either with telescopes or microscopes the atheists say that He can have no existence. Both the believers who believe in a God about whom they have heard or read, and the non-believers, are unhappy.

Khwaja Hafiz has gone to the extent of saying:

“Talk of Wine and the Singer, delve not into the mysteries of the world; no one has solved, nor will ever solve this riddle through reasoning.”

Talk of the Master and his Name (the Wine) alone. Do not delve into the secret of the universe, for no one has up till now solved this riddle, nor will anyone ever do so by means of intellect and reasoning alone.

All these questions are within the limits of time and space and the sphere of Maya (delusion). There is no answer to them; but in spite of all this they persist in the mind. People often say that if God-realization is so difficult, why should we strive for it. The answer to this question is that just as a hungry man cannot live without food, similarly we cannot live without the Lord. St. Augustine has said:

“Thou, Oh! God, hast made us unto Thyself, and the heart of man is ever restless until it rests in Thee.”

People remember God for a variety of reasons. Lord Krishna, in the Bhagvad Gita (the Song Celestial), has said: “Four categories of persons pray to the Lord, namely, the sufferers, the pleasure-seekers, the devotees and the wise: the sufferers for the alleviation of their suffering, the pleasure-seekers for the gratification of their pleasures, the devotees for the attainment of knowledge, and the wise for the realization of His beatitude.”
The reply of Perfect Saints to questions concerning whence this universe originated, and when and how, is that we should approach the Creator Himself for the answer. Those who have realized Him have annihilated their self. They have gone beyond the limits of time and space and the spheres of cause and effect.

“Oh mind, visit the place where you can see the Beloved; give up this world so that you may see the other world.”

Rise above your body so that you may see the Sustainer of all. Get out of this world so that you may see the world above.

“He, the Lord, is true. His creation is true. He Himself knows His design and purpose.”

(The created one cannot know the design of the Creator; Oh Nanak, that alone happens which He Wills. ” (Gauri M5, Sukhmani 285-1)

On realizing Him these questions are automatically answered.

These interesting topics can be discussed at leisure when we reach the destination. At our present stage only those questions are necessary which relate to the path leading to Him. If you wish to know here and now, enquire of those who have reached the spiritual regions where the Lord is manifest. God cannot be known by reasoning, the reading of books and philosophical discussions. Doubtless, through them we can get an idea of His Reality and the existence of His power. But in order to realize Him as a fact we will need to experiment in the laboratories of the Saints and experience Him for ourselves. Some scientists say there is no proof of His existence. They do not even feel the necessity of believing in Him.

A study of ancient history and religious Scriptures shows that the ancient people worshipped the forces of nature such as the moon, the sun and so forth in order to strengthen their belief in God. They also coined different names for Him and as a result the world has become entangled in the cobwebs of these names.

Saints and holy men do not involve us in the verbiage of these names but tell us that no name can describe Him and that there is no use in quarreling over the different names. All of them are His names. We call water ‘eau’ in French, 'hodor' in Greek, 'ma' in Arabic, 'jal' in Hindi, ‘water’ in English and so on. It makes little difference if we use any of these terms. But our thirst can only be quenched when we get the actual water itself. Guru Nanak says:

“What can poor Nanak say? All are praising the same One. Nanak lives at the feet of all. He praises all Your names.” (Rag Basant M1, 1168-14)

Guru Gobind Singh has mentioned more than a thousand names of the Lord in the Jaap Sahib. He, however, emphasizes the necessity of understanding the real significance of the names, and advises that one should go beyond them and realize the “Named One” who is the object of all of them.
As has been mentioned before, correct information about God can only be had from those who have realized Him in the transcendent regions, for their knowledge is not merely a matter of imagination nor has it been gathered from religious Scriptures or hearsay. They have seen Him with their own eyes. They have, by expanding and illuminating their consciousness, experienced Him and have made others experience Him. Even today they can make the seekers after God realize Him.

Where is God?

Ignorant persons think that God lives beyond the skies or beneath the depth of the oceans. Great souls realize Him in their hearts, and Perfect Saints see Him everywhere, both within and without. Saints and holy men say that He pervades the entire universe and that the universe is in Him.

“The world is the abode of the True One. He dwells in it.” (Asa Var M2, 463-13)

This universe is His body in which He dwells. He pervades every atom in the same way as the soul pervades every pore of the body and is enabling it to function. The body is reduced to dust when the soul leaves it. Similarly, this universe is destroyed when He withdraws His power from it. The Akash (Ether) from which this universe is made and the Prana (Life Energy) which runs it, are powers created by the Lord. He is the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of the entire universe.

God is Beyond Mind and Intellect

The infinite Universe of universes and worlds is before our eyes. But there is present behind it an indescribable power which is running the entire “show”. Even those who do not admit the reality of religion and say that man cannot know God's nature and form, do not deny the existence of this Supreme Power. The well-known philosopher, Herbert Spencer, came to the conclusion that Reality is neither known nor can it be known by anyone. He wanted to discover the Reality through intellect and reasoning. But Reality is beyond the reach of the mind and the senses. His conclusion, therefore, that the Reality is not conceivable by the mind and the senses, was inevitable. Every phenomenon of the world can be explained by reason, but in so far as access to spiritual regions is concerned, reason is useless. Spencer had, however, to admit the existence of Reality and in the January, 1884 issue of the monthly magazine “Nineteenth Century”, he wrote as follows about the ultimate cause of this Universe.

“There is an eternal and immortal power and everything has manifested from the same.”

The German philosopher Kant became impatient and gave up even thinking about the Unknowable Reality. John Stuart Mill, in “Three Essays on Religion”, says that whatever experience tells us about the First Cause and what we understand by the word ‘Cause’ is that the primal and immanent essence that pervades all causes is nothing but force. These learned men are of the view that this universe originated from an Indescribable Force and that that Force is eternal and immortal.
In the Brihadarnayak Upanishad, Rishis say: “Reality is beyond the reach of any possible description in terms of form and matter, nor can it be described in these terms. Just as it is impossible to extract oil from sand or to quench thirst with wine, similarly it is useless even to conceive that Brahm (the Lord) can be known through learning.”

In this Upanishad there is a short aphorism “Ned Neti” (Not this, not this). It is repeated four times. Its meaning is that what is described is not Brahm or the Lord. Or in other words, what is beyond name and form is Brahm. As He is without qualities and indescribable, He is not a subject for these eyes, nor can mind and speech have access to Him.

Guru Nanak also says that He is beyond the realm of thought: “He cannot be conceived however hard one may think.”

He is the Power and is All-Pervading

This primal force is eternal and immortal. What is the proof that there is only one power and that this world was not created as a result of the interaction of more than one force? It may suffice to refer to the view of John Stuart Mill that this force is really one and is homogeneous and is present in this universe in a certain quantity which neither increases nor decreases. This force is all-pervading and is running the entire great Universe of universes.

“The lovers are many but the Beloved is one. Religions and creeds are different, but all have the same object.”

In all the religious Scriptures He is not described as confined to any one race, religion or community. He is described as “the Lord of all universes.” It is stated that all things have emanated from Him. He pervades everywhere. No place or thing whether sentient or insentient is without His Light.

Our Lord or Father is one. We are all His sons. Thus we are all brothers. These eyes of flesh cannot see Him. The eyes with which He can be seen are different and to see Him they have to be opened or awakened.

“Oh Nanak, those eyes with which He can be seen are different.” (Maru Var M5, 1100-1)

Shamas-i-Tabriz, the great thirteenth century Persian Saint, says:

“You should see Him with your own eyes, you should hear His voice with your own ears. One should see the Lord with one’s inner eyes and hear Him with one’s inner ears.”

This Power is Conscious and Not Inert

This power is conscious and not inert. What is the nature of this power? Is it a blind force? Or is it related to any conscious being? If it is accepted that life originated from inert power, then it would mean that conscious power has originated from inert force. In the Encyclopedia Britannica, writing on Biology, Huxley has stated that the characteristics of a conscious being make it distinct from all other matter. According to the knowledge that we possess at present, it is not known how life originated from matter. It is stated at another place, “The answer to the query as to how life originated, is that we know nothing about it.”
According to the laws of logic the same qualities that exist in the original can be found in that which is created out of it, in the process of evolution. For example, heat applied to water produces steam. There is nothing in the steam which is not to be found already in water and heat. Therefore, if there was no consciousness present in the creative originating power, then from where has consciousness come into this universe?

It can be said that it is not necessary that the resultant should have the qualities of the original. For example, lime and turmeric are not red in color, yet if the two are mixed together, red color results. By mixing five or six ingredients we can produce a medicine. The fact is that by chemical analysis we can separate the ingredients of any particular substance, but can we in a similar manner produce consciousness from inert matter, or can we obtain matter by analyzing consciousness into its ingredients, or can the mixing of particular atoms of the body in particular proportions result in producing life? This is impossible. We should, like Huxley, admit humbly that we know nothing in this respect.

The well-known American philosopher Will Durant, in his book “The Mansions of Philosophy” states:

“In the heart of matter, giving it form and power, is something not material, possessed of its own spontaneity and life; and this subtle, hidden and yet always revealed vitality is the final essence of everything that we know.”

What is this essence? This is the omnipotence of the Lord, which is beyond the reach of mind and intellect, as has already been mentioned. The resultant can have different qualities from the ingredients, but its essential nature cannot be different from that of its cause. By mixing lime and turmeric another color can be produced, but the essence of the reality does not change.

Similarly, if there had been no consciousness in the Original Cause, then there would be no consciousness in the universe. There is another difference between the conscious and the inert. A conscious being feels its consciousness itself, while in the case of an inert being, its existence is felt by others only. It is only the conscious being who feels the existence of the inert. Consciousness is for the conscious being himself, and the existence of the inert is for others.

The qualities of the resultant are in accordance with the qualities of the cause. Consciousness can only come from consciousness. The soul is a particle of the Over-Lord (God).

“Oh Kabir, It (soul) is a particle of the Lord.” (Kabir, Rag Gond, 871-10)

The powers that exist in the soul also exist in the Lord. The soul is consciousness and the Lord is the storehouse of consciousness. The soul is capable of thinking, and the Lord is an ocean of thoughts. The soul has intelligence and knowledge, and the Lord is the embodiment of knowledge and the treasure-house of intelligence. The soul is full of love, and the Lord is the source of all love. We are made in His image. Every particle is a part of the whole, and so are we.

There is little difference between the views of the sages Ramanuja and Shankaracharya. The followers of Shankaracharya call their system Advait (monism) and the followers of Ramanuja call their system Vashisat Advait (qualified monism). Shankaracharya said, “All is consciousness. It is one (there is nothing except it).” Ramanuja also admits that there is nothing besides consciousness but says that it has two aspects, one conscious and one inert. If God were
without these two aspects, he says, then the inert and the conscious would not have manifested in
the universe. The two are one like the two joined parts of a pea.

This has been so explained in the Upanishads also. The real substance in the beginning was like
a pea, the two parts of which were joined together. When difference developed between the two
parts, the one became Purusha (conscious being) and the other, Prakriti (matter). By their
interplay the universe came into being. The real substance is consciousness. Consciousness was
generated by consciousness.

What is God and What is Our Relationship With Him?

The Lord is the great storehouse of consciousness. He is the embodiment of reason and the
treasure-house of intelligence. He is the repository of love and compassion. We are parts of
Him. He is the whole. The essence of which our souls is made, its fountain source, is called the
Lord. If we are a drop of consciousness, He is the Ocean of Consciousness. We are a ray of the
essence of consciousness and He is the sun of the essence of consciousness. Every particle is a
part of the whole. Our real substance is a part of that whole which is called the Lord.

The Scriptures also proclaim that son is the soul of father. Just as a tree produces seeds and a
seed grows into a tree, similarly all beings spring from God. All living beings are of the same
essence as the Lord. They are His children. Just as a child is a part of the flesh of the mother, it
lives in her womb and is brought up there, similarly we are born in God, are brought up in Him,
and are connected with Him in the same way as a child is with the mother. In fact he is never
separate from her.

The mother's connection with the child is natural. He may be unwise or ignorant, but the mother
takes care of him. In fact, she is obliged to do so. A mother is never neglectful of her child.
Because of her genuine love, she cannot be indifferent to him.

We have an even stronger connection with the Lord. We are particles of the Lord. The
relationship between us and the Lord is that of a part to the whole. There is no distinction
between the ocean and its waves. There is no difference between the sun and its rays. The Lord
is never unmindful of us even for a moment. He is always looking after us. We have never been
separated from Him. He is always with us and always pervades our entire being.

“You are a mighty river. I am a fish. How can I know Your limits?”  (Sri Rag M1, 25-6)

If we become childlike, the Lord Himself watches over us. But when we grow in our intellect
and begin to reason and ruminate, then we feel unhappy. If we turn to Him and hold fast to His
garment, live in the world but not let go our hold of Him, as a child does with his mother, we will
be happy. Beg of Him, eat and drink and cry out, “Oh mother! I am Yours, whether dutiful or
otherwise. I am in Your lap. Where else could I go if I left You?” This should, however, be said
with love, truth and simplicity. There should be no cleverness about it. The waywardness of
upright children is forgiven. The Lord also relishes love, simplicity and faith.

“The simple realize the Lord.”  (Kabir, Gauri, 324-15)
Continue to be children of God. Do not surrender the rights of your precious patrimony. Know the Lord as immanent and conscious. Remember Him as a living entity. Have devotion. He is both with and without qualities and is also beyond them. He who is with form is the formless One also.

“Oh Nanak, He is gross as well as subtle.” (Gauri M5, Sukh 281-18)

He appears to His devotees in various forms. Just as in the ocean icebergs are formed owing to extreme cold, similarly, owing to the intensity and magnetism of devotion the formless appears with form but with the rising of the sun of knowledge the iceberg (form) dissolves into formless water.

Some say He is formless, others say He is with form. Some regard Him as father, others as mother or friend or husband. You may remember Him in any role or relationship. There need be no dispute about it. They all mean the same thing although in different words. Create love for Him in your heart.

The prophet Moses once went into a jungle. He found there a shepherd sitting and remembering God. “Oh Lord,” he was saying, “If you had been a child I would have fed you with milk. I would have combed your hair and would have clothed you with woolen garments.” He was wholly engrossed in contemplation of the Lord in this fashion. Moses said to him, “You are an infidel.” On hearing this the shepherd was taken aback and cried bitterly. He said, “Oh Lord, I have not been courteous to you. Oh! What shall I do?” Thereafter the prophet Moses went his way. Later when he went into a trance and met the Lord he was told:

“Oh Moses! The learned ones' ways of devotion are different from those whose hearts and souls are consumed in love's fire. You have been sent to unite and not to separate. The united one you have broken away from me.” (Maulana Rumi)

Meanwhile the shepherd while still crying, also went into a trance. And lo! God appeared to him and encouragingly said to him, “I will drink your milk. I will put on your clothes and eat whatever you offer me.” Presently, Moses went to the shepherd and said to him, “Please forgive me for what I said. God is very pleased with you.” At this the shepherd replied, “Oh Moses, the One who came to you has visited me also.” Remember Him with innocent love.

God as Visualized by the Saints

Do the Saints believe in monotheism or dualism or trinity? Saints do not believe in duality or trinity. They look upon monotheism from a realistic point of view. Does the mere belief in 'One' amount to monotheism? If the matter is examined carefully then the belief in 'One' leads to a conception of trinity.

1. The thing to be conceived
2. The person who conceives; and
3. The belief.

Where there is a conception of three, monotheism cannot exist. He who tries to establish monotheism by reasoning, in fact demolishes it.
“To reason out monotheism is to kill it.” (Shamas-i-Tabriz)

If there is one and only one, there can be no dialogue by the one. A dialogue can only take place if there are two. One would then talk, taste or smell the other. If there is only one, who will hear or smell or taste or say? The Saints have, therefore, drawn attention to the One Reality.

Kabir says:

“If I say one, He is not so. If I say two, it would be blasphemy. He is what He is, says Kabir after profound thought.”

If He is said to be one, then He is not the only one; for the word 'one' cannot be used unless there are two entities. If they are said to be two, both become limited and localized. Whether we use the words Rehman (Merciful) and Shaitan (Devil), or Dayal (Merciful) and Kal (Negative Power) both are limited. This leads to variation in principle.

Mind, speech and intellect have no place here. When He was hidden in Himself He was neither one nor two. He had no form or attributes. Exactly what He was cannot be described. The hidden One can only be described when He becomes manifest. In the unmanifested state He was inconceivable, unknowable, and nameless. He was neither the Doer nor the nature, nor the Creator. There was neither Creator nor the creature, nor even the creation. This state can be realized to a certain extent in deep sleep. The Saints have made this state (nameless) as their ideal.

The Gurus have described the Supreme Lord or the nameless Being as Wad Purush (Great Lord), Soami (Lord), Khasam (Owner), Adi Niranjan (Immaculate One), and Nirankar (Formless One).

“You are all-pervading. What shall I say; hear You my Master. You are the Great All-Wise.”
(Sri Rag M5, 51-13)

“You are the Great Lord; You are Unperceivable and Invisible; in our search we find You unfathomable. You are yonder of the yond; and You alone know Yourself.”
(Kanara M4, 1296-7)

“Sing the praises of the Lord; you will have all your wishes fulfilled. Nanak remembered the Lord; He was redeemed.” (Bilawal M5, 848-15)

“He is the Lord of myriads of universes, the Sustainer of all life. He takes care of all and supports all; but the universe acknowledges not His beneficence.” (Sorath M5, 612-6)

“You are my shield, oh Lord, so I think not of any other; and I remain carefree leaning on Your Name.” (Ramkali M5, 884-4)

“Sublime and most high is the Lord's Court, unfathomable and beyond thought. Says Nanak, it is through the Lord's Name that one is blest with Glory.” (Maru M5, 1003-14)

“Oh, our infinite Lord, You who are from the beginning of the beginning, oh, our primal Lord, our Immaculate One, I reflect on how to be attuned to You, oh, embodiment of Truth.”
(Maru M1, 1023-11)

“He is beginningless and an Immaculate One: He is without any attributes. He pervades all and yet He is separate from all.” (Maru M5, 1075-13)
Tulsi Sahib also described Him as the Lord and by origin of all.

“**Oh Lord! You are the origin of all.**”

The Saints say that the Lord’s abode is very beautiful and is a resting place for the devotees. The Saints wholly and solely depend upon Him.

“*The Lord’s abode is beauteous; in it abide the devotees. They live in this hope.*” (Sri Rag M5, 80-19)

The Lord’s station is also called Hari Rai (Lord of Lords) and Maha Dayal (Most Merciful) in the Gurubani.

“*He is the sustainer of the world, most beneficent, most wise and most merciful is He.*”
(Gauri M5, Chhand 249-7)

That great Lord is invisible, infinite, imperceptible and most wonderful. He is self-existent and self-luminous.

“*You are the merciful Lord. You are not subject to death. You are indescribable. You are unknowable and wonderful.*” (Mam M1, 1038-15)

“He is invisible, infinite and unfathomable. He is beyond death and deeds. He is self-existent, unborn and without caste. He is beyond attachment or delusion.” (Sorath M1, 597-5)

The Lord is beyond time and timelessness, high and separate. All the creation is under His orders, yet He is not the doer. He is beyond form and formlessness. He is omnipresent and the sustainer of all; creator, immovable, all-powerful, imperishable, redeemer of sinners, unknowable, inaccessible, without beginning, eternal and pure consciousness. He is everlasting, invulnerable, a storehouse of knowledge and nectar, without attributes, kind to devotees, self-existent, apart from all, an ocean of sweetness and is omnipresent. He is the embodiment of Shabd, the Holy Spirit or the Sound Current, and His Name sustains all. The Name has the qualities of the named One. His abode is described by the Gurus as Nij-ghar (Own Home), Nishchal Dham (Immovable Abode), and Param Pad (Supreme Abode). He partakes both of time and timelessness and form and formlessness. Whatever is seen is His manifestation.

Guru Nanak has described Him in Jap Ji as follows:

“*The One, of form the Primal Sound (Om), of name the eternal True, of being the Creator, without fear, without enmity, Timeless existence, Unborn, Self-existent with the Grace of the Master.*”

It is impossible to describe that great Lord, who is nameless, ever-existent, the immaculate one, and without attributes. He is beyond mind and speech. He cannot be understood or known by intellect and imagination. He is experienced by the soul only when the mind and intellect are stilled. He has been described as ‘One’. This is a clue to His form. Ancient sages have described Him as OM. By contemplating upon the component letters of OM, the gods Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh (Shiva), the powers of creation, sustenance and destruction were conceived, and the foundation of the Hindu trinity was laid. The Gurus however, take the figure 1 or the word One to represent that existence which is beyond description and utterance. He who is One and who has no partner. The placing of the figure 1 before OM shows that One does not refer to the
trinity. The One is considered superior to all because when the timeless One conceived the idea of creation, there emanated from Him a sound which resembled the sound of Om. Muslim holy men describe this sound as 'Ho' and say that from it the universe was created.

It is His Dhun-atmik Naam (Unutterable or Inexpressible Word). Uniting ourselves with it is the means by which we may meet the Lord.

"Onkar is the form in which the infinite Creator Himself manifested." (Bhai Gurdas, Var 37, Pauri-2)

Bhai Gurdas again says:

"The Absolute One manifests, the Figure I is His manifestation. It makes me sit near Him." (Bhai Gurdas, Var 3, Pauri-15)

"The One grew and Onkar took form." (Bhai Gurdas, Var 6, Pauri-4)

"The One grew and Onkar took various forms." (Bhai Gurdas, Var 18 Pauri-1)

"The self-born is One; there was motion in Him, and it produced Onkar." (Bhai Gurdas, Var 22, Pauri-1)

"That One is inconceivable. Know Him to be the Reality." (Bhai Gurdas, Var 22, Pauri-14)

All this creation has come out of Ekankar (One). He who understands the secret of “I” thereby becomes the Creator and the Lord.

"Know the secret of the One. Become the Creator and the Lord." (Ramkali M1, 930-18)

The secret of “I” is revealed in those pure hearts whose bodies become motionless, whose minds and senses are stilled, and whose attention (Surat) and sight (Nirat) become one-pointed. In other words, when the mind and intellect become calm, salvation is the result.

"He who serves the One becomes emancipated. His comings and goings cease." (Ramkali M1, 930-12)

"The Gurmukh attains the One. But such a one is rarely found." (Ramkali M1, 930-15)

"He who knows the One to be One, He knows all, both here and hereafter." (Gauri M4, 281-11)

Sat Naam (True Name of God) is that truth which does not perish in the three periods of time (past, present and future). It is always true and does not change. It is the Personal Name of the Lord.

The fifth Guru in the line of Guru Nanak has said:

"The tongue utters Your definitive Name. Sat Naam is Your age-old Original Name." (Maru M5, 1083-12)

All other names are definitive ones which describe some quality or virtue, as for example He is called the Creator because He creates, or the Merciful Lord because He showers mercy.
To understand Sat, commonly translated as Truth, is very difficult. It is different from truth and untruth. Truth and untruth are a pair of opposites and receive light from each other. The Gurus, however, speak of that Sat which is self-luminous and self-sufficient. Both truth and untruth do not exist there. It is that Sat which sustains both the truth and the untruth. The Guru Granth Sahib has clearly stated:

“True, True, True is He, nay, not one is separate from True Purush.” (Gauri M5, 250-17)

This Sat is experienced when the mind and senses are stilled and he who gets this experience knows the Creator.

“To him who knows Him all is Truth. Oh Nanak, He alone is True.” (Gauri M5, 285-8)

“He who believes in God as Truth in his heart, knows the essence of the Creator, the Cause of causes.” (Gauri M5, 285-9)

According to the dictionary the word Naam (Name) comes from a Sanskrit root meaning ‘known, deterministic and definitive.’ The word by which we call a person or thing in order to distinguish him or it from others is called its name. But in Guru Granth Sahib by Naam (Name) means that all-pervading power which governs all universes and regions, which is the fountainhead of all knowledge and contemplation, and which sustains all. Guru Arjan sings praises of this Naam as follows:

“Naam sustains all knowledge and contemplation. Naam sustains all skies and underworlds. Naam pervades all the worlds.” (Gauri M5, 284-12)

The Lord manifests Himself as Naam. Sat is a wave of that eternal existence. The soul gets connected with it and enjoys its bliss. The Lord is one; but when it reveals itself, it is realized as Sat Naam (True Name). The soul experiences it by uniting with its definite and indivisible existence. This is neither a matter of talk nor of mere imagination. Saints and seers experience it and they admit that they do so. There is no room for doubt in the matter.

The Supreme Lord (Karta Purush) is the Creator of the universes. In the external world, one makes an article from some material, but He requires no help or aid from any quarter for creating the universe. He is the Supreme Being of all and is capable of doing everything. He creates all out of His own Being. Therefore, He is the real Creator.

Some believe that this universe came into being of itself. But others believe in God, soul and matter as three primary entities which are interdependent. They may be eternal within their respective spheres. The Saints, however, say that all have been created by the One and that He is the Cause and Creator of all. In the external world, a potter is dependent upon clay for making his pottery wares. But the One does not have to depend on anything in order to be a Creator. All are created by Him. He Himself is the Creator. He creates the universe by His Will. He is all-powerful and can do everything. In the mundane world the three powers, Brahma (Creator), Vishnu (Sustainer), and Mahesh (Shiva) (Destroyer) rely on His Will for their working. Therefore, it is necessary to give up the created and serve the Creator. He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of all.

“You know not that One. You mistake the created for the Creator.” (Bhai Gurdas, Var 15, Pauri-7)
Fearless (Nirbhai) – That One is without fear because He is the most powerful being and creator of all. Everything else has been created by Him. They are not His equals and so He has no fear. No god or goddess or incarnation can be His equal.

“Oh Nanak, He is fearless and absolute. He created all other beings.” (Asa Var M1, 464-16)

“By contemplating on Him, the devotees also become fearless. Give up fear and live fearlessly, merge in Him who created you.” (Gauri M5, 285-10)

Without enmity (Nirvair): He could have feelings of enmity only if He had others like Him. But when He Himself is the warp and woof of the universe, then against whom can He feel enmity? Those who praise that One become devoid of enmity and hatred. Their hearts become calm. If anyone entertains feelings of enmity towards them, the waves of his hatred striking against their pure hearts return to the sender making him even more miserable.

He is always without enmity. However sinful you may be, give up pride and do not be afraid of taking shelter with Him. Do not consider Him a dreadful being. He is the embodiment of love. He is free from all defects.

Timeless Being: He is deathless. He is beyond the reach of time and death. Time has three components: past present and future. The entire universe is confined within these limits. All take birth, grow and die within them. That One is, however, beyond the sphere of time. He is immortal, unborn and eternal, for He is without beginning or end. When the "past" and "future" do not exist in Him, how can He have any "present"? He is always the same. He is beyond time, space and matter. All are subject to Kal, the Negative Power, but He is Akal, timeless.

“You are the destroyer of Kal. You are the destroyer of Maha Kal. You are the deathless One.” (Patshahi 10)

Such a description might lead one to doubt the existence of such a Being. The Gurus say He is a Muni or Being or Existence. He gives light to all and can be called 'Wajud' in Persian or 'Being' in English.

Unborn – Ajuni: When we give Him a form, we get an idea of His being subject to birth and death. In order to remove this doubt, He is described by the Gurus as Unborn Ajuni. He is never conceived in a womb. He who is free from conception and birth is also free from death. By worshipping the birthless, one can also attain the state of birthlessness.

Self-existent – Sebham: He is self-existent. He is self-manifested and does not have to depend for His existence on anyone. He is without a cause. All receive light from Him, but He is self-conscious and self-effulgent.

Grace of Master – Guru Parsadi: The word Guru comes from the root Gri which means Shabd (Sound). He who gives the Shabd is the Master. Parsadi means that which is obtained through Grace. Gur Parsadi means that the above mentioned aspect of the Lord can only be experienced through the Grace of the Master. The Grace of the Master is the means of obtaining it.

One can gain union with the Omnipotent Lord by repetition of Holy Names, by faith, by service, by Satsang, and it can be obtained by the practice of Shabd the Holy Spirit, Word or Sound Current, as enjoined by the Master.
This union is obtained by a very fortunate devotee only and that too only if it is ordained. The Lord can be realized only by controlling the mind. Mere performance of good deeds, austerities, pilgrimages and holy baths leads nowhere.

Supreme bliss can be had by contemplating on the Lord or by remembering Him. Egotism is annihilated and the accumulated sins of past births are wiped out. One acquires miraculous powers and receives honor in the Court of the Lord. All his wishes are fulfilled. Fear of death is banished and salvation is gained. Inner Light, tranquility and the blossoming of the lotus of the heart are experienced. Merging the spark in the Flame, man transcends the cycle of birth and death and no longer returns to the world of phenomena.

The Lord of Lords (Hari Rai)

The Gurus have mentioned Hari Rai a number of times. Hari here does not mean any God or incarnation. Hari refers to the Supreme Lord and Nameless Being. Just as it has been mentioned in connection with 'Ekankar' (the One), the Lord (Hari) is One. Similarly, it is true that there is no difference between Hari Rai, Soami and Anami Purush (the Nameless Highest Deity). One should praise Ekankar the One and take shelter with Hari Rai (the Lord of Lords).

“Praise the One, the One Lord; contemplate on Him. Praise the virtues of Gobind and Gopal; take shelter with Hari Rai.” (Gauri M5, 296-12)

He is a vast reservoir of Nectar, inaccessible, infinite, redeemer of sinners, refuge of devotees, compassionate, and knower of all hearts. He is the emancipator of the Saints, and his abode is the highest abode or the original abode. He has myriads of names, but His value cannot be assessed on the basis of these names. These names are not adequate to describe Him.

“The Names of the Lord are infinite; He is unknowable. But the wise considered His virtues; they could not evaluate Him.” (Kalyan M4, 1319-3)

He is, therefore, also called the Nameless Being. Maulana Rumi has said:

“I begin with the name of Him who has no name. Call Him by any name and He will respond.”

(Maulana Rumi)

His law is written large everywhere. No one can defy it. He is watching over all. He can be realized only by a rare fortunate soul. Only a true devotee, but not an egoist, can meet Him.

Hari Rai can be realized through the Grace of the Master, by rendering service to Him, and keeping His company. On realizing Har Rai, one gets inner Light. One's wishes are fulfilled. One obtains bliss and is freed forever from the cycle of birth and death.

The Immaculate One (Adi Niranjan)

The Gurus use at places the words Adi Niranjan to describe the Lord. Adi Niranjan is the Lord, the Supreme Master, ageless and boundless.

“He is from the very beginning, He has existed through the ages, He has no limits; He is immaculate. Such is our Lord.” (Maru M1, 1023-11)
He is formless. The entire universe was created by His Will. He pervades all. He has no caste or color.

“He is beginningless and immaculate; He is without any attributes. He pervades all and yet He is separate from all.” (Maru M5, 1075-13)

At the abode of Adi Niranjan there is neither sun nor moon. Nor can we call it darkness nor light. He is engrossed in His own bliss.

“There is no sun or moon; Adi Niranjan rests in bliss.” (Kabir, Bhairo, 1162-14)

He is pure and has no partner. To meet Him one has to make the Lord dwell in one’s heart. Then alone will the love for Lord be awakened.

Those who have received school and college education know that this earth, with the moon and the planets, is revolving round the sun. The sun, like other solar systems, is revolving round another luminous entity, far brighter than itself. Similarly, this three-tiered universe, with its Lord, is revolving around that Sat Purush (True Being) and that Niranjan (the Immaculate One) in its turn is going round its source, the Adi Niranjan. The Adi Niranjan (the Eternal Immaculate One) is beyond time and timelessness, form and formlessness. Adi Niranjan and Hari Rai are the names of the same Supreme Lord.

**Ekankar – The One**

Adi Niranjan (the Immaculate One) is actionless. He is separate from all. Whenever He wishes to create, He does so through His representative, Ekankar, (The One) or Sat Purush, (True Being). The Lord as the One is manifesting in manifold ways.

“The Master, our Creator, pervades the earth, the waters and the inter space; though manifests He in myriads of ways!” (Gauri M5, 296-12)

Bhai Gurdas says that the Absolute, who is Adi Niranjan (the Immaculate One) or the Lord, assumed the form of Ekankar (the One) and created all the innumerable universes by His Will.

“The Formless One took the form of that One. He took the form of Onkar and created all.” (Bhai Gurdas, Var 39, Pauri-2)

“This deathless death too is the creation of the Lord, to annihilate the world of form.” (Kabir, Maru, 1104-7)

There are two forces at work in nature. One is Kal (Time or the Negative Power), or Maha Kal (the great Negative Power). And the other is Akal (Timeless). Both were created by the Lord to unfold and develop the creation. The Lord or the Absolute manifested as Sat Purush (True Being) or Akal Purush (Timeless One) and unfolded the universe. The region of Ekankar is beyond the reach of dissolution and grand dissolution. The Saints aim at attaining this region-of-no-return. The Tenth Guru in the line of Guru Nanak says:

“You are the destroyer of Kal and Maha Kal. You are the deathless one.”
Those who have access to Sat Purush or Ekankar are called Saints. Guru Nanak and His successors have called them Satgurus or True Spiritual Teachers.

“Those who realize the True One are called Satgurus.” (Gauri M5, 286-12)

When the soul merges in that One or realizes Him, it becomes fit to reach the Lord's abode. Ekankar or Sat Purush gives the soul His own essence and enables it to see the Lord's abode.

“The Immaculate One is pure; there is no one like Him. When that One dwells in the heart, egoism and pride vanish.” (Maru M1, 1034-2)

There are millions of Brahm-Loks, or higher regions that work under the governance of Brahms who represent the Ekankar and carry out His Orders and revolve around Him, being taken care of and sustained by Him. Saints obey the True Being. The Brahms have no control over the Saints. Saints by initiating persons into the mystery of the Name of God, take them direct to Sat Purush. Ekankar is different from the Onkar of the Vedas. Onkar is the ruler of the three worlds, and his domains extend up to and include Trikuti, the second spiritual region. Ekankar is Akal Purush or Sat Purush (the True God). He is beyond Kal, the Negative Power. Kal merely supports this creation; but Ekankar is all pervading and is the ruler of all the five regions.

Ekankar can be realized through a True Master by remaining in His company. Attaining Him, doubts, perversions, delusions and egotism are destroyed. The mind comes under control and one swims across the ocean of phenomena.

The Lord God (Ram Rai, Sat Purush)

Ram Rai, Akal Purush (Timeless Lord), Sat Naam (True Name) and Sat Purush (True God) are names of the same Being. The Gurus give Sat Purush the name of Ekankar also. Ram Rai pervades all hearts. He is the reflection and image of the Lord. It is only through Him that the Nameless Lord can be attained. In the beginning the Lord was unmanifest. He then became manifest.

Sat means unchangeable permanence. The being that does not exist is hidden. To become manifested is to exist. That invisible, unknowable and unmanifested Being assumed form. That Being came to be known as Sat Purush, Akal Purush or Ekankar. The Lord, after assuming this form, unfolds His creation in various ways and sustains it. The word Ram has been used at several places in the Adi Granth. It does not point to any incarnation. It means Sat Purush (True Being) or Nirankar (the Absolute). Kabir Sahib has explicitly dwelt upon it as follows:

“There are four Rams in this world. Three of them pertain to the world; the fourth Ram is the Real One. Dwell upon Him. One Ram lived in the house of Dashrath, one Ram dwells in every heart. One Ram is the creator of this universe. One Ram is distinct from the three attributes.” (Kabir)

The first Ram, known as Ram Chandra, was the son of King Dashratha. The second Ram is the mind, which abides in every heart. The third Ram is Kal, the Negative Power, who has created the three worlds or the three attributes. The fourth Ram is different from these and is free from the three attributes. Everyone contemplates on the three worlds, but never does anyone discover the secret of the fourth one.

“All contemplate on the three worlds. They do not know the secret of the fourth one.” (Kabir)
All the world is engrossed in love for the three attributes. But without Sat Naam one remains in delusion. Without Sat Naam how can one ever cross the ocean of existence!

“In the worship of the three attributes is the entire world deluded. Says Kabir, how can anyone get across the ocean of this world without True Name?” (Kabir)

This Ram is in reality the same as Sat Naam or Sat Purush. This is the fifth region which is hinted at and which is the goal of the disciple.

Kal or Dharam Rai (Lord of Judgment) is acting under the orders of Akal Purush, Ram Rai or Sat Purush. The Saints, who are incarnations of Sat Purush, are also working in this world. Their duty is to take souls back to the lap of Sat Purush in the highest heavens.

Ram Rai is invisible. He is attained through Satsang, Satguru and attunement with the Divine Music. Everlasting bliss is obtained by union with Him. It is difficult to attain this state without prior knowledge of Brahm. He is met when one has attained the state of tranquility. By acquiring this one gets rid of all troubles. The angel of death dares not come near and one becomes fearless. Ram Rai pervades every heart and is a reflection of the Lord.

The Immaculate One (Niranjan)

The word Niranjan is made up of the two words Nir (without) plus Anjan (Maya). It means a being who is free from Maya (Illusion). The extent of Maya is very wide. In the gross regions it is called Maya. In the subtle or causal regions it is known as Prakriti (Matter). It predominates in all regions below Sach Khand, which is the highest region. Niranjan is a being who is beyond the limits of Maya. Dissolutions and grand dissolutions cannot reach Him. There are several references to Niranjan in the Adi Granth. In some places it is used as a substitute for Hari and Nirankar. It is pointed out in the Scriptures that when nothing existed the Immaculate Absolute (Niranjan Nirankar) was there. He had no form or color.

“What was He doing when all this was not? The formless Immaculate One was all in all.” (M5 Gauri 216-2)

“You are the self-existent, formless Immaculate Lord. They who contemplate upon You are truly rid of all their sufferings.” (M4 Gauri Var 301-8)

“The Lord is all by Himself. He is the Immaculate Being. The Lord unites us with Himself. Everything that He wills comes to pass.” (M4 Vadhans 573-10)

1. He is ever the same and has been so from the beginning of time. He is fearless and Supreme.

“He does not increase or decrease. He is the timeless Immaculate One.” (Kabir, Gauri 343-10)

“Oh Nanak, he who knows the secret knows Him to be the Primal Being, the Immaculate One.” (M3 Bhairo 1129-4)

“Seldom it is that one hungers for the Immaculate One. Oh Nanak, rarely does one get this food.” (M3 Ram Kali Var 949-3)
2. Niranjan has been described as invisible, unfathomable, inaccessible and limitless. He is also called Hari (God) and Sat Purush (True Being or Lord).

"He abides both here and hereafter. How can we find Him? He is the invisible, immaculate Lord. Of Himself He unites us with Himself." (M3 Gauri 162-19)

"The Name is immaculate, invisible, unknowable, the Master made us realize it." (M 3 Vadhans 585-9)

"Serve the Eternal, Immaculate Lord. He is the Creator." (M1 Majh Var 138-8)

"Oh my beloved! All contemplate on You. You are the Eternally True and Immaculate Being." (M4 Kanara 1313-12)

3. Niranjan and Ekankar are the same.

"You are the inner-knower, the blesser of all life; on seeing You one is intoxicated with bliss. You are the Supreme Being, Immaculate and Fearless, and pervade both the land and the sea."
(M5 Ram Kali 916-4)

In describing the abode of Niranjan, mention is made of Param Hansas (very high and pure souls) and unlimited Light. Kankan (the One) dwells there. Innumerable pure souls are there who have pure bodies and who live on the food of the Lord's Name.

"The Lord's Immaculate Name is the pure food which the devotees, swan-like, taste, and see the infinite light of Truth, and wherever they see, they see the One, the Absolute Lord." (M1 Gauri 227-15)

"They accept sufferings as nectar, and do not suffer again." (M1 Mam 1034-16)

4. The word Niranjan is used for the Being who rules the subtle regions.

"He knows the ruler of the black lotus to be Niranjan; with the Grace of the Lord he realizes the Shabd." (M1 Maru 1040-7)

5. The Name of the Lord (Niranjan) pervades all. It is reverberating in every heart in the form of Shabd Dhun (the Divine Melody of Sound).

"The Melody of the Divine Balancing Power comes to us through the True Shabd. The mind is attuned to the Truth. The devotee then enshrines in his mind the unfathomable invisible Name of God." (M3 Sarang 1234-7)

Niranjan is the essence of the Lord's Name and is the Nectar of Celestial Bliss. Niranjan is Shabd in form. The Name and the Named are one. In other words the Name of Niranjan has the same attributes as Niranjan Himself. The Gurus mention both interchangeably. He is the source of the five Shabds or Celestial Sounds. Only the devotees and Saints can realize Him. He is beyond Brahm and it is only through His Grace that one can give devotion to Him.

Niranjan is realized by devotees through the Grace of the Guru and His company. When one goes beyond delusion, attachment and egotism, when one dies while living, when one goes into Sunn (the perfect void) or Samadhi (spiritual ecstasy) one experiences Him. By merging in the Anhad Shabd (Unending Music) one realizes the Lord.
“One is rid of fear and merges in Bliss. One is purged of ego and imbued with the Eternal Lord. One knows the reality of Maya and the Immaculate One, the King of all.” (M1 Maru 1040-4)

Through the Grace of the Master, a disciple, while still surrounded by Maya, realizes the Immaculate One and his Light merges in the Eternal Flame.

“*Environed by Maya, he attains the Immaculate One and merges his Light in the Flame.*”
(M3 Majh 112-11)

By attaining to Niranjan, the mind is controlled. The fear of death is banished and Light (soul) merges in the Flame (the Lord). True knowledge and the highest spiritual stage are gained. The Third Eye is awakened and one is enabled to return to his Original Home. Besides, several other advantages also accrue to the disciple. It is only through the Immaculate One that one can realize the Supreme Lord or the nameless Being. The true devotee is one who has realized Niranjan.

The Omnipresent

The Lord is the Creator of the entire universe. He does not have to depend on anyone for this purpose. He has created everything by His own Will. Thus have innumerable universes come into being.

“Through one Word did He create the entire universe, and myriads of rivers (of life), came into being.” (Jap Ji, 3-17)

He projected everything by His own Will and He Himself pervades the entire creation. He is manifest in all things.

“You created the universe through Your Will, and creating it you pervade it. You work through all, and thus manifest Your immanence.” (Maru M5, 1095-6)

He is the doer, responsible both for the creation of the universe and the process of creating it. He is Himself the creation. There is nothing else beside Him. He is both the cause and the effect.

“Without the Lord there is naught else. He is both the Creator and the Cause.” (Gauri M5, 189-8)

All this creation is the unfolding of the One only. There is no one except Him. He is Himself the warp and the woof.

“Oh Master of all life, You motivate all. Nanak sees You pervading everything where can he see another.” (Gauri M5, 292-17)

“All is the Lord, without Him is naught else. As upon one thread are strung hundreds of pearls, so is the Lord woven into the warp of the world.” (Namdev, Asa 485-3)

Where is the Lord? After creating the world, He is not apart from it. He is the Supreme Being. He dwells in the creation and pervades it. He is immortal and omnipresent. There is no need to seek Him in wildernesses. The need is to awaken the inner eye that can see Him.
“Why do you wander, oh brother? He is omnipresent and is pervading everywhere.”
(Dev M5, Gandhari 535-6)

Without actual personal experience it is difficult to understand this fact. We can, of course, make out something by using some illustrations. He is for example, pervading and resounding everywhere like the waves of a powerful radio station. Those whose minds have become subtle and who have attuned themselves to Him, hear Him and see His glory. As fire exists in wood and butter in milk, so does the Lord pervade everywhere.

“As fire is locked in the wood, and butter in milk, so does the Lord pervade all creatures and His Light illumines high and low.” (Sorath M5, 617-3)

Butter is in milk but we cannot see it. We even doubt this fact and argue that puris (unleavened cake) can be fried in butter but not in milk and halwa (pudding) can be prepared from butter and not from milk. But if someone prepares in our presence curd from milk and then churns it and takes out butter, we are convinced that milk, in fact, contains butter. Similarly, the Lord pervades everything, high or low and Saints through spiritual practices actually show Him to us.

“The Lord's Naam is pearls, rubies and diamonds. The Master shows us that it is such a great treasure.” (Ramkali M4, 880-16)

He is all-pervading, as is the ether. Just as there is ether both inside and outside a pitcher and the ether is not affected by the breaking of the pitcher, similarly the Lord pervades everywhere and is not affected by Dissolution.

“In thousands of pitchers is confined the same ether. The ether is not affected when a pitcher breaks.” (Suhit M5, 736-12)

We can understand the omnipresence and all-pervading quality of the Lord to some extent by using the example of the sun. When the sun rises, its rays radiate in all directions and light the entire world, but the bats cannot see it. Similarly, the Lord pervades every particle and every heart, but owing to our outward or centrifugal tendencies we cannot see Him.

“As the rays of the sun light every corner, so does God permeate every being.” (Basant M4, 1177-14)

He pervades all the heavens and helps both the nether-lands and upper realms.

“The One Lord pervades everywhere, He is in heavens, hells, nether-worlds and upper realms.” (Gauri M5, 207-6)

The Lord permeates all the fourteen regions and the four corners. He fills all the worlds, He dwells in all the ten directions. His glory is manifest on the earth and the skies. Sea, land, forests, mountains and nether-lands are all His dwelling places. The Lord dwells not only in the gross regions, but in the subtle ones also.

“He is in the fourteen worlds and the four corners; His perfect glory shines in all lands. He fills all the ten directions; He is seen on the earth as well as in the skies. The Merciful Lord dwells everywhere, in the sea, land, the mountains and the underworlds. He is in the gross as well as in the subtle. Oh Nanak, a true devotee sees Him everywhere.” (Gauri M5, 299-16)
The tenth Guru in the line of Guru Nanak says that His light pervades both the earth and the skies. He is always the same. He does not increase or decrease. He suffers no rise or fall. He does not have the changeable nature of human beings. He is eternal. He dwells in all, and all exist in Him. His effulgence cannot be measured. It is also mentioned in the Bible that we all live, move, walk and exist in Him.

“There is one Light that shines in the universe, which undergoes no increase or decrease, nor has any ebb or flow, which has no rise or fall, which remains the same forever. Such an effulgence illumines the dweller and the dwelling.” (Akal Ustat)

He is the True Lord. He is Supreme. In forests, seas, lands, nay in everything, is reflected the glory of the Compassionate One. His radiance fills the entire world. Heaven and earth remember His Name.

“The Merciful One pervades all, forests, mountains, seas and lands. He shines in His glory. His Name resounds everywhere.” (Akal Ustat)

The tenth Sikh Guru has sung the praises of the all-pervading Lord in a brilliant way:

“God is in the water, God is on the land. God is in the heart, God is in the forest. God is in the mountain, God is in the cave. God is on the earth, God is in the heavens. God is here, God is there. God is in space, God is in time. God is invisible, God is without creed. God is without sin, God is without enmity. God is deathless, God is shelterless. God is impenetrable, God is indissoluble. God is not moved by charms or spells. God has His own Light, He cannot be moved by incantations. God is without caste, God is without lineage. God is without friends, God has no mother. God feels no physical or mental suffering. God is without doubt, God is without Karmas. God is invincible, God is fearless. God is unbreakable, God is indissoluble. God cannot be punished, God is radiant. God is transcendent, God is inscrutable. God is unconquerable, God is imperishable.

“Repeat God’s Name; establish God’s Name in your heart; do penance to God and repeat His Name. Oh God, You are in the water, You are on the land. You are in the river, You are in the sea. You are in the tree, You are in its leaves. You are in the earth, You are in the firmament. Your Name is repeated again and again. Your Name is fixed in man’s heart. You are space, You are time. You are the occupant, You are the dwelling. You are unborn, You are fearless. You are impalpable, You are indestructible. You are continence, You are fast. You are deliverer, You are adviser. You alone are, You alone are.” (Tav Prasad-Laghu, Naraj Chhand)

It is also stated in the Psalms that there is no place without Him.

“Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me.” (Psalms 139-7 to 10)

Guru Arjan says that the Lord is always with us. Where can we run away from Him? We can get release only when He forgives us and then alone can we gain salvation.

“Oh my mind, the Lord is always with you. Oh! How can you escape His presence? The Lord Himself forgives. He Himself redeems all.” (Gauri M5, 170-4)
No place is without Him. He is with us both within and without. He is the beginning, the middle and the end.

“*The all-pervading Lord is everywhere. Without Him there is naught. He is with us, both inside and outside oh Nanak, why say that He is far away?*” (Gauri M5, 259-17)

“*On seeing Him one gets peace. There is no one as great as He. He is the beginning, the middle and the end. He pervades the land, the sea and the outer space.*” (Suhir M5, 784-15)

He is not far from us. He abides in the inner recesses of our heart. He is not separate from us. Wherever one looks, one feels His presence.

“*Do not consider the True One to be afar off; He is within us. Wherever I look I find Him. How can I evaluate Him?*” (Asa M1, 421-6)

It is said in the Yajur Ved:

“*He is omnipresent. He is the warp and the woof of the entire universe.*” (Yajur Ved, 32-8)

That One working through Maya assumes wonderful forms. From One He becomes many and unfolds the universe. He pervades the seas and the lands.

“*The Lord and Creator pervades all, earth, sea and outer space. Oh Nanak, He is Ekankar – the One, that One is manifest in all.*” (Gauri M5, 296-11)

It is said in the Atharva Ved:

“*The Light is one, but it shines in diverse ways.*” (Atharva Ved, 13-3-17)

It is also mentioned in the Yajur Ved:

“*The Lord is omnipresent. He is present inside all.*” (Yajur Ved, 23-4)

He is manifest in many forms. He pervades all, whether formless or with form; whether with qualities or without qualities; and whether manifest or unmanifest. All originate from Him and are His different forms.

“*He is the Absolute as well as the relative One. He has bewitched all by His power.*” (Gauri M5, 287-17)

“*He is the relative One. He is the Absolute and Formless, He is the void and the trance. Oh Nanak, He creates all. He meditates on Himself.*” (Gauri M5, 290-16)

All the creation can be divided into four categories:
1. The Egg-Born – Andaj
2. The Womb-Born, from a foetus – Jeraj
3. The Moisture-Born, or sweat-born – Setaj
4. The Seed-Born, or earth-born – Utbhuj
He pervades all these beings as well as the sea and land. Wherever you look, He is to be found there.

“He created the egg-born and the fetus-born. He created also the sweat-born and the earth-born. I see His glory in all. He pervades all.” (Sorath M1, 596-16)

“You pervade all beings, be they in sea, land or outer space. Oh Nanak! The Master sends His Grace, and one gets the bliss of the Lord.” (Bhairon M1, 1127-17)

“Oh Lord! You are the omnipresent Light in the universe.” (Yajur Ved 5-35)

“This universe is the dwelling place of the Lord.” (Yajur Ved 40-1)

He pervades all and is yet detached. He is free from all bondage.

“The Master has removed all doubts. Oh Nanak, sing the praises of the Lord. He is the fountainhead of all virtues. He is omnipresent but detached. He pervades all.” (Sorath M5, 617-5)

Those deluded by attachment and Maya think Him to be far away, but He is ever-present. He is with us, both inside and outside. He is so near us that there is nothing nearer than Him. He pervades every heart.

“Be not deluded by attachments. Do not consider Him to be afar. Oh Nanak! Why say He is far away?” (Gauri M5, 210-12)

“The all-pervading Lord is everywhere. Without Him there is naught. He is with us, both inside and outside. Oh Nanak! Why say that He is far away?” (Gauri M5, 259-17)

“He fills the sea, the land and outer space. He pervades all hearts.” (Suhi M5, 778-13)

“Glory to the Immaculate One. He is both within and without. He abides in all hearts. He pervades all as Truth.” (Bhiron M1, 1127-1)

He pervades all beings and regions. He pervades in all directions; both above and below, and He is in every particle of everything.

“Just as oil is in the sesame, butter in curd, water in cascade and fire in wood, similarly does the Lord pervade everybody but can be perceived by the soul only by the practice of truth and austerities.” (Swetashvatar Upanishad, 1-15)

He Himself is present in the devotee (bhakt) and in the Lord (Bhagwan), in the disciple and in the servant and in the master, in the king and in the subjects. He sustains them all. All the forces of nature emanate from Him and are sustained by Him.

“He is the devotee, He is the Master; He pervades both of them. Oh Nanak! He pervades all, He is seen everywhere.” (Gujri M5, 498-9)

“The Lord is One, but He manifests in different forms. He pervades every heart. Oh Ravi Das, He is near. He can be realized if He wills it.” (Ravi Das, Sorath, 658-2)
He pervades all and is ever with us. But because we are always engrossed in objects of the world, we cannot see Him. The sun is not to be blamed if the bats cannot see it. The sun is shining equally for all. The Lord is all-pervading. Then why do we not see Him? The reason for this is that the eyes that can see Him are as yet unawakened. Those eyes which can see Him everywhere are different from the physical eyes.

“Oh Nanak! Those eyes that can see Him are different.” (Maru Var M5, 1100-1)

We can see subtle things only when we ourselves become subtle. The Lord is extremely subtle. Unless we become as subtle as He is, we do not get connected with the Lord. It is a basic principle that the instrument with which we see must be appropriate to the thing to be seen. Our eyes cannot see light that is extremely bright or extremely dim. Similarly, we cannot hear a sound which is either above or below the range of our hearing. Therefore, we have to use various scientific instruments with the help of which we can hear them. Thus, with the help of the instruments we magnify these subtle sounds so that we can hear them. We can see far-off things through a telescope and minute things through a microscope. But this applies only to gross things. To see astral things however it is necessary that our inner eyes become subtle. The Lord is the subtest of the subtle. To realize Him we have to be equally subtle.

“He who is so high knows that Great One.” (Jap Ji, 5-10)

The Lord pervades everywhere both inside and outside, but so long as we do not become subtle within and one-pointed and our Inner Eye does not also become equally subtle, we can never see Him. This subtlety can only be gained by inner exercises or by what is described as 'going within' by the Saints as they alone can teach us the correct technique. Some say that the Lord resides in the South, others say that His Abode is in the West; but actually He is everywhere and we should search for Him within ourselves.

“Hindus see the Lord in the South; the Muslims see Him in the West. Search for Him in your heart; your heart is His Abode.” (Kabir, Prabhati, 1349-12)

All the universe is His form. The disciple, by carrying out spiritual practices as enjoined by the Master, realizes Him in himself.

“The world you see is His manifestation. It is the Lord Himself that you see.” (Ramkali M3, 922-4)

He pervades everything in the form of the Guru – Shabd (Word).

“The Lord pervades all beings, He is the inner-knower of all hearts. He who contemplates on Him, through the Guru's Word, sees the Lord pervade all beings.” (Suhi M4, 775-9)

How can one know Him, the One Being who pervades all? The Adi Granth says that only he on whom He showers His Grace to make Himself known alone becomes fit to see Him. It is through the Master that the Inner Eyes that can see the bewitching Lord everywhere are developed and all doubts are banished.

“The Master has shown the Lord. The Lord is captivating. He is present everywhere. He is present in all hearts.” (Asa M5, 407-2)

“The Lord is in every heart, when one meets a Master, He manifests Himself.” (Basant M4, 1177-16)
"The Master has removed all doubts. Oh Nanak, sing the praises of the Lord. He is the fountain-head of all virtues. He is omnipresent but detached. He pervades all." (Sorath M4, 617-5)

All are illumined by His Light. All shine because of His refulgence. One begins to see the Light by following the directions of the Master.

"All are illumined by His Light. All shine because of His refulgence. The Guru's teachings show the Light. Whatever pleases Him is true worship." (Dhanasri M1, 663-9)

This state, however, is attained only by a few devotees, namely those who are very dear to the Master.

"Gross and subtle, both are God. Oh Nanak! Only a devotee knows the Lord." (Gauri M5, 299-18)

What is true knowledge? It is to see the imperishable One pervading all. In the Bhagwat Gita, Lord Krishna says:

"That knowledge with which one sees the one indestructible Reality in all beings, the unseparated in the separate, know thou that knowledge as Sattvic (pure)." (Bhagwat Gita 18:20)

The Saints, on seeing Him pervading everywhere, are overjoyed.

"The One Lord pervades all. Nanak sees Him and is overjoyed." (Kanara M5, 1299-16)

On seeing Him pervading all, no one is our foe, nor are we the foe of anyone. This knowledge, however, can be had only from the Guru. We make friends with all and all become our friends. Hatred is then banished from the heart. In this way, we unite with the Lord.

"No one is my foe and I am no one's enemy. The Lord pervades inside; the Master made me realize this. All are our friends and we are friends to them. The feeling of separateness has vanished, and I am united with my King." (Dhanasari M5, 671-7)

Guru Arjan says that when one thinks ill of another he is surrounded by evil. But when one gives up the feeling of mine and thine, no enemy remains. When we begin to differentiate, we suffer, but when we know the one Lord who pervades all, we know the Reality of all things.

"When one looks on another as evil, he is encircled by evil on all sides. When he gives up mine and thine, he has no foe left." (Gauri M5, 235-12)

"When he considers himself separate from others, he suffers, woe, misery and privations. But if he considers all to be one, he becomes all-wise." (Gauri M5, 235-16)

We should not have feelings of enmity for anyone. We should not upbraid anyone because the Lord pervades all hearts, the sea and the land.

"Have feelings of enmity for no one, for the Lord pervades all hearts. That one is present in both the sea and the land. He who sings the praises of the Master is however very rare." (Gauri M5, 259-18)

"Who is bad, who is good? The Lord is in all. This is the Truth that the Master reveals." (Asa M1, 353-10)
He who has found the Lord in every heart has fulfilled his life's mission.

“*His coming to this world is blessed; He knows the Lord is in all hearts.*” (Gauri M5, 198-1)

The Carefree One

The Lord is very deep and unfathomable. Everything is His manifestation. Out of Him, Agam Purush, The Inconceivable Lord, Alakh Purush, The Indescribable Lord and Sat Purush, The True Lord, who are the rulers of the imperceptible, the invisible and the true regions respectively, came into existence.

“He, the Lord, is very deep and unfathomable, oh Nanak! There is no one to equal the carefree Lord.” (Gauri M5, 252-11)

All the divine forces are sustained by Him. These are called Beings. The Lord (Hari) is known as the Great Being, Param Purush. Amongst these Beings is Par Brahm who creates worlds (Brahmands) and bodies (Pind), sustains them and destroys them. Millions of worlds are sustained by Him. Each world is being supervised by a Brahm, god. He is the Lord of millions of Brahmands (universes), and is the supporter of all.

“He is the Lord of myriads of universes, the sustainer of all beings. He cares for all. The ignorant and unwise however do not know this.” (Sorath M5, 612-6)

The Supreme Lord has two aspects. One is Kal, the Negative Power, the creator of the universe and the other, Akal, the Immortal One or Dayal, the Merciful One, who is free from the cares and the worries of the lower worlds. These Beings have been described before. The Lord creates the universe according to His Will. He sustains and pervades it. All this is from Him and is His manifestation.

“The world is the abode of the True One; He dwells in it.” (Asa Var M1, 463-13)

“He manifested Himself in myriads of waves; no one can know His sport.” (Gauri M5, 275-8)

He is governing and administering the affairs of the pure spiritual regions as well as of the universes and the lower worlds, according to His Will. Is this work, the vastness of which it is impossible to conceive and which bewilders us, any burden to Him? Is He busy thinking about it all the time? No! While doing all this He remains fresh as a blossom and in spite of its onerous nature He remains detached. He is unconcerned, independent and unmoved. After creating the universe and taking care of it, He still remains free and ever happy. He has no cares and worries of any sort. He is perpetually in bloom. Guru Nanak says:

“The ruler rules in an orderly manner. Oh Nanak! He blooms as unconcernedly as does a flower.” (Jap Ji, 2-3)

He is carefree and imperceptible:

“He is carefree and imperceptible; contemplate on Him all the twenty-four hours.” (Ramkali M5, 896-5)

He is the unfathomable Lord and is all-pervading.
“There is one seal of authority and one King. The carefree One is everywhere. His writ runs in all the three worlds. He is the unknowable and unfathomable Lord.” (Basant M1, 1188-17)

He is Truth. He is the redeemer of all our sins and shortcomings.

“My beloved is carefree and true. He purges us of our sins and faults.” (Majh M3, 112-14)

He is all-powerful. He does what He wishes to. He does not have to depend on anyone. He lacks nothing. He need not consult anyone.

“Whatsoever the Lord does, He does it Himself. He has not to ask anybody; He consults no one.” (Bhairon M4, 1135-7)

His orders are absolute. No wisdom or cleverness can stand against Him. Everybody has to give up his self and bow to His Will.

“His Will is absolute. No wisdom or argument can stand against it. One should abandon selfhood and take shelter with Him, and accept His Will.” (Sarang M4, 1251-1)

If He so wishes, He turns the prince into a pauper and the pauper into a prince. Those who realize Him are accepted unreservedly at His Door.

“The great ones He humbles. The humble ones He makes kings. Those who realize Him are accepted by Him.” (Prabhati M1, 1329-19)

“He humbles the great and raises the humble in an instant. None can fathom the glory of the Lord.” (Bilawal M5, 813-10)

As to the indifference of the Lord, Kabir Sahib has the following to say:

“He transforms seas into land, land into sea, and sea into mountain.”

He raises the humble to the skies and hurls the vain to the ground. He makes the beggar a king and the king a beggar. He does what He likes. There is no way to refuse to accept His Will.

“He turns sea into land. He turns hills into valleys. He turns valleys into mountains. From earth He raises some to the skies. Others He hurls from the skies to the earth. He makes the beggar a king. He makes the king a beggar. He makes the fool a wise man. He makes the wise man a fool. Of woman a man is born. Through men women come into being. Says Kabir, I am a sacrifice to the vision of the Beloved of Saints.” (Kabir, Saran 1252-4)

The Lord is carefree. He is happy to see His Creation. To whomsoever He wills He shows the path. If He does not will it, He does not do so.

“Watching all He is pleased. To whom He wills He shows the way. He leads some on this Path. Others He leads astray.” (Bihagara M4, 550-13)

If He is bounteous and so wills it, He transforms a heron into a swan. This is nothing extraordinary for Him.
“A heron turns into a swan, if Your Bounty so wills. Nanak is the slave of Your slaves; have compassion on him.” (Basant M1, 1171-6)

“Whether you are a swan or a heron, you are saved only by His Grace. Oh Nanak, if He so wills He turns a crow into a swan.” (Sri Rag M4, 91-4)

He is carefree. Only by taking refuge at His Door and asking for His Grace alone one can attain salvation.

“Ask not for an account of my deeds; I err every moment. Forgive me my sins. Across the ocean show me the way.” (Gauri M5, 261-1)

Our repetitions and austerities have no merit. It is only through His Grace that one is saved in the end. There is no end to our sins. All our actions lead to bondage. If the Lord in His mercy takes us out of the ocean of misdeeds, then alone we, the sinking stones, can swim across.

“As the sea is brimful with water; so are my sins without count. Have pity on me and in Your Grace, let this sinking stone swim across.” (Gauri M1, 156-14)

The attainment of the carefree Lord and the release of the Soul depend solely upon His Grace. Those whom he favors, follow Gurmat (teachings of the Saints) and realize the Reality.

“Detached and unfathomable is He. He can be known by the Master's Grace alone.” (Sri Rag M1, 20-13)

When one meets a Master, then through His Grace, love for the Carefree Lord springs up in the heart.

“Carefree is He. Know Him by the Master's Grace.” (Gauri M5, 187-18)

Union with Him can be had only by uttering the Unutterable Word.

“Praised be the unutterable Lord, He is the carefree True One. He unites us with the Shabd, and we then enjoy its taste.” (Maru M1, 1057-4)

It is however, a rare devotee who attains this state in his life and thus he experiences everlasting bliss.

“He is in the body, whether you find Him or not. The devotee searches for Him within, and by meeting Him he gains everlasting peace, and unites with Him.” (Maru M3, 1066-13)

The Master is indistinguishable from the Lord. He also is carefree. Praise Him with every breath. All fear is banished by taking refuge in Him.

“Praise Him with every breath. The Master is the carefree Lord. Take refuge with Him and banish fear. The slanderers are all killed. They fall to the ground far and near.” (Gond M4, 869-15)

The Lord and the Master are one. He who knows this becomes carefree himself. He becomes a true king and fearless.

“He who knows is carefree. He who knows is truly great. He who knows has no fear. He needs no other effort.” (M 5 Maru 1074-9)
Contemplation  
(Dhyan)  
Chapter 2

Dhyan is a Sanskrit word derived from the root ‘Dhaye’ which means to contemplate some form, to remember it, to repeat it, to think about it, and to collect the soul currents at their headquarters. Dhyan connotes both seeing and thinking. To fix the attention at any point is also called Dhyan. This leads to seeing spiritual scenes, Light and Radiance. If these phenomena do not appear, you may take it that Dhyan has not been successful.

Many people claim that they contemplate upon the all-pervading Lord. Omnipresence is a quality of the sky (ether). Its contemplation is that of ether. So long as the inner vision is not awakened, the spiritual scenes are not beheld.

A man cannot live without carrying on some form of contemplation. Whatever vocation one is engaged in, he thinks about it before retiring at night, and forms mental pictures of it. Simran and Dhyan are interdependent. We think of the world and contemplate on its forms, with the result that we come again and again into this world.

The question arises as to what one should think about so that he need not return to this mundane sphere. Kabir Sahib advises: “Undertake such contemplation as will end transmigration.” What is such a Dhyan?

The Sikhs Scriptures state that Dhyan signifies knowing and listening to the Divine Melody. Guru’s Shabd (Word) is also known as Dhyan. This Shabd is the Unstruck Music that created the universe. Dhyan is the second step of the spiritual ladder and is born of Simran.

So long as a person has not seen God how can he contemplate upon His form? God is Shabd. He is love. It is a language of silence. He alone attains Him who loves Him. In the first instance, it is essential that we should contact a Master who is Shabd and love incarnate; who has merged himself in the Lord; who is no longer a drop but has become the ocean. Soul is in the Lord, and the Lord is in the soul. Therefore, so long as we do not see the Lord, we should contemplate upon the form of a God-Man.

Whenever we close our eyes, we behold scenes of the world such as family and children, hearth and home, wealth and possessions; we constantly dwell upon the world and its objects with the result that every cell of our mind is immersed in it. It is for this reason that we are firmly tied to the world. We do not know how to contemplate upon the form of the Lord. The one we have to contemplate upon is beyond the three worlds. So long as we do not meet Him, on whom shall we contemplate?

Let us examine the objects of this world to discover what is worthy of our contemplation. The entire world is comprised of the five elements, viz., Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. Accordingly, everything in this world is divided into five parts.

1. Those beings that have all the five elements active in them. In this category are all human beings.
2. Those that have four elements, namely, earth, water, fire and air, active in them. This category relates to quadrupeds.

3. Those that have only three elements, namely, water, fire and air active in them. This is the category of birds.

4. Those that have two elements, namely fire and air active in them. This category includes reptiles, lizards and the like.

5. Those that have only one element – water – predominant in them. These are members of the vegetable kingdom.

If a human being, in whom all the five elements are active, were to contemplate on the forms in whom one, two, three, or four elements are present, he would go down to their level, for whatever one contemplates that he becomes. Is it therefore desirable that a man should contemplate on the form of a man? If so, why? We shall explain it by means of an example: A room contains a number of radio sets. Only those sets that are connected with batteries or an electric current receive the news. Those that are disconnected do not do so. Similarly, only such persons as have opened their inner vision and are in communion with the Lord are the ones worthy of our worship and contemplation.

Therefore, Sikh and other Scriptures emphasize the need of contemplation upon the form of a Master who is one with the Lord. Such a course is conducive to valuable benefits.

God is manifest in the Master because the Master is God in human form. Therefore, the contemplation of the Master is really that of the Lord, and His worship is true service to the Lord.

The highest form of contemplation is that of God, or connecting our consciousness with Shabd, which is God-in Action, and listening to it is contemplation of the person in whom God is manifest. The contemplation of God is impossible, for we have not seen Him. Therefore, we should first contemplate on the form of the Master, because we can see Him and by contemplating upon Him, we are enabled to contact Naam.

The contemplation of the form of the Master may be likened to seeing a glowing bulb, the first perception of which is that of light, seeing which we are oblivious of the glass that holds it.

In the initial stages of Simran, the contemplation of the physical form of the Master is necessary. After that, the disciple contemplates on the Radiant Form of the Master, which remains with him in the spiritual planes. This form subsequently merges in Shabd, its real form.

Theosophists say: “The Master souls have their radiance spread out to extensive spiritual planes.” With the manifestation of the Radiant Form, the disciple’s devotion is half complete. When the Refulgent Form appears within, the disciple should fix his attention in it, so much so that he completely merges himself in this form and can no longer distinguish between himself and the Master.

“I have become You, and You me. I have become a body and You have become my soul, my very life, so much so that none can say we have a separate entity.” (Shamas-i-Tabrez)
According to Scriptures dealing with the soul, when the course of contemplation is complete, the disciple, the discipline, and the Deity all merge into one. The worshipped and the worshipper become one, as the caterpillar becomes a butterfly and loses its own identity. Such a state (Fana-fil-Sheikh) is known as merging in the Master.

But the Master has already merged in the Lord (Fana-Fillah), with the result that the disciple also merges into Him. Whatever you dwell upon, that you become.

A peasant called on a certain Saint and the Saint asked him, “Whom do you love?” He answered that he loved his buffalo. Whatever you love, reflection on it stills the mind. Before long his thoughts began to concentrate and, because of dwelling upon the buffalo, he mentally assumed its form. Thereupon the Saint opened the door of the room and asked the peasant to come out through it. The peasant replied. “How can I come out through this small opening? My horns are too wide to pass through it.” Such is the power of contemplation!

In the Gita, Lord Krishna says: “The way I am remembered, in the same way I remember. Whoever reflects upon and worships a form with faith, he assumes that form.” Again, “Those who yearn for Me, they come and merge in Me.”

In the Kathupanishad, the body of man has been likened to a chariot, of which the senses are the horses. Like unbroken horses they are always running after sense pleasures. The mind is the bridle, and safety lies in pulling and in keeping it under control, which is, however not so easy. The Gita says that the remedy lies in making the mind contemplate upon the form of the Master. “Devote thyself whole-heartedly to Me and take refuge in Me. Collecting the mind in this way, stop its going out and wanderings.”

Just as we cannot scale the wall of a fort without the help of a ladder; even so, we cannot reach the Lord without contemplation of the Master. It is concentration that takes us from the physical to the astral, from the astral to the causal, and beyond the causal to the Lord.

The Radiant Form of the Master manifests only in pure and sincere hearts. In an impure heart, it simply cannot reside. Hafiz says:

“The pure form of the Beloved can be seen only by pure eyes. Behold Him with pure and keen eyes – as a Muslim scans the sky on the Id-eve. It is not every eye that can behold the Radiant Form of a True Master. It is the privilege of a rare and fortunate few.”

The Upanishads as well as the Bhagavad Gita say: “Purity of mind and its cleanliness are regarded as essential prerequisites for contemplation and meditation.”

The purity must be both inner and outer. The outer comes first, and later, with practice, comes the inner. Those who are vile and whose mind is restless can never succeed in contemplation, and will suffer pain and privation. So long as contemplation on the form of the Master is not achieved, the soul currents cannot collect within.

The contemplative faculty of the soul is called ‘Nirat’; that is, the seeing faculty of the soul. The soul has two faculties. One is ‘Surat’, which means the hearing faculty, and the other is ’Nirat’, which means the seeing faculty. So long as the seeing faculty is not developed, mere listening to the Shabd does not bestow the fullest possible benefit. By fixing the attention within, one is able to behold many spiritual regions. So long as the seeing faculty does not develop, the hearing
faculty of the soul does not ascend to higher planes. By developing the seeing power of the soul we achieve Dhyan. And it is this alone that leads us to true knowledge.

The power of contemplation is innate and natural. Even the turtles and the swans are known to possess great powers of contemplation. It is said that through contemplation they hatch their distantly laid eggs. Among Hindus, gazing on the rising sun is regarded as a means to contemplation. Some people dwell upon the pictures of ancient Saints. This is contemplation of material and lifeless objects. In Dhyan, one may see pictures with frames, but these cannot lead one upward. Both pictures and idols are lifeless. They cannot draw one upward. Therefore a picture cannot pull us up. He alone can draw us to the spiritual regions who frequents them himself. Contemplation on the form of ancient Saints can do us little good. Most of the pictures of such Saints are not true to life and are mere figments of imagination. Worship of the lifeless is prohibited in the Holy Scriptures.

The pictures of Saints help to keep alive their memory, but they are unable to give us what a living Master can. Tulsi Sahib goes so far as to say: “Even if you should make a picture of the wishing-tree and pray to it a thousand times, you would gain nothing.” He further says: “If in place of a money-lender, you place his picture in his shop, it can never perform his tasks.”

The New York American newspaper dated 30th March, 1933, reports a newly-invented instrument which can determine from a photograph whether the person had died since the portrait was taken. The paper adds, “It detects the movement of ‘life waves’ or ‘Z waves’ on a photographic plate, and the stillness of these waves after the death of the subject was reported today by E. S. Shrapness-Smith, an authority on chemistry.” He said, “Life, like a radio-station, emits a distinct type of wave. These human waves are transmitted and fixed in a photographic plate. While the subject of the photograph is alive, the movement of the waves is lively. The moment the person dies, no matter how far distant from the photograph, the life waves cease to emanate from the plate. I am unable to reveal at present just what the instrument consists of, but it is based and depends on: radiation; magnetism; static electricity; and current electricity. There is nothing psychic or mysterious about it. It is the result of a new application of the laws of science.”

This proves that the pictures or photographs of Saints who are not alive today will not help us. Another factor is that most of the pictures of Saints who have long since departed are not exact replicas but are mostly the result of the imagination of the artists who produced them. Besides, the worship of a lifeless thing is prohibited. The pictures or photographs of a Saint certainly remind us of our Master, but they can give us nothing more. It is only the living Master who can bestow His Grace on us.

Among Muslim Saints many methods are used to develop the seeing faculty of the soul (Nirat). They are called ‘Nazri’ or ‘Basri’, namely, relating to eyesight. They term this ‘shughal’ or practice. The well-known among them are:

1. Shughal-i-Aftabi – In this the attention is fixed on the rising sun, and it is best done during winter. One gains miraculous powers. Amongst the Hindus, this practice is known as Tratak Dhyan.

2. Shughal-i-Mansur – In this a person lies flat on his back on the ground, with his face turned up. He relaxes his entire body and fixes his attention within at the eye center. The yogis call it Shavasan.
3. Shughal-i-Barzakh-i-Akbar – In this, while controlling the breath, the attention is fixed at the Third Eye. Many Muslim Saints practice this method, which was also a favorite with Prophet Mohammed. This is equivalent to contemplation on Trikuti – the second stage in spiritual transport – and is done while sitting in the Padam Asan.

4. Shughal-i-Barzakh-i-Kabir – In this, the seeing power of the soul is fixed within and without on the form of a Master. As a result of the practice, one is able to achieve certain supernatural powers and also unravel hidden secrets.

5. Shughal-i-Isme-Zat – In this, the disciple fixes his attention on the Light within and is thus able to merge within himself.

6. Shughal-i-Iena – In this, a mirror is placed in front of the practitioner. He fixes his attention on the pupils of his own eyes as reflected in the mirror. By gazing steadfastly, the pupils of his eyes turn inwards and he gains access to Nukta-i-Saveda or the Third Eye.

7. Shughal-i-Nim-Khwabi – In this, one has to keep his eyes constantly open to avoid sleep. The result is that even in sleep a person remains half awake.

8. Shughal-i-Basait – In this, the seeing power of the soul (Nirat) has to be collected at the eye focus.

9. Shughal-i-Mukaman Mahmudan or Shughal-i-Sultanan-Nasira – In this, the eyes are fixed on the tip of the nose, and the attention is then gradually taken to the root of the nose. Ultimately the attention goes within and gains entrance into the spiritual regions. The Yogis call it Chachari Mudra.

The way to perform these practices can only be learned from a Master. If one practices them by oneself, they are dangerous. Of all the practices, Shughal-i-Barzakh-i-Kabir, in which the Master’s form is contemplated both within and without, is the best. The Master’s form takes the practitioner to inner realms and remains forever with him. The other practices take one up only to the astral region or the causal region, but not beyond them.

In Dhyan-Yog three kinds of contemplation are enumerated:
1. Asthool (material)
2. Sukshm (subtle or astral)
3. Noori (luminous or radiant)

To gaze at the picture of a Master is the asthool or material practice. When the soul currents collect behind the eyes at a point between the two eyebrows and see there the light of a lamp, and the seeing power of the soul gets focused on the lamp, the practice is known as Sukshm or the subtle method of contemplation. When the attention is fixed on the Kundalini and it is awakened, the soul currents, leaving the body, collect at the eye focus and the soul, ascending above, rises into the refulgent regions. These constitute the Noori or the Luminous Dhyan. By practicing this one is able to behold his astral body.

All these qualities and benefits accrue through contemplating on the form of a living Master, in body and flesh. The Master lives in the physical world through his physical form. Through the astral form he gains access to the astral regions, and through the causal form he moves in the
luminous or causal region. This refulgence is the manifestation of Truth. By contemplating upon it, one attains the highest spiritual development.

Kabir says:

“With every breath contemplate upon the form of your Beloved. The gift of the human form is unique. Do not tarry in carrying out this practice.”

Khusro, a devoted disciple of his Master said:

“Oh you renowned artist of China, look at my Beloved! Either paint an exact replica of His beauty or give up your art.”

Just as a small child looks at an object with a fixed gaze without blinking its eyes, so should you accustom yourself to gazing intently at the beautiful face of your Master. Then see how your doubts vanish and how you attract Reality. By practicing this method daily the disciple grows fearless. Were such a person to look at a snake or a lion, the latter would not attack him. The Third Eye of a man wields immense power. It is the gateway to all the higher spiritual realms. It is through Satsang that this practice can be developed. It is the first step in our travels through the spiritual regions.

In order to obtain spiritual wealth, we have to go to a living Master and contemplate upon His form. In the Sikh Scriptures, it is a living Master and His contemplation that alone are considered really and fully beneficial. The spiritual currents that emanate from Him are surcharged with mind and soul force. Therefore, His company and contemplation enable us to benefit from the waves of spiritual consciousness that radiate from Him. It is for this reason that every Saint has contemplated upon the form of His Master, and that the Saints will continue to do so.

The contemplation of the Master bestows many advantages. Through reflection, the disciple imbibes all the inner qualities and virtues of the Master. The mind of the Master is motionless. By contemplating upon Him, the mind of the disciple also becomes still.

Patanjali says in the Yoga Sutras:

“Contemplation of persons who are free of worldly desires bestows stability of mind.”

Then, too, remembrance of the Lord dwells in the heart of the Master. He even beholds the refulgence of the Lord. By Simran and Dhyan the disciple begins to remember the Lord automatically and becomes worthy of witnessing the inner scenes. The lovers of the Master’s form get tied to the Master. They become oblivious of the body and also of the world.

The Master is free from birth and death. Gurmukhs are the devotees of such a Master. One whose attention is fixed on the form of the Master, one who loves naught save the Master – who can ever make such a person return to the world?

On one occasion Maulana Rumi fell ill on account of separation from his Master. Sadruddin, another Saint, came to enquire about his health. He prayed: “May god restore you to health.”
At this Maulana Rumi replied: “May health be welcome to you. Between the lover and the beloved, only a thin veil (of this body) remains. Do you not wish that this veil should vanish and the Light should merge in the Refulgent Source?” He further said: “You do not know the king, who is sitting within me. Do not look at my outer face hidden behind hoops of steel.”

When Khusro became completely dyed in the hue of his Master, people commenced to taunt him as an idol-worshipper. He said: “People are ignorant of the Reality. They say that Khusro is an idol-worshipper. Let them say so, for I have no concern with the world and its people.”

When we see the Radiant Form of the Master within, the soul is able by concentration to maintain a stable position, and begins to listen to the inner music. In this way the Naam current flows and the devotee remains immersed in its enjoyment. The mind then takes to Naam with fervor.

The more you contemplate, the more you will hear the Sound Current and greater the pull it will exercise on the soul. The Sound Current draws the soul to higher regions, and through contemplation enables it to stay there. Dhyan carries the soul to spiritual regions within. In this way the soul ascends to these regions, but it is the privilege of a rare Gurmukh (true devotee of a Perfect Master). This contemplation is in the inner sky and in consequence the soul, getting rid of sense pleasures, fears and all other fetters, gains access to its real Home.

Simran bestows concentration. Concentration leads to the Radiant Form of the Master. Contemplation enables the soul to stay there, and the Divine Melody is heard.

In this connection Hafiz says: “When I had a glimpse of the handsome and charming face of my Master within, I bowed low and prayed, God be blest that tonight I have been so fortunate.”

It is a well-known fact that love beautifies everything it touches. Laila was of dark complexion, but in the love-intoxicated eyes of Manju she was far beyond compare. If you wish to see Laila, see her with the eyes of Manju.

It is true that love makes a beloved charming. But the Master’s form is inherently very beautiful. To add full loveliness to it, He does not have to depend upon the imperfect love of human beings, nor does He stand in need of any artificial aids such as colors and perfumes.

The Radiant Form of the Master resides within every true disciple. When the soul withdraws from without and goes within, crossing the stars, the sun and the moon, it beholds His Refulgent Form. It is this radiance that bestows light to both the sun and the moon. Whoever goes within sees His Wondrous Form.

We are wonder-struck to hear descriptions of the beautiful physical form of the Master, but if we manifest Him within, we will find Him a thousand-fold more beautiful. By addressing the Lord, Hafiz says:

“Oh Beloved, I have heard many a tale about your wondrous beauty; but now that I have beheld you within, I see that you are really a thousand times more wonderful than the tales depict you.”
Shut your eyes and you will find nothing but darkness within. This darkness is even more pronounced than a completely moonless night. When the soul, withdrawing from without goes in, there come into view the stars, the sun and the moon. Beyond them appears the Radiant Form of the Master. The Master does not come secretly, but flashes of light emanate from His Radiant Form in such a manner that the soul is irresistibly attracted towards it. In reality, this scene beggars description.

Hafiz has attempted to portray this inner vision, but how can one describe what is indescribable? He says:

“The whole night His refulgence filled my heart with Light. What a bold thief He is to come in the darkness, but with what an aura of radiance He comes!”

Contemplation of the Master’s Form is wondrously rewarding. Those who think of the Master’s Form gain honor and glory both here and beyond. All their desires are fulfilled. By merging in the Master they attain God-Realization.

**Contemplation and Religion**

In contemplation are contained all the formalities of religion. Religion is a unique thing which is helpful in both the worlds. Without adopting it, man cannot be happy. Where religion is held as naught, spirituality fails to grow. Religion is the true fountain-head of life in this world and the next. Without religion one cannot travel a step on the Path of Spirituality (Parmarth). The Scriptures lay emphasis on first strengthening the foundation of religion and thereafter devoting oneself to Naam or Shabd; for without the former, the latter is devoid of benefits. Religion keeps everything in its proper place, in balance and in unison. It opens the inner vision, with the result that one learns the correct value of things. Thus, truth appears as truth, and untruth as untruth. All prophets and Saints have stressed the need for religion. Lord Krishna mentions in the Gita:

“Whenever evil predominates over virtue and religion is on the decline, I incarnate in every age to protect the righteous, to destroy the wicked, and to re-establish religion.”

Similarly says Guru Gobind Singh: “Akal (the Timeless) has sent me into this world to lead the people on to the right path and to wean them away from evil.” The word ‘dhamam’ (religion) is derived from the root ‘Dhri’ which means to imbibe, to be supported by. It is a power which, affording support to the entire universe, keeps it stable. Some say that the world rests on the horns of a bullock. Others, that it is balanced on the forehead of ‘Shesh Nag’, the mythical snake. Guru Nanak in the Jap Ji settles the issue by saying: “The world is sustained by religion.”

What kind of Dharam sustains the world? One that is born of mercy, and one that keeps the entire universe in a state of equilibrium and free from chaos by means of the tender cord of contentment.

The people who believe in God have their religion in Naam, which sustains everything. As conscious co-workers of Naam, they follow its principles and surrender to His Will. They become attached to religion. They live by religion. They are religion incarnate.
According to the Vishnu Puran, religion has four main tenets:

1. Sat, which means unchangable permanence.
2. Yag, which literally means sacrifice, but esoterically refers to the practice of charity.
3. Puja, which means worship, good conduct, cleanliness.
4. Simran, or the repetition of the Holy Names.

Ravi Das and Bhai Gurdas also say the same thing. Bhai Mani Singh, however, has described the four tenets of religion as follows:

1. Naam, Shabd, or Sound Current.
2. Charity, which comprises mercy and sacrifice, to think of the good of others, to forgive, to consider everything as belonging to God, and to give it away to God’s children.
3. Snan, which means a bath. Esoterically, it comprises worship, good conduct and cleanliness; to withdraw the mind from wrong ways such as falsehood, violence and cheating; and to withdraw the intellect from evil thoughts and collect it at the Third Eye.
4. Gyan or knowledge, which is the achievement of Truth.

Guru Ram Das says: “On contemplation being successfully completed, all the four essentials of religion easily become part of the disciple.”

**Fruits of Contemplation**

Tulsi Sahib, the Saint of Hathras, says:

“It is immaterial whether or not a person has been born into this world if he does not contemplate upon the form of his Master.”

Without beholding the Resplendent Form of the Master within one can never purify the mind. So long as the Radiant Form does not manifest, we remain ignorant of Gurmat and consequently of the higher planes of true spirituality.

Hafiz says:

“Such inner contemplation is a gift from the Master. But it is obtained only when the Lord wills it. The outer learning and contemplation do not lead to God-Realization with the consequence that the soul continues to be tied to this world.”

The Sikh Scriptures detail a number of the advantages that accrue from contemplation upon the form of the Master who is God Incarnate. By such contemplation one is freed from the shackles of this world. Then sin, misery and fear vanish, and one imbibes purity. The angels of death have nothing to do with such a one, for he attains equanimity and bliss, and gains his real Home. He is given honor and glory in the Court of the Lord. The Light merges in its Source. As a consequence, he has everlasting happiness, true knowledge and Naam. All desires are fulfilled. All impurities are removed. The soul transcends the world of phenomena and wins name and fame both in this world and the next.
Detachment
Chapter 3

Discrimination is a prerequisite on the path of spirituality. It distinguishes between truth and untruth. One must understand the distinction between truth and untruth, between the permanent and the impermanent. It is a quality by which one can realize the nature of a thing correctly. It produces detachment.

Absence of attachment is detachment. Attachment is another name for longing or desire for material objects or persons. One becomes detached when he is able to take his attention away from these objects. A person with discrimination knows that this world is impermanent; it is all illusion and subject to dissolution. When detachment is achieved all these worldly objects and relations lose their importance, and all the ties of attachment are automatically loosened.

Detachment may also be described as non-attachment or disinterest in worldly objects. It is the name of the state of the mind in which love for anything in this world or the next vanishes. When the mind is diverted from worldly objects and relations and is attracted towards a higher aim, that is also detachment; in other words, the mind is removed from the worldly longings and is restless in the feeling of separation from the Lord. The awakening of such love is also called detachment.

“*My mind is diverted (from the world) and I have a desire to have the Darshan of my God. My mind is acutely restless for this.*” (Adi Granth)

He alone is detached who has risen above attachment and is moving towards meeting the Lord by withdrawing completely from all worldly attractions. The Sikh Scriptures call God a Detached Being because He was never attached to anything, and because such a Being is free from all desire and is never a victim of attachments.

A person appears in this world and then vanishes from sight like a bubble. What happens prior to his birth and after his departure? The desire to know the secrets of this mystery of life arises in the mind of a seeker. In that state, his mind is naturally detached from worldly illusions and he tries to engage himself in a search for a much higher Being. Kabir says:

“*By thinking how this being came and where it will go, I became detached.*”

One who is deeply plunged into the world and its attachments can have no detachment. Neither can he achieve the true Detached Being as long as he is involved in the perplexities of life. When one is in doubt one cannot achieve anything in this world, nor can one meet God. A person should either remain in the world and be firmly attached to his religious beliefs, or he should detach his mind from everything. If he once becomes detached and then again gets involved in the entanglements of the world, he is a most unfortunate person.

There is no advantage in becoming superficially detached by imitating others. Remaining away from Naam and reading Scriptures, going on pilgrimages, or retiring into jungles do not enable one to be attached to real love.
“Pundits have been searching for Him in Scriptures. Others become detached and still have desires for bathing in holy waters and going on pilgrimages. Such detached persons even move from one jungle to another in search of Him. Only a rare one from among them is really attached to Him.” (Adi Granth)

The Sanskrit word for spirituality means “Supreme Achievement.” One should therefore discriminate between Supreme Achievement and an ordinary benefit. He should follow the path by which he may get the true, pure and highest benefit. He should eliminate everything that is not necessary and should assimilate the Truth.

Man is a soul in human form and his connection with the world is through his body. The human body has been given to enable one to perform certain functions in this world.

The soul, being a particle of God, naturally feels happy when it has knowledge of God. But unfortunately man has followed an entirely different path. Saint Augustine says:

“It is the great evil of man to desire to enjoy the things which he ought only to lose, and to lose those which he ought to enjoy.”

In fact, everything pertaining to this world should be discarded, and everything pertaining to spirituality should be imbibed. That is real detachment. In order to meet God, one should detach oneself carefully and with discrimination. Then alone will he receive the real benefit; that is, he will be able to rise above the cycle of birth and death.

“If one acquires detachment of the mind through careful discrimination, he is free from the cycle of birth and death.” (Adi Granth)

In order to be truly detached, it is necessary to be detached from everything in this world. And to do this it is not necessary to leave one’s home, society or other connections. Saints do not advocate that type of detachment. The real detachment is to detach one’s soul and mind from the love of the world and its objects.

The outward detachment of persons, who are detached from the worldly objects indiscriminately and leave them outwardly only, can never bring peace. For then, attachment is still felt in the mind, and that cannot be the foundation of the true inner detachment. Such persons again fall victim to the worldly longings. One should, therefore, live in the world in name only – for mere subsistence – and should fix his soul in Naam, in the Master and in God who are all permanent. (Naam, Master and God are, in fact, one and the same).

Detachment and Renunciation

Detachment and renunciation are entirely distinct and independent of each other. One who is on the path of spirituality need not practice renunciation, but spirituality is not possible without detachment. Renunciation is connected with one’s own fate karmas. Raja Janak, Guru Gobin Singh Sahib and many other highly evolved souls are examples of perfect detachment without renunciation. It is written in the Mahabharata that one who has renounced everything and retired into jungles is liable to the effects of his environment.
When one meets a Perfect Master, then alone will he be able to understand fully the implication and the meaning of true detachment. Then he need not try to run away from the world and leave his household in order to lead a life of detachment.

“Oh my mind! If you meet a True Master you need not run out to achieve detachment, because He is the bestower of all gifts and is the treasure of all comforts, and is the Foundation of Elixir, running at all times to take devotees into life everlasting.” (Adi Granth)

In the company of a Master, the soul of a disciple imbibes the qualities of God and all other tastes in the world become insipid. The devotee is engaged in worldly pursuits, but within himself he is above their ties because of detachment. He lives in the world but he is not a man of the world. He realizes that God is the highest goal, and he forgets his world in remembrance of Him. So even while living in the world, he cannot forget Him.

The truly detached person knows that one day his own body, his house, his palace and all his worldly property – all attachment – have to be left behind, and nobody knows when this will happen. Therefore, he lives in this world in name only and gives more attention to the purification of his soul, for he does not wish to barter his soul for the sake of this world.

“For what is the man profited, if he shell gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (St. Matthew 16:26, St. Mark 8:36)

Kabir says: “You have lost your soul in order to love the world, but this world will not accompany you! You have therefore cut your own feet with an axe, like a thoughtless man.” (Adi Granth)

A Master fully imparts the true method of spiritual practice and also teaches the disciple how to live in this world without attachment. Thus the devotee earns his own living and carries on his household life within proper discipline and under set principles. The devotee also listens to the Sound Current and becomes worthy of attaining salvation.

“One is able to get the secret of Naam from no one but a True Master, and thereafter all his desires vanish, his mind remains fixed in God and he becomes detached from life (in this world). Oh Nanak! When we meet a True Master all our desires are fulfilled, because we gain salvation even while experiencing the comforts of life.” (Adi Granth)

What would happen if one were to leave his hearth and home? The mind would create new ties in a jungle, not only with the surroundings but also with abstract desires. If one cannot be detached there, where else can it be possible? Actually, detachment is not the renunciation of the objects of the world, but is the renouncing of the strong desires by which one is attached to this world.

Even if a man should leave his house, his wife, his children, etc., the evil desires already fixed in his mind would not leave him. The mind will create conditions to ensnare him in worldly ties. As a householder, he had the ties of his house, his wife and his children; and, in the jungle, the different sects, disciples, masters and other social and institutional connections will take hold of him. In his home he was busy as a householder, but in the jungle he has the additional headache of living on alms. The whole trouble is with the mind. When it is pure and controlled, then only one really becomes detached.
Who is a Detached Person?

When thoughts about the mysteries of life have a strong hold on the mind of some people, they leave this worldly life, renounce their household and become detached. Guru Nanak says:

“Thousands of people renounce the world physically and claim to be detached, but true detachment is that which pleases the Lord. One who is really detached is one who listens to the Shabd (Sound Current, Word) and is filled with the fear of God, and carries out his spiritual discipline accordance with the precepts of his Master. He serves the Lord, meditates of Him, accumulates the Treasure of His Name; his thirst and hunger for worldly objects vanish; he feels His presence everywhere; he is fully satisfied with the Elixir of His Name; he is the truly detached person. He achieves this with the Grace of a Master.”

One who has reached the stage where he can see his Master within at will, is always a detached person. He will completely disregard the criticism of others. A truly detached person is one who has a strong desire to meet the Lord and for whom it is not possible to live without him. He thinks of Him with very breath and considers life useless without Him.

“My mind is now detached and I have a strong longing to meet Him. That place is blessed where Thou art. My mind has become detached and a feeling of renunciation has entered in me, because I yearned for the Darshan of my Friend, the Lord. Just as a butterfly cannot live without flowers, I cannot live without God. I am in love with my Beloved and I am now detached every minute of my life. This body is worthless without Him. I cannot sleep without the love of my Beloved. But when I meet God then my mind is full of bliss.” (Adi Granth)

A detached person is absorbed in Shabd and is thus truly detached. Other are all on the downward path. The detached person beholds Light within himself and listen to the Shabd. Thereby his mind is fully attuned to the Lord.

“A detached person is really detached if he is attached to the Shabd. Others are all making false claims and are following the wrong path. Oh my mother! My mind is attached to Shabd and is dyed in detachment. Therefor it has become completely detached. There is Light within, and through that Light comes the Shabd by which my mind is attuned to the True Lord.” (Adi Granth)

Without service to the Master and without contemplation, everything is foggy. No one can cross the ocean of life without Shabd. But whosoever is absorbed in Shabd or Naam is a really detached person.

“The world is all illusion without service to the Master. Without Shabd nobody can cross the ocean of this world. He alone is fully detached who is fully engrossed in Shabd, because this Shabd is True. Shabd is my Master and Shabd is my Spiritual Guide who is as deep as the sea. This world is a desolate land without Shabd. Only a truly detached person can attain the state of Sahaj. So says Nanak, Oh Ye! Take it as True!” (Adi Granth)

“A person who is absorbed in Naam is always detached. Even when he is leading a householder’s life, his mind is attached to the real Truth.” (Adi Granth)

“He alone is a real detached Sadhu in whose mind Naam has entered. He who has known himself by attuning himself to Naam is detached.” (Adi Granth)
“A truly detached person rises to the regions above, because true detachment comes after crossing the three gunas (attributes). Such a person goes to his Home.” (Adi Granth)

“A detached person has his mind fixed on his Home and is free from hope and despair. He is fully satisfied with the gift of Naam and is contented because he has drunk deep from the Ocean of Amrit (Elixir) in the Sahadj.” (Adi Granth)

“The mind is day and night detached, and the soul has fixed its abode in the Spiritual Region above Sun Madhal (Daswan Dwar). It was the magnificent blessing of my Master who gave me the knowledge of Alakh Lok (the Indescribable Region).” (Adi Granth)

He is detached who is dyed in the color of God, because his mind is attuned with Naam and he drinks the nectar of immortality. He follows Hakum (the Will of the Lord); he has true knowledge, and he has destroyed his mind and the mind’s desires.

“A detached person is always engrossed in the Naam of God, and the Lord is always near such a one. Oh my God! I can live only if I meet Thee. Have mercy on me and give me a glimpse of Thy Darshan.” (Adi Granth)

“Everlasting bliss is enjoyed by those who have understood the knowledge of Truth, by the Grace of the Lord. Oh Nanak! I say only that person is detached who has his mind permanently fused in Him.” (Adi Granth)

Only a Gurumukh is truly detached. He has control over his five senses and has subdued lust and anger as well as his mind.

“A Gurumukh has attained pure Light and all his doubts have vanished. Oh Nanak! A Gurumukh is always the recipient of joy and he is constantly detached in the Name of God.” (Adi Granth)

“Through the Grace of my Master I have conquered all my five senses, and through His Grace also I have acquired the virtues of forgiveness and patience. That person is really worthy of all praise who sings the praises of the Lord.” (Adi Granth)

“Oh Ram (God)! He who has subdued his mind is the real detached person.” (Adi Granth)

Such a person, having realized his self, lives desirelessly in the world of desires. His mind is in contemplation day and night. Such a person is really detached and merges in the Lord. One who has renounced all desires and is also free from the attachment of illusion, is detached from all directions and really has detachment ingrained in his mind. Such a person is very fortunate.

With the Grace of God and our karmas, detachment is acquired through a Master by His Satsang and by following his precepts implicitly. One who is gifted by God with the quality of fear, obtains real detachment through that fear.

Detachment is actually a pre-requisite for meeting the Lord. Real detachment is produced when Shabd is heard within, because then the ties with the world are broken. When one becomes detached the cycle of birth and death is ended; pain, worry and separation will never come; illusion is destroyed and the bliss of Sahaj is attained.
Repetition of Names and Austerities
Chapter 4

Human birth is obtained only through great good fortune. On getting it we should follow the spiritual path and the teachings that are preached by the Saints. Human birth is rare. It cannot be had again and again. If we miss this opportunity we would regret it very much later on.

Kabir says:

“Oh Kabir, human birth is rare and cannot be had again and again; just as fruit which ripens falls to the ground and cannot be restored to the branch.” (Kabir, Salok, 1366)

“The rung of the ladder from which the hand has slipped cannot be caught again; even so is the human life wasted.” (Belawal M3, 796)

“He who misses the rung has to undergo the torture of coming and going.” (Mam M5, 1075)

Shamas-i-Tabrez also says to the same effect:

“Thousands of eons pass before this wealth (human body) is gained. How can I get it again if I let it go this time?”

Man is engrossed, body and soul, in this world. He does not think of that other abode where he will someday go and live.

“To the abode, he is to leave, he is attached; for the abode where he has to go and live forever, he cares not.” (Sri Rag M5, 43)

It is therefore, necessary that before leaving this world man should make some provision for the hereafter.

“A journey to a strange land lies ahead of all; o ignorant one, beware, for death is near!”

Human birth is the top of creation. It is obtained only by great good fortune. Human birth provides us with an opportunity to meet the Lord. Guru Arjan Sahib says:

“For many births was I a moth or insect. For many births was I an elephant, a fish, or a deer. For many births was I a serpent or a bird. For many births was I grass and trees. Now there is an opportunity to meet the Lord, this body of glory has been obtained after long ages.” (Gauri M5, 176)

“The human body has been gained as a means of meeting the Lord.” (Asa M5, 379)

Nothing is gotten free in this world. Of course, those in whose heart the fire of love is raging, need not do anything. Until such time as one obtains this wealth, he should make an effort and hold out his palms to receive. Shamas-i-Tabrez says that if you have not developed yearning for the Lord, you should remain busy in remembering Him, for the Lord does not withhold wages from the laborer.

“Since you have no love, worship Him, for He would not hold back the wages of the laborers.”
The Lord knows how to sustain and support his creatures.

“In the Court of the Lord there is no dearth of anything. If there is anything wanting, it is our own service. It is because of this that we do not get His Grace.” (Kabir Sahib)

“In the Court of the Lord nothing is lacking; man does not receive Grace because of his lack of service.” (Kabir Sahib)

Shamas-i-Tabrez says that the ferment becomes wine only after it has matured for a long time in the vat. If you wish to be intoxicated with divine love, you should engage yourself in spiritual practice.

“The ferment does not become wine until after it matures in the vat for a long time. If you wish your heart to be illuminated, you should practice for a long time.”

Offer your mind at the altar of His beauty and become desireless. The Lord Himself will then find some means of redeeming you. In order to offer their minds, people perform many repetitions of names (Japs) and austerities (Tap), practice self-discipline, fasts, pilgrimages and so forth, so as to generate love for the Lord. If one offers his heart sincerely to the Lord, He who is the source of mercy becomes kind and creates means for redeeming the offerer.

The nature of repetition of names and austerities is considered in detail below.

Repetition of Names (Jap)

Jap means repetition. It includes the mastery of mantras (set forms of words) as well as the method of succeeding in its practice. The aim of these methods is to touch the feet of the Lord. They are of five kinds: repetition (Jap); offerings in fire (Homa); water oblations offered to ancestors (Tarpan); special prayers to deities (Abhishek); feeding of Brahmins (Brahm Bhog).

According to the Scriptures, mantras are repeated for attaining various desires. They are practiced in several ways. Sometimes a mantra is added both before and after another mantra, as in ‘Om Ram Om’ (Sampat). Sometimes a mantra is read as it is, as ‘Om Nameh Rama’ (Alom). Sometimes it is repeated in the reverse order, as ‘Rama Nameh Om’ (Wilom). Similarly, various other methods are adopted, each leading to different results. In this way various powers are said to be acquired through the practice of mantras relating to Bhairon, Kali, Lakshmi, Hanuman and various other gods and goddesses. These mantras are called a Bhairon shield (Bhairon Kawach), Kali Shield (Kali Kawach), Durga Shield (Durga Kawach), etc. They are said to protect the body just as a coat of mail protects the arms and body of a warrior. But in the various hymns of the Gurus the Name of the in-dwelling Lord is described as the shield of the devotees.

“Rama is the coat of mail which protects the devotee. It cannot be harmed by the enemy.”

(Gori M5, 868)

“I am surrounded by Rama on all sides and no trouble can come to me, my brother.”

(Bilawal M5, 819)

To get the benefit of the Jewel of Ram Naam (the Name of God) is the purpose of repetition (Jap). The four Vedas all point out that the treasure of salvation lies in the Name of the Lord (Ram Naam), and to find the treasure is the purpose of all repetition (Jap).
“The priceless Jewel of the Name is the essence of all repetition.” (Ramkali M1, 931)

“After studying all the four Vedas, the learned have come to the conclusion that the way to achieve happiness and salvation is the recitation of the Name of the Lord (Ram Naam).” (Gori M5, 267-10)

For this reason stress is laid in the hymns of the Saints on the repetition of the immortality-giving Name.

“Repeat the Nectar of Naam, oh tongue, for It makes the humble devotee its own.” (Kabir, Gori, 331-6)

What is this Repetition? This repetition is the Lord Himself. He is also the reciter. This recitation is Nectar personified.

“He Himself makes us repeat, and He does the repetition Himself. He Himself is the Nectar, He is the dear one, and He Himself is the taste of the Nectar.” (Sorath M3, 605-15)

The repetition of the Name of the Lord is the essence of happiness and its remembrance is the highest flight of thought. With such repetition human life becomes successful. The mind becomes satisfied when it drinks this water of immortality and attains everlasting life.

“These efforts result in bliss, for remembrance is the essence of happiness. Therefore repeat the Name of the Lord, the essence of wisdom.” (Bilawal M5, 815)

“Life is fruitful when it hears the Name of the Lord. Recitation leads to a happy life. Drinking the Nectar of the Name satisfies the mind.” (M5 Mam 1018-15)

Those on whom the Lord showers His Grace repeat His Name.

“He who obtains His Grace is the one who contemplates. He ever recites the Name of the Lord and by this he gains happiness.” (Maru M4, 998)

It is mentioned in the hymns of the Gurus that of all the paths, the best path or the purest action is to repeat the Lord's Name.

“The best of all religions (Dharam) is the pure action of repeating the Name of the Lord.” (Gauri M5, 266)

The Lord is unknowable and unfathomable. Man has only a very limited capacity, and without the Master's help is not competent to perform his repetition (Jap) or to understand Him.

“Nothing can be gained from repetition, austerity or self-control without the Master's help. From the very beginning the Lord is unknowable and unfathomable.” (Maru M5, 1005)

“The real recitation is that in which the mind finds God. This is the highest knowledge. That recitation is the best in which man finds God and gets the highest knowledge.” (Magh M5, 900)

The technique of remembrance and repetition of the Name of God is obtained by the company of the Master (Guru). It is only through the Grace of the Lord that man sings His praises and can continue to do so.
“Remember the Lord in the company of the Master, oh Nanak! Repetition brings salvation by dyeing one in the color of His Name.” (Gauri M5, 298)

“Let us always sing the praises of the Lord. You have always enabled us to do so, oh Master and merciful Lord.” (Asa M5, 399)

**Austerities (Tap)**

The meaning of Tap is to undergo physical or mental hardship or to perform any practice that removes egotism. It is called Riyazat in Persian. To live in jungles and subsist on roots and fruits, sitting in fire, exposing oneself to five fires (to sit with fire on all sides, and to bear the heat of the sun from above as the fifth fire), to lie on nails fixed in the ground, to remain standing with one hand raised, to sit in water and to undergo other physical and mental sufferings are called Tap (austerities). The purpose of performing these austerities is that the mind may become pure, and that lust, anger, attachment, greed and egotism may be removed so that realization of the Lord may be attained. Many persons leave their homes owing to domestic troubles and in order to escape responsibilities. They leave their homes and go to other places and put on ochre colored clothes; but lust, anger, attachment, greed and egotism accompany them.

“One donneth ochre robes and warmeth oneself by the side of smoldering fire, and stung by worries, one abandoneth the household, and forsaking one's land, one wandereth from place to place. But, Lord, keepeth one within the five demons wherever one goeth.” (Prabhati M5, 1348)

In the religion of the Saints, no importance is attached to austerities that cause pain to the body, since by exposing the body to water and fire the inner fire is not extinguished, nor by keeping the hand raised is egotism removed.

“The inner fire is not extinguished without a Master, however much one may expose oneself to outer fire.” (Maru M1, 1013-1)

“By practicing ascetism or exposing oneself to the heat of the sun, the ego is not removed.” (Sri Rag M3, 33)

“By practicing Hath Yoga the body becomes weak. The mind is not calmed by fasts and austerities.” (Ramkali M1, 905-4)

Sheikh Farid says:

“I would heat the body like an oven or feed the fire with my bones, and walk on my head when my feet become tired, if I could but meet my Beloved.”

It is not necessary to heat the body like an oven or to burn one's bones. The head and feet have done you no wrong. The Lord is inside you. Turn inwards.

“Do not heat the body like an oven or burn your bones like fuel. The head and feet have done no wrong. See the Lord within.” (Salok M1, other than Wars 1411)
If one’s goal can be achieved without causing suffering to the body, then why undergo such suffering? Kabir Sahib says, “Put on the mantle of knowledge and contemplation. Make the body the firewood and ignite it with the fire generated at the eye center. Bear the love of the Lord in the heart and know all the four yugas (ages) in trance. That supreme yoga which created body and life is Ram Naam (Lord’s Name). It is only when the Lord is kind that one attains the true ideal”.

“He who follows the path taught by the Master wears the coat of knowledge stitched with the needle of meditation and the thread of Shabd. He uses compassion as a rake and the body as firewood, and ignites the fire of the eye center. He bears love for Him in his heart and contemplates in trance on all the four yugas (ages). All yoga is included in the Name of the Lord to whom belong this body and life. Oh Kabir! When He has compassion, He leads him to the true ideal.” (Kabir, Asa, 477-9)

Gurus describe the real austerities through which the cycle of birth and death is ended and the soul reaches the door of the Master. The greatest of the austerities is the Master’s service, through which the Lord dwells in the heart. In this way one reaches the door of the Master.

“The Master's service is the best of all austerities. The Lord dwells in the heart of the man who performs such service and removes all his sufferings. He sees the Lord as the Door of the Truth.” (Asa M3, 423)

The Gurus say that the true ascetic is he who has obtained the company of the Saints.

“He is the true ascetic who has the company of the Saints and is dyed in the hue of the Master.” (Basant M5, 1180)

He who withdraws his mind and senses from the pleasures of the senses and puts them in the service of the Master is a real ascetic. But if he is false of mind, always tells lies, runs after illusion (Maya), calls himself an ascetic but acts dishonestly, performs pilgrimages to all the sacred places, but has not controlled the mind and the senses, he will make no spiritual progress and will not gain salvation.

“The false-hearted man earns falsehood. He runs after Maya and calls himself an ascetic. Steeped in ignorance he visits all the sacred places. How can such an ascetic gain salvation?” (Ramkali War M3, 948)

Of course, if with a sincere heart, with clean intentions, and through the kindness of the Master, such a one perseveres in the truth he will then give up his wanderings outside and will get inner bliss and salvation. These austerities alone should be practiced because they alone lead to salvation.

“With the Grace of the Master attain truth; oh Nanak, such an ascetic attains salvation.” (Ramkali War M3, 648-16)

“I have given up searching outside, for the Master showed me the Lord inside. I realized the wonderful Form of the Lord, and my mind no longer wanders.” (Manu M5, 1002-3)
The Effect of the Iron Age (Kali Yuga)

The Iron Age has still a long time to last. Man is feeble. No one can properly do right actions. Dharam (duties), charity, pilgrimages and true austerities cannot be practiced. An adverse wind is blowing. He who practices the Name gets a bad name. Those who indulge in an outward show of piety or practice hypocrisy are considered to be respectable.

“Kali Yuga is neither found in a particular land, nor at a pilgrim-station. Nor is it in a set-mansion and certainly not where men practice charity. Whosoever practices truth in this age, loses. And austerities bear no fruit. Moreover whosoever utters the Lord's Name is defamed: These are the signs by which Kali Yuga is known.” (Ramkali M1, 902-17)

In this age all the world is indulging in selfishness owing to the restlessness of the mind, no one can properly devote himself to repetition of sacred names (Jap), austerities (Tap), or fasts or worships, and people are spoiling their chances of happiness in their future life by forgetting the Name.

“Repetition of mantras (Jag), austerities (Tap), fasts or worship are of no avail to one who has a feeling of otherness from the Lord.” (Kabir, Gauri, 324)

“Oh Nanak, he who forsakes the Name is confused wherever he goes. All his Jap, austerities and self-discipline are wasted and he is at the mercy of others.” (Sorath War M3, 148-19)

Unless one gets the correct method from the Master and develops true love and devotion, all his repetition, austerities, self-control, fasts and holy baths are in vain.

“What use are repetitions, austerities, self-discipline, fasts, or baths in sacred streams unless one knows the way of loving devotion to the Lord.” (Kabir, Gauri, 337)

In the Iron Age the outer repetition of mantras and the practice of austerities do not lead to salvation. The repetition of mantras, austerities, self-control, fasts, worship and so forth do not eradicate the feeling of egotism. The soul is entangled in the cleverness of the mind and the jungle of Maya. It does not find the way of escape from these snares.

“Repetition, austerities and self-discipline practiced by an egocentric man do not cure his malady since he will still suffer from pride, and the feeling of otherness is still alive with him.” (Suhi M4, 732-7)

“All repetitions, austerities and cleverness lead only to wandering in the wilderness.” (Asa M1, 412-2)

In the Iron Age no action or ritual except the practice of Naam leads to salvation.

“In the Iron Age no action or ritual is of any avail; except for the practice of Naam there is no other way.”

The lure of the senses is very strong and widespread. The ascetic and the pundit, lured by austerities and greed, remain separated from the Lord.

“The ascetics are led astray by austerities and the pundits by greed.” (Asa M5, 370)
"The poison of Maya is spread far and wide. But he who practices repetition rises and realizes."  
(Gauri M5, 210)

Unless Maya is destroyed, hundreds of actions, the repetition of mantras and the practice of austerities are of no account.

"Without destroying Maya one gets nowhere, no matter what he may do in the way of countless actions, repetitions or austerities."  
(Gauri M5, 238)

The repetition of mantras, the practice of austerities, fasts and self-control and the making of pilgrimages do not lead to peace of mind. Peace of mind comes only after one takes refuge with the Master or the Lord.

"I practiced repetition, austerities and fasts to see the feet of the Lord. But the fire cannot be extinguished without taking refuge in the Lord."  
(M 5 Bilawal 545)

What are True Repetition, Austerities and Self-Control?

The teachings of the Saints say that only those repetitions, austerities and services are beneficial which are dear to the Lord. They remove the feeling of selfishness and separateness.

"Only that repetition, austerity and service is approved which is dear to the Lord. It is He who forgives and unites to Himself and removes egotism."  
(Sarang War M3, 1247-16)

The Lord is manifested in the Master. Therefore, obedience to Him is true repetition, austerities and self-control. The purpose of all austerities and self-control is to develop the soul (surat). This development can only be achieved through the Grace of the Master. This is dear to the Lord. Such service is fruitful.

"Repetition, austerities, self-discipline and obedience to the Master are to be performed by the devotee. Oh Nanak, service is done to develop the soul. This is acceptable to the Lord, and one then finds reality."  
(Sri Rag M4, 88-6)

For this reason the service of the Master is superior to all austerities. As a result of this the Lord dwells in the heart of the seeker and he forgets all hardships.

"The Master's service is the best of all austerities. When the Lord's Name dwells in the heart, It removes all sufferings."  
(Asa M3, 423-13)

It is said that remembrance of the Lord and His dwelling in the heart constitute repetition, austerities and self-control.

"Remembrance of the Lord includes all repetitions, austerities and worship. Remembrance of the Lord removes the feeling of otherness."  
(Gauri M5, 262-17)

"He in whose mind dwells the Lord is the man who practices repetition, austerities and self-discipline, and who is the knower of the essence of things. The life of the disciple who has the Jewel of the Name is indeed perfect."  
(Sorath M5, 615-6)
The real austerity consists in finding the Master and practicing the Yoga of the Sound Current (Surat Shabd Yoga). There is no other true repetition or austerity or self-control. The Sound Current or Shabd is within all persons and is only obtained through the direction of the Master. Action, duties, purity, self-control, repetition and austerities are all based on the Shabd or inner Sound. The essence of all repetition and austerities is the Divine Sound.

“The real austerity consists in finding the Master and practicing the Yoga of the Sound Current (Surat Shabd Yoga).”

“‘He only is an ascetic who leads a life of austerity, meets a Master and gets from Him the Shabd.’” (Ramkali M3, 948)

“There is no true repetition, austerity or self-discipline unless one practices the Shabd taught by the Master.” (Maru M3, 1067-7)

“Repetition, austerities and self-discipline are obtained when one practices the Shabd given by the Master.” (Maru War M3, 1092-11)

“All actions, duties, true self-discipline, repetition, austerities and pilgrimages dwell in the Shabd.” (Parbhati M1, 1332)

“He who has the Shabd gains the door of salvation. In Shabd is contained the essence of all repetitions and austerities.” (Dhanasri M3, 861)

The Name or Shabd is superior to all practices such as charities or donations, repetition or austerities. A person may go to Banaras and practice austerities there, or may hang upside down or may expose his body to fire, or may practice ascetism, or may perform the horse sacrifice, or may give gold in charity. He may do various repetitions and austerities. He may study all the religious books (Dharam Shastras and Sumrities). He may do various good acts and duties, observe fasts, and engage in internal introspection and contemplation. He may leave his home and wander in the forests, but none of these can equal the practice of the Lord's Name (Ram Naam):

“The Name is superior to donation, charity and austerities. The tongue that remembers the Lord leads one to fulfilment.” (Asa M5, 401-3)

“If one practices austerities at Banaras and dies while hanging upside down at a sacred spot, or sits near fire or rejuvenates himself or performs the Ashumedha Yagna (horse sacrifice) or gives gold in sealed covers, all this does not equal the sacred practice of the Lord's Name.” (Namdev, Ramkali, 973-10)

“Repetitions, austerities, knowledge and contemplation, reading the six shastras and commentaries on them, performing of yoga practices, actions and duties, or wandering in the forests without performing any action, do not equal the remembrance of the Lord. Oh Nanak, it is sufficient for the beloved of the Guru simply to repeat the Name.” (Gori M5, 625)

Sincere love is the essence of all repetitions and austerities. He whose mind is pure and who contemplates with love and devotion on the feet of the Lord must be considered to have performed all repetitions and austerities.

“He whose heart and body are pure, who loves truly, and meditates on the feet of the Great Lord, must be considered as having performed all repetitions and austerities.” (Sri Rag M5, 48-13)
Love is preferable to all repetitions, austerities, self-discipline, rapture, delight, honor and sacred knowledge.

“Repetitions, austerities, self-discipline, gay happiness, glory and pride, oh Musan! are nothing as compared to love.” (Chobole M5, 1364-3)

Real repetition, austerities and worship are those which lead to Love for the Lord. Love for the Lord is real. All else is false.

“That repetition, that austerity, that fast and that worship is true which increases one's love for the Lord. Without love for the Lord every other love is false and is forgotten in a moment.” (Berari M4, 720-13)

How Real Repetition and Austerities are Practiced and Their Fruit

The repetition and austerities which are related to the practice of Naam depend upon the Grace of the Lord. Only he on whom the Lord bestows them can have them.

“The Name contains repetitions, austerities and self-discipline. May the Lord bless us with His gracious look.” (Prabhati M5, 1348)

“Repetitions, austerities, self-discipline, compassion and duties are practiced by those who are blessed by Him.” (Ramkali M5, 966)

The company of the Saints is gained through the Grace of the Lord. The devotees of the Saints repeat the blessed Name of the Lord.

“Those who get the Grace of the Lord gain the company of the Saints. They live on the Nectar of the Name of the Lord.” (Suhi M5, 762)

The Grace of the Lord descends through a Saint or Godman. It is only through Him that repetition, austerities and self-discipline can be successful. With the help of a Saint, Naam resides in the heart and the devotee finds a place at the Door of the Lord.

“Repetitions, austerities and self-discipline are obtained through the Guru by one in whose heart dwells the Name. Oh Nanak, by cherishing the Name he finds a place at the Door of the Lord and is glorified.” (Sorath M5, 602)

He who finds a Master may be considered to have performed all austerities, fasts and pilgrimages. No effort, cleverness or other form of striving is of any avail. The main thing is to find a Master. All repetitions, austerities, purity and self-control depend on His Will. Those, for whom He wills it, can do them.

“Pilgrimages, fasts and austerities are all dispensed with by the Lord when one meets a Master.” (Ramkali M1, 879)

“No effort, wisdom or artifice is of any avail. It is all given by the Perfect Master. Only those repetitions and austerities are true which are practiced by him, and which he gets done by others.” (Gori Ramkali M, 915)
It is only when the Lord is merciful that, through the Grace of the Master, the full fruits of repetitions, austerities and self-discipline are obtained.

“Repetitions, austerities, self-discipline and true greatness are obtained by the Grace of the Master and the help of the Lord.” (Gori M5, 196)

For this reason service of the Master is the highest form of austerity. By serving the Master with body, mind and soul, the Lord resides in the heart and all worldly cares are destroyed.

“Service of the Master is the best of all austerities. The Lord then dwells in them and all sufferings are ended.” (Asa M3, 423)

The Lord of Death bows at the feet of those who repeat the Name according to the directions and instructions of the Master, and they are looked after by the Lord.

“He who repeats the Name gets wisdom from the Master. The messengers of death are like pebbles under his feet.” (Maru M1, 1042)

“Do good deeds and repeat the Name as directed by the Master. He looks after His followers and they realize the true secret.” (Gori War M4, 317)

There can be no repetition, austerities or self-control unless the pleasures of the senses are given up. This can only be done by controlling the ten apertures of the body and by repetition of the Name.

“He who gives up sense pleasures and evil deeds and contemplates on the soul, his repetition, austerities and self-discipline bear fruit. His lotus opens and drops of honey fall within.” (Sri Rag M1, 23-17)

“He who controls all the ten doors is contented of heart and repeats the Name.” (Gori M5, 298-19)

These repetitions and austerities are obtained by sincere devotees through good fortune. Such a one becomes free from all ailments and is immersed in ecstasy day and night.

“Oh Nanak, by repeating the Names the sincere devotees realize the Lord.” (Sorath M1, 598)

“By repetition of the Name the devotee is rid of ailments and his body becomes healthy. He daily contacts the Lord in trance, while absorbed in deep meditation on His Name.” (Varhansu M4, 574)

“He is the true devotee, ascetic and house-holder who constantly remembers the Lord and thereby gets the gift of repetitions, austerities and self-discipline. Oh Nanak, the true devotee repeats the peace-giving Name in the approved manner.” (Basant M5, 1184)

“He is the true house-holder who controls himself and gets the gifts of repetitions, austerities and self-discipline.” (Ramkali War M1, 852-12)
Remembrance of the Lord and praise of His Name lead to various benefits, according to the Gurus. All desires, ignorance and cares are destroyed, and death and rebirth end. All good intentions are fulfilled. The heart is filled with happiness, bliss and joys. The lotus opens and egotism disappears. The fear of death is overcome and one does not go to hell. He crosses the world of phenomena in safety. The Lord is seen everywhere and in everything. One not only crosses the world himself, but takes others also along with him. He is saved from the depredations of the five robbers (the senses), and attains the stage of easy and natural trance in meditation (Sahaj avastha). He is beholden to the Lord. The remembrance of the Master is remembrance of the Lord. The True Gurus, therefore, take care to explain the benefits of remembrance of the Master.
The Master or Perfect Master
(Guru or Satguru)
Chapter 5

What do we understand by the term “Guru”, and who is the Guru?

To know a Master or to understand His real significance or reality is, in fact very difficult. To do this, discerning eyes like His own are necessary. Only a Godman can know a Godman. How can a person, who is confined in the case of the body, realize the Lord's glory? Unless we are as great as He is, we cannot understand Him.

“He who is as high as He is, He alone can know the One on High.” (Jap Ji, 5-10)

Only a swan flying with other swans can know them. How can the doves and crows know from which country the swans come and to what land they go? The Guru, like that fabled bird which remains always in the sky, does His work on the earth, and then takes flight and returns to the skies.

He is beyond the three bodies (gross, subtle and causal), the three gunas, the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether, and the twenty-five prakritis; and He is beyond the reach of the mind and Maya.

Shamas-i-Tabriz says about the Perfect Masters or Satgurus:

“There are birds who lay golden eggs, they fly to the realm of the skies every morning, when they run they seem like suns in the seventh region. When they sleep, they make the sun and moon their pillows. Oh Shamas-i-Tabriz, they enable thousands of those born blind, with one kind look, to see the path.”

The Perfect Masters are those who have indistinguishably become one with the Lord. They are born in human form according to the wishes of the Lord, so that they may take souls from the lower regions and unite them with the Lord. They connect with the Lord those who follow their instructions, and make them like themselves. Actually, they look after the entire universe.

A man standing on the top of the hill can see a fire whether it be near or far. Similarly, the Perfect Masters find out those that are engaged in selfless service or those that are earnestly seeking God, no matter where they are, whether far or near. They help them and become the means of uniting them with the Lord. It is necessary to have a special receptacle in order to obtain special Grace of the Masters. The receptacle is filled according to the state of its preparedness. The Perfect Masters freely distribute spiritual powers. One can, by their Grace, progress rapidly and unite with the Lord in this very life.

Although the Masters have assumed human forms similar to our own and live amongst us, yet they live with the Lord of all regions and universes. They appear to be bound to earth because of their bodies, but they live beyond the seven skies.

“There bodies are in the world, but their souls are with the Lord of the world; their bodies are tied to earth, but their souls are beyond the seven skies.” (Moinud-din Chishti)
Outwardly they have the human form but inwardly they are quite different. Maulana Rumi says:

“Do not judge the Saints by your intellect. Our words for milk (shir) and tiger (sher) are written in the same way, but in substance they are not the same.”

Do not try to judge the Saints by means of your intellect. In Persian, the words “shir” and “sher” are written almost alike. But one sher is the tiger which kills and devours, while the other shir is the milk that sustains us.

Similarly, though human beings have similar shapes and forms, they differ in spiritual development. It is the spiritual development which fulfils the object of human life. It tears off all worldly attachments, destroys all doubts and the Sustainer of life is attained.

How can we adequately praise the Perfect Master or Satguru? He is the ocean of truth and wisdom. He is the embodiment of the Supreme Lord who has existed from the beginning throughout the ages.

“How can the Guru be praised? The Guru is the ocean of wisdom. He is from the beginning, throughout the ages; He is the ever-existing Supreme Lord.” (Asa M5, 397-1)

It is impossible to praise the Supreme Lord adequately. The Perfect Master is His manifestation and it is therefore also impossible, to praise Him adequately. He is like the Lord, beyond the reach of thought, imagination, inference, guess, theory and reasoning. He cannot be seen, heard or described. Book after book can be written and the whole of one’s life may be spent in writing, but still one would not be able to describe even one letter relating to His personality.

“You are beyond inference, imagination, probabilities or intellect. You are beyond what I have seen, heard or read. The book is finished and life has drawn to a close. We are still only at the first letter.”

The realized ones say that if all the earth were to be used as paper, all the trees as pens and all the seas as ink, we would not be able to describe His virtues. Kabir Sahib says:

“If I were to mix all the mountains in the sea to make ink, and were to use the whole earth as paper, I would not be able to describe His virtues.”

The Masters are spiritual Kings. We are beggars, deceived by Maya (the illusion) of the material world. How can we know their glory? Maulana Rumi says that if he were to praise and glorify the Lord till doomsday, he would not be able to do so.

“If I were to describe His mercy until doomsday, it would be fruitless, for there is no limit and no end to it.”

If we were to attempt to describe the Lord, we could only describe Him according to our intellect. If a buffalo were to describe Him, it would describe Him as a great buffalo. What comparison is there between a king and a buffalo? Guru Arjun Sahib says: “You are a King. You are the Emperor of Emperors, we call You the Exalted One, or the Master. Do we really praise You by such honorifics? It is in a sense, insulting You.”

“Thou art the King, oh Lord; if I call Thee a chieftain then is it any praise for Thee?” (Bilawal M1, 795-3)
If a small child were to stand before his mother and say, “Mother, I know you”, how imperfect would his understanding of his mother be? Similarly, how can we sing the praises of the Guru? Our praises would be so imperfect.

It is fortunate that whenever such Perfect Masters appear, they themselves give out a few hints regarding their true nature. For it is certain that unless they themselves reveal themselves, the human beings, who are spiritually asleep and under the sway of attachment and Maya, would not know them.

Let us, then, ask them what the Perfect Master or Guru is, and who He is? They say:

1. The Shabd or Divine Music is the Perfect Master. The Shabd is indistinguishable from the Supreme Lord. It is a conscious current of that Great Power which created the universe and which fully pervades it. All the universe emanated from this Shabd.

“Who is your Guru, of whom are you the disciple?” (Ramkali M1, 942-19)

“The Shabd is the Guru and the soul is the disciple.” (Sidh Gosht M1, 943-2)

“The Shabd is the Guru, the ancient, the deep. The world would be a madhouse without the Shabd.” (Sorath M1, 635-7)

“The Word is the Guru, the Guru is the Word; in the Word is the nectar, which the Guru says we must accept. The Guru manifests Himself and redeems His disciples.” (Nat M4, 982-11)

Tulsi Sahib says:

“The soul, the disciple, and the Shabd, the Guru, travel together on the path. There is an inverted well in the sky, the soul becomes absorbed in it.”

Bhai Gurdas Ji says:

“Know the Shabd to be the Guru: your Guru will reveal this. Become the beloved disciple. The soul will follow the Melody.” (War 7, Pauri 20)

Kabir Sahib says:

“Where is your Guru? Where does the disciple live? How do the two happen to meet? When do the two separate? How do they come and go? The Guru is in the sky. The disciple is in the heart. The soul meets the Shabd. Then they never separate. Accept the Shabd as the Guru. Most Gurus are false, they seek their personal ends, and wander about for self-gratification. The Shabd is the Guru of the entire universe.

2. Those in whom the Shabd Guru is manifest are indistinguishable from the Shabd. He alone is a Saint or Perfect Master who can initiate others. The Shabd is a manifestation of the Supreme Lord, and it is revealed to the Saints or Perfect Masters. They are indistinguishable from the Lord.

“I churned the sea of the body, and saw a wonderful sight. The Lord is the Guru and the Guru is the Lord; oh Nanak, there is no difference between the two.” (Asa M5, 442-18)
One who practices the Shabd is a Perfect Master or Perfect Guru. This is evident if we consider the word Guru etymologically. Guru is a Sanskrit word. It comes from the root “Gri”, which means to call or speak or utter a sound. One who bestows the Shabd, one who practices the Divine Sound of the Shabd or is connected with the Shabd, is a Perfect Guru.

The Gurus have described the Perfect Guru in this way and have emphasized the necessity of taking shelter with such a one.

“He instills truth in your mind; accept Him as your Guru. The unutterable He makes you utter; He unites you with the Divine Sound.” (Dhanasri M1, 686-7)

“Oh Nanak, know the Truth to be the True One.” (Sri Rag M1, 15-18)

He is unutterable, but He makes us experience Him. He connects us with the Shabd.

Kabir Sahib says that he who makes us see the invisible is a Saint or Satguru.

"Oh brother, He is a Sant Satguru, who makes us see the invisible."

The Perfect Guru makes us hear the Divine Melody of the Shabd.

"He is a Perfect Guru, who makes us hear the Shabd. He makes us offer devotion; He makes us contemplate upon Him.” (Maru M3, 1055-6)

Kabir Sahib also says the same thing:

“In their own spheres, all are great holy men. But he who has realized the Shabd, He is the greatest of all. There are various Gurus, and there are differences in their approach. Worship that Guru alone, who connects you to the Shabd. ”

Tulsi Sahib has also given the same definition of a True Guru.

“He who knows the different Divine Sounds, He is indeed a great Saint. He knows the Unknowable, He knows the Word.”

The Perfect Master or Guru is similarly described in the Sar Bachan:

“He alone is the Guru who loves the Shabd. He who knows it not is not a Perfect Guru. He who practices the Shabd is a Perfect Guru. Bow before such a Guru. Become the dust of His feet.”

The Perfect Master or Satguru is the true physician, for He has the life-giving herb of the Name or Shabd. The Satguru is the custodian of the Shabd, and it is the Shabd that takes the soul to its source. It is described as the Voice of the Silence in Theosophy, and it resounds in all the universes and regions.

The Saints, in their hymns, consider one who practices listening to the Divine Sound to be a True Guru. One cannot obtain true initiation except from such a Saint. When the disciple's efforts bear fruit, he realizes the Shabd and merges in the Lord, the source of the current.

“Realize the Shabd and meet the Lord; your service will then be accepted.” (Sri Rag M3, 27-9)
The Lord Himself, as the Shabd, pervades the Guru and showers the Shabd through Him.

“He Himself pervades the Guru, He pervades as the Shabd. He who loves the True One merges in the True One.” (Malar M1, 1279-14)

The True Guru is merged in the Shabd.

“All the True Gurus were merged in the Shabd of Satguru; Nanak, Angad and Amar Das, thrice blessed is Guru Ram Das, His Guru connected Him with the Divine Touchstone.” (Sawayye M4, 1407-13)

“The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.” (Bible)

All true devotees get the Shabd, which is real life, from the Perfect Guru. He is life in himself, and since He is free from ego, the Shabd speaks through Him. He has transcended the valley of death. He has realized the life of the Lord, which works through the Sound, and He himself can give that life or spiritual awakening to His disciples.

The soul is entangled in the inertness of Maya or illusion. In order to free it, it is necessary to breathe the Shabd into it, so that what is hidden may manifest itself. This cannot be accomplished by anyone except a Perfect Master or Guru. The enlightened ones say that it is only the Perfect Guru who can establish contact with the Sound.

“That which is on trust should be returned; happiness lies in doing so. The Shabd of the Guru is established only in Him; it cannot be manifested in anyone else.” (Sarang M3, 1249-8)

The realization of the Divine Sound is the holy gift of the Perfect Guru. The realization is not the result of one's own effort. How can hearing of the Shabd, which is limitless, be the result of one's own limited efforts? It is beyond such limits. When the unsophisticated, simple child begins to creep towards its mother, the mother lifts the child up.

“The Lord is not attained by effort, He is not attained by service. He meets one of His own accord. He to whom He is kind meets a perfect Guru, and practices His mantra.” (Dhanasri M5, 672-12)

This does not mean that a disciple should not make an effort. He should practice his meditation as directed by the Guru. But he attains results only according to his Guru's Mercy and Grace.

“He who meets a Satguru always sings the praises of the Lord. The Name pervades his heart, and he merges in the Shabd.” (Vadhans Var M4, 592-8)

The unending music of the Shabd or Naam is within us, but we cannot get it without the help of a Saint, for the Lord has given the key to the Saints.

“The Unending Music is the Treasure, the Saints have the key to it.” (Ramkali M5, 893-19)

“Without a Guru the Name cannot be attained; both the seekers and the adepts have been waiting in vain.” (Majh M5, 115-2)
The lives of the Perfect Masters are sustained by the Shabd, which sustains their Pranas (life energy) also. The Perfect Masters swim in the waters of spirituality and give us life by making us also bathe in them. They are enlightened and they have experienced the son-ship of the Lord. Jesus Christ, for example, said: “I am the son of God.” (St. John 11:36)

The Gurus say that the Lord does what the Saints request Him to do.

“The Lord does that which is requested by the Saints.” (Maru M5, 1076-8)

“What the Saints wish they get done; no one is turned away from their door.” (Maru M5, 0176-9)

Maulana Rumi says that Saints have been given power by the Lord even to call back an arrow from its flight.

“The Saints have been empowered by the Lord; they can even bring the arrow back from its flight.” (Maulana Rumi)

Are Saints the rivals of God? No, never. Actually, the Lord is captivated by the Saints, for they hold Him in bondage by their love for Him. Whatever the Lord wishes to do, He does through His Saints. In this universe, the Saints are His agents or officers and do His work. Paltu Sahib says that in His household there are no other managers. All Saints are lovers of the Name. Whatever they wish comes to pass.

“Oh Paltu, in the house of the Lord there is no other manager. The Saints are lovers of God; whatever they wish comes to pass.”

The Gurus describe the Saints as “child-like” and “indifferent”. Maulana Rumi also says that the Saints and Mahatmas are the children of God. They know this relationship and know their rights as children. They partake of all His virtues.

Maulana Rumi says:

“Oh son, the Saints are the children of God, in sight or out of sight, they are always in His mind.”

All Perfect Saints are the children of God. Everything – whether manifest or not, is known to them. God speaks through them.

“Oh Lalu, know you this: Whatever He wishes, I say to you.” (Tilang M1, 722-15)

In this physical universe, the Saints are the redeemer of human beings. The living Guru is the hope of the people, the Light of the world and the Savior of mankind. Because of the Grace of the Shabd, the Saint or Perfect Master is free from all limitations and bondage. He takes souls out of the stormy sea of birth and death and takes them to the immortal regions. The Shabd and the Perfect Guru are indistinguishable. The Guru, in His outward form, has a human body. He teaches and persuades those who come to hear Him. But when you go to the subtle regions, He assumes a subtle form and accompanies you in that form. If you reach the causal region, the second spiritual region, He assumes a causal form and in that form He helps you there. He has traveled through all the stages of the journey to the highest regions and can help you in those regions also. He does not rest until He merges you in His real form, the Shabd.
3) He who has realized the True Being is a Perfect Master or Guru. He has transcended both the
dissolution and the grand dissolution. He has the power to take others to the highest region. It is
only by remaining in the company of such Saints that one can be redeemed.

"He who knows the True Being, He is the Saguru. His company brings release. Oh Nanak, sing
the praises of the Lord." (Gauri M5, 286-12)

The Different Kinds of Master or Guru

There are four Gurus, namely: the mother, the father, the teacher and the Satguru. Of these, the
Satguru is the True Guru, and His relationship is wholly spiritual. A worldly religious guru is
called an 65charya or teacher, and he gives social, ethical and religious teachings. This class of
gurus or teachers includes the academic teachers also.

The Sant Satguru or Saint is called the Satguru. He has an entirely spiritual relationship with the
disciple. He imparts spiritual teachings only.

According to the stage to which they have ascended in the spiritual regions, Gurus can be
divided into three classes: 1) Sadh Guru; 2) Sant Guru; 3) Param Sant Guru.

A Sadh Guru is a holy man who has risen above the region of Trikuti or Onkar, which Muslims
call Lahut. This is the second region above the physical universe. According to the Muslim
Sufis, he is one who has crossed the region of ‘Hu’, has wiped away all the dirt covering the soul
and has removed the covers of the three attributes or gunas, the five elements, the twenty-five
instincts, and the mind and Maya, all of which cover or hide the soul.

“A Sadh is free from the three gunas.” (Gauri M5, 272-7)

He has recognized himself to be a particle of the Supreme Lord, and he tries to merge in Him.

A Master or Saint is one who has attained the Sach Khand, True Region, which is beyond the
dissolution and the grand dissolution.

Param Sants are those who have reached the region of Anami, (Indescribable or Nameless), or
Nirala, (Detached), or Maha Dayal, (Most Merciful), or Soami, (Lord) and have become One
with the Supreme Being.

There is a great deal of difference between a Saint and a Param Sant. A Param Sant is one who
has reached the True Region and has crossed all the lower regions. This difference is pointed out
for academic purposes only. Only those who have been given the authority of initiating the
seekers by the Lord, are Perfect Masters or Gurus. If the Lord authorizes one who has reached
the Sadh gati (status of Sadh) or Sant gati (status of Sant) or Param Sant gati (status of Param
Sant) to be a Guru, he is called a Sadh Guru, Sant Guru or Param Sant Guru. There can be many
Sadhis, Saints or Param Saints, but the Lord only rarely nomintes any one as a Perfect Master or
Guru authorized to initiate. All Perfect Masters are Saints, but all Saints are not Gurus. There
are many graduates or holders of the Master of Arts degree, but only a few of them are
professors. Similarly, all those who seek spirituality do not become Gurus. Actually, it is only
rarely that one becomes a Guru.
The Perfect Masters or Saints, also called Gurus, are regents or viceroyos of the Supreme Lord. They are of two kinds. First, there are Swathe Sant Gurus in their own right. They are born Saints who come direct from the highest spiritual region, such as Kabir Sahib, Guru Nanak Sahib and others, all of whom taught the true spiritual path from an early age. They always remain connected with the Lord. Whenever such Saints come into the world they start a wave of spirituality. Then there are others who succeed them and continue their teachings. After some generations this work slowly decreases and dies out. Then another Saint comes and starts the wave again. These Saints may come anywhere and in any nation.

The second kind of Saints are those who are not born as Saints but who have practiced spiritual meditation in this world. They have the necessary ability, and have been commissioned by the Lord to do the work of a Guru. Even they are not brought up to Mastership here. They come here already perfected. For name's sake only, they appear to attain completeness and perfection in this life. The first kind of Saint is described as follows by Kabir Sahib:

“Oh Kabir, we are familiar with the secret; we have come here, as ordered.”

Bhai Gurdas Ji says:

“The Baba (Nanak Dev) was born with the Gift; thereafter He practiced it assiduously.”

(Var 1, Pauri 24)

“Oh Lalu, know you this; whatever He wishes, I say to you.” (Tilang M1, 722-15)

The first kind of Saint gets an order from the Supreme Lord to go forth as a Guru, and He then takes birth; while the second kind receives the order to act as a Guru after he has been born. There is no difference in their spiritual powers or work. Both kinds of Saints possess full powers and use them when necessary.

Besides these two kinds of Perfect Masters or Gurus, all others, who work as gurus, are merely imposters. Many of them are selfish and proud and are worshippers of Maya, illusion. They use their knowledge as a tool and use the seekers after spirituality as their beasts of burden. Narrow-mindedness and religious prejudices are the results of their teachings. Gurus of this kind are dangerous. By their wilful and harmful actions, they give a bad name to the institution of a Perfect Guru — the glorious, unimpeachable and spotless Power.

Is There One Guru or Are There Many?

The Word is the Master of the entire universe, and the soul the disciple, which, having merged in it, becomes indistinguishable from it. In the sphere of unity and oneness, He in the form of the Word is the Guru of all the universe, but in the sphere of plurality, it is the person in whom the Word is manifest and who is granted the status of a Master that acts as a Guru.

Kabir Sahib says, “I know the secrets of that house and have been authorized by Him.” The story of how Guru Nanak, while in the state of deep meditation in the bed of the Veyin river (a large rain-water drain), was authorized to act as a Guru by the Supreme Being, is well known. Bhai Gurdas Ji says:

“Baba Guru Nanak was born with the gift; thereafter he practiced it assiduously.” (Pauri 1, 24)
Both Kabir Sahib and Guru Nanak Sahib were Great Masters. According to history, Kabir Sahib was born in 1398 A.D. on a full moon day near Banaras and his Light merged in the Eternal Light in 1518 A.D. Guru Nanak Sahib incarnated in 1469 A.D. at Talwandi in the Punjab and his Light merged in the Eternal Light in 1539 A.D. at Kartarpur. This means that Kabir Sahib manifested 71 years before Guru Nanak Sahib and that they were contemporaries from 1469 A.D. to 1518 A.D. Both of them taught the True Spiritual Path of Surat Shabd Yoga.

Similarly, Shamas-i-Tabriz and Maulana Rumi were contemporaries in Persia from 1207 A.D. to 1247 A.D. Guru Angad Sahib and Dadu Sahib were contemporaries from 1504 A.D. to 1552 A.D. Two other Great Saints, Guru Arjan Sahib and Dharam Das, were also contemporaries from 1561 A.D. to 1606 A.D.

It can be seen, therefore, that there can be several Perfect Gurus functioning at the same time. But for a person who wishes to become a Gurmukh or a beloved disciple, he must have one Guru only, just as a chaste woman has one husband only and remembers and thinks of him alone. A woman visited by a number of persons is a prostitute.

“Know the One, see the One, praise the One; believe in One, select One, and seek the One.”

A disciple should have one Master only. The disciple should continue to contemplate on the Form of the Master who initiated him even after the latter leaves this world, and he will succeed. The Master, when He initiates a disciple, takes His stand by him. He dwells in his heart. He is the ideal. The disciple will succeed because of this fact. He will gain inner experience. He will lack nothing. A Master never dies. He is imperishable. He is a principle or an ideal, which never dies. He merely gives up the body. A disciple may serve and live in the company of another holy man. He should, however, maintain internal connection with the Guru from whom he received initiation, and always fix his attention on His Form. He is present in his heart and will look after every one of His disciples. If one were to shift from one Master to another, he would never gain anything.

The Master or Guru of the Time

The Guru of the time is the Guru with whom the disciple has a living connection. Gurus of the past are no longer Gurus, because they are not living.

Both are necessary in their own spheres. By reading the history of the past Gurus and their beautiful hymns, we can realize the necessity of a living Guru and to some extent we understand His mission. The real benefit of spirituality, however, can only be had from the Guru of the time or the living Guru. The Guru who initiates a person is his present Guru or Guru of the time. Even if there be more than one Guru at one and the same time, a disciple should have one Guru only, just as a woman should have one husband only. Contemporaneous Gurus fill their respective disciples with their own higher consciousness. One cannot gain emancipation without this. Gurus stress the need for this again and again. Maulana Rumi says, “Do not rely on your intellect or ability or cleverness. Do not break your relationship with the prophet of the time.”
“Do not turn away from the Prophet of your own time; do not rely on your own self and your own efforts.”

Every Prophet of God emphasizes the necessity of seeking the Master of the time. He who has not, after due deliberation, searched for the Master of his time (in other words, has not received initiation from the Master of the time) who is the Regent and Viceroy of God and is a Perfect Guru, will remain lacking in true spirituality.

If we do not find the living Master, we will remain deprived of true spirituality. For this reason Maulana Rumi advises that one should follow Moses (the living Master) and God, and should not let pride harm his soul.

“Believe in the God of Moses and the Master: Let not your pride undermine your faith.”

True devotion does not grow without a Master of the time. When we have not seen the Lord or enjoyed His company, how can we love Him? Without love and devotion we cannot reach the True Region.

Some persons think that the teaching in the Adi Granth about the necessity of a living Master held good during the lifetime of the Sikh Gurus only. This matter deserves serious consideration. The advice of the Perfect Masters or Saints is for the entire world and for all times, and not for a specific period.

“Great Saints speak the eternal Truth, for all the world, for all the ages.” (Sorath Var M3, 647-1)

The command of an emperor is as good as the emperor. This command stresses the need for a living Guru.

“The Word is the Guru, and the Guru is the Word; the Divine Nectar is in the Word. Oh seekers, obey the words of the Gurus; the living Guru grants release.” (Nat M4, 982-12)

Bhai Gurdas Ji comments as follows:

“The Vedas and other scriptures are the shop of the Master, which enable a man to cross the ocean of the world. The reality cannot be understood without a Master. The Lord incarnates as the Master and makes us understand.” (Var 1, Pauri 17)

The inner secrets cannot be expressed in words, either spoken or written. They can be explained only by the Perfect Master of the time. He accompanies a disciple on his spiritual ascent and takes him across all the difficult stages of the journey.

“The Master helps in overcoming all the difficulties.” (Basant M5, 1185-15)

This work cannot be done by a Guru who lived in past ages. The formless Shabd takes form. The Shabd must take form. Incarnations have form. Perfect Masters are incarnations of the Supreme Being, the Timeless One. They are called Guru Avatars or Masters incarnate. Guru avatars are human in form. Bhai Gurdas Ji says that without a Master incarnate no one can know the Lord.
Without the teachings and help of a living Guru, the inner secrets of the path to the highest region cannot be known. Initiation is necessary to obtain knowledge of this path. Reading the Vedas and Shastras is not sufficient.

From the history of the Sikhs it appears that the Adi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs, was compiled during the time of Guru Arjan. Side by side with the doctrine of the Word of the Guru, or the Word personified in the form of the Guru, there have been living Gurus in human form who have bestowed initiation. Up to this very day the Khalsas or Pure Ones who have the inner Light, have this right to bestow initiation.

“When full Light appears in the heart, the Khalsas (pure ones) then know the most Pure One.”
(Patshahi 10)

The Necessity for the Living Master

The formless Lord pervades everywhere, but in spite of this, unless we become directly connected with Him, we do not receive any virtue from Him. Electricity is present everywhere, but we cannot derive any light or other benefits from it unless we know the location of the switch. Even if we know this, it is of no use unless there is a light bulb properly connected with the switch. When the connection is made, electricity does its proper work. It lights our dark house. It alleviates the heat of summer by operating fans. It cooks food for us. It runs our factories.

Similarly, if we are connected with the Lord, our actions will bear fruit. The Perfect Master is the Lord in human form. He is the Shabd personified, “the Word made flesh.” Unless we are familiar with the human Master, how can we realize His subtle form, which is the Shabd? The Shabd and the Perfect Master are the two means of taking the soul to its original Home. No one but the Master can reveal the secrets of Reality, and without Him no one can gain release from the bondage of mind and Maya. No one can meet the Lord except through the Shabd, and it is only the Satguru who can connect the soul with the Shabd. This is the only purpose of their manifestation in this world.

“The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.” (Bible)

The Perfect Master or Satguru has a very clear inner vision and can at once see who is fit for this Path. Those that are ready are accepted. He, in His Grace, chooses them and makes them followers of the Truth.

“When the disciple is ready, the Guru appears.”

When our soul grows weary in its search for the Lord, and is anxious to return to its home, when our eyes long to see the Lord and we hunger for Him, then, in order to fulfil our intense desire, He incarnates as a Perfect Master or Satguru. In order to release the seekers from their bonds He himself comes as a redeemer. He gives the seekers instructions according to their development, and connects them with the Lord.

The secrets of spirituality, or of the practical means by which the soul can become united with the Lord, are given out by the living Master only. This teaching is imparted through an unspoken language. There is no spoken language by means of which it can be imparted.
Religious books merely give a few hints about the ascent to the spiritual regions. The scenes witnessed by the soul with the help of the Master in the subtle regions cannot be fully described. The books, being inanimate, cannot help the soul in its ascent. In the writings of the Saints there is a reference to internal experiences. The bliss of these experiences can be had by internal progress and not otherwise. It can be achieved through the Satguru only. It cannot be had by reasoning. Holy books and Scriptures describe it to a certain extent only; but it cannot be experienced except through the living Master.

**Past Saints**

A patient cannot take medicine from a past physician, however proficient he may have been. No one can get his case decided by a past judge. No woman can marry a dead person and beget children of him. Similarly, Perfect Mahatmas came in their own time and redeemed those who came in contact with them then. After the expiration of their period they left the world and merged in the Lord. Before departing, they passed on their work to others. Only man can make another man understand. This is the law of nature. The Lord works in this world of matter through living persons.

Many believe that past Mahatmas are even now present in the spiritual regions and can help us. This matter should be considered calmly. Those Perfect Masters fulfilled their mission and merged in the Lord and left the remaining work to some other Mahatmas. One Mahatma finished His work and handed over the office of Guru to another, according to the direction of the Lord, so that the work of connecting the souls with the Lord and redeeming them could continue. Even if a past Mahatma wished to redeem a person, He would work in accordance with the law of nature and carry out His mission through a living Mahatma.

We can take the help of past Masters only after ascending to the regions where they are. We are, however, in this gross world, while they are in the world of the spirit. If we think that past Mahatmas can help us from the spiritual regions, we are acting on inner feelings, imagination and inferences. And unless our inner eyes are opened, we are unable to be certain whether our inner thoughts are from the Lord, from a past Mahatma, from some imperfect soul, or if they are only waves of our own subconscious mind. It is wrong to act on the waves of the subconscious mind, and one is likely to be misled by them. Moreover, when we have not seen a past Mahatma, the anti-power or any other soul can claim to be that Mahatma and deceive us. As we cannot positively recognize Him, we are likely to be deceived.

Let us consider whether it is logical to think that past Mahatmas can act as Gurus and that it is not necessary to have a living Guru. If a past Mahatma can do so, surely the Lord Himself could give the necessary spiritual instructions. Then why did any Mahatma have to come here at all, as the Lord could always do so?

If, however, there was a necessity for a Mahatma at any time in the past, it follows that there is a necessity for one even now, just as there was before.

If the Lord wishes to make people understand, He must take human form. This is the law of nature. He has to take the form of a Saint or a Holy Man.

“*The Lord took the form of a Holy Man.*” (Maru M5, 1005-8)
“The Lord showed great renunciation and took the form of a Saint.” (Kabir, Asa 476-14)

This does not mean that the past Mahatmas are dead. No, they are immortal and have crossed the gross, subtle and causal regions. They are united with the Lord and are indistinguishable from Him. If they are supposed to be wandering in the lower regions, what was the use of their perfecting the practice of listening to the Shabd?

It is no use getting entangled in long intellectual arguments. It does not help or carry us forward. Seek the guidance of a living Mahatma who can tell you the natural and easy method of uniting with the Lord. You need not wait for another life after you die here. If you try, you can succeed here and in this very life.

Complete and imperishable spiritual success can be had from a living Guru only. There is a dynamic power of higher consciousness in Him. His touch charges us and connects us with the current of the Shabd, and He helps us in the higher spiritual regions by accompanying us. That soul is indeed blessed which takes shelter with such a Mahatma.

It is obvious that if, for instance, we had to visit London, we would first consult a directory to find where it is situated and the route we should follow, where we would have to change and at which port we would have to embark, and to which company the ship belongs. We would have to obtain a passport, for if we did not have a passport we could not start our journey. Similarly, we have to obtain a “permit” from a Saint, the Deputy of the Lord, to enter the realm of the Lord. This passport or permit is initiation. One has to have the permit stamped with the seal of the Satguru, this fact has been mentioned by various Mahatmas in their hymns. Their writ runs throughout all the universes and regions since they are the duly appointed Deputies of the Lord. When we get their passport, no one can obstruct us in any of the universes or regions. Saints say if the seed of Nam is sown in any heart, it will certainly sprout and the initiate will certainly reach his original Home.

In addition to obtaining the information and papers needed for the journey, the other necessary measure to adopt is to follow the right path leading to your destination. If the right road leads to the north and one walks towards the south, one cannot reach the destination, however enthusiastic he may be. He will only go further away from his destination. It is, therefore, necessary to follow the right path.

When making preparations for a journey, we consult various directories. But if someone tells us about a person who has already visited the place and the country to which we want to go, we would not only consult the directories but would also consult that person, because he has seen and known everything for himself. If, on contacting him, we learn that he is again visiting that country and is willing to take us along with him, we would gladly accompany him. We can, to some extent, check his facts with those given in the directories. If the facts and directions are corroborated by several directories, we are all the more satisfied. The souls of the Saints visit the spiritual universes and regions. They can therefore, give us the information needed for our own journey to those regions.

“A Gurumukh comes and goes at will.” (Ramkali M1, 932-13)
Religious books are like directories. They simply point out the way. The Saints-incarnate take us to the higher regions in the ship of Naam. We can obtain tickets or passports from them and cross in their ship of the Naam or Shabd. They are themselves the captains. We can thus reach the region of the Lord.

It is good to study religious books, but the power that takes us across is the Naam or the Shabd, without which it is not possible to reach the region of the Lord. If we simply make enquiries and take no step forward on that path, we cannot reach the country of the Beloved. Bhai Gurdas says:

“The traveler enquires about the right path but walks not on it. How can he reach the land of the Beloved by mere talk?” (Kabi 439)

To try to walk on that path by oneself results in being led astray, and one has to repent for this mistake. If one has the Master by one’s side, one can easily reach the Home of the Lord and become intoxicated with its bliss. If it had been in our own power to go back, we would not have remained separated from the Lord.

“If we could meet Him by our own effort, we would not linger here to grieve in separation. Let us then find the company of a Holy Man, oh Nanak, and rejoice in His royal glory.” (Majh M5, 134-5)

If something that we want is at one place and we search for it at another, how can we ever find it? But if we take with us someone who knows the secret, we can certainly find it. The path which would otherwise take innumerable lives to cover is then traveled over in a moment. Kabir Sahib says:

“The thing you want is at one place, but you search for it at another; how can you ever find it? Oh Kabir, if you want to find it, take one with you who knows where it is. He will then show you the thing you want. It is a long, long way to go, but He will take you there in a moment.”

In order to learn how to cook well, one has to work under an expert cook. When studying medicine or engineering, one has also to do practical work. One cannot become a doctor or an engineer by mere reading. One needs the help of a teacher in all the external sciences. How much more is a teacher needed in the case of the abstruse and difficult spiritual science? For without a teacher, when we shut the eyes, we see only darkness within us. A teacher is needed to show us how to see the Inner Light. One needs a teacher in every line. Some say that no spiritual teacher is necessary, and that they can acquire spiritual knowledge by themselves. They are like a person who refuses to drink water out of the well of someone who is willing to serve him, but insists upon digging a well of his own. This shows that he is not thirsty as yet. Those who do not need spirituality do not need the Master either.

Bhai Nand Lal says:

“No one except a lover of rubies loves a ruby; he alone has the eye which can truly evaluate a ruby.”

We can further illustrate the necessity of a Guru by another example. One wishes, let us say, to fly in an airplane. But the pilot has locked the door and engine of the plane so that no ignorant person can get in and possibly be injured. A person who does not know how to operate a plane
does not even know how to board the plane. But even if he were to do so, the airplane would not start, since the engine is locked. Even if it were to start, the ignorant person does not know how to take it up or bring it down. Even if he were to take it up, he would not know the conditions in the upper regions. There would be nothing but certain destruction for him.

This human machine is wonderful. In the first place, the soul cannot concentrate itself at the proper place unless proper instructions have been given. Even if it should do so, however, it could not climb into the ship of the Shabd. Even if it should somehow be connected with the Shabd, it has no knowledge of the higher regions and does not know the direction to be followed in order to go up or to come down. If the pilot takes a new man with him in the plane, unlocks it, and takes him up on a few flights, the new man might then be able to fly the plane by himself.

For traveling through the spiritual regions it is very necessary to have a pilot who knows those regions and who has often traveled through them. If he is with us, the journey becomes possible. If such a Mahatma were to invite us to accompany Him and we should say, “No, thank you, we will fly our plane by ourselves,” we would be very unfortunate. Maulana Rumi says that it is very dangerous to travel on this path without a Master.

“Seek a Master for this journey; without a Master it is full of risks and dangers.”

The Naam or Dhun-atmik Shabd is an unspoken language. It cannot, therefore, be learned from books and Scriptures. We can only get this wealth from a Mahatma who gives initiation. He is the Shabd personified, and the Lord's Shabd will be manifest only through Him.

“Without a Master no one can attain the Shabd. The Lord has so ordained it.” (Maru M3, 1046-11)

“The Shabd of the Guru is controlled by the Lord; It cannot be manifested by anyone else.”
(Sarang Var M4, 1249-8)

The Master knows all the inner secrets. What He says is based upon His own experience. His testimony, therefore, carries great conviction.

“Listen to the testimony of the Saints; they say what they have seen with their own eyes.”
(Ramkali M5, 894-8)

The Gurbani attaches great importance to the necessity of having a Guru. In the hymn called “Asa-di-var” it is said that man has been sleeping for many lives. It may be taken as an axiom that no one, unless he has a True Guru, has ever reached the Truth, or will ever reach It.

“No one ever found Him; no one ever will find Him. He Himself dwells in the Master. He manifests Himself in, and speaks thru Him.” (Asa Var M1, 466-7)

“When the Lord is kind, the Master is kind. Man wanders in many births; the Master then attunes him to the Shabd. The Master is most bountiful; let all the world know it. Meet the Master, realize the Truth by giving up egotism.” (Asa Var M1, 465-2)

All the Saints say that no one can meet the Lord without a Master. The Lord Himself has made this irrevocable law.

“It has been ordained by the Lord since the beginning; no one can know Him without a Master.”
(Bihagaru Var M3, 556-2)
The Gurus say that God has given them to understand that no one can gain release without a Master.

“Oh Nanak, the Lord has so ordained; no one can gain release without a Master.”  
(Gond M5, 864-9)

The Master is the physician who gives us sight. The Lord is inside us. All the world is blind and works in darkness. If one meets a Master, he can then see the Lord inside himself with his own eyes.

“This world is blind; all work in darkness. No one knows the path without a Perfect Master. On meeting a Master, one sees with one's own eyes. One realizes the Truth within oneself.”  
(Sorath M3, 603-16)

Who are the really blind? Not those whose outer eyes are without sight, but those who are far from the Lord.

“They are not blind who have no sight. Oh Nanak, blind are those who are separated from the Lord.”  
(Ramkali Var M2, 954-15)

Guru Arjan Sahib also says that a man with eyes is blind since he cannot see the Lord who is so close to him, and fearlessly commits sins oblivious of His presence.

“He sees, tastes and speaks in ignorance; he hears and yet hears not. He considers that which is near to be far; he, a confirmed sinner, continues to sin.”  
(Suh M5, 741-3)

We see the gross world with gross eyes but our Third Eye or Shiv Netra is closed. It is only when the Third Eye opens that we can see the subtle, causal and other regions of consciousness, which are beyond the reach of the mind and intellect.

“He is blind and acts blindly. The Third Eye has not opened in him.”  
(Malar Var M1, 1289-18)

We are deceived by Maya and are blinded. We cannot see beyond the gross world.

“Deluded by Maya man does not remember the Lord; he suffers in this death-afflicted land. He is blind and deaf and sees nothing; he is self-centered and is consumed by his sins.”  
(Majh M3, 111-10)

It is impossible to enter and pass through the subtle regions by oneself. It is necessary to have the guidance of those who have already traveled there. Maulvi Rum says that if you wish to go on a pilgrimage, you should go with one who has already made the journey. The worries and difficulties of the journey will be reduced. It does not matter whether such a guide is a Hindu or a Turk or an Arab.

“If you wish to go on a pilgrimage, go with one who has already made it. Whether he be a Hindu, a Turk or an Arab.”  
(Maulana Rumi)

Masters are spiritual physicians and open one’s spiritual eyes. Shamas-i-Tabriz says:

“If you wish to see the manifestation of the Lord, put the dust of the feet of the Saints in your eyes as collyrium, for they can grant sight even to the born-blind.”
"If you wish to see the Lord, use the dust of the Saints' feet as collyrium. They have the power to make the born-blind see."

That collyrium is the Naam or Shabd. By applying it one can see the spiritual regions. Unless one applies it, he remains blind, and his coming to, and going from this world are of no use.

"Those who know not the Shabd are blind and deaf. Their coming here serves no useful purpose." (Sorath M3, 601-7)

Guru Nanak tells us that the Shabd enlightens us and enables us to see and realize the Lord.

"Learn this from Nanak; enlighten yourself and realize Him." (Basant M1, 1190-2)

The Lord is in every heart, but we are, as it were, suffering from cataract.

"He is in the heart, but we see Him not; such a life is a curse; oh Tulsi, we suffer from cataract."

Sight is a great blessing to us. A sightless person, longing for sight, cannot see and wanders about in the dark. If he recovers his sight by an operation, he feels greatly indebted to the surgeon. The inner eyes are millions of times more useful. Without them one cannot see beyond this world. One cannot see the Lord. Without Him we have been wandering from birth to birth. The Master opens the Inner Eye or the knowledge-center. This inner vision is most essential, but it is highly regrettable that we, engulfed in Maya, do not experience it.

Not only men, but even gods long for the Third Eye. They cannot make spiritual progress without it. Not to speak of their inability to see the Lord, they cannot even see their own mother, Shakti (primal force).

"Mother Nature conceived, oh wonder! and gave birth to three deities; one who creates the world, the other who sustains the world, the third who destroys the world. The Lord sees them all, but they see Him not; how strange!"

Gosain Tulsi Das says that no one can cross the ocean of the universe without a Master.

"No one can cross the ocean without a Master, even if he is an ascetic like Shankara."
(Tulsi Ramayana)

If persons of such high status require a Guru, what about the common man? He may try in millions of ways, but he can achieve nothing. Hence the Guru says:

"No one can find the Lord without a Master, even though he goes on making millions of efforts."
(Maru M3, 1057-8)

Tulsi Sahib further says that release cannot be gained without the Grace of the Master.

"Oh Tulsi, without the Grace of a Master, it is difficult to see the path of release, far off, beyond the physical bounds."
The Gurus, in their hymns, have placed great emphasis on the need for a Saint or a Master, saying that no one need have any doubt that anyone has ever crossed the ocean of existence without a Master.

“Let no one remain in doubt; no one has crossed over without a Master.” (Gond M5, 864-5)

This universe is an ocean. The Master is a ship and He Himself is its captain. No one can cross over without the Master. It is only through His Grace that we can meet the Lord. No one gets release without this.

“Guru is the ship, Guru is the captain. No one has crossed over without a Guru. One meets the Lord through the Guru’s Grace. One cannot get release without a Guru.” (Sawayye M4, 1401-11)

In the religious Scriptures of the Hindus the necessity of having a Guru is also strongly emphasized. In the Katha Upanishad I-ii, it is said:

“People cannot know Him simply by hearing about Him. The Mahatma who says anything about Him is a wonderful person. He is worthy and wise who gains access to Him. No one can realize God without a Guru.”

It is again said in the Katha Upanishad I-ii:

“God cannot be realized without initiation, however much one may meditate on Him. Unless you are initiated by a true Guru, you cannot realize Him because He is so subtle that He is beyond the reach of imagination.”

In the Chhandogya Upanishad IV, 9-3, it is said:

“It has been said by revered persons such as Gurus that without initiation we cannot comprehend our reality.”

In the Mundaka Upanishad, 1st Mundaka, 2nd part, Salok 7-12, it is said:

“Let a Brahmin, after he has experienced all these worlds which are gained by actions, acquire freedom from all desires. That which is eternal (which has never been made) cannot be attained by means of the transitory (which has been made). Let him, in order to understand this, take faggots (a sign of discipleship) in his hand and approach a Guru who is learned and who dwells eternally in Brahm.”

Without a Guru one cannot follow the directions given in the Scriptures.

The Svetasvatra Upanishad, 6th Chapter, Salok 23 says:

“He who is firmly devoted to the Lord and is also as greatly devoted to the Master as to the Lord will understand the hints given in this Upanishad.”

In the Manu Smriti, 2nd Chapter, it is said:

“A disciple should, both before the beginning and at the close of a lesson, touch with both hands the feet of his Master and obey his preceptor.” (Shaloka 71)
“Those who, without a Guru, learn the Vedas by hearing from others, are really thieves of the Vedas since their real meaning cannot be understood without a Guru, and one who wrongly interprets the Vedas goes to hell.” (Shaloka 116)

“Bow to him from whom you wish to gain worldly knowledge or divine knowledge.”
(Shaloka 117)

“He should stand with folded hands, having controlled his body, tongue, intellect, desires and heart.” (Shaloka 192)

In the Bhagvad Gita, Chapter 4, verse 34, it is said:

“You should prostrate yourself before a Perfect Master and carry out spiritual practices and serve Him. Only a Guru who knows the reality can impart this knowledge to you.”

We cannot gain knowledge of the spiritual path without a Master. It is very necessary to know a Master.

Jesus Christ said: “No man cometh to the Father but through me.” (Bible)

“He who does not know the Son, does not know the Father.” (Bible)

“He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me.” (Bible)

A search through the Scriptures of all the religions shows that all lay emphasis on the point that no one can gain release without a Guru.

“The Shastras, Vedas and Smritis all say the same; hold fast to the belief that there is no release without a Master.” (Gujri M5, 495-12)

The method of taking shelter with the Guru is the best method of realizing the Lord. Hazrat Mohammed said to Hazrat Ali: “Oh Ali! You are the lion of truth, a hero and a brave man; but do not rely on your own strength alone. Come under the shade of the fruit-bearing tree. From among the various methods of meeting the Lord choose the best: find out the loved one of the Lord. He will hold your hand, for He is beloved of the Lord. He takes the seekers to the Court of the Lord.”

“The Prophet said, ‘Oh Ali! You are a brave-hearted lion. But do not depend on your bravery. Take shelter under the tree of hope. Oh Ali! Of all the directions, turn to the ‘Shelter of the Lord.’ He takes His servant by the hand. He leads the seekers to His Court.’”

Maulana Rumi says that the mind cannot be controlled except by taking shelter with a Master. You should, therefore, firmly clutch the garment of a Master who has controlled the mind. Go and sleep under His protection, so that He will release you from this bondage. Sing His praises day and night. Search for this hidden treasure with the Saints. You should wander from door to door; roam in the streets and bazaars, and search for Him over and over again. As far as possible, do not turn your back on the Saints. Make an effort to know them as they are.
“Nothing except the Grace of the Master can kill the ego; hold fast to the garment of the Redeemer. Go and sleep under His protection; it may be that He will then grant you release; go on cooing like the cuckoo day and night; seek the secret of the hidden treasure from the Master. Go from door to door and street to street; search for Him time and again; do not turn your face away from the Saints; then leave the rest to God.”

Spirituality is a difficult path and cannot be trodden without the company of a Master.

The soul is covered with three sheaths, namely, the gross, subtle and causal bodies. One can, with the Master's help, reach the subtle and causal regions. His Original Home, however, is beyond the three regions, in the fourth region. There are many entanglements and obstructions in the gross region. If we reach the subtle region, there are numerous misleading and distracting devices there, and it is difficult to escape them. And beyond that region it is impossible to enter the region of pure consciousness all alone. To walk on this path is to tread on a razor's edge. There is danger at every step. He who wishes to know the reality or to get true knowledge and to meet the Lord should seek a Perfect Master who knows the way. It is said in the Katha Upanishad (I, iii, 14): “Arise, awake, learn the true knowledge quickly. Seek a Master who has knowledge of what is beyond, since the Mahatmas say that the path is sharper than the edge of a sword and it is very difficult to tread it.”

It is impossible to realize the Lord without a Master. A disciple needs the help of the Master at every step.

Maulana Rumi says:

“Search for a Master, because to tread this path without him is full of risks and dangers. If you tread this path without a Master, Satan leads you astray and throws you in a well. If the protecting hand of the Master is not on your head, then the voice of Satan will worry and lead you astray. Many wise men trod this path, but were led astray by the Negative Power (Kal). There are Shabds (Sounds) of Kal inside us, which are imitations of the Lord's Divine Sounds. They lead you to destruction.”

“Follow the Master, since without Him the journey is full of sufferings, risks and dangers; whoever went this way without a Master, was misled by the evil ones and thrown in a pit. Oh fool! If you have no Master, the voice of evil will keep you confused; the evil ones will lead you astray and cause you suffering. Many wiser than you have tried this path before. The voice of evil conies as the voice of a friend; it's a friend who leads but to destruction.”

We can cross this gross darkness through the merciful Grace of the Master only. When the soul leaves the gross region the Master accompanies it and helps it in overcoming all difficulties and pitfalls.

“The Master helps in overcoming all the difficulties. One reaches home safely and attains bliss.” (Basant M5, 1185-15)

The subtle and causal regions are like wastelands. Maulana Rumi says that you should not tread this path alone. Take a companion with you on the way. Do not enter this jungle relying on your own strength.

“You should not journey without a friend; do not enter this desert relying on your own self.”
Hafiz has also stated with great firmness that you should not go on this way without a Master, for without a Master it is dark and there is danger of your going astray.

"Do not tread this path without a guide; there is utter darkness. Beware of going astray."

There is Utter Darkness Without the Guru

There is utter darkness without the Master, Guru. The reality cannot be clearly apprehended because it is beyond the mind and the intellect. It expresses itself in an unspoken language. But the Master makes the disciple understand through contemplation. Without a Master, one remains entangled in ignorance. Falsehood appears to be the truth, and one becomes trapped in it. Here is no other way to reach the goal except through the Grace of the Master. Without a Master, success is not obtained and one is not freed from attachment, Maya and the three gunas.

"There is utter darkness without a Master; such a life is worse than death. It is like drowning in desert sands, a tragedy in a waterless waste." (Malar M1, 1275-12)

One does not gain emancipation without a Master, nor does one know the secret of true spirituality. What is learned from the Master is the secret of the heart and is practical knowledge. It is a practical matter.

"There is utter darkness without a Master. One cannot understand without a Master. Without a Master the soul is not realized. Without a Master release is not attained. Seek a Master, meditate on truth. When you meet a Master, the Shabd will remove all your sufferings. Let the Master dwell in the eyes. Let the Master dwell on the tongue. Oh! Praise the Master always. Nalh Kavi has said so. They who have not seen the Master, they have done nothing. They have wasted their lives." (Sawayyes M4, 1399-16)

Ordinary people are in utter darkness. On closing the eyes there is nothing but darkness. In addition, the darkness of ignorance pervades everywhere. The person who can dispel this darkness is the Guru. “Gu” means darkness and “ru” means light: one who can light up the darkness, one who can take us from utter darkness to the Light of Truth. The celebrated poet Kalidas says that the Guru is one who can produce Light in darkness and take one by the hand into the presence of the Lord.

"The Guru shows Light in the darkness; He takes one by the hand into the presence of the Lord."

Being in darkness, whatever one does becomes the cause of one's bondage. Saints say that very little is gained by reading or listening to religious books, the performance of formal religious practices and rites, worship, repetition, meditation and praising God's virtues. These do not give release from bondage. Kabir Sahib says that without a Guru, charities and the repetition of holy words are of no use; the Puranas and the Vedas confirm this fact:

"The counting of beads without a Guru; giving in charity without a Guru; all are of no use whatsoever. The Puranas and Vedas say it so."
Without a Guru all actions and observances are fruitless. Without a Master all worship is a waste. Unless the internal eyes are opened and unless one knows the reality, one cannot gain emancipation. It is, therefore, necessary to take shelter with some Guru who can turn us away from external practices and connect us to the inner practice of Naam and take our soul to its Original Home, beyond this lower universe of vast regions.

On meeting a Master, darkness is dispelled. He is seen as being radiantly present on all sides.

“On meeting a Master darkness is dispelled. He is present wherever one may look.”
(Ramkali M1, 877-1)

Even if there were hundreds of moons and thousands of suns, our eyes, if they had no sight, would find utter darkness. Similarly, there may be millions of Lights on the spiritual path, but unless our Third Eye opens it is all dark. The Guru Granth Sahib says that without a Guru these Lights remain hidden and the darkness persists. The Guru opens our Inner Eye and we begin to see the Spiritual Light.

“Even if there be hundreds of moons; even if there be thousands of suns; with all their light, there is darkness without a Master.” (Asa Var M2, 463-2)
Characteristics of a Master
Chapter 6

1. The Master is born in a particular country, and yet He belongs to the people of all the countries. Because He has a certain form, He belongs to a particular country, but He is free from the bondage of body. He can travel in the higher regions at His pleasure. He is a Master and a manifestation of the Shabd. He belongs to all. He is One with the Lord. He is present everywhere. He remains constantly with the disciple and helps him. He reveals Himself within the disciple.

“The Master is One with the Lord; He pervades all things.” (Sri Rag M5, 53-5)

“The Master is always with me; He frees me both here and hereafter.” (Vadhans M4, 588-2)

“The beneficent form of the Master is in my forehead; wherever I look I see it with me.”
(Dev Gandhari M5, 535-15)

2. The Master is immortal. He is the helper of the helpless and supporter of the supportless.

“Eternal is the Lord; Eternal is the Master; Eternal is the True Wisdom. He is the Lord of gods; He is the Lord of men; He is the helper of the helpless; He looks after those who have no other support.” (Ramkali M1, 934-10)

3. The Lord Himself knows His mysterious ways. The Master knows them also.

“I pay homage to the Creator of the world; He is unborn; His laws and justice are perfect and fair. The Creator Himself knows the reasons for creation; the other one who knows is the mighty Master.” (Ramkali M5, 930-5)

4. The Master is unerring.
All human beings make mistakes. It is a part of their nature. But the Master is human in form only. Inwardly He is One with the Lord. Like the Lord, He is faultless.

“All commit mistakes, except the Lord and the Master.” (Sri Rag M1, 61-7)

5. It may be said without any doubt that the Master can lead us to union (with God). He accompanies us on our inward and upward journey, and shows us all the regions, whether subtle or causal, and takes us to the Original Home.

“The Master was kind to me; He showed me the land of death. He showed me the under-world. He showed me the subtle world. He is 'Brahma'; He is unborn; He is; He shall be. He is found in the heart.” (Sorath M1, 597-19)

6. The Master is the greatest of the great. There is no one higher than Him. He can do whatever He wishes.

“Oh mind, dwell on the Master; no one is equal to Him. I know no one else; the Master unites us with the Lord.” (Sri Rag M5, 49-15)
“The Master is the creator; the Master is the sustainer. His words are true, and nothing is beyond His power. Whatever He wills, happens according to His wish.” (Sri Rag M5, 52-13)

7. The Lord redeems all the disciples of the Perfect Master.

“Knowledge is the Master's weapon; devotion is His sword and coat-of-arms; therewith He vanquishes Kal, the devouring monster. The Lord is the protector of the Master, and the Lord redeems all, when the Master so desires.” (Gauri M4, 312-14)

8. He is the True King. He is the Lord of Amrit, Nectar of Immortality, and devotion.

“The Lord is the treasure-house of devotion and ambrosia, and He dwells in the Master. The Master is the True Lord of treasury; He fills the coffers of His disciples with the wealth of Godliness.” (Asa M4, 449-16)

9. The Master is a jeweler.

The Master is the great jeweler; the ruby of Naam is His stock-in-trade. He can manifest Naam and thus redeem the disciple.

“The Lord's Naam is both a ruby and a diamond; the Master manifests it. The self-seekers are unfortunate indeed, not to know what a treasure lies hidden in the straw (human body).”
(Ramkali M4, 880-15)

“He who reflects on the self, recognizes the diamond. The Perfect Master gives a single glance, and thereby redeems the disciple. The disciple accepts the Master; and his mind is stilled. Such is our Master, of royal state, and a perfect connoisseur of jewels, that at a single loving glance He discerns the jewel within us and redeems it.” (Asa M1, 413-16)

10. The Master has the key to the temple of God.

“I see nothing but is clothed in beauty, bright and joyous; I see none but is a part of myself, not apart; for by the Grace of the Master all doors have been opened to me.” (Sri Rag M5, 80-13)

“Where there is no Shabd, darkness abounds. Nothing is gained there, and coming and going do not cease. The Master has the key; no one else can open the door. When one is fortunate, one meets a Master.” (Majh M3, 124-14)

“The Master has the key; the mind is a room; the body is the ceiling. No one but a Master can open the door, for no one else has the key.” (Sarang Var M2, 1237-10)

11. The Master is the true place of pilgrimage.

“The Master is the true place of pilgrimage; He constantly meditates on the Lord’s Name.” (Majh Var M4, 140-4)

“There is no place of pilgrimage equal to a Master; for a True Master is the Lord Himself.” (Asa M1, 437-3)
“The Master is a river of purity, and bathing in it rids one of sins. When one meets the Master, He gets the Holy Name; the animal is tamed; and turns into a god.” (Prabhati M1, 1329-1)

12. The Master is the Pool and Source of the Nectar of Immortal Life.

“The Master is a Pool of Nectar, the Fountain of Truth. When a crow bathes in it, He turns into a swan.” (Gujri M4, 493-2)

“The Master is a Pool of Nectar, and the fortunate ones bathe in it. The seekers come to the Master, as swans come to the pool.” (Sahi M3, 751-1)

“The Master is the Pool of Nectar. His depths are infinite.” (Gauri 2M5, 50-4)

13. The Master is the philosopher's stone.

“We are vile and sinful men of ego, suffering from the illusion of duality; but when we meet the Master, who is the philosopher's stone, we are turned into gold, and the infinite, pure Light fills us.” (Asa M3, 427-2)

“The Master is the philosopher's stone. The rusted, iron-like mind turned into gold after meeting Him.” (Sorath M3, 638-14)

“When iron contacts the philosopher's stone, it acquires its qualities, and turns into gold. The Master is the philosopher's stone; he who meets Him is benefited. Prahlad benefited by the Master's words. For the Master protects the honor of His devotees.” (Kanara M4, 1311-11)

14. The Master has controlled the five enemies, namely: lust, anger, greed, worldly attachment and pride or ego. Being one with the Lord, the Master becomes free from all mental defects.

“The Master meditates on Truth; Truth and the Master are One. He is the Perfect Master who has controlled the five senses.” (Gauri Var M5, 304-4)

15. The Master is free from enmity. He is above pain and pleasure, good and evil. Like the Lord Himself, he is without ill-will and wishes well to all.

“The Master is free from enmity; He sees the Lord in all. He seeks the good of everyone; and wishes ill to none.” (Gauri Var M4, 302-3)

“The Master is free from enmity; He treats all as God's sons. He removes our defects, and purifies our bodies.” (Ramkali Var M5, 960-18)

He is not grieved by suffering; He is not elated by happiness. He remains unperturbed. He transcends pain and pleasure and remains immersed in Naam. Poison or nectar, whatever comes in His contact, is filled with His sweetness; they do not affect Him.

16. The Master is always merciful.

“The Master is merciful and bountiful; He is always compassionate. The Master is free from enmity; He sees the Lord in all.” (Gauri Var M5, 302)
“The Master is always merciful. We get nothing but what we deserve. He looks after all with the same kindness; and we receive His Grace according to the measure of our love.” (Sorath M3, 602-6)

“The Master protects the disciple; He is always kind to those who serve His Will.” (Gauri M5, 286-14)

17. The Master forgives the sinners and backbiters.

“Without the Master there is no release; He is an old, old lover of the Lord. By His Grace He grants release, and forgives the sinner.” (Maru M1, 1027-18)

“To those who meet the Master, all sins are forgiven.” (Gauri Var M4, 310-17)

“Even if someone slanders the men of God, they do not forsake their virtues.” (Berari M4, 720-1)

“He who slanders the Master, but later takes shelter with Him, is forgiven for his sin. The Master admits him to His Holy Company.” (Bilawal Var M4, 854-18)

18. He is the Lord's intermediary. He unites the separated souls with the Lord.

“May I be a sacrifice unto the Friend, by meeting whom I meet the Lord.” (Ramkali Var M5, 964-4)

“As I had heard about the Master, so I found Him to be. He unites the separated souls with the Lord; He intercedes for them.” (Ramkali Var M5, 957-2)

19. The Master is the driver of the elephant-like mind of the disciple.

“The mind is the elephant, and the Master is the driver. His wisdom is the goad, and the mind does as He directs. The mind needs the goad always; for without the goad, it strays.” (Gujri Var M3, 516-18)

“Oh Kabir, the body is like a forest, and the mind is like an elephant in rut. Wisdom is the goad, and the driver is the Saint.” (Kabir, Shalok 1376-13)

20. The Master is the great boatman.

“The Master is the boatman, and the boat of the Shabd takes us across to land where there is no wind or fire, nor water nor any form.” (Maru M1, 1009-14)

“The Master is the boatman; rare are the men who understand Him. When He is kind, He takes us across the ocean of this world.” (Asa Var M1, 470-11)

21. The Master is one with Naam. He is the ocean of Naam and gives away Naam liberally.

“The Perfect Master is attuned to Naam; He is the boatman in the Iron Age. He who obeys the Master crosses the sea and gets attuned to Truth.” (Bihagara Var M4, 552-9)

“The Master is the Ocean of Naam; I long to see Him. I cannot live without Him even for a moment; I will die if I do not see Him.” (Sahi M4, 758-19)
“The Master gives the Naam of the Lord. He unites us with the Lord.” (Sri Rag M4, 39-18)

22. The Master gives the disciple the gift of divine life and directs him to take to devotion.

“The Masters are above birth and death; they come to the world to do good to others. They bless us with Divine Life and devotion, and unite us with the Lord.” (Suhi M5, 749-2)

23. The Master has eternal love for the disciple. He looks after him carefully. He cares for him like a mother. He helps him both here and hereafter.

“When a mother looks after her son, she keeps him always in view; she feeds him constantly, and caresses him every moment. So does the Master treat the disciple; He keeps him absorbed in the Love of the Lord.” (Gauri M4, 168-1)

“The mother is happy when the son feeds himself; the fish is happy when it swims in the water; the Master is happy when the disciple heeds His words.” (Gauri M4, 164-10)

“The Master helps the disciple; He redeems him here and hereafter. The Master loves the disciple, and protects him fully.” (Gauri M5, 286-16)

24. In the case of the disciple who practices according to the Master's directions, the Master comes at the time of the disciple's death and takes charge of him.

“Serve a True Master; for He gives protection. He comes at the time of death, and takes one along with Him.” (Maru Var M1, 1284-10)

How to Find a Master

A True Guru is found only through the Grace of the Lord. How can a blind man catch a man with sight unless the latter helps him to do so? Whenever the Lord is kind to anyone, He creates circumstances for him to meet a Perfect Master. One can do nothing except pray to Him, sincerely with love.

“When He is kind, one meets a Master. One remembers Him, and becomes One with Him.” (Malar M1, 1257-11)

“When the Lord is kind, the Master is kind. A man wanders in many births, but the Master rescues him by means of the Shabd.” (Asa Var M1, 465-2)

A master is found only by great good fortune.

“Those who are fortunate meet a Master.” (Sri Rag M4, 82-15)
The Benefit of Having a Master

The Gurus clearly describe the various benefits of having a Master. Egotism, pride and ignorance are destroyed. Thirst and hunger go away. Sufferings and doubts are removed. Uncertainty disappears. One is saved from the five thieves, namely: lust, anger, greed, attachment and egotism, and the fire of Maya. One becomes wise and gains knowledge of the three worlds and of his own self. One becomes happy, pure-minded and cheerful. The mind, which is engrossed in attachment and Maya, awakens. Desires are satiated. One obtains occult and spiritual powers, conviction and faith. One becomes happy and full of peace. One is always joyful, and the Lord dwells in one’s heart. One is steeped in devotion, attains self-realization and is dyed in Naam and Shabd. One is freed from the cycle of birth and death. One is honored in the Lord’s Court both here and hereafter. The Lord of Death is subdued, and one crosses the ocean of the universe and gains release. One treads the path that leads away from this world of delusion. The lotus of the heart blossoms, and one attains the stage of dying while alive. One ascends beyond Trikuti and attains the condition of sahaj yoga (preparedness for the state of oneness with God), suññamadhi (the trance of the void), sahaj gati (the condition of equipoise beyond the influence of Maya), the eternal region and ultimately the Original Home. One is honored in the presence of the Lord and is united with the Lord.

Guru Dev – The Radiant Form of the Master

The word ‘dev’ comes from the root ‘dev’, which means light. By Guru Dev is meant the Radiant or astral form of the Master. Theosophists also say that in the astral and causal planes the form of the Master is very bright and is visible for many miles. Tulsi Das says that the nails of the feet of the Master shine like diamonds and by meditating on them, divine sight is developed.

“The nails of the feet of the Master shine like diamonds; meditation on them gives divine sight.”
“Bal Kand 3”

Maulana Rumi says that when the Master dwells in your heart, you begin to see the past and the future.

“When the Guru appears in your heart, you know everything from the beginning to the end.”

A deep study of the teachings of the Gurus shows that by the Guru is meant the manifested incarnation of the Lord, and our need for such an incarnation has been stressed. A Master is really a Godman who is the manifestation of Divine Truth in the world.

“Oh Nanak, the Guru is the Lord; the Perfect Master unites the devotee with the Lord.”
(Kanara M4, 1310-17)

The term Guru Dev is also used to refer to the Inner Light-Form of the Satguru. This form is free and beyond the bondage of body and mind. It can be seen with the sight faculty of the soul only. When it appears, all doubts are removed and the disciple’s service bears its true fruit.

“My eyes were opened by the Master, and all my doubts were removed. My aspirations were fulfilled.” (Gauri M3, 200-10)
Guru Arjan Sahib says that this blissful image of the Master appears in the forehead.

“The blessed image of the Guru appeared in my forehead, and now I see it wherever I go.”  
(Dev Gandhari M5, 535-14)

This Light-Form remains with the disciple in the eternal regions as well as in the regions of Brahma, and unites him with Sat Purush. There is no difference between the Guru, the Satguru, and the Lord. These are merely the names of different forms of the same current of the Lord. Owing to the law of “like attracts like”, when the Lord appears in human form to redeem souls, he is called the Guru. His real form, which has existed from the beginning and throughout many ages and is very bright, is called Guru Dev. This form is very blessed. Satguru means the Perfect Master. This term is used to mean the True Being, Sat Purush who is manifest in the Satguru. The Gurus say that beyond Guru Dev there is the real form which is Satguru and Hari (the Lord), and that it is invisible and imperceptible.

“Oh Nanak, I bow to Guru Dev, Satguru, Par Brahm, Par Meshwar and Hari.”  
(Gauri M5, 256-5)

“The Guru is our Light and our Lord; His very sight is beneficial, for He is the perfection of all virtues.”  
(Bilawal M5, 802-11)

“He is beyond all praise; He is the all-powerful Master. The Master is Par Brahm Par Meshwar. He is limitless, unseeable and imperceptible.”  
(Gujri Var M5, 522-12)

“Guru Dev is unseeable and imperceptible; all the three worlds become known through His service. It was a gift of His own bounty that I could find the unimaginable and imperceptible.”  
(Bhairon M1, 1125-10)

In the human form, He is called a Guru (a Master authorized to teach). In his Light-Form, He accompanies us to the subtle, causal and spiritual regions and merges into the form of Satguru or Sat Purush and becomes indistinguishable from Him. The Guru Dev is the connecting link between the Guru and Satguru. When the soul gathers in one place and crosses the stars, the sun and the moon it finds the Light-Form of the Guru manifested. This form is like the bodily form of the Master, but it is extremely beautiful, radiant and alluring. When hinting at this, Maulana Rumi says that if you wish to see this form, you should travel towards your Original Home, the region that was visited by Hazrat Ibrahim, Abraham. You should pass through the big star and by your determined efforts transcend the sun and the moon. You will then be able to place your forehead at His Door.  

“Like Jalil, go towards the Reality; cross the star, the skies and the blue beyond; put your foot on the sun and the moon, and then place your head at the Door of His Court.”

Guru Nanak Sahib also hints at this spiritual path.

“From the east you should turn to the west, and should join together the sun and the moon.”  
(Ratan Mala, page 767)

“First go to the east; then go to the south. Then climb the mountain from the west after a full round; beyond the seventh region is the lotus throne, which is the seat of Par Brahm, resplendent with a wealth of infinite Lights. Oh Nanak, that is the land of perfect detachment.”  
(Ratan Mala, page 767)
Gather the soul together in the back of the eyes and cross the sun and the moon. Then rise up, walk round the seventh Puri (Sahasdal Kanwal), and pass by Brahm and reach Par Brahm, where there is the Jewel of Naam. He who reaches there is truly detached. The Light-Form of the Master is blissful. Guru Nanak has said:

“The wonderful form is blissful; it is shown by the Perfect Master.” (Maru M1, Sorath 1041-16)

On seeing that form the disciple cries out: “Wah Guru!” (Glorious Master) “Wah Guru!” (Wonderful Master).

This form remains with the soul in all the regions and universes. It takes on the form of the Shabd in the region of Brahm. It takes the soul to the Ultimate Home or Sach Khand (True Region). When this form appears within, all doubts are destroyed, the service of the devotee is approved and half of the task of the disciple is then accomplished. Thenceforth the devotee has to do nothing. The Light-Form is responsible for taking the soul to the Ultimate Home. The Saints praise this form and the bliss of contemplating on it.

“The Lotus Feet of the Guru Dev are dear; the Saints worship them with Love.” (Asa M5, 394-5)

“The Saints are filled with joy when they remember the Guru Dev.” (Gond M5, 869-14)

Khwaja Muinud-din Chisti describes the Light-Form of the Master as follows:

“Oh Master, on seeing Your moon-like face the sun is steeped in the water of shame, and on seeing the effulgent rays of Your cheek the moon has hidden its face. On getting the dust of Your path the sun has become bright and has built his golden throne in the skies. If even one ray of Your bright face were to shine in the skies, the sun would hide itself with shame. In the person of the prophet this sun or light of truth is manifest, just as the moon gets its light from the sun.”

“The sun saw Your moon-like face; and drowned itself in the waters of shame. When Your face arose, the moon hid itself. The dust of Your feet is luminous. The sun obtained radiance from it. It erected its golden tent in the sky. Beauteous are Your cheeks; if a flame from them shines in the skies, the sun hides behind a curtain. The Light of the Lord appears in the Guru. The moon gets its light from the sun; the Guru gets his Light from the Lord.”

Maulana Rumi also hints at the Master's Radiant Form:

“You do not know the emperor sitting in my heart. Look inside, and do not be misled by my outer form. You do not know my companion; you do not know the King inside me. Look at my golden face; look not at my iron feet.”

St. John described the Light-Form thus in the Bible:

“I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.” (Revelations 1:10)
“And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks: and the midst of seven golden candlesticks one like to the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. And his head and his hairs were white, as white wool, and as snow, and his eyes were a flame of fire. And his feet like unto fine brass, as in a burning furnace. And his voice as the sound of many waters.”
(Revelations 1:12-15)

“There is a hint about this in the Sar Bachan, where it is stated that the Guru showed His wonderful form which cannot be described.

“The Guru appeared in a wonderful form; it cannot be described.”

A pure heart is needed to see this form. It can be seen by pure eyes only. It cannot be manifest to every eye.

“See with the Inner Eye; His face is like the moon. Not every eye can see the glory of that moon.”

This form of the Master is everlasting, eternal and ever-existent. This has been so throughout the ages. It leads the seeker to merge in Sat Purush.

“Great is the Lord; great is the Guru Dev; great is the Eternal Being, who feeds the hungry lotus.” (Kabir, Gond 873-3)

“The Guru Dev is eternal; the Guru Dev is ever-existent.” (Gauri M5, 250-5)

Guru Arjan Sahib also says to the same effect:

“I bow to the eternal Guru. I bow to the ever-existent Guru. I bow to the Satguru. I bow to the Guru Dev.” (Gauri M5, 262-10)

The Guru Dev is the highest of all and is all-powerful. All happiness is gained by serving Him. By His Grace egotism is destroyed and one gains release.

“The Guru Dev is the most powerful. All happiness is gained by serving Him.” (Bhairon M5, 1152-14)

“By Your Grace egotism is banished. The Guru Dev is all-powerful.” (Bilawal M, 811-5)

The Guru Dev is true. His service is also true. All else is false.

“The Guru Dev is true; His service is true.” (Nam Dev, Bhairon 1166-15)
Guru Arjan Sahib has sung the praises of the Guru Dev in a beautiful manner. He says:

"Guru Dev is mother, Guru Dev is father, Guru Dev is the Lord and Parmeshwar (the Powerful One). The Guru Dev gives happiness and is a true friend who never deserts us. He banishes ignorance. He gives the gift of Naam. He is the manifest image of peace and of true intelligence. He is the philosopher's stone. The Guru Dev destroys all sins and is the redeemer of sinners. Holy is the spot where He sits; it is the true fountain of divine knowledge and immortality. One becomes pure by bathing in it. The Guru Dev is from the beginning, and has been through the ages. One is redeemed by remembering the mantra of the Guru Dev; His mantra is the Lord's mantra. Oh Lord! Have mercy and lead us to a Guru Dev. Take us sinners and fools, across. The Guru Dev is the Satguru and Par Brahm Par Meshwar. We bow before the Guru Dev."

"Guru Dev is the mother and the father; Guru Dev is the all-powerful Lord; Guru Dev is the friend who banishes ignorance; Guru Dev is the blood relation and brother; Guru Dev is the bountiful one who gives Naam; Guru Dev's mantra stills the mind; Guru Dev is peace, truth and wisdom personified; Guru Dev is the philosopher's stone; Guru Dev is the sacred pool of nectar; Guru Dev is boundless knowledge; Guru Dev is creator and redeemer; Guru Dev redeems the sinners; Guru Dev is from the beginning, existent in all ages; Guru Dev gives the mantra which saves, Guru Dev's company leads to the realization of the Lord; Guru Dev's Grace takes us sinner's across; Guru Dev is the transcendent Lord, the God of Gods; Guru Dev is the Lord; Nanak salutes Him." (Gauri M5, Bawan Akhri 250-1)

The Gurus mention various benefits that result from realizing the Guru Dev. Lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride are gotten rid of, and millions of sins and sufferings are banished. It removes all defects and raises the soul from a lower to a higher level. It extinguishes the fire of Maya in which all are burning. All desires are fulfilled, and actions prove fruitful. One is honored in the world. It redeems souls in the Iron Age, and the foolish and ignorant souls take to devotion for the Lord. They get happiness, peace and equipoise. One becomes emancipated, and redeems one's family also.

The Guru Dev can be realized only through the mercy of the Lord by a great good fortune.

The Perfect Master

In order to obtain the full benefit of spirituality, Saints and Mahatmas have, in their hymns, emphasized the need of a Master. But the Guru should be a Perfect Master. It is only a Perfect Master who can make us perfect. All the Mahatmas have, therefore, praised a Puran Master or Murshid-i-Kamil (Perfect Master).

There are stages of spiritual evolution. Unless you find a Perfect Master, your spiritual evolution will not be complete. If one desires to become a Master of Arts, one cannot do so by learning from a fifth standard or a tenth standard student or a graduate teacher, for they can take one only up to the stages they themselves have attained. In order to pass the M.A. examination we need at least an M.A. teacher. In the schools, we have different teachers for different classes. A student who passes the M.A. examination respects all teachers from the very first class onwards. Similarly, there are stages in spirituality, such as that of a Sadhu or Saint or Perfect Master.
In order to get the full benefit of spirituality, we need a teacher who has attained the stage of a Saint. A Sadhu, who is free from the bondage of body and mind and has transcended the three gunas can also help; but a Guru of this type places before the disciple the ideal of a Satguru. A person below this stage is not so helpful. A guru can only teach up to the stage he himself has reached. He takes the disciple there and not beyond it. It is folly to expect benefit from an imperfect guru. He cannot help you to find release. Guru Nanak Sahib says:

“Disciples are many; so are gurus; no release can be found through an imperfect master.”
(Ramkali M1, 932-11)

A Perfect Master may not have any university degrees, but His company gives something better than formal scholarship, namely, spiritual enlightenment. The Perfect Guru does not reveal all His competence on the first day. As the ability of the disciple increases, the Guru also reveals more and more. At first, He appears merely as an elderly person, but gradually He reveals Himself as a Perfect Guru. He does not stop there. He shows the disciple that He is merged in the Lord and that there is no difference between Him and the Lord.

Recognizing a Perfect Master

It is not easy to recognize a Perfect Master. We can do so to a certain extent by the signs on His body, His way of life, and the spirituality gained from Him. Some facts about these points are briefly given below.

He is always kind and treats all alike. He is free from prejudice and enmity. He is unaffected by praise or slander.

“The Master is always merciful; we reap the harvest of our karmas, but His gracious look alleviates pain. He reveals Himself according to the measure of our faith.” (Sorath M3, 602-6)

“Great indeed is the Satguru; He is the True Being. Great indeed is the Satguru; He is without enmity. Praise and slander are the same to Him.” (Shalok M4, 1421-9)

His Way of Life

The Master's way of life is of a particular kind, and it distinguishes Him from others.

1. The Master is bountiful. He is never a beggar. He does not hanker after anything. He earns His own living. He is a burden on no one. He maintains Himself, and helps the helpless and the suffering.

“He is no Master, who begs from door to door. Do not bow to such a one. He who labors and gives in charity, oh Nanak, he is on the right path.” (Sarang Var M4, 1245-17)

2. He charges no fees and does not accept any donations for His teachings. He imparts them free of charge. His teachings are free, like the other bounties of nature such as air, water, sunlight and so forth.
3. His ornaments are prayer and humility. Despite the fact that He is all-powerful, He does not boast that He can do anything out of the ordinary. He always says that it is the Lord who does something, or that it is being done by His Satguru. Truly, a fruit-laden branch bends humbly. He who considers himself humble is truly great.

“He who is humble is truly great.” (Gauri Sukhmani M5, 276-7)

4. He is not opposed to anybody and does not complain about the conduct of anyone. Even if someone bears Him ill-will, He forgives him. He does not criticize anybody, and He does not slander anyone. He loves everybody, including His enemies. He believes and lives up to the precept: “Love thy enemies”.

5. He is the radiant sun of purity, universal wisdom, truth and spirituality. He is spiritual, and seekers after spirituality gather round Him like moths and make their lives fruitful by obtaining spiritual benefit.

6. He does not dress in any particular manner and does not torture His body for controlling the mind. His method is quite different. It is easy and natural.

7. He does not perform miracles like a juggler to please His audience. Although He is all-powerful, He keeps His powers hidden. But He does sometimes use them if He is so disposed. His disciples are always benefited by His Grace.

The Structure of the Body

Certain physical characteristics are said to be possessed by a Perfect Guru. He has no physical defects. He walks like a chakor (moon-bird). His eyes are like those of a lion. He has a broad forehead, a lotus on the sole of His foot and a mole on His face. Hafiz Sahib says:

“If my Beloved of Shiraz (Guru) takes control of my mind, I will sacrifice both the worlds to the black mole on His face.”

“If that Beloved of Shiraz possesses my heart, I will sacrifice Samarkand and Bukhara to His dark mole.”

The Character of a Perfect Master and the Influence of His Company

1. By sitting near a Perfect Master and contemplating on Him the mind is inclined to get under control and is stilled to some extent.

“By seeing Him, the mind becomes happy; but how are we to see Him? The Saints are our friends, helpful and true; they dye us in His color and help us live in His presence.” (Suhi M5, 760-10)

Rays of purity constantly radiate from Him. He is full of wonderful Light and kindness. He has an indescribable influence on others. He has magnetic attraction. By His words, which are full of mystical meaning, He pulls the soul upwards. He produces an experience of bliss which defies description.

“If He were to give out the secrets of His mysteries; the souls would take flight towards the sky.”

(Maulana Rumi)
2. One finds a strange radiance and attraction in His eyes and in His forehead when one gazes at them, even for a moment. He feels a pull, and his attention gathers together and seems to ascend to the higher subtle regions from the gross regions. His consciousness expands and is elevated.

3. There is peace and evenness within a Perfect Master. As a result of being in His company, a current of bliss runs through us. We feel happy on meeting Him. All our doubts are removed and we feel certain that our ultimate destination will be attained.

“Such a one is the Satguru, on seeing Him one feels happy; that the doubts of the mind are banished, and the abode of the Lord is attained.” (Gauri M4, 168-10)

4. He is full of the Elixir of Life. His face is bright and radiant. His voice is attractive and the light in His eyes is both alluring and piercing. Powerful currents of life-energy emanate from a Saint and surcharge the surrounding atmosphere. His words have a strange influence. They penetrate the hearts of the listeners. The mere presence of a Saint awakens souls and redeems them.

5. A Perfect Master can, with a single glance, find out one's inner condition. He then instructs us according to our condition. When anyone visits Him He can see the visitor's inner condition as if that person were encased in transparent glass, but He keeps it a secret. Bees rush to flowers for their fragrance and honey; similarly, the seekers go to the perfect Master to partake of His wealth of spirituality and righteousness. No one returns empty handed from the bountiful Master. They bring back with them the seed of Naam which, sooner or later, fructifies and gives release to the soul. When one begins to visit a Perfect Master, his good days begin.

“When I met the Holy Man my good days began.” (Dhanasi M5, 671-11)

6. The Sant Satguru is the True Son of the Lord. To Him all religions, castes, faiths and sects are alike. He sees the same Lord in all living beings.

“The Lord Himself acts in this body of five elements (the body of the Saint).” 
(Janam Sakhi Guru Nanak – Journey to Mecca)

Without partiality to any religion or caste, He imparts the same message to all the world. To Him, all are the children of God, and He looks upon them with the same eye.

“The Satguru is merciful, and all are equal to Him. He looks upon all with the same eye, and he who loves Him, prospers.” (Gauri Var M4, 300-15)

He clasps all to His bosom.

“Oh Nanak, the Satguru unites all to the Lord.” (Sri Rag M1, 72-8)

He does not ask anyone to give up his religion and adopt a new one. He is concerned only with the soul. He does not mind what religion he belongs to. But it is necessary that you should have a desire for spiritual progress.

There is no question of religion or caste so far as He is concerned.
“I rejoice in the Shabd, which knows no distinction. It is the same for all, whether a Brahmin or a Sheikh.” (Kabir)

The Perfect Master fearlessly preaches the path of spirituality, which is free from the limitations of Scriptures and formalities and is present inside everyone. He is a true Haji, one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca; one who has seen God, who has made the upward journey to the Court of the Lord. You will derive spiritual benefit from a Perfect Guru wherever you meet Him. Maulana Rumi says, “If you wish to go on a pilgrimage, take with you someone who has experience of it, whether he be a Hindu, an Arab or a Turk.” Do not be misled by His outer form. Consider only His spiritual attainment. We do not have to enter into any outer relationship with Him. We must take instructions in spiritual science from Him and practice what He teaches us.

If you wish to go on a pilgrimage, take one with you who has experience of it; He may be a Hindu, a Turk or an Arab. Do not look at his features or color; look at his ideal and determination.

7. The Perfect Master is an incarnation of the Lord. Just as the Lord communicates His teachings to the Saints without the agency of speech, similarly, the Saints impart their messages to their disciples by means of internal experiences, and without the use of speech.

“Like God, the Master does not make use of speech or any material instrument. He teaches the disciple without speaking.”

The Master is formless like God and above the sphere of senses. He instructs His disciples without uttering a word.

The teachings of the Saints are imparted in an unspoken language, the language of the soul which, one soul conveys to another soul. The soul is a particle of God and His great mystery. It speaks without tongue or throat.

“The soul is a particle of God, and it is a secret of God. It can speak without a tongue or palate.”

It can function and act without the aid of any senses.

“He sees without eyes; He hears without ears; He walks without legs; He works without hands; He speaks without a tongue; He dies while living. Oh Nanak, He knows His law; He is one with Him.” (Majh Var M1, 139-2)

Maulana Rumi also says that in the higher spiritual regions these feet are not needed for walking, nor do we require a tongue for eating, wings for flying, ears for hearing or eyes for seeing.

“The soul travels without wings or feet, it eats without lips or teeth; it sees the universe with closed eyes.”

8. With Perfect Masters it often happens that seekers after truth have no need to put questions during discourses. They get answers to their questions without asking them.
9. Whenever the Saints manifest themselves, they preach the practice of Naam or the Surat Shabd Yoga (Yoga of the Sound Current) and clearly say that the Lord has never been and will never be realized by formal religious practices. He is inside your heart. Your heart is the true temple of God. You must search for Him there. The Lord can be realized only by going within.

“This body is the Temple of the Lord, and the Jewel of Knowledge is to be found therein.”
(Prabhati M3, 1346-4)

The body of man is a wonderful thing. If the Inner Eyes are opened, it is discovered to be the abode of the Lord, the temple of God. It is the true mosque wherein God is to be found.

“The heart is the mosque; the body is the true place of worship. And God created man to His own image.”
(Bible)

Why should men who have within them these natural mosques and temples, wander about outside seeking the Lord? This is not proper. Those who search for the Lord outside the body cannot find Him.

“The Friend is by your side; why are you so ignorant? Your Friend is within you; why do you seek Him elsewhere?”
(Maghrabi)

“In your head are beautiful gardens, and the company of great souls. Make haste and visit them; ask the secret from the Master.”
(Maulvana Rumi)

“They who search not inside the body are ignorant and foolish. They look for the treasure in wrong places, like the deer that looks for musk in the bushes.”
(Gauri M4, 309-9)

Those who search for Him outside the body are fools. They are like the deer which searches for musk in the bushes. Out of ignorance they wander in solitudes and wastes. Whatever is in the macrocosm is in the microcosm. You must search for Him inside your own self. We are mistaken when we search for Him in brooks, streams, hills, man-made temples and other places. We will not find Him there. If we know the secret of the path, we will find Him. We cannot, however, go inside without a True Master.

“Know ye by the Grace of the Master, the temple of the Lord is within you.”
(Prabhati M3, 1346-2)

10. The teachings of the Perfect Masters are wholly true and scientific. They are natural and practical. They are not merely the result of imagination and intellect. Whatever they teach, they teach with absolute conviction, for their teachings are not the result of mere reading or learning. They are based on their own personal inner experiences, and these experiences are common to all holy men. Their spiritual experiences tally with the experiences of other holy men. They do not ask people to have blind faith. They have themselves seen the Lord.

“But the Lord of Nanak is visible to the eyes (of the Saint).”
(Asa M5, 397-7)

“Namdev filled the golden cup with milk, and placed it before the Lord. Such devotees dwell in the Lord’s heart. The Lord was pleased; He drank the milk and the devotee went home. Namdev then had the vision of the Lord.”
(Namdev, Bhairon 1163-19)
They are true Hajis (men who have seen God). They say, “Practice the spiritual meditation and see with your own eyes.”

“The Beloved should be seen with the Inner Eyes, and His words should be heard with the Inner Ears. You will see His Light behind the darkness, and will understand His wonderful words with the ears of the spirit.”

Shamas-i-Tabriz says: “We should see the Beloved with our own eyes, and listen to His voice. When one closes the eyes there is darkness. One should see His Light behind it.”

You would then understand His glory as a result of your own experience. The Perfect Masters or Saints do not rely on Scriptures and books, for the Scriptures merely describe the experiences of holy men. Saints, however, are themselves the Vedas and the Scriptures personified. Books owe their origin to them. They are all this and more. The teachings of the Saints are free and true, and all bondage is banished through them. One attains immortal honor and distinction through them.

Guru Nanak Sahib has described the signs by which one can recognize the Perfect Master in His "Malar". He says:

“The real Master is one who shows us our True Home inside our body. He makes us hear the five Melodies that are ever resounding within us. All the worlds, the underworlds, the islands and universes are wonderful, as the sweet Melody of the Shabd, (Divine Sound) is resounding in them. The Melody comes from the Throne of the True Lord.”

Guru Granth Sahib advises us to hear that Shabd in the Sukhman or the Royal Vein, and attune ourselves to the spiritual regions. The Melody is indescribably sweet; on hearing it all worldly desires die out. When the lotus of the heart turns upwards, it is filled with this Nectar. When you drink this Nectar, your mind will not waver. Prayer will become automatic and constant and there will be communion without speech with the unspoken Word, which has been since the very beginning. All the seekers who realize the five Melodies are real devotees and return to their Original Home. Guru Granth Sahib says that he is a slave of anyone who seeks and realizes the Shabd and reaches his Home.

“He is the wise and True Master, who shows us our home within our body. There rings the Melody of the five Shabds; there is the beat of the drum of Shabd. The worlds, underworlds, islands and seas all make one wonder-struck. A deep and subtle Melody plays there, and a King sits on the Throne of Truth. Hear the Music in the Sukhman, in the region of the void, hear the unutterable Music, and the desires in the mind will die out. The lotus will be upturned and will be filled with Nectar; then the mind ceases to wander, and the eternal Music never leaves us. It is with us from the beginning through the ages. All who realize the five Shabds and go back to their Original Home, have found the Shabd which leads them Home. Nanak is the slave of such Perfect Masters.” (Malar Var M1, 1290-19)

All holy men say that the True Master is one who can attune the soul to the Shabd or Divine Harmony.

“The Perfect Master attunes us to the Shabd; He is all-powerful and all-pervading. He is above the illusion of Maya, and has not an iota of greed in Him.” (Maru M1, 1021-7)
A Perfect Master does not make His disciples engage in any external practice. His teachings are: “Go inside and attune yourself to the Shabd.” The sign of meeting a True Master is that the unending Music begins to play within the initiate.

“Oh Nanak, he who has a Perfect Master hears the Anhad Shabd (unending music).”

He who is attuned to the Naam is a Perfect Master. In this Iron Age, He is like a ship that can ferry the souls across. A devotee sets sail on board this ship and goes across the ocean of existence. He realizes the Truth within himself.

“The Perfect Master is attuned to the Naam; He is the boatman in the Iron Age. He who obeys the Master crosses over; for he gets attuned to Truth.”

11. Whenever Saints and holy men appear, they sometimes create an atmosphere which is not liked by the worldly-minded people. They do so, so that the slaves of the world and worshippers of mammon, who often gather round them like flies, may leave them, and the real seekers may not suffer. They intentionally provide some cause for criticism so that only the deserving will come to them.

“Should there be no keeper at the gates of the Master? There should be one so that worldly dogs may not crowd in. Slander acts as the Master’s doorkeeper, so that no undeserving soul may approach them.”

In the Janam Sakhi (biography) written by Bhai Bala, it is stated that Guru Nanak said, “Many Saints will incarnate in the Iron Age in order to redeem the sinners.” Bhai Ajite then asked what would be the signs by which they could be recognized, and would the people be able to find them? The Guru said that one sign would be that whenever Saints would incarnate, many impostors, who followed the formalities of religion, would criticize them. A few would follow the Saints, but they, too, would be criticized by the so-called disciples of the so-called gurus. People would forget the Yoga of the Sound Current and would read the written words and say prayers while kneeling. The Path of the Unending Music would be forgotten. Men would repeat other mantras and would not know about the Path of inner devotion. When the Yoga of the Sound Current would not be practiced, I will appear in the garb of Saints. When the practice of Anhad Shabd (Unending Music) commences, one could know that I was there.

12. When a Saint appears on the earth, there is a flood of spirituality. The true seekers gather round Him from all sides. All benefit from His teachings – the simple as well as the righteous, for they find a true satisfaction in the teachings. It even happens that some thieves, robbers and sinners also come to the Saints, benefit by their teachings and become holy men. The Masters act like a washer-man and wash away the dirt of our sins. They are living examples of selflessness and sacrifice. They rule the hearts of the people. Spirituality is preached by them on a grand scale. People throng around them by the thousands, and the world is wonderstruck by this demonstration of spirituality and devotion.

13. The Perfect Masters or Saints are powerful personalities. They look after their disciples whether they be near at hand or far away. This naturally creates confidence in the hearts of their disciples. Their hand is no less strong than that of the Lord. Their reach is so great as to transcend the seven skies. As the disciple's contact with his Master increases, he receives fresh benefits and sees new miracles.
Powerful is His hand; it is no less strong than that of the Lord. His hand has the power of God. You may be sure that His reach is so great that it transcends the seven skies.” (Maulana Rumi)

These are some of the signs of a Perfect Master which should be taken into consideration by a seeker.

Besides these, there are innumerable other signs which a seeker recognizes after being in His company for some time. Maulana Rumi says there are other signs which are known only to those who are acquainted with them.

“There are many signs to help one recognize a Saint; but only he who knows them can recognize them.”

When one goes inside, one sees the Light-Form of the Master and this form speaks to the disciple. It replies to his questions and remains with him constantly.

“The Master is constantly with me.” (Asa M5, 394-3)

The disciple then knows the Master intimately.

The world is full of the so-called “Masters”. But most of them hunger for fame and wealth and are not real masters. They should be avoided. A Master should be adopted only after a careful and balanced consideration. If one should find the above signs in anyone, it would be an indication that there is some reflection of the genuine truth in Him. Never try, however, to test a Master. When one meets a Perfect Master, the mind is stilled by His magnetic attraction. There can be no success without His help.

“Except for the Master's Grace, nothing kills the ego. Hold fast to the garment of that great mind-subduer. If you hold fast, it will be because of His Grace; whatever power you get, will be His.” (Maulana Rumi)

The Perfect Master is a person who is free from cravings and desires. You must surrender to Him all your mind, body and wealth so that He may make you like Him. How this body and mind should be surrendered is described as follows by Kabir Sahib:

“Surrender body and mind to Him who has no desires; who has given up all consideration for the self, and who attunes you to the Lord. Surrender of the mind means surrender of all, for the body goes with the mind. What else is left with you to give? Kabir has said: Surrender of body and mind is for your good; the burden is then removed from your own head. If a man asserts that he has done this by his own efforts, he is quite in the wrong. Surrender of body and mind means nothing, if the underlying desires are not given up. Kabir says to that seeker: How can the mind be controlled? When body and mind are truly surrendered, the desires should also go with them. Kabir says that he is without fear, for his mind is with the Master. His innermost thoughts are also surrendered at the Lotus Feet. Oh Kabir, these feet are those of the Master, I see naught else.”

A Perfect Master is a wonderful being whose worth is beyond description.

“A Perfect Master is glorious. Oh Nanak, may I be a sacrifice unto Him.” (Sorath M5, 618-14)
“The Master is very great; no one can truly evaluate Him.”  (Sorath M5, 514-15)

A Perfect Master is a highly realized soul. He has no feeling of duality. One is redeemed on meeting Him.

“His mind is enlightened; He has no feeling of duality. Oh Nanak, meet Him, for He redeems and sings the praises of the Lord.”  (Gauri M4, 168-15)

He is a helper of the helpless and a pardoner of the sinners.

“Be humble and lie prostrate before the Master; the Master honors the humble and blesses them.”  (Sri Rag M4, 41-4)

“No one remains here forever; it is so ordained. Time tears the body. This mind is full of defects, and the body suffers because of them. I am a sinful beggar. But the Perfect Master obtains reprieve for me, and forgives my sins.”  (Maru M1, 1012-4)

When a Perfect Master looks at a soul with a merciful look, the soul is redeemed.

“The devotee reflects on the self, and recognizes the diamond. The Perfect Master gives him a single glance, and thereby redeems him. When the disciple accepts the Master, his mind is stilled.”  (Asa M1, 413-16)

Bhai Nand Lal says that one life-giving look of the Master is sufficient.

“A single life-giving look of the Master is quite sufficient for redeeming the disciple.”

Whatever the Perfect Master desires is approved by the Lord and comes to pass in this world.

“Whatsoever the Perfect Master prays for, is heard by the Lord. It pervades everywhere, and is in every heart and on every tongue.”  (Bilawal M4, 856-12)

The power of the Master is the Shabd. It is eternal.

“Perfect is the Master; perfect is His power; His Word is eternal; It lives forever.”  (Prabhati M5, 1339-19)

How Can a Perfect Master be Found?

The Perfect Master is found only through the Grace of the Lord.

“He to whom the Lord is kind meets a Perfect Master.”  (Sorath M5, 640-16)

“Oh Nanak, when the Lord is merciful, then a Perfect Master meets you.”  (Shalok M4, 1421-19)

Many aspire to get a Perfect Master, but only he, who is so destined, meets Him.

“He alone finds a Perfect Master, whose destiny is so ordained.”  (Gauri Var M4, 307-19)
How is the ground prepared for meeting Him? When one sincerely aspires to meet the Lord, the Master appears.

“He who has sincere devotion in his heart, meets a Perfect Master.” (Bhairon M3, 1129-14)

The Signs of Meeting a Perfect Master

There are many signs for ascertaining that one has met a Perfect Master. The most significant of these is that one gets a first hand-experience, a living contact with Naam, the Light of God and the Voice of God. The wish of the Master (which, in fact, is the wish of the Lord, since the Master is merged in the Lord and there is no distinction between them) becomes the willing duty of the disciple. He then treads the path of obedience and submission.

“You Law is infinite, and nobody can fully comprehend it; he who meets a Master, treads the path ordained by Him.” (Asa M5, 396-15)
Oneness of Guru, Guru Dev, Satguru and Lord

Chapter 7

It is said in the Scriptures that Akal Purush is without form. He sees without eyes, works without hands, walks without feet and hears without ears. He is present everywhere but is not visible. He is beyond the reach of intellect or imagination, for they function within human limitations. How is one to meditate on Him and to become acquainted with Him? For, in actual fact, one can love only one's fellow human beings.

“Birds of a feather flock together, pigeons with pigeons, and falcons with falcons.”

Birds love birds, animals love animals, and man loves man. In order to still the mind, we must have something before the eyes as an objective. To fulfil this need of human beings, Rama, Krishna and others came to this world as incarnations of Kal, in the form of human beings, and Saints come as incarnations of Sat Purush, also as human beings. In an inspired line, a Persian mystic says:

“Since He is God, He comes Himself.”

This is true. God does reveal Himself to us. We are helpless and have no access to the Lord. He is all powerful. But in spite of His being formless, He reveals His Light in the human body and thus manifests Himself. He appears amongst us in the form of a Perfect Saint and becomes the means of uniting us with the Lord. The Satguru is the being through whom the Lord sends His message to us in this world. The Gurus have therefore repeatedly praised the Satguru and they say that the Lord is manifested in Him and that if you wish to be united with Him you must take shelter with the Master. There is no other means of success.

“Know ye the Master and the Lord to be one; the Lord accepts one whom the Master loves.”
(God M5, 864-11)

“The Master is sent by the Lord; the Master is the true sustainer. If the Master is pleased, everything is yours. Nanak would gladly sacrifice himself unto Him a thousand times.”
(Gauri M5, 218-9)

What is the Meaning of Oneness?

The oneness of the Master with the Lord means that his essence is merged in the essence of the Lord, and they are One. The Lord is infinite. He pervades everywhere. The Master is the point where He is manifest, and the whole world derives spiritual Light from him. The Master, so to say, is the bulb in which the electric light is made to appear. The Lord enlightens the people of the world by this bulb. The Master is not the body. He transcends it. The disciple is also not the body. When he transcends the bondage of the body, he sees the glory of the Master. The Satguru is the place where the sun of Reality rises. One of the Saints says:

“He has hidden a sun in man.”
The True Master is hidden in the human body. He radiates the Light of the Lord. This body is not sufficient to manifest His light and beauty. In order to know Him as he really is, we have to rise above the body. His eyes are the windows of the Lord’s Home, and in them shines His Light. We cannot understand it by any worldly example.

The Perfect Master remains intoxicated without wine and satisfied without food.

"The Man of God remains intoxicated without wine; the Man of God remains satisfied without any meal." (Maulana Rumi)

His eyes remain fixed on the vision of the Lord, and his hand is the hand of the Lord.

"His eyes are fixed on the vision of God; His hand is the hand of God." (Maulana Rumi)

The Master is not a creature of this world and is not in the bondage of this body. He goes beyond all the lower worlds and regions, the mind and the intellect, and lives and moves in the spiritual regions. And He, in his mercy, gives eyes to thousands of persons to see inner sights and cross these regions.

The living Master is one with the Lord. He is the true manifestation of the Lord in this world. He has been given the duty of working for the salvation of its creatures. He is the manifestation of the Shabd. He is the source of love. He is the incarnation of bliss and peace. Only man can guide man. This is the law of nature. The Master assumes human form according to this law, so that he may persuade people and unite them with the Lord through his own strength. He can every day, or whenever he likes, enjoy the bliss of the innermost and highest regions of Light and Life.

The Sikh Gurus and other holy men have clearly stated that there is no difference between the Master and the Lord. In fact they are one.

"The Lord is infinite, transcendent and powerful. Oh Nanak, He is met in the form of the Master." (Sorath M5, 599-6)

"My Guru is true and eternal; He does not come and go; He is the imperishable one. He pervades all." (SuhI M5, 759-7)

How can the Master’s greatness be described? He is from the beginning and has been throughout the ages. He is the very Lord.

"How can the Guru be praised? He is the pool of wisdom and truth; He has existed throughout the ages from the beginning. He is the very Lord." (Asa M5, 397-1)

The Gurus say:

"We have churned the ocean of the body and have made the wonderful discovery that the Master is the Lord and the Lord is the Master. There is no difference between them."

"We churned the sea of the body, and saw a wonderful sight. The Lord is the Guru and the Guru is the Lord. Oh Nanak, there is no difference or distinction." (Asa M5, 442-18)
The Lord lives in the Master.

"The Creator Himself is in the Master; the Lord is manifested in the Master. Myriads of men are redeemed by Him." (Maru M1, 1024-9)

"Without the Master love does not awaken in the heart, try as you may. The Lord has enshrined Himself in the Master, and the Master unites us with Him. All homage to the Master!" (Maru M4, 996-13)

"The slanderers come to grief and suffering; there is no difference between Namdev and the Lord." (Namdev, Bhairon 1166-12)

Kabir Sahib says, “I have become one with the Lord. My mind is filled with the joy of union.”

“I and You, my Lord, are now One. My mind is filled with the joy of union.” (Kabir, Gauri 339-8)

He again says, “Ram and Kabir are united and nobody can distinguish between them.”

“I have ascended to the Lord’s throne, and have met the Supreme Music-Maker. Rama and Kabir are now One, no one can distinguish between them.” (Kabir, Ramkali 969-16)

The Lord and the Master are one.

“The Lord and the Master are One; oh Nanak, the Lord loves the Master.” (Maru M1, 1043-9)

“The Master and the Lord are One; He pervades everywhere.” (Sri Rag M5, 53-5)

“The wave goes back to the ocean; the Lord and His servant are One.” (Sarang M5, 1209-17)

“Oh Nanak, the devotee and the Lord are One; by remembering the Lord, one merges in Him.” (Vadhans M4, 562-6)

“Oh Nanak, the Saint and Hari (the Lord) are One; remember Him, blessed is His Naam.” (Sri Rag M4, 79-6)

“There is no distinction between the Saint and the Lord; there is barely one like Him in a million.” (Gauri M5, 208-17)

“The Lord and His servant merge and become One; the Lord and His servant are alike.” (Asa M4, 447-15)

The Lord and His devotees are one. Let there be no doubt about this. The Saint is like the wave, which is nothing but a rise of water and not different from it.

“The Lord and His devotees are One; there is no difference between them. The wave rises from the water, then it subsides in it.” (Dasam Granth)

The drop, when it falls into the ocean, becomes one with the ocean. The Lord is wonderful. The Master is the means of manifesting Him.

“The transcendent Lord is wonderful, and the Master is His image.” (Bhairon M5, 1152-15)
All religious books say that there is no difference between the Master and the transcendent One.

“*Oh Nanak, I have studied the Smritis and the Vedas; there is no difference between the transcendent One and the Master.*” (Bhairon M4, 1142-9)

The Lord is the Shabd, (or the Word made flesh). He pervades the Master as the Shabd. He distributes the gift of Shabd through the Master. He is the Incarnation of the Shabd.

“The Lord Himself pervades the Guru; He pervades as the Shabd. The Master loves the True One, and He merges in the True One.” (Malar Var M1, 1279-14)

The Master is One with the Lord, as is the Shabd.

“The Lord Himself is the Master and the Shabd. He has loved the devotees through the ages.” (Gauri M3, 246-7)

“The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, full of Grace and Truth.” (Bible)

There is no difference between the Guru, Satguru and the Lord.

“There is no difference between the Perfect Master and the Lord; devotion to them is crowned with happiness.” (Sri Rag M4, 77-5)

The Master is the True Being who repeats the Naam of the Lord, on hearing which the souls are redeemed.

“The Perfect Master is the True Being; He repeats the Naam of the Lord. He who hears what He says is released; may we be a sacrifice unto Him.” (Dhanasari M3, 667-6)

The Perfect Master is eternal and everlasting. He is free from birth and death. He is never-changing. He is never destroyed. He is sustained by the Naam or Power of God.

“The Master is eternal; He does not come and go. He is the imperishable One; He pervades all.” (Suhi M4, 756-7)

“The Master is unchanging; His mind is still. He is sustained by Naam.” (Sarang M4, 1199-5)

The Perfect Master is a manifestation of the Lord. His words are nectar and make men immortal.

“The Perfect Master is the image of the Lord, and His words are nectar.” (Malar M5, 1264-6)

The Master, being one with the Lord, is the creative cause of the universe. He sustains the entire universe and its living beings.

“The Master is the creator; the Master is the sustainer; His words are true.” (Sri Rag M5, 52-13)

“The Master is the Lord, the Creator. He is the sustainer of the entire universe.” (Suhi M5, 741-12)

“The Master is a fountain of happiness; the Master is the creator. He is the life of the souls; Nanak is sustained by the Master.” (Gauri M5, 187-12)
Tulsi Das Ji says:

“I bow at the holy feet of the Master. He is the ocean of compassion and mercy. He is, in reality, the Lord in human form. His words, like the rays of the sun, dispel the thick darkness of attachment.”

“One day, Lord Christ asked his disciples:

“But whom do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said: “Thou art Christ, the son of the living God.” And Jesus answering said to him: “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (St Matthew 16:15-18)

On another occasion he spoke more clearly to them. Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long a time with you; and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also. How sayest thou, show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?” (St John 14:8-10)

Jesus also said:

“I and the Father are one. He that seeth me hath seen the Father. This that I tell you I do not say of my own, but the Father abiding in me doth His works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.”

Guru Arjan Sahib, when speaking of his oneness with the Lord, clearly stated:

“My temple is the highest. My region is endless. My Kingdom is an everlasting one. My wealth is immense and is not subject to decay. My glory has existed throughout the ages. My followers are at every place. I am praised in every home. Devotion is given to me in all the lands. The Lord is manifest within me. The Father has become one with the son. When the Father is pleased, He and the son are dyed in the same color.”

“My temple is the highest of the high. My region is endless and indescribable. My kingdom is eternal. My wealth is immense and everlasting. My glory resounds throughout the ages. My glory is manifest everywhere. My praise rings in all homes. All the people give me devotion. My Father is manifest within me. The Father and the son have become one. Oh Nanak, God, my Father, loves me. The Father and the son are blended in the same hue.” (Bhairon M5, 1461-13)

Hindu Scriptures also say the same thing.

“The Master is Brahma; the Master is Vishnu; the Master is Maheswara; the Master is the transcendent One. I bow to such a Master.”
A drop merges in the sea and becomes the sea. It is so stated in Mandakya Upanishad.

“As the flowing river disappears in the sea, losing its name and its form, thus a wise man, freed from name and form, goes to the Divine Saint, who is greater than the great. He who knows that highest Brahm also becomes Brahm. That Divine Being manifests in his body. How can He who pervades everywhere confine Himself to one place, and how can the Infinite Being be limited to the human body? In this connection Lord Krishna says in Verses 24 and 25 of Chapter 7 of the Gita:

“The undiscerning think that I am the unmanifest that has come to manifestation; they do not know my higher being, immutable, supreme. Veiled by Maya, I am not known to all. This world is deluded and does not recognize me as unborn and immutable.”

He again says in Chapter 9,

“I pervade all the universe in my unmanifest form; all beings are sustained by me, but I do not depend on them. Fools scorn me because I have taken the human form. My higher being is not known to them.”

The Muslim holy men also say that the Master is, in fact, the Lord. Maulana Rumi says that the hand of the Master is not smaller than that of the Lord. It wields His very same power. His reach is very long and extends beyond the seventh heaven. His hand is connected with the Lord. No one can imagine His grandeur. He is a brilliant sun hidden in the form of a man. Try to know Him as He really is.

“Powerful is the Master’s hand; it is not less strong than that of the Lord; His hand is the power of God. One should believe in its greatness for it extends to the highest heaven. In His palm flows the Eternal Current; the Lord is without rival or partner in His grandeur. He has hidden a sun in man. Know the Master as He is.” (Maulana Rumi)

Maulana Rumi again says:

“The Light of the Lord shines in the Master. We look at His manifest human form and therefore do not know that He is in fact the Lord Himself. He has assumed the form of a man, but in reality He is the Lord.”

“The Light of the Lord shines in the Master. You can see this if you master your mind.”

He further says that the Lord has said that He is very vast. He cannot be contained in the hills, dales, lands and skies and so forth. It is curious, however, that He is contained in the heart of a Master. In other words, the ocean is contained in a pot. If you want to search for Him, look for Him there.

“The Prophet said, ‘God has told me, I do not live high nor low. I do not live in land or skies, nor do I live in heavens. Believe me, my dear, I live in the hearts of Saints. If you want me, go and seek in those hearts.’”
In his manifested form the Master is human, but His soul is one with the Lord.

"His body is in this material world, but His soul is in the heavens. He is beyond the ken of matter and mind."

Shams-i-Tabrez says that the Perfect Master is the King of kings. The Lord has closed the doors to His abode and is sitting behind them. But He manifests Himself in human form as a Perfect Master and comes to earth to open the doors.

"That Great King is sitting behind firmly closed doors, but He Himself takes the form of man and opens them."

Bulleh Shah says that the Lord comes in human form to awaken the people.

"God has come in human form; He has come to awaken the people."

The Gurus say to the same effect:

"The Lord has come in human form; He is called Ram Das (Servant of God)." (Sorath M5, 612-7)

"Our Lord is very wise and is called a Saint." (Kabir, Asa 476-14)

"Oh Pipa, Om is the real essence. Only a Perfect Master can reveal it." (Pipa, Dhanasri 695-15)

"The Master is the immaculate Lord; do not consider Him to be a human being." (Ramkali M5, 895-5)

"The servant of the Lord is like the Lord Himself. The form makes no difference." (Maru M5, 1076-3)

Bhai Gurdas says:

"That One took form, and was called Guru Gobind. The formless One assumed form; He is One, but appears as many. " (Var 25, Pauri 1)

He who imparts to you true knowledge, know Him to be the Lord. He is the real Shabd. Consider Him to be One with the Lord.

"He who imparts the true knowledge, know him to be the Lord. He is the true Shabd; He is One with the Lord." (Basant M3, 1174-17)

When a blackbird is being taught to speak, a mirror is placed before it and a man hides behind it and speaks. The blackbird looks at its own reflection in the mirror and thinks that someone of its species is sitting there before him and speaking. Similarly, the Lord is hiding behind the garb of the Saints and speaks through them. The Lord is indescribable and wonderful. He has to take a human form to manifest Himself to the human beings. How can He communicate with human beings without a body? Kabir Sahib says that Brahm speaks under the cover of body and cannot speak without it. How can one see a personality who has no attributes unless it takes a form like us?
The body of a Master walks on this earth, but His soul soars to the seven skies. He is human in outer form, but God speaks through Him. He is in reality God. He is God plus man, that is, a Godman. He is the string that connects us with God. The Master is the Shabd-personified, but He has to take a human form so that He may make us understand Him.

It is said that the King of Russia, Peter the Great, went to Holland to learn the art of ship-building. He disguised himself as a workman. There were many Russians who had fled from his tyrannical rule there, and he talked to them of Russia and advised them to return to their homes. They also felt like returning. They said, however, that the Czar had turned them out and that therefore they could not return. Peter told them that the Czar was his friend, that he would recommend them to him, and that the Czar would agree. When Peter, after learning the art of ship-building, made ready to return home, those who believed his words accompanied him. When Peter entered the country, everyone bowed down and showed him great respect. This encouraged his companions to believe that he would make the Czar feel favorably disposed towards them and would give them permission to live in Russia. When they reached the capital, Peter left his companions and asked them to see the Czar in his court. When they went there, they were wonder-struck at seeing him sitting on the Czar's throne. They had believed him to be a laborer like themselves, and did not know that he was the Czar. They then felt grateful that the Czar had brought them home in the guise of a laborer.

The position of a Master is similar. He takes on human form to take human beings to their original home. Outwardly, He appears to be a prisoner amongst other prisoners; but in reality He is the king of all regions and universes. He is not a prisoner. He is, no doubt, in the guise of a prisoner; but He is here for redeeming the prisoners and has come here to free them of their bondage.

Guru Arjan Sahib says: “He who sent you is calling you back home to enjoy the bliss of the eternal kingdom.”

“He who sent you calls you back. Travel happily and return home comfortably. Sing the bliss of union with the Lord. Enjoy the eternal kingdom. Come home, oh friend. The Lord will remove your sufferings. Your troubles will be ended. The Lord is manifested in the Master. He destroys and removes suffering. The welcoming music is playing, and the Lord will welcome you there. Be firm and have no doubts; the Word of the Master will sustain you. His glory pervades the world. His court is resplendent. He sent us into this life, and it is He who is calling us back. The Creator has done a wonder. Oh Nanak, all glory be to Him, the True One.” (Dhanasri M4, 378-2)

When Rani Inderamati, by intense meditation, reached the True Region, she saw that Kabir Sahib was sitting in the place of the True Being. She said, “Oh Lord, why did You not tell me earlier that You were the True Being, and I would have recognized You.” Kabir said, “How could you have believed at that time (before you had developed spiritually)?”

All the Saints who have reached the true and nameless regions are one with the Lord. When this is so, how can one be great and the other small? All are the same. If we consider one to be greater and the other smaller, it is our mistake.

“He who differentiates between one Saint and another, goes to the region of hell.”
Millions of people visit a Master and see Him. They hear His discourses and describe Him according to their own respective understanding. They call Him a kindly gentleman or a philosopher or a learned man or a wise moralist. They comfort themselves by so describing Him. But there are very few amongst them who see the Lord in Him. Everyone praises Him according to his own degree of understanding. If the Master were only a man, he could give us nothing more than human virtues. But in fact He is more than human. One who is not developed inwardly, fails to recognize Him. He reveals Himself only to those who are sufficiently developed. He whose eye is not trained cannot recognize Him. How can a blind man see or recognize another person by his face? Unless the Lord or the True Being is Himself kind to a person, that person will not recognize the Guru as Guru. Unless the Perfect Master, who is Truth incarnate, reveals Himself, one cannot recognize Him. Even if the Master should live next door, an undeveloped person would not know Him. Very often, the members of a Perfect Master's own family fail to recognize His stature.

No one can recognize Him without good fortune. But one who recognizes Him, recognizes the Lord. Bhai Nand Lal says:

“The Lord is ever present. See His holy vision.”

When the seeing Inner Eye is opened or the Lord Himself makes Himself known, then one begins to feel the reflection of the Lord within him. The only object of Simran (repetition) is to open the seeing Inner Eye so that we may be able to see the Lord everywhere and in the Master, where He is manifest. But this is possible only by the Lord's Grace.

The Gift of the Lord and the Master

The spiritual Path is not easy. It is, in fact, very difficult. It is said in the Katha Upanishad:

“Arise, awake. Go to the holy men and get knowledge from them. The learned say that this path is sharp as a razor's edge and it is difficult to tread it.” (Katha Upanishad 14)

In the Holy Quran, the path is described as the Pul Sirat, Razor Bridge which is sharp as a razor's edge and narrow as a hair. Bhai Gurdas also says that following the Master is like treading a path that is as narrow as a hair and as sharp as a razor. One feels diffident about entering the path after reading the difficult rules and formalities mentioned in the Vedas and other Scriptures. How, one thinks, can a weak and helpless man, who is a prey to worldly attachment and Maya, contend against five powerful enemies, lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride? How can he cross the ocean of existence?

It is true that the Lord sends the Masters to redeem us. It is, however, not easy to serve them and act within their will. Unless the Lord and the Master shower their Grace, it is extremely difficult to progress spiritually. The Lord is merciful. He, in His compassion, unites whomsoever He likes with Himself.

“He sustains all the world; Devotees, by His Grace, are united unto Him. The living beings have no power of their own; they have nothing to say about the matter.” (Sri Rag M3, 32-7)

It is true, however, that the Lord leads one to whom He is kind to His incarnation, the Perfect Master. The Master then connects him with the Shabd, which takes him to the Lord.
“Those who serve not the True One, serve the other one, and go to destruction. Oh Nanak, the Master is kind; He connects us with the Shabd.” (Gauri M4, 315-3)

“By His Grace one meets a Master and serves Him. He connects the soul with the Shabd.” (Majh M3, 110-1)

“When the Lord is kind, one meets a Master. One then contemplates on the Name of the Lord.” (Suhit M4, 757-10)

The virtues found in the Lord are found in the Master also. He too is the redeemer of the fallen and is merciful. He forgives their sins and bestows on them Naam, the Name, which helps them to rise.

“My Master is the redeemer of the fallen; I rely on Him. He hears the prayers of Nanak, and He forgives all.” (Sorath M5, 620-4)

“Great is the Perfect Master, like the Lord; serve Him and gain infinite happiness. Through His Grace the Lord forgives the sinner, and His Name helps him to rise.” (Gauri Var M4, 30507)

The Master even goes to the extent of forgiving his critics, and often times even draws them to him.

“One who slanders the Master and then takes shelter with Him, is forgiven His sin and admitted to the Holy Company.” (Bilawal Var M4, 854-18)

He cleanses innumerable sinners of their sins and takes them across the ocean of worldly existence.

“He forgives the sinners, and they contemplate on the True Name. He takes them across the ocean on board His ship.” (Sorath M3, 638-12)

The Master is the True Lord. He is an ocean of mercy. Everything is had by His Grace.

“The Lord gave us the Master, and the Master is the true sustainer. When the Master is pleased, oh Nanak, you are blessed.” (Gauri Majh M5, 218-9)

The Grace of the Lord and the Master is in the gift of Naam, which is the Word or Holy Spirit. The Masters always emphasize its importance and help us through it.

“The Lord blesses the devotees with Naam, and its glory increases from day to day. The Lord takes the devotees to the original abode; all honor be to Him.” (Gauri Var M4, 316-5)

“You are unknowable and unfathomable, and one has Your vision only by good fortune. The Lord Himself was kind, and the Master bestowed the Name.” (Asa M5, 406-4)

There is no higher gift than that of Naam in this world or even beyond it.

“There is no wealth equal to that of Naam; He alone is true to whom the Lord gives it.” (Asa M3, 364-13)
The gift of Naam and access to the Lord can be obtained only through the Master and His company.

“\textquote He alone is great to whom the Lord is kind; by the Master’s Grace He dwells in the mind.\textquotel" (Gauri M3, 159-6)

“The Merciful Lord was kind; oh Nanak, He gave the company of Holy Men.” (Asa M5, 391-12)

The way to obtain the Grace of the Master is to practice listening to the Divine Sound of the Naam and constant remembrance of the Lord. The Master is then kind and bestows His Grace and the practice is successful. Both things, the practice and the Grace, are interdependent. They are like the two wheels on which a cart moves.

“He, in His Grace, bestows the Name.” (Sahi M1, 729-18)

“Nothing but Name can help us; treat pleasure and pain alike. Do not give up the Name; the Lord Himself gives it, and the Master unites us with it.” (Asa M1, 416-2)

“If the Lord is forgotten for a moment, that moment is wasted. Remember Him with every breath, and He will forgive you of His own sweet will.” (Gujri M3, 506-14)

By recognizing the law and living according to the will of the Lord, the Master is pleased.

“They who know the ‘Word’ have no regrets; oh Nanak, let the Name dwell in the heart.” (Gujri M5, 523-6)

When the Saints bestow Naam according to the Will of the Lord, no power can destroy it. The seed of Naam, which they sow in the heart, cannot but bear fruit. The disciple will certainly reach the Lord one day.

“Truth is attained by His Grace; it is a gift bestowed by His will. No one can deprive us of it.” (Sri Rag M1, 62-12)

“Oh my mind, be ever engaged in devotion, for a devotee always gives devotion. The treasure of devotion is gift from the Lord; no one can deprive you of it.” (Vadhans Var M3, 589-2)

Kal and Maya cannot destroy the seed of Naam planted by the Master, for the Master is beyond their reach. He is the True Being or the Lord. The lords of the subtle and causal regions cannot undo His acts.

“No one can undo His acts; He forgives and redeems at will.” (Solh M5, 1030-16)

“No one can go against the order of the Master; oh Nanak, the Master is the Lord Himself.” (Gond M5, 865-2)

The bounty of the Lord is endless. There is no limit to it.

“Oh Nanak, His bounty is endless.” (Asa M1, 358-12)

This bounty can be had by a great good fortune only.
"You are unknowable and unfathomable; one has Your vision only by good fortune. The Lord Himself was kind, and the Master bestowed the Naam." (Asa M5, 406-4)

On receiving this bounty one is released from the cycle of coming and going (birth and death).

"When the Lord forgives, there is no more coming and going." (Vadhans M3, 571-8)

"Coming and going ceases, and one dwells in the original abode. He gave the true treasure; it was so willed by Him." (Maru M3, 993-18)

Only a devotee gets this treasure, and no one else.

"Oh Nanak, He is all in all; there is no other like Him. He gives the treasure of devotion, and the devotee is full of happiness." (Maru M3, 994-9)

"If the Master takes me to task I accept it gladly. If He forgives me, it is His greatness. The devotees understand Him. Those who are egotistic fail to do so." (Sahi M4, 758-6)

It is only through the Master's Grace that one can repeat the Name.

"When He is kind, one repeats the Name; no one else can sing His praises." (Asa M1, 416-4)

One should therefore not be proud. One can do nothing by oneself.

"The Lord is the doer and the cause; He knows the secrets of all hearts." (Gauri M5, 266-11)

A seeker should therefore humbly wait at the door of the Master and hope for His Grace.

**Care Given by the Master**

The relationship between the disciple and the Master is very abstruse and cannot be fully or adequately described. The Saints have, however, tried to explain it so that we may comprehend it to some extent. All worldly relationships, they point out, are based on self-interest. The relationship between the Master and the disciple, however, is pure. It is selfless. We can understand it to some extent by comparing it with the relationship between the mother and her child. The mother cares very deeply for the new-born child. She shares its pains and pleasures. The child has no power of discrimination. He cannot, for example, distinguish cleanliness from dirt. If the child is unhappy, the mother is very anxious and tries to remove the cause of its suffering and even passes the night without sleeping. When the child is happy and smiles, the mother is happy both mentally and physically.

The mother feeds the child and lulls it to sleep. Even if the child should wet the bed on a cold winter night, she would place it on the dry portion and herself lie on the wet portion of the bed throughout the night.

When the child is small, it is ignorant of language and of its home. The mother looks at the child and the child looks at the mother. She prattles to the child and teaches it to speak. She looks after the child in all matters. She sees to it that it does not put its hand in the fire, she feeds it and keeps it clean. She carefully instructs the child until it grows up into an adult.
Similarly, when a disciple is reborn, so to say, in the family of the Master, he is ignorant of spiritual matters. His thoughts and cares are always entangled in low desires. But the Master stills the mind and the senses of the disciple and purifies him. For spiritual progress, control of the mind and the senses by stilling them is necessary. While the Master in His mercy lends help to still the mind of the disciple, He at the same time enables him to understand and to speak that language which is unspoken. The Master is always careful about the progress of the disciple. He does everything possible to make a disciple clean, devoid of all dirt, and pure. He removes all his defects.

“Serve the Master, the giver of happiness. He washes off all vice.” (Sri Rag M5, 43-19)

A Perfect Master removes all the defects of the disciple. He gives him good advice and spiritual wisdom. He ends his bondage to the world. Great, indeed, is such a Master.

“Wonderful is the Master, our teacher. He instructs us in the Lord’s wisdom. He has made us wise.” (Gauri M5, 168-3)

“The Master removes the filth of wrong thinking.” (Gauri M5, 286-14)

“The Master breaks the bondage of His devotees.” (Gauri M5, 286-15)

The Master does not let the disciple face situations that are too difficult for him. Just as a child is ignorant and the mother saves him from impending catastrophes, similarly, the Master protects the disciple from sufferings and difficulties without even telling him anything about them.

“He protects His disciple; He does not let him face difficulties.” (Dhanasri M5, 682-1)

The Master removes all the sufferings and diseases of the disciple. The sufferings ordained by fate are lightened. He gives strength to the disciple, which enables him to regard the worldly sufferings as insignificant.

“The Lord is kind to me, and all my sufferings and sorrows have vanished. No painfully hot wind blows upon me; the Master himself protects me.” (Gauri M5, 218)

The Master bestows the boon of Naam on the disciple. He feeds the disciple on spiritual food and makes him drink the water of eternal life. He awakens the disciple and makes him realize his true self. He shapes his life both here and hereafter.

“The Master protects the disciple; He is always kind to those who serve Him.” (Gauri M5, 286-14)

“The Master helps the disciple. He redeems him both here and hereafter.” (Gauri M5, 286-16)

The Master brings up the disciple with the love of a mother – nay with an even greater love. He always keeps him under His protection. He is an ocean of love.

“He rears the disciple like a mother, and always keeps him in view. He feeds him both externally and internally with love. He enables the disciple to love the Lord always.” (Gauri M4, 168-2)
It is immaterial whether the disciple is near to, or far away from the Master. He has a long reach, for His hand is the hand of God. His hands wield the power of God.

“His hand is the Lord's hand; His eyes feed on His vision.” (Shamas-i-Tabriz)

The hand of the Master protects the disciple in mountains, wastes, seas and even beyond. The white-robed swallow, it is said, leaves her young ones and goes far away, but constantly keeps them in her thought. The tortoise lays eggs on land but lives in the water and from there it hatches the eggs by fixing its attention on them. The Master always keeps an eye on the disciple in order to bring him up properly. He takes care of him through His spiritual force, so that he may rise above the three gunas.

“The mother swan travels afar in the skies, but she always remembers her off-spring and feeds them on her love. Even so does the Master love the disciple, and cherish him to His heart.” (Gauri M4, 168-4)

“Oh Nanak, the Master loves the disciple with all His heart.” (Gauri M5, 286-17)

“He lends a helping hand and sustains the disciple every moment.” (Dhanasri M5, 682-2)

The relationship between the Master and the disciple is that of pure love. He is very kind. He gives us instructions regarding how to return to our home, and then prays to the Lord to forgive us and free us from bondage.

“He calls upon the people to tread the path to the Court of the Lord. He prays to the Lord to forgive and release them.” (Maulana Rumi)

The Master is the true friend of the disciple. Whenever the disciple encounters difficulties, He comes to his help. The disciple, as a rule, does not know this; but such incidents take place between the disciple and the Master every day. This fact is fully supported by tradition. Sometimes incidents take place which we do not understand at the time, but they are for our good, as we come to find out later on. A child may be sleeping comfortably, while its mother sits beside the bed and looks at its face lovingly. She fans the child and patiently waits for it to open its eyes. Similarly, the Master waits lovingly for the ignorant disciple to awake from the sleep of attachment and Maya.

All this care is given to the disciple while he is in this world. But the Master himself comes and stands by the disciple at the time of his death, which is the time of utmost anxiety. He takes the soul of the disciple with Him. He is also present to help the disciple at the time of final reckoning.

“He accompanies the disciple; He is with the disciple on the day of reckoning.” (Suhi M1, 729-3)

“My Master is the image of joy and power; He attunes us to the Transcendental One; He helps us till the end.” (Ramkali M5, 915-11)

Maulana Rumi says:

“Oh foolish man! Take hold of the garment of the Master so that you may escape the sufferings of the next world.”
“Oh fool, catch hold of His garment quickly, that you may be freed from the pangs of death.”

The company and friendship of worldly people is transitory and evanescent. Some leave us when we face difficulties; while others desert us in the end. But the Master is the true protector and helper of the disciple. He is always with him at the time of need or difficulty. He does not leave him alone at the time of death or even later.

“Oh Nanak, break with your worldly friends and brittle supports, and give your love to the Master – a firm and true friend. They leave you while you are still alive; He does not forsake you even after death.” (Maru Var M5, 1102-3)

Yama, the angel of Death cannot take with him any soul that is protected by the Master. The Master Himself takes His initiates with Him. Kabir Sahib says:

“Just as gold does not rust and iron cannot be consumed by worms, similarly, a Master's devotee, whether good or bad, never goes to hell.”

“Gold never rusts, and iron is not consumed by worms. The devotee, be he good or bad, never goes to hell.”

The Master helps the disciple to overcome difficulties in both the worlds – the physical and the spiritual. There is no helper other than He.

“I have the wealth of the Lord, and it will be with me as I journey. He is my life-long friend, and will accompany me; He protects me here and hereafter; the Lord gave me the Master out of His great mercy.” (Sorath M5, 628-6)

“The Master is always with me; He frees me both here and hereafter; all glory be to the Master; for He made me realize the Lord.” (Vadhans Var M4, 588-2)

“There is no friend like the Master; by the Grace of the Lord, He is my friend both here and hereafter.” (Maru M1, 1031-19)

If we find a Master by good fortune, we are, so to say, insured both here and hereafter. He is very kind. He helps us in the hour of need and on dangerous occasions without expecting anything in return and without asking for any reward for it.

“He is my benefactor and accepts no reward; He helps us in our difficulties; He saves us from the rocks and rapids (in the stream of life).” (Maulana Rumi)

The Master is the redeemer of the poor. He helps us with His Grace. His company is more beneficial than words can express. If the Master is with us, not even an army of thousands of enemies can harm us.

“Him whom the Master helps, thousands cannot harm.” (Sawayye M4, 1399-19)

They are fortunate who are united with the Master. They have no anxiety.
The Hand of the Master on One’s Head

The Master is the great and inexhaustible storehouse of mercy. But He sometimes has strange ways of showing His mercy. Some He redeems simply with one kind glance. He has springs of Naam or the Holy Spirit within Him. If He places His hand on the head or forehead of any disciple, that disciple is redeemed. The Gurus have described the benefits of this act. The Master, by placing His hand on the head of the devotee, gives him a vision of the Lord. The Naam or Shabd manifests itself inside. The disciple benefits from the spiritual current which flows from His hands, and all his sins are wiped off.

“I am happy; I am at peace; the Master so ordained it. The Shabd dwells within me. He gave me the vision of the Lord by placing His hand on my forehead.” (Sri Rag M5, 73-17)

“The Jewel of the Lord’s Naam dwells in my heart, for the Master has placed His hand on my head. The accumulated sins of many births have been removed; the debt of ages is wiped out by Naam.” (Jaijsri M4, 696-3)

Those on whose head the Master places His hand are very fortunate and rare.

“Blessed is he who has the wealth of the Lord: He is fortunate on whose head the Master places His hand.” (Bhairon M3, 1155-17)

“The head on which the Master places His hand is one amongst millions of devotees.”
(Prabhati 1340-15)

His hand helps the disciple in situations of every description, and the disciple need not concern himself about obtaining help from anyone else. All bow to the Master; all the worlds pay Him obeisance.

“His power is recognized in the four corners of the world. He placed His hands on my head, and was kind to me. He removed all my sufferings.” (Dhanasri M5, 641-17)

“He is bountiful, most powerful and great. This servant has praised Him in a few words. I have no need for anybody’s help, if the Master places His hand on my head.” (Sawayye M4, 1405-1)

“The world bows to him, and falls at his feet; the world and the heavens pay homage to him on whose forehead the Master places His hand. The Perfect Master makes him perfect.”
(Gauri Var M4, 309-5)

The disciples of the Master are blessed. They live and make spiritual progress under His constant and never-failing protection.
Shelter of the Guru

To take shelter with the Master means to subordinate one's will to the will of the Guru and unreservedly surrender oneself to Him. This is an easy means of gaining release from the cycle of birth and death. The disciple should implicitly rely on the Master and should give himself up to Him in the same way as one confides in a surgeon and trusts his life in his hands. Similarly, one follows the instructions of a guide when one is lost in a jungle and is sick and tired, and cannot himself find the way. The Master's task is not only to teach, but to help the disciple in overcoming his difficulties. He alone is a true friend who not only advises us regarding what to do in difficulties, but also helps us in freeing ourselves from them.

Let us suppose that one wants to go to a foreign country. He makes enquiries about travel by air or by sea. When he sets out on his journey, he takes his place on a specific ship or plane. He completely assigns himself to the care of the captain or the pilot and has no further worries. In actual fact, he has to depend on the captain or the pilot. If the passenger should happen to fall into the sea, the captain, without any payment, would try to save him. The case of those traveling in the spiritual regions is the same. In order to understand spiritual matters and the teachings of a Master, one should use one's intellect and discrimination; but after one takes shelter with a Master, he should surrender to Him unconditionally. One should follow the path indicated by the Master. He knows the path we have to tread, while we are ignorant of it. We have to rely on His help, and by doing so we can fulfil our ideal of progress in the spiritual regions.

To take shelter means to have full confidence in the Master and to be guided by Him. One should follow His orders without considering their so-called propriety. Whatever the Master directs us to do is for our good, although at the time it may not appear to be proper or beneficial for us. The disciple should obey Him in word, deed and spirit.

When the disciple surrenders himself to the Master for good, the Master looks after him in every way. Just as a mother brings up her child, so the Master looks after His disciple. As the disciple becomes purified, the Master gives him spiritual wealth. The child who sits in the lap of his mother need not worry, because all his worries are hers. He is care-free and happy. Similarly, the disciple, after taking shelter with the Master, becomes care-free and happy.

The Gurus call out with raised hands, “Friends! If you wish to enjoy spiritual bliss, take shelter with the Master!”

“The Master gives the clarion call: He who wants constant spiritual bliss, let him take shelter with the Master.” (Kalyan M4, 1326-15)

In chapter 18, shloka 66 of the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna, as a teacher, gives the following advice to his disciples: “Do thou, renouncing all religious rites, take refuge unto me alone, and I will free thee evermore from all thy sins. So do not grieve.”

It is easier to practice meditation than to surrender unconditionally to the Master. When one takes shelter with the Master, one must be like a child. He must give up his own will and conform to the will of the Master. He must surrender himself to the Master in word, deed and spirit. This is difficult, but if owing to good fortune one gets shelter, then all his desires will be fulfilled. He will merge in the form of the Guru.
The shelter of the Master is gained only as the result of great good fortune. To take shelter with the Master is to take shelter with the Lord. The Master is the Lord.

“I have no friend but Thee, oh Lord; I take refuge with the Master. I find the Lord there; Oh fellow traveling merchant of small worldly wares, come, seek a Master and gather the everlasting wealth.” (Sri Rag M4, 81-18)

“He who is so destined by the Lord, oh Nanak, takes shelter with a Saint.” (Gauri M5, 296-5)

When the Lord is kind, a devotee reaches this stage.

“Blessed are they who find shelter with Him, all glory to the True Court of the Lord; come, come to this place of eternal calm. Oh Nanak, when He is kind, the devotees meet the Master.” (Sri Rag M2, 31-7)

The Gurus have described the various benefits that result from taking shelter with the Master. The mind is controlled; one is freed from all grieves, sufferings, pains and pleasures, and the three modes of feeling. One is freed from the burden of karmas.

“I took shelter with the Master, and the Lord put His seal of approval on my mind.” (Ramkali M5, 879-17)

“I met a Perfect Master, and I took refuge with Him. Then all my grievances and troubles were removed.” (Asa M5, 395-16)

“This body is the city of pleasure and pain; he alone is saved who takes shelter with the Master. He remains detached from the three modes; such a devotee is really blessed.” (Mara M5, 1075-17)

The mind becomes pure. All desires are fulfilled, and one gets happiness.

“He who takes shelter with the Master is purified. But if the proud person repeats the Name of the Lord, he cannot wash off the dirt.” (Sri Rag M3, 38-7)

“The Masters have come to redeem the world, and the world thirsts for their sight; he who takes shelter with them Crosses over; blessed is the company of the Saints.” (Gauri M5, 207-7)

“The Master is the bestower of all happiness; take shelter with Him. On seeing Him, one gets joy. Praised be the Lord, all sufferings depart.” (Gauri M5, 207-17)

Egotism and darkness are banished, and Light appears.

“Egotism and ‘otherness’ consume the world. Oh Nanak, contemplate on the Shabd and take shelter with the Master.” (Sorath Var M3, 651-11)

“I took shelter with the Creator and the Cause, and then I reached my Home easily through the Master’s Grace. The darkness disappeared and the moon rose.” (Asa M5, 393-18)

The gift of spiritual life is obtained and Naam manifests itself.
“The Master gave the incomparable gift; He made the Name of the Lord dwell in my heart, when the Merciful One is kind, He gives us shelter with the Master.” (Asa M4, 443-6)

“In the Kali Yug, Iron Age, the Name is hidden, even though the Lord fills every heart. The Jewel of the Name shines in the sky of the hearts of those who have taken shelter with the Master.” (Prabhati M3, 1334-15)

The fear of death is removed. One does not have to go to hell. The cycle of birth and death comes to an end and one crosses the ocean of worldly existence.

“He is freed from the fear of death and Kal, and does not go to hell. Oh Nanak, taking shelter with the Master redeems the devotee; the Lord and the Master protect him.” (Sarang M4, 1248-18)

“All the Master’s actions are pure; He protects us. Oh Nanak, a devout disciple never goes to hell. He is under the protection of the Lord.” (Asa M5, 464-10)

“He who is fortunate contemplates on the Name; oh Nanak, one who has this shelter does not come and go.” (Sri Rag M5, 53-5)

“Oh Blissful Lord, the destroyer of pain; he who takes shelter with the Saints crosses this ocean of existence, which is full of sufferings.” (Dhanasri M5, 691-7)

The Lord forgives the sins of one who takes shelter with the Master. He becomes fearless and balanced, and attains the highest abode. He is honored in the Court of the Lord and is united with Him. By taking shelter with the Master, the devotee gets shelter with the Lord. One who is separated from his mother suffers a great deal. One who has not taken shelter with the Master is like a child who is separated from his mother.

The Gurus therefore emphasize the point that one should take shelter with the Master.

The Words of the Master

When one is reborn in the house of the Master, that is, when one takes shelter with Him, one should give up all previous spiritual or other practices and ask Him what to do. Other practices cannot free one from birth and death and unite one with the Lord. It is the duty of the disciple to follow the path taught him by the Master. Whatever he does in obedience to the wishes of the Master is giving devotion to Him. If a passenger follows the directions of the boatman while in his boat, he gets across the river. He should therefore obey the directions without any objection. His welfare depends upon his doing so.

The Master is responsible for His disciple in all matters. The disciple should therefore lovingly carry out the orders of the Master, and not let his own whims interfere with them, even though the Master’s orders may sometimes appear a trifle strange at the first glance. The Master is all-powerful. There may be something which we do not understand. Hafiz Sahib says:

“Dye your prayer-cloth in wine if the Master so directs, for you do not know the spiritual path but He does.”
“Dye your prayer-cloth in wine if the Master so directs; for He is not unaware of the path and its ways.”

How can he who merely does lip-service and does not carry out the Master's orders gain spiritual salvation? He who obeys the Master is dear to Him.

“Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only.” (St James 1-22)

Engage in the practice of listening to the Shabd. Do not merely give lip-service to the Master. How can you derive full benefit by merely seeing and hearing the Master? The Gurus say:

“Take the words of the Master to be true. Let them dwell in your heart and make your life fruitful.”

“Believe in the words of the Master, and let them dwell in your mind. In this birth as a human being, try to get freedom from the bondage of the body.” (Sawayye M4, 1401-10)

The words of the Master are not separate from Him. The Master pervades them. His words are outpourings of His heart and are permeated with His Truth and soul-force. Such words permeate the hearts of spiritually-minded persons like arrows and produce a sweet pain, which cannot be described.

“The devotee thirsts for the Lord, and the words of the Master pierce him like arrows. Only the wounded know these pains; others do not realize them.” (Bilawal M4, 835-19)

The words of the Master bear fruit in accordance with the extent to which you act upon them. To obey the Master is to give devotion to Him. Guru Ram Das Ji Says:

“Think of the Master always, whether sitting or standing, walking or traveling. The Master is the Word and the Word is the Master. He will emancipate you through the Word.”

“Think of Him while sitting, standing or walking; the Master is the Word and the Word is the Master. You will be emancipated through the Word.” (Kanra M4, 1310-2)

The words of the Master are very sweet and pleasant. You are filled with Nectar through them. By acting in accordance with the words of the Master one becomes immortal.

“Blessed is the Guru's Word, for with it one attains the Lord's Nectar, as Ambrika, the king, attained the eternal state by uttering ever the Guru's Word.”

“The words of the Master are sweet; one gets Nectar through them. The devotee reaches the eternal abode; he should contemplate on the Master's words.” (Kanra M4, 1311-12)

To repeat the mantra given by the Master according to His directions, and to practice it, is true devotion and the essence of Truth.

“Repeat the Simran as directed by the Master; this is devotion and the essence of Truth.” (Ramkali M5, 895-7)
To practice as directed by the Master is right thought.

“Act as directed by the Master; this is right thought.” (Sri Rag M5, 52-10)

The Word of the Master dwells with the devotee. Water cannot drown it, the air cannot dry it, thief cannot steal it and fire cannot burn it. It is imperishable, everlasting and inscrutable. It is the sustainer of the helpless. It protects one's honor. Through it one is freed from death and all doubts are destroyed.

“The Word of the Master dwells with us; water cannot drown it, a thief cannot steal it, fire cannot burn it.” (Dhanasri M5, 679-10)

“The Word of the Master is imperishable. The Word of the Master frees one from death. The Word of the Master is inscrutable. The Word of the Master removes all doubts.” (Gauri M5, 177-4)

The Gurus direct that “Ram Naam” (the Name of the Lord) be praised through the words of the Master. One can journey towards one's Original Home by following His directions. The cycle of birth and death will cease. All of this can be had only in the company of the Saints.

“Practice the Lord's Name as directed by the Master; search for it in the company of Saints. Seek for the Original Home as directed by them. The cycle of birth and death will then cease.” (Maru M1, 1030-7)

This wealth cannot be had by those who are puffed up with pride. Many persons who visit the Master sing holy hymns, but what the hymns tell of, is fruitful only in the case of those who practice the teachings of the hymns and the directions of the Master, believing them to be true.

“Seekers and disciples come to worship, and all sing the holy hymns. The singing of those alone is fruitful, who act on the words of the Master as true.” (Dhanasri M4, 669-14)

Those who see the Master repeatedly begin to love Him, and those who act on His words, believing them to be true, are dear to the Lord.

“Those who visit the Master repeatedly learn to love Him very much. They believe His words to be true, and they are very dear to the Lord.” (Nat M4, 982-2)

Practice as the Master directs. You will then recognize the Shabd and easily reach the abode of peace. You will enjoy real bliss and cross the ocean of existence.

“Do as the Master says, and you will recognize the Shabd and reach the eternal abode. The Eternal Name glorifies.” (Bilawal M3, 832-17)

“He who does as directed by the Master is happy and gets the essence of peace. He is freed from fear and is ferried across.” (Sarang Var M3, 1248-8)

It is very necessary to obey the Master and act within His Will. The salvation of the disciple depends upon this. Everyone may see the Master. But it is very necessary to obey His words and practice the Shabd imparted by Him.
“All the world can see the Master, but this does not lead to salvation unless one practices the Shabd.” (Vadhans M3, 594-11)

The Master should, however, be an adept in the practice of the Shabd or Divine Sound so that He may make the Shabd dwell in us. The Shabd is not in the nine doors of the body. Only He who has knowledge of the Shabd beyond the nine doors deserves to be called a Master. When one gets such a Master, he should act according to His instructions and remain within His will. By doing so he will make his life fruitful and will emancipate his family also. He does not then have to suffer.

“The life of those who obey the Master is blessed. Their mothers are blessed and their family is redeemed.” (Sri Rag M3, 28-10)

“He who acts within the Will of the Master does not suffer any ill. The Nectar is given at the Will of the Master. He who submits, drinks.” (Sri Rag M3, 31-14)

By remaining within His Will, a disciple gets the Nectar of immortality. As a result, he reaches the Original Abode.

“Oh mind, listen to the Master, and act on His advice. Come to live in the Original Home. Drink the Nectar and be happy.” (Sri Rag M3, 37-2)

Who acts upon the words of the Master? He alone, to whom the Master is kind.

“He to whom the Lord is kind acts on the words of the Master.” (Prabhati M5, 1348-10)

He who acts upon the words of the Master and realizes the Lord, has no equal. We should, therefore, repeat the Name of the Lord.

“Oh mind, repeat the Name of the Lord. He who obeys reaches the abode of the Lord. There is no one as powerful as He.” (Gond M4, 891-5)

The Gurus describe many benefits that result from acting upon the words of the Master. One praises the Lord. He becomes dyed in His color. His tongue tastes the Nectar. All of his actions prove successful. He gets the possession of the nine treasures. Diseases and fevers are banished. One's desires are fulfilled. The mind becomes still. Egotism is destroyed. Pain and pleasure appear to be the same. Harmful desires and cravings are banished. Sins are gotten rid of and sinners are redeemed. The poison of Maya leaves us. One becomes indifferent as to whether one is in the home or outside. The snare of death is destroyed and death does not come near. One does not go to hell. Birth and death cease. Great contentment is experienced. One concentrates easily. The Nectar is obtained. One is connected with the Name and his devotion proves fruitful. On realizing the Lord, the seeker and the Lord become One.
Worship (Puja)
Chapter 8

The word puja (worship) comes from the Sanskrit root puj, which means to serve or praise some higher and more sublime being than one's self in order to gain spiritual benefit. Nowadays wherever one looks one finds only outer worship prevalent. Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs and those belonging to other religions are all engaged in outer worship. Churches, gurdwaras (Sikh temples), mosques and mandirs (Hindu temples) are all religious places. In the same way, all religious books deserve to be venerated. But people regard bowing their heads and offering flowers before them as worship. The Sikh Saints have written extensively on this type of worship. Guru Ramdas Ji says that ignorant persons whose inner vision has not awakened are wallowing in ignorance. They worship lifeless idols and tombs by placing flowers on them. But all their efforts are of no real spiritual worth.

"Misled by superstitions, the ignorant blind ones make offerings of flowers to lifeless stones and graves, and waste their entire lives." (Malar M4, 1264)

Kabir Sahib also does not approve of worshipping lifeless idols and does not believe that this leads to salvation. This likewise is the view of Guru Nanak Sahib.

"The Hindus die while worshipping their idols; the Muslims die while bowing before Him; they burn, while they bury, the dead, neither of them know the Reality." (Kabir, Sorath, 654)

"They who go and worship gods and goddesses do not know the Transcendental One; Oh Kabir, they see no truth and instead are taking poison." (Kabir, Gauri, 332)

"The deluded ignorant ones worship stones; that which will itself sink how can it save you?"

It is strange that he who lives in the natural mosque (the body), which was constructed by the Lord with His own hands, should undergo hardships in man-made mosques.

Tulsi Sahib says, "It is regrettable that the owner of the real mosque should visit man-built mosques and temples."

Maulana Rumi says:

"Fools pray in the mosques; the illuminated ones try to purify themselves; Oh fools, that is man-made, this is God-made. There is no mosque except the one inside the Saints. The heart of the Saint is the mosque, all should worship the Lord there."

The ignorant people respect the mosque built of stones and bricks, but try to harm the Saints in whom the Lord is manifest. The worship in the mosque is all external observances. The Reality is that mosque which is inside the Saints. It is a true place of worship because the Lord is manifest there. All the five elements are found in man, four in animals, three in birds, two in insects, and one in vegetables. Man should not worship the lower beings. Many people worship stones or idols. What is idol worship? When did it start? What is real idol worship, and what is its purpose? These questions are discussed in a separate chapter on Idol-worship. People do not gain peace or realize the Lord by observing external rituals such as pilgrimages, cleanliness, self-
control, burning incense, repetitions, austerities, putting marks on the forehead, bathing or reading scriptures. Guru Arjan Sahib says that one is not dyed in the color of the true Lord simply by doing the six actions (Khat Karam), namely, practicing, cleanliness and self-control, bathing and so forth. Such a person never gains salvation.

“If he does the six actions and worships after bathing, if he is not dyed with love for the Transcendental One, he goes to hell.” (Sri Rag M1, 70)

“Visiting holy places, fasts, cleanliness, self-discipline, acts of piety, matter not. Oh Nanak, it is only by devotion that one obtains deliverance; all else leads to duality.” (Sri Rag M1, 75)

“By doing the six actions, by worship, putting marks on the forehead, visiting holy places or bathing at sacred spots, by washing the intestines or performing the eighty-four postures, one does not get peace of mind.” (Majh M5, 98)

The real and beneficial worship is the inner worship, which is not performed by the hands and feet or by the mouth, but by the mind and heart.

“The inner worship is done by the mind. Such a worshipper sees the One and none else.” (Basant M3, 1173)

“I went to the temple to worship the Lord, but the Master told me that He is inside the mind.” (Ramanand Ji, 1195)

“If one cherishes the Lotus Feet even for a moment in his heart by remembering the Lord, all his desires are fulfilled.” (Prabhati M5, 1349-2)

That worship is fruitful which leads to love for the Lord.

“That repetition, those austerities, that fast and that worship is fruitful, which promotes love for the Lord. Except the love of the Lord, all other attachment is false and is forgotten in a moment.” (Berari M4, 720-12)

The real worship is performed with inner love and by offering service of the body and the mind.

“Visiting holy places, fasts, cleanliness, self-discipline, acts of piety matter not. Oh Nanak, it is only by devotion that one obtains deliverance, all else leads to duality.” (Sri Rag M1, 75)

“Oh Mother, what should I offer to the Lord? I do not find any beautiful flower or any other thing that is worthy of Him; neither incense, lights, sweets nor scents; how is Thy servant to worship Thee? By offering the body and mind we attain the Lord, through the Grace of the Master. There is no other way of worship. Oh Ravidas, what will be your fate?” (Ravidas, Gujri, 525-16)

When the worshipper progresses, he sees the Lord in His full glory. He sees that flowers and other beautiful things are already there, and there is no need to offer them. Even the body, the mind and our wealth are no longer ours. Then how can we offer anything?

“I see none alike. The one sun pervades everywhere, how then can I worship another?” (Prabhati M1, 1345)
Guru Arjan Sahib says that only the Lord should be worshipped. Those who worship others are killing their soul.

“From king to insects, and from insects to the king of the gods, all fill their bellies by causing pain to others. They leave the Lord and worship others, and thus kill their souls.”
(Malar M5, 1267)

The Lord is the basic substance or essence of all forms and of the formless. How can we worship Him? The Lord as the Shabd or Name pervades the whole of the universe. Name and Shabd are the Lord, and worship of them is worship of Him. The Saints teach that real worship consists in remembrance and repetition of the Name of the Lord. This is acceptable to the Lord. Most of the people do not do this and are following a wrong path.

“In order to worship, contemplate on the Name; without the Name there is no worship.”
(Gujj M1, 479)

“The true men have attuned themselves with the pure Lord through the Shabd. There is no worship without the Name. Without the Name, people are misled by doubts.”
(Ramkali M3, 900-9)

The Name should be worshipped in all hearts. Man is tied with the rope of attachment and Maya. This can be cut only by a Master, and He alone can make man worship the Name.

“He cut the rope and made me His slave, and made me serve the Saints. I became a worshipper of the one Name. The Master showed me beautiful visions.”
(Gauri M5, 209)

But only a sincere devotee can worship the Name.

“One worships, but knows not the way. Secondly, his mind is stained. Only a Gurmukh knows the true worship, and the Will (of the Master) dwells in his mind.”
(Ramkali M3, 910)

“The proud man cannot perform this worship. Everyone performs worship, but the proud man does not find the Reality.”
(Ramkali M1, 910-7)

This real knowledge and contemplation or the wealth of the worship of the Name can be obtained only from a Master.

“Oh Nanak, give up virtue, worship, knowledge and contemplation; he to whom the Master is kind meets the Merciful Lord.”
(Gauri M5, 187-3)

“The Guru and the Lord are one; oh Pipa! Om is the quintessence of Reality; the Master can reveal it to you.”
(Pipa, Dhanasri, 695-15)

“I searched the ocean of the body, and discovered a wonderful thing. Oh Nanak, the Master is the Lord, and the Lord is the Master, and there is no difference between the two.”
(Asa M4, 442-28)

Until a man rises to higher and finer regions where he can himself worship the Lord, it befits him to worship His incarnation, the Master. The essence of the Master is Naam or Shabd. A disciple should, therefore, while contemplating on the human form of the Master with his outer eyes, progress inwardly and see the illuminated form of the Master within. When the heart of the devotee meets the heart of the Master, then the melody of the Shabd will be heard. Devotion to
the Master is a step leading to spiritual relationship. Worship of the Master is worship of the Lord. Gurus place great emphasis upon this. One should worship both the Lord and the Master to gain salvation.

“Worship the Lord and the Master with love in your mind and heart; the Master is the giver of bliss and the mainstay of all.” (Sri Rag M5, 52)

“The Name of the Lord can be repeated by all, whether Kshatriyas, Brahmins, Sudras or Vaishyas. The devotee worships the Master as the Transcendent Lord, and remembers Him always day and night.” (Belawal M4, 800)

Guru Ram Das goes to the extent of saying that he who worships the Guru is dear to the Lord.

“He who worships and serves the Master is dear to my Lord; the Master is the servant of the Lord. He by His Grace takes one across (the ocean of the world).”

In Slokas 5 to 8 of Chapter 12 of the Gita, Sri Krishna Bhagwan as the Master tells his disciple Arjun:

“People have great difficulty in contemplating on the unmanifest, and this can be done only with great difficulty. Therefore, you (Oh Arjun) think of me (the form of the Guru). Still the mind and by this you will certainly dwell in me.”

The worship of the Lord consists of the worship of the Master. The Master teaches the method of worshipping the Name. One day the disciple will see the Lord in all the universe, and the Lord will manifest within him.

“The Master of Nanak is manifest everywhere.” (Asa M5, 397)

Such a rare form of worship can only be had when the Lord Himself wishes it. Man can then reach the Master, who shares the worship of the Name with him. It is only due to great good fortune that worship of the holy feet of the Master can be had.

“It is owing to great good fortune that one worships the feet of the Master; he gives up all and takes shelter with the Lord.” (Asa M5, 395-19)

Maulana Rumi says:

“The worship of the devout consists of kneeling and prostrating themselves. The lovers of the Lord give up their bodily consciousness. Five times a day the thought to worship occurs to the devout. But the lovers always remain in communion with the Lord.”

The devotees who perform outer worship say prayers, but the lovers of the Lord leave the body and then say prayers by going inside. The devotees say prayers five times a day at fixed hours, but the lovers listen to the Inner Voice every moment.
Awe and Affection
(Bhae & Bhav)
Chapter 9

Awe

The word ‘Bhey’ in Sanskrit and ‘Bhae’ in Punjabi means to be ‘in fear of’ or ‘in awe of’. The Gurus have used this word at several places. Everyone, whether a human being or not, has some fear. No one is entirely free from it. It is only the Lord who is not afraid of anyone, as He is the creator of all. He has no co-sharer or companion.

“That One has nothing to fear; He wills and makes us follow His Will.” (Belawal M1, 796)

If one wishes to become fearless one should worship the Lord. As one thinks, so he becomes. The worship of the fearless One makes you fearless also. The Lord is immanent or dwelling within you.

“There is no other of whom we should stand in awe.” (Asa M5, 399)

There is no need to be afraid of anybody other than the Lord.

“Except the Lord there is none other to be afraid of.” (Gauri M, 184)

Of whom can one stand in awe? Only of one about the existence of whom he is certain. There can be no fear of one whose existence is doubted. Therefore, whenever there is fear of the Lord, there is an ever present belief in His existence. When there is fear, the heart and mind are affected. The Lord pervades both land and sea.

“You pervade the land and the sea, Your Light shines in every heart.” (Belawal M1, 795-11)

When man is afraid of the Lord, he constantly remembers Him and he cannot commit any sin. Awe and affection are thus born. It is for remembering the Lord that all worship is performed. If, while performing actions, there is no remembrance or awe of the Lord, then these actions and duties lead nowhere.

“Without awe of the Lord all actions are false and of no avail.” (Asa M3, 427)

Gurus place great emphasis on awe for spiritual development. When there is awe, there is a strong desire to find means to remove it. It serves as a reminder every moment that one should strive to achieve one's object. For this reason, one makes quick progress.

“The number of breaths in the life of each one is fixed. Your breaths are mentioned in your account.” (Asa M1, 354)

Man’s days are numbered. It is not known when they will end. Every day, every hour, every minute brings us nearer to that great final change (which is called death). On its arrival the soul leaves the gross, astral and the ethereal bodies and goes to higher regions. This body is the field of actions. One can do actions in this body alone. In this body man can know himself and
become indistinguishable from the Lord. The fear that the goal may not be realized before the end of this life, and that this human birth would therefore be in vain, compels a man to become spiritual. Not to know one's own self and to spend day and night in sin is to commit suicide. He who is afraid of not knowing his own self and of passing his days in sin and thus committing suicide and not knowing the Lord, stands in awe of Him and takes steps to free himself from his fear and to know the Lord through himself. In this way he escapes the fear of death. Those who are not in awe of the Lord always live in fear of death and rebirth.

“Those who are in awe of the Lord have no fear; those without it have much to fear. Oh Nanak, this mystery is only solved when one enters His Presence.” (Suhit War M2, 788-3)

“Without awe no one can cross the ocean of the world; the fear of the Lord keeps a man straight.” (Majh M1, 151-5)

How is This Awe Born?

The one on whom the Lord showers His Grace lives in awe of Him, day and night.

“He to whom He is merciful gets it by making the Shabd of the Master dwell in his mind. He always remains in awe of Him. He destroys other fears, and his doubts are removed.” (Majh M3, 113)

Maya, the deceptive illusion of the world, is very powerful. The universe in reality changes every moment, and nothing in it is eternal or remains in the same state, although it appears to us to be eternal and everlasting. The intellect may for a moment believe it to be illusory, but the heart does not admit it to be so. When a Master is found and one takes on His color, then the curtain of Maya becomes a little loosened and he begins to see the illusory nature of the world. He begins to understand the causes of the fall of the soul, of the troubles in this world, and begins to take steps to remove them from his own life. He begins to believe that the Lord is all powerful. He begins to love Him. He then sees His Will working.

“She who meets the Master stands in awe of Him and is a woman of noble family; she knows the Will of the Lord through His Mercy.” (Gujri War M5, 516)

We do not see the Lord, then why should we be in awe of Him? He is manifest in the Master. On meeting a Master, awe for the Lord comes to us of itself. The Master knows everything in our heart. When we see the Master, we know Him. He knows us inside out and we become afraid of our own actions. We try to rid ourselves of them and easily become pure. On one side is our awe of Him; on the other is His remembrance and upward pull. Awe forms in the mind and is mingled with affection, and this gives us an opportunity for self-improvement.

“When one meets a Master, fear develops in him, and he is embellished with love and fear of God.” (Adi Granth, 788-13)

On account of the Awe (fear) of the Master many people have attained the Fearless (God) and gained spiritual emancipation.

“Oh Sheikh, still thy ego and abiding in the fear (of the Lord) shed thy craziness. Yea, thru the Guru’s fear, many attained salvation and living in fear, attained the Fearless (God).” (Adi Granth, 551-17)
The fear of the Lord can take root within us by the Grace of the Master and when it gets settled down there, the mind gives up its improper tendencies and comes under control.

“It is by Guru’s Grace that one is filled with the Lord’s Fear, and by good fortune God abides in one’s mind. Thru God’s Fear one controls the mind and thru the Word, one’s sense of ego is destroyed.” (Adi Granth, 645-1)

God is Shabd (Word) and the Master is its embodiment. He reveals to us the secret of the practice of Shabd. Satsang and the practice of the Shabd firmly establish awe of the Lord in our being.

“They alone are filled with the Fear of the Lord, who practice Guru’s Word (Shabd). They always live in the company of the Saints, and to them are revealed the merits of the True One.” (Adi Granth, 35-13)

Innumerable benefits flowing from awe of the Lord are detailed in Gurbani (scriptures). None can cross the ocean of fear (world) without awe. Lord's devotion and peace of mind are born of awe. It also helps the manifestation of Shabd within. When we remain in fear all the time there is constant remembrance of the Lord within and this purifies us. Ego leaves us, the fear of death disappears and we are freed from ignorance. It leads to attainment of salvation and our original home – Sachkhand. Gurbani also refers to the many evils that result from the absence of the fear of the Lord. Persons devoid of such fear ever remain in darkness, lead purposeless life and suffer untold misery at the time of their death. They do not deserve to be associated with. In their company we get no inspiration for the devotion of the Lord and the mind remains unclean.

How to Be Free From Fear?

The Lord is the true Father and Mother of us all. He is the real Friend and Brother. He is ever our protector. The fear of transmigration and the chain of birth and death are shattered as a result of taking refuge in Him. By His Grace all our cherished desires are fulfilled and all our fears are driven out.

“Thou art my father, Thou art my mother, Thou art my kin, Thou art my brother. When Thou art my protector everywhere, why then may I be in fear, oh dear?” (Adi Granth, 103-13)

“And I became fearless, all fears vanished, and the Protector, protected me, yea. Such is Thy munificence, oh Lord, that all my objects are achieved.” (Adi Granth, 383-4)

After meeting the true Master man begins to practice Naam and feels the presence of God everywhere. All ignorance and fear are removed.

“Know ye that Truth is soiled not and thru it one is rid of fear and doubt, and it taketh one no time to break the thread of illusion.” (Adi Granth, 840-2)

“The Perfect Master hath dispelled all fear, and all doubts from one’s mind, and one seeth the Lord everywhere.” (Adi Granth, 107-14)

After the Naam becomes his mainstay and the Shabd is manifested within, all fears leave him.
“Fear leaves him, he tastes the nectar and is dyed in the hue of the formless One. Pain, poverty and pollution are destroyed; the Name is his mainstay.” (Gauri M5, 297-12)

Those who have the treasure of the Name inside them are free from fear.

_Gauri M4, 310-13_

They do not forget the immaculate Lord day or night, even for a moment. They hear the Shabd from inside and see the flame of the light. Oh Nanak, all their fears are dispelled.

_Belawal M1, 843_

Egotism is destroyed. One enjoys spiritual experiences and no fear remains. The devotees accept whatever happens with gratefulness. If there is fear, it means that one has not realized the Lord. When there is realization, there is no fear; where fear lives, the Lord is not. Oh Saints, remember this for Kabir has said it after great deliberation.

**Affection – Love**

The Sanskrit word Bhav and the Punjabi word Bhau mean confidence, faith, love, affection, respect or desire. They mean love which is mingled with respect and is full of reverence. In ordinary love, the quality of respect for the beloved is sometimes overlooked; but Gurus emphasize only that love which is full of affection and respect and which recognizes the sublimity of the Beloved. Such devotion is true. Guru Nanak Sahib says that without such affection, eating and drinking is useless and life is unfruitful. All repetitions, austerities, fasts, self-discipline and baths in sacred waters are of no use if they are performed without affection and devotion to the Lord.

“What is the use of human birth if there is no devotion or love for the Lord? Eating and wearing fine clothing is useless if the feeling of otherness is in the mind.” (Salok M1, 1411-7)

“What is the use of repetitions, austerities, self-discipline or fasts, if one does not know how to have love and devotion for the Lord.” (Kabir, Gauri, 337-13)

In order to experience God in action it is necessary to possess such affection.

“This body is the field of actions, and the Gurmukh churns it to find the Reality. The diamond of Naam shines within it, and Reality is in the vessel of love.” (Belawal M4, 834-15)

Such affection is an aspect of the Lord Himself, and it is experienced when it pleases Him. All ignorance and illusion then leave the devotee and he sees the Lord face to face. Such devotional affection can come only from the Lord Himself.

“You are Yourself devotion and love; You unite us to Yourself. Oh Nanak! Forget not His Name, if you wish to live within His Will.” (Sri Rag M1, 62-2)

“When He wills it, one loves Him; doubts and superstitions then take their departure.” (Kabir, Sri Rag, 92-3)

“Devotion and love spring from You; it is You who make the Gurmukh remember the Name of the Lord.” (Ramkali M1, 906-5)
When we are in this gross body, we become one with it. We cannot see the Lord, who is extremely fine and unknowable. How can there be affection for someone whom we have not seen? He shows a glimpse of Himself in the person of Saints and holy men.

“*My consort is very wise and He alone is called a Saint.*” (Kabir, Asa, 476-14)

“*He appears in the form of Saints.*” (Maru M5, 1005-8)

When one finds a Master and is accepted by Him, and when the Master is pleased with him, he receives looks of affection.

“*From the Master he gets the food of love; he loses his taste for all else, and the Lord's love dwells in his mind.*” (Majh M3, 115-14)

It is the real food of affection which is revealed by the Master, and by taking it the Truth appears.

“*Nanak knows the Truth to be the Truth.*” (Sri Rag M1, 15)

This devotional affection cannot be revealed except by a true Master.

“*The Master revealed the true food of love; by loving the Lord the Truth is realized.*” (Bajwar M1, 146-12)

Sometimes a devotee becomes intoxicated with love and begins to dance with joy. This is not affection. Affection is mingled with awe and this awe can only be generated by affection for the Master. Those only who stand in awes can have true affection.

“*Dancing and gesturing are the play of the mind; Oh Nanak! Only those who fear can love.*” (Asa War M1, 465)

It is said that Majnun used to bow to each footprint made by Laila, his Beloved.

Oh seeker, your Beloved pervades every particle of the land and the skies. You should take each step with respect and bow to the Beloved. You should walk with the feet of awe and with eyes of affection and keep your attention fixed on the Beloved, so that you may merge in Him.

“*Walk in awe with eyes of love, keep your attention fixed; Oh Nanak, the wise will in this way find the Lord.*” (Magh War M2, 139)

Hafiz Sahib also hints at this. He says, “*As long as traces of Your Name and company remain with me, my head will remain bowed on Your path. Oh Master, the places which have Your footprints become the places of worship for the illuminated ones.*”

“*As long as any traces of wine or the wine-shop remain, my head will remain bowed towards the footprints of the Master. The ground bearing His footprints will remain a place of worship for years for those of illuminated mind.*”

Awe is inspired only by meeting a true Master. This awe, created by the Master's extraordinary beauty and magnetism, gives rise to pangs of love. One feels a peculiar sensation of love and abandon. When the devotee is in front of the Master both his heart and soul are attracted to Him.
In that state, under the influence of awe, the eyes get filled with tears, but the devotee cannot go beyond the limit of propriety. He cannot remain quiet and yet he cannot speak. He becomes tongue-tied. This state defies description. A lover may be in the room of the Beloved, but he cannot utter a syllable.

“Lovers are killed by the Beloved; no sound can come from the dead.” (Sri Rag M3, 788)

One can only attain such a condition of affection by standing in awe of the Master.

“That one is rare who finds love in awe and enjoys the Divine Intoxication.” (Kabir, Kedara, 1123-27)

When a devotee attains this state of affection, the fear of death and rebirth is dispelled and because of him all of his family gains salvation. Fear and ignorance are destroyed and one becomes fearless. The devotee enjoys a real holy bath and gains everlasting life. By having affection for the Master he realizes the Name as a reality. The entire world rises higher because of his affection.

Awe (Bhae) and Affection (Bhav)

What are called Bhae amd Bhav in Sanskrit are described as Bhae and Bhav in Punjabi. These confer great benefits. By having them as an embellishment, one is able to return to one’s Original Home. The Gurus direct that these should be acquired.

“Oh Yogi, Awe and love are like two spheres attached to the staff of the body; if you are beloved of the Master the Music is struck and in this way the cravings are destroyed.” (Ramkali M3, 608)

The soul that has awe and affection as its embellishments always enjoys the happiness of her Lord. How are these embellishments acquired? The soul uses the collyrium of awe and puts it in the eyes of affection, shows love for her Lover and becomes the ever happy wife of her Lord.

“Oh Nanak, She who embellishes herself with awe and affection adorns the bed of her Lord at all times.” (Asa M1, 357-8)

“With the collyrium of awe she adorns the eyes of love; she is indeed the ever happy wife, who loves her husband.” (Tellang M1, 722)

When the soul, decorating herself with awe, tastes the juice of the betel leaves of affection and surrenders body and mind to her Lord, it becomes indistinguishable from Him.

“When the soul, decorated with awe, tastes the juice of the betel leaves of affection and surrenders body and mind to the Lord, she is ever in happiness, Oh Nanak.” (Suhi War M3, 788-10)

Kabir Sahib says that if one has only a little of this affectionate devotion, it is then no wonder that he meets the Lord. Just as water blends with water and cannot be separated, similarly, the soul that is embellished with awe and affection is drawn by the magnet of the Lord and merges in Him.
“To a person conversant with the practice of love and devotion, it is no wonder that just as water mingles with water and does not separate, so the weaver (Kabir) unites with the Lord.”
(Kabir, Dhanasri, 692)

It is truly said that the drop by blending with the ocean becomes the ocean.

What a beautiful picture has been drawn of awe and affection in the Jap Ji. Guru Nanak Sahib uses the illustration of a goldsmith's shop. He says that in the shop of purity of body and mind the devotee should patiently beat the anvil of wisdom with the hammer of knowledge. He should kindle the fire of the practice of austerities with the bellows of awe. He should then make nectar in the crucible of affection, distilling it by constant remembrance of the reality of the Lord. That is the real factory in which the Shabd is generated.

“*There the goldsmith patiently hammers the anvil of wisdom with the hammer of knowledge, kindles the fire of austerities with awe, and molds the reality in the vessel of love.*” (Jap Ji, 8-7)

Guru Nanak Sahib further illustrates the necessity of love by another metaphor. When the time of ultimate union arrives, the tiller should cultivate the land with the plough of humility using contentment as the bullocks. In other words, he should engage in practice and irrigate the ground of love with the water of purity. The crop of spirituality will then sprout.

“*Let love be the ground, purity the water, truth and contentment the bullocks, humility the plough, mind the tiller, remembrance of the Lord the soil, and the harvest, union with the Lord.*” (Ramkali M1, 955-4)

Awe and love are mentioned together as well as separately by the Gurus. One always thinks of and remembers the one he loves. When one loves a beautiful and Divine Being, the remembrance of this Being always attracts him and remains present in his inner mind. Such love, which is tinged with awe, becomes true affection. When there is such love, affection grows.

“*Oh Nanak! When there is love, there is affection.*” (Asa War M5, 463-14)

Guru Amar Das Sahib says that there can be no devotion without awe.

“*Without awe there can be no devotion, and there can be no love for the Name.*” (Sahi War M3, 788)

“*Without awe no one gets love, and without love no one gains salvation.*” (Tukhari M4, 1116-1)

Both awe and love go together. Just as the sky is above the earth and day follows night, similarly, owing to one's awe of the Master, fear which is filled with reverence and affection is born. The Master is an incarnation of the Lord; therefore awe and affection for Him are awe and affection for the Lord. We should strengthen our devotion through these qualities.

“*He turned earth and sky into his dwelling place, and passed his days and nights in fear and love.*” (Belawal M1, 839-4)

“*Always think of the Master with love and affection, and strengthen your devotion with awe.*” (Majh M3, 112-16)
There should be awe and affection for no one else. The store of the Lord's devotion is limitless and inexhaustible and it is through His Grace alone that one can have awe and affection. Only that person to whom the Lord is kind can be dyed in this color.

“Oh Nanak, He alone has awe, love and affection on whom You have mercy. Your store of devotion is inexhaustible. He whom You love receives it.” (Tukhari M4, 1116)

“He Himself dyes the devotee in His own color. Through the Shabd of the Master one is dyed in the color of the Lord. The mind and body are dyed, as is the garment. Awe helps in the dyeing process.” (Majh M1, 114-5)

But he who has perverse vision cannot have awe and affection.

“If vision is perverse, there is no awe and love; if you kill the ego, you can realize the Name.” (Gauri M1, 153)

All the desires of the mind are fulfilled through awe and affection. Man is dyed in a beautiful color, and the false color of the world cannot affect him. The melody of the Shabd or Naam is heard, and he attains salvation. Without awe and affection, death and rebirth continue.

**Affection for Others**

When one has affection for beings other than the Lord, that is, for worldly objects, and so forth, it is called dwait (otherness) in Sanskrit.

There is mention of this in Gurbani. It is said that in the material universe constant change and evil tendencies are to be found everywhere, and the people are restless because of their bondage to those tendencies but they do not realize it.

“All are engaged in the activities of the world and love of otherness; Pandits are in bondage to attachment and do not know the nature of illusion. These are obstructions due to their love of Maya.” (Sri Rag M3, 23)

In the field of the world the feeling of otherness is strong. Three forces (Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Mahesh, the destroyer) are working within the law of the Lord. Everyone is entangled in their net of worldly attachments and is afraid of them. No one turns away from them and looks to his real Creator and Sustainer, the Lord.

“He created otherness through the activity of the three gunas, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh were created and carry out His Will.” (Ramkali War M3, 948)

Until one reaches the fourth stage which is beyond the sphere of the three gunas, and this can be attained only by meeting the Master, the daily routine of his life, together with worship, fasts and self-discipline keeps him in the sphere of otherness.

“Fasts, rules of conduct and daily worship lead to the love of otherness and do not bring real insight.” (Belawal M3, 841)

“Beyond Trikuti one meets the Master; the door of salvation is in the fourth Stage.” (Sri Rag War M3, 33-12)
People forget the Creator and become entangled in His creation and forget death.

“He loves the creation and not the Creator; he does not think of death.” (Dhanasri M3, 676-9)

Owing to the feeling of otherness, no love is developed, and one forgets the feet of the Lord and never even thinks of them. Owing to ignorance, one gets involved in the cycle of death and birth.

“The love of otherness makes one forget the holy feet of the Lord; Oh Life Sustainer of the Universe! Remove the sufferings of Thy servant.” (Belawal M3, 796)

“The ignorant bride is full of ego, and so is born again and again. She does not love the Lord, because her mind is attached to the other.” (Suhi M4, 732-1)

As long as the feeling of otherness is present in the heart, repetitions, austerities, fasts and worship are of no help.

“Repetitions, austerities, fasts or worship do not help the one in whose mind there is love for others.” (Kabir, Gauri, 324-12)

According to the Gurbani, those who ignore the Lord, who are entangled in love for illusory and perishable objects, and who indulge in false conduct and eat unclean things, should be classed as dogs and pigs. They die while barking, and find no place in the Court of the Master.

“He who is false is like a pig or dog; he dies barking in fear. He is false of body and heart and indulges in falsehood, and receives no place in His Court.” (Maru M1, 1029-17)

The feeling of otherness can be removed only by loving the Master and practicing Naam. There is no other method. By this method one becomes attached to the feet of the Lord and redeems himself.

“Those who commune with the Master, their love of otherness disappears; their Light is pure; their life is redeemed.” (Sri Rag M1, 73)

### Instability of the Universe

This universe is unstable and perishable. It is continually changing. It will not be tomorrow as it is today. There is no stability in this world. It is the land of death, and like a house of sand it can be destroyed at any time.

“The world is peopled by the dead; it is like a castle of sand, its destruction, like that of a piece of paper in a rainstorm, can be accomplished in a moment.” (Belawal M5, 808-5)

“Know this world to be false, Oh friend; Oh Nanak, it is unstable as a wall of sand.” (Salok M9, 1428-16)

Everything that is seen in this world is like a cloud. It is not stable. What has been created will certainly perish one day.

“He who is born will die, if not today then tomorrow.” (Salok M9, 1429-1)
This creation, like a bubble in water, is created and destroyed again and again.

“Just as a bubble appears and disappears; Oh Nanak! The created world does the same.”
(Salok M9, 1427)

The universe is like a dream. It is made of dream stuff. People come together and are separated according to the law of union and separation.

“The world is like a dream; the play is over in a moment; people come together by chance and go away in separation.”
(Sri Rag M1, 18-8)

Whatever is seen here is some day going to perish. Every object in the universe is short-lived. Kings, subjects, houses, palaces, those who dwell in them, all the objects of the universe, gold and silver and their wearers, this body, clothes, men and women, all are perishable. The people have forgotten the Lord because of these entanglements. No one really deserves to be loved here. Many have gone, some are going and the rest are ready to go.

“Kings and nobles do not remain, nor do the rich or poor; each has his turn; there is no help for any one.”
(Ramkali M1, 936)

“Oh, what is there to love? See with your eyes open. One is gone, and another is about to go. Everyone goes in his turn.”
(Belawal M5, 808)

But still one remains engrossed in this universe. Our wealth, our wife, our riches and our houses are not ours, and nothing will go with us when we leave. Why, then, is one so fond of them?

“Of what are you proud? This world is like a dream; nothing is yours, as Nanak says very clearly.”
(Salok M1, 1428-8)

The body which comes with us at birth is also left here and does not go with us when we leave.

“Wake up, oh mind, wake up from your sound sleep; the body which comes with you at birth, that also does not accompany you.”
(Telang M9, 726-18)

How, then, can those who are related to this body, and how can our other possessions accompany us?

“Neither wealth, wife, riches, house nor anything else will accompany us. Know this for certain.”
(Basant M9, 1187-1)

“Wealth, wife and the possessions which you consider as yours; Oh Nanak, none of these will accompany you. Believe it to be true.”
(Salok M9, 1426)

Think for a moment about how your companions have gone. All are coming or going. Where are your mother, father, grandfather, great-grand-father?

“Oh Farid! Where are your father and mother of whom you were born? They have passed away before you, but you still do not believe.”
(Farid, Salok, 1381-15)
Everyone in this universe has to leave it in his turn.

“Death is certain; no one can live forever. One is certain to go: Why should Sahjo, for her short married life, get her hair dressed?” (Sahjo Bai)

Where have Rama and Krishna, the incarnations, great prophets and Saints, Bhim, Arjun, Rustum and Sohrab, the warriors, gone? This universe is like a long drawn out dream.

“Ram is gone; and Ravana, who had a big family is also gone. Oh Nanak, nothing is lasting in this world of dream.” (Salok M9, 1428)

What reliance can be placed on this life?

“How can you rely on this life? Man is like a bubble of water.” (Telang M9, 726-15)

Every day, every hour, every minute is bringing us nearer to the end of the body.

“Our life is ticking away every moment; like water dripping out of a broken pitcher.” (Telang M9, 726)

When we accompany a dead body to the cremation ground, we shout “Ram Nam is True” but in our hearts we believe in the everlastingness of the world and are doubtful of death. It is related in the Mahabharat that when Yaksha asked Yudhistra what was the most wonderful sight, he said: “We see people die every day, but live in the hope that we will live forever. What can be more wonderful!” (Mahabharat)

When nothing is stable and whatever is to happen will happen, then why should we worry?

“One should worry only about a thing that can be prevented. Oh Nanak, in the way of this world nothing is stable.” (Salok M9, 1428-18)

This body and universe are both false and unreal. Only God and the particle of God which is in the body are true.

“Holy men judge this body to be illusion; only the Lord that dwells in it is real.” (Basant M9, 1186-8)

“If this world to be a dream or play; Oh Nanak, nothing is real in it except the Lord.” (Salok M9, 1427-9)

In this perishable body and universe, the only real thing is the Lord Himself and His particle, the soul.

“Oh Kabir, the soul is a particle of Rama (the Lord); like writing in indelible ink, it cannot be erased.” (Kabir, Gori, 871-10)

Know and sing the praises of the Lord and be engrossed in Him. Worldly attachments are futile. Turn away from them and love the Lord. Surrender every priceless breath, which cannot be purchased for any amount of money, to the Master and the Lord.
"Oh Kabir, do not sleep. Wake up! Every breath is a gem, count and surrender it to the Lord. I say and am saying with the beat of drums, your breath is being wasted, although it is more valuable than the three worlds." (Kabir)

Warning

Everyone in this world is entangled in attachment and illusion and is unconscious and unaware of his own self, his soul. All that is seen here will remain behind. The objects that will be left behind appear to be stable, and we do not pay attention to the eternal.

"That which is to be left is taken as eternal. That which is bound to happen is considered to be far off and uncertain." (Gauri M5, Sukhmani 267)

We are wasting our invaluable time on objects that will be left behind, and do not think of that which will accompany us. The body that comes with us does not accompany us. Its form and its youth will not remain the same. How can reliance be placed on relations and objects connected with this body? It is a question of the value of life. We should keep in our minds that which we really wish to know and the ideal we wish to reach. He who remembers death remains free from the bondage of the world and cannot do any evil action.

"They who know they are to go, why should they cast their net wide." (Suhi War M2, 787-15)

We understand that death will come one day and cannot be avoided, and so why should we resort to deceit and fraud in order to live a few days longer?

"We are to die, and we will die. Nobody will remember us. We will reside in the deserted land (burial or cremation ground) after leaving the populous village." (Kabir)

By sitting with spiritually awakened persons we come to know that death is real and life is illusory. Understand the body to be perishable and do not be proud of it.

"How can one be proud of this body and wealth? It takes no time to leave them. The world wastes itself in the pride of ego." (Malar M1, 1274)

This body is perishable and it should, therefore, be used for spiritual development. It should be used to associate with awakened persons, holy men and Saints, and for singing the praises of the Lord.

"Oh Kabir, this body will perish, whatever way may be followed. Either be in the company of Saints, or sing the praises of the Lord." (Kabir, Salok, 1365-18)

This body is precious only as long as the soul resides in it; otherwise nobody cares for the body.

"As long as the Lord is living in the home, everybody calls you a lady; when the Lord leaves it, nobody will care for you." (Sri Rag M6, 50-18)

Our lifespan is decreasing every day, every hour, every minute and every second. But the man who is floating on the waves of attachment is unaware of this.
This is so far as the body is concerned. In addition, man is engrossed in home and family, but these also do not accompany him when he leaves, Mahatmas tell us.

“You are happy with your son and your bejeweled wife; you are enjoying pleasures, making merry, and are intensely proud.” (Sri Rag M5, 42-6)

Oh man! Amongst all of these things, you are like a guest for a night who has to leave with the dawn of a new day.

“You are like a guest for the night who departs at dawn; then why are you so happy with your family and this pleasure garden which will not last?” (Sri Rag M1, 50-13)

Even so, man continues to rely upon this universe which is like the ever-moving shade of a tree.

“You are a guest for the night, but hope to live for the ages; the houses and riches which you see are like the shade cast by a tree which is constantly moving.” (Gauri M5, 212-18)

Everyone has to leave in his turn. It is necessary to see this with open eyes.

“Oh, what is there to love? See with your eyes open; one is gone, and another is about to go; everyone goes in his turn.” (Belawal M5, 808-8)

Our body, our family, and our riches will not accompany us.

“One departs after beating his drums for a little while; he does not take with him the riches he has earned or his buried treasures.” (Kabir, Kidar, 1124-9)

“Whatever possessions you have will be left behind; concern yourself with the Name of the Lord and become desireless.” (Sorath M5, 614-9)

“Son, wife, friends and houses are bound to us by Maya. At the last moment no one will stand by us, and all will prove to be false.” (Sorath M5, 609-10)

This universe is not to be lived in forever. Everyone has to pass his allotted time here and then go. One should not be misled by its golden color. Once the soul leaves the body, everything else remains behind. The body, wealth and all other worldly objects then have no value.

“Oh self-willed one! You have forgotten the purpose of life; do not be deluded by the golden color of the safflower, this will last for a few days only, and its value is very little.” (Sri Rag M3, 85-10)

High and low, rich and poor, all have to go. Death is always nearby and the last moment is approaching, and one never knows when it will come. Human birth is an opportunity for meeting the Lord. He who does not engage in devotion to the Lord and does not practice the Name wastes his life.

“He loses the jewel of birth who does not know the ways of the Lord; he who has attuned himself to the Lord even for a moment has not wasted his life.” (Gauri M9, 220-11)
Without Naam, the fear of death and the wheel of eighty-four continue. The Naam is invaluable, and can be had from the Master only. One should redeem one's life by getting Naam from a Master.

Human birth is rare. Do not waste it. Spend it in devotion to the Lord.

In this perishable body only the soul is real and immortal, and one should care for it with true devotion.
Divine Ambrosia (Hari Ras)
Chapter 10

In the Gurbani the words Naam and Shabdr have been used for Hari, the Lord. It has the power
to make one immortal. It has, therefore, been also called Nectar or Ambrosia. It has a very
great intoxicating effect. Because of this enrapturing effect it has been described as Hari Ras or
Divine Ambrosia, by the Gurus.

In the Divine Ambrosia of the Name or Naam there is the sweet Elixir of Life. This aspect has
been explained in detail in the Gurbani. It is also called the most excellent Ambrosia. One is
advised to drink it, because the sense-pleasures are tasteless. The intoxication produced by them
is not real. Sense-pleasures are related to the desires of the mind. We therefore fall when we
indulge in them. They do not result in any constant and lasting pleasure. The Ambrosia of the
Name is the most excellent one, and unless we drink it we drown in the ocean of worldly
existence and our soul remains without the lasting bliss.

"Give up the love of the insipid water of evil, and drink in the Divine Ambrosia of the Lord's
Name. For, because of not tasting it, myriads have been drowned, and one’s soul is never in
peace."

"Nanak, sweet is the essence of the Name, through the Perfect Guru do I attain the Truth."

"Oh Lord bless us with the sweet ambrosia of Your Name."

What is the Divine Ambrosia?

Divine Ambrosia is Naam. It is the Unstruck Music. To attain it is to attain the Lord. The
Gurbani says that Hari Ras or Divine Ambrosia is another name for Naam or Shabd. Those who
are not recipients of this Ambrosia are unfortunate and remain within the clutches of death.

“They who tasted not the Divine Ambrosia of the Naam, they, the unfortunate ones are handed
over to the messengers of death."

“The Lord redeems the sinners; He makes them meet the Master; they then taste the Divine
Ambrosia."

“Through the Guru's Word, you hear the Unstruck Music, and through the Lord's Name enjoy
the Divine Ambrosia. Says Nanak, this is how I met with my Lord, who is the Creator and the
Cause.”

“If you taste the Divine Ambrosia, you are purged of vice. If imbued with the Lord's Naam ever-
abiding is your glory. ”
It is Indescribable

“He who is awakened and made to drink this Ambrosia; he alone knows the indescribable story.” (Gauri M5, 13-16)

“Oh Lord, be merciful to me, the poor one, and bless me with the Unutterable Word. I am blessed with the Divine Ambrosia of Your Naam, by meeting with the Saints, and You seem sweet to my body and mind.” (Sarang M4, 1199-17)

It is Nectar

“In the service of the Master, you are blessed with the bliss-giving vision of the Lord, and meeting Him, you drink the Divine Ambrosia.” (Bilawal M4, 800-2)

“Rare is the one who gets this Ambrosia; he who drinks the Nectar becomes immortal.” (Gauri M5, 287-12)

Where is the Divine Ambrosia?

The holy books, Scriptures and the Vedas contain only praise of the Divine Ambrosia. They do not contain the Divine Ambrosia itself. This latter is within us. We can get it only by going within. Emerson has said, “Tap inside.” This Divine Ambrosia pervades everywhere, but the eyes that can see it are opened only when one goes inside. Saints and sages advise us to go within. By studying the holy books there dwells up within one a desire to obtain the Divine Ambrosia, but it is impossible to get it by mere reading.

“By reading the Vedas the people taste not the Ambrosia. Lured away by Maya, they discourse on dissent, they who revel in ignorance are forever in the dark. Through the Guru alone, one knows and sings of the Lord.” (Majh M5, 128-3)

1. The Divine Ambrosia is everywhere:

Naam pervades all divisions and regions of the universe. Its essence also pervades everywhere. It fills all corners and places. But the unfortunate ones cannot find it.

“The Divine Ambrosia is everywhere, but those who are unfortunate ones cannot find it.” (Sri Rag M4, 41-13)

2. It is in the Third Eye:

“In his heart dwell the Lord's Lotus Feet, and he partakes of the Divine Ambrosia.” (Sorath M5, 616-3)

“The Lord breaks the chain of doubts, and the Divine Ambrosia is tasted inside.” (Maru M1, 1041-15)

3. It is in the Tenth Door:

When the soul is withdrawn from the nine doors and enters the tenth door behind the eyes, it tastes the Ambrosia.
“Beauteous is the township of the body in which one buys the Divine Ambrosia of the Lord's Naam.” (Kalyan M4, 1323-14)

“The body has nine doors, insipid are their tastes; and it is in the Tenth that drops the Nectar. Oh God, be merciful that we may drink the Divine Ambrosia through the Guru's Word.” (Kalyan M4, 1323-13)

How Can the Divine Ambrosia Be Obtained?

1. Through the Grace of the Lord.

The Lord is Himself the Nectar, and He is also the Divine Ambrosia. He Himself alone can make one intoxicated with it. He alone receives it to whom the Lord gives it.

“He Himself is the Nectar; He Himself is the Beloved. He Himself is the Ambrosia; He Himself sings its praise. Oh Nanak, He showers Ambrosia, and the devotee's thirst is quenched.” (Sorath M4, 605-16)

“He whom the Lord of our destiny blesses, he alone knows the Divine Ambrosia.” (Sorath M5, 624-1)

He alone gets the Divine Ambrosia to whom the Lord is kind. The Lord is, however, uninfluenced, and gives it to whomsoever He pleases.

“When the Lord showers His Grace, one is blessed with the Divine Ambrosia; and then Oh Nanak, one sings the praises of the Lord, and drinks the Divine Ambrosia.” (Sorath M4, 733-4)

“Oh Lord, bless me with Your mercy, that I may sing the praises of Your Naam, and find the Divine Ambrosia in the heart.” (Sorath M4, 607-14)

“When the Lord so wills it, you will receive the Divine Ambrosia, and on your tongue will be the beauteous Word. You will dwell on the Lord's Name, and be ever in peace, and be attuned to the Naam.” (Gauri M3, 246-15)

2. It is obtained by great good fortune:

“A true devotee tastes the Divine Ambrosia and is in bliss day and night. He gets it by good fortune.” (Dhanasri M3, 664-3)

“They taste the Divine Ambrosia and remain detached. Through good destiny they taste it.” (Asa M4, 445-6)

“He gathers the Divine Ambrosia and through the Guru's Word, He dwells on the Lord's Name. Thus is fulfilled the eternal writ.” (Asa M4, 446-7)

3. It is obtained from a Perfect Master:

He to whom the Lord is kind meets a Perfect Master and obtains from Him the Divine Ambrosia. By the Ambrosia of the Name the soul of a disciple becomes fragrant and enraptured. It forgets all the tasteless pursuits of the world and becomes absorbed in the Music of the Naam.
“One gets the Divine Ambrosia through His Grace when one meets a Perfect Master. Oh Nanak, all other tasteless pleasures are forgotten when the Lord dwells in the heart.” (Ramkali M3, 921-11)

“Fortunate is the one who meets the Master, in his heart is the Naam; and he enjoys the Divine Ambrosia.” (Gauri M3, 162-2)

“Oh Master! Enshrine within me the sweet Naam of the Lord, which is cool and fragrant like the sandalwood. The Naam has wholly illumined my mind and the gaze of my soul sees all.” (Nat M4, 981-5)

“How to find the Lord, oh Saints, by seeing whom I become alive? I cannot live for a moment without Him. Unite me with the Master that I may taste the Divine Ambrosia.” (Gauri M3, 163-9)

“Through the Mercy of the Master, one receives the food of Love, then one loses the taste for everything else and enshrines the Divine Ambrosia in his heart.” (Majh M3, 115-14)

“Sweet is the Name of the Lord, oh dear one; taste it with your whole mind; taste the Divine Ambrosia, forsaking all other tastes.” (M 3 Gauri 246-13)

4. It is obtained by the Grace of the Master:

“The Ambrosia is obtained by the Master's Grace, oh Nanak, one gets release by contemplating on the Name.” (Asa M3, 361-18)

“By Guru's Grace one gets the Divine Ambrosia; and contemplating on Him he is ferried across.” (Maru M4, 998-8)

5. One obtains it by keeping the company of Saints and listening to their discourses:

“The Ambrosia is obtained in the company of the Saints. Oh Nanak, blessed is the body of such a one.” (Asa-M5, 374-7)

“In the company of the Saints one gathers the Divine Ambrosia, and meeting with the Master, the fear of death departs.” (Sorath M1, 598-17)

“If one is blessed with the society of the Saints, by great good fortune one tastes the Divine Ambrosia.” (Dhanasri M4, 690-12)

“I seek forever my beloved Lord, and meeting with the Saints am blessed with the Divine Ambrosia.” (Suhi M4, 732-14)

6. It is obtained by submitting to His Law:

“A devotee who submits to His Law, drinks easily the Divine Ambrosia.” (Sarang Var M4, 1246-18)
Who Obtains the Divine Ambrosia?

It is only rare devotees, longing for their Master, who are blessed with the Divine Ambrosia. Egotistical persons do not obtain it.

“*So sweet is the Divine Ambrosia! But rare is the one who tastes it, by the Guru's Grace.*”  
(Ramkali M5, 886-19)

“*Rare is the one who by the Guru's Grace, tastes the Divine Ambrosia, and remains in bliss day and night. But it is only through perfect destiny that one attains to the Name.*”  
(Dhanasri M3, 644-3)

“The five birds then fly not out (after Ambrosia is tasted), and the tree is fruitful, yielding the fruit of Nectar. The Lord's devotees contemplate in utter poise and sing the praises of the Lord. He feeds the birds with Divine Ambrosia.”  
(Maru M1, 1033-16)

“Egotistical persons do not enjoy the taste of the Divine Ambrosia, for in their hearts is the thorn of selfhood.”  
(Gauri M4, 13-10)

“Evil are the ways of the egotistic; they know not the Divine Ambrosia. They get no Nectar because of their doubts; they love the poison in their hearts.”  
(Bilawal M4, 854-6)

“The egocentric tastes not the Divine Ambrosia; he acts in ego and he comes to grief.”  
(Sahi M4, 733-3)

Qualities of the Divine Ambrosia

To those who have tasted the Divine Ambrosia, other things are tasteless. They are fascinated by its wonderful taste.

“One may have many women of exquisite charm and beauty, but compared with the Divine Ambrosia, insipid are all other tastes.”  
(Asa M5, 385-4)

“Oh brother devotee, if you were to taste the Divine Ambrosia, you would never love any other taste.”  
(Sahi M4, 733-2)

“He who has tasted the bliss of the Lord hankers not after the insipid tastes (of the world).”  
(Gauri M5, 186-10)

“If you have tasted the Divine Ambrosia, you are held spellbound by its wonder.”  
(Gauri M5, 180-13)

To God-oriented persons the Divine Ambrosia is the greatest and the most invaluable wealth.

“There are seven lands and oceans, you may drain them of their wealth; but the devotees desire them not; they ask for the Divine Ambrosia.”  
(Kalyan M4, 1323-18)

The rishis, munis (sages), Sankadik (mythological eternally young gods) and other holy men including Sukhdev and Prahlad in ancient times reached wonderful states after partaking of the Divine Ambrosia.
“The Sankadik and Brahma sing Your praise, Sukhdeva and Prahalad sing Your praise too. Whosoever drinks the wonderful Ambrosia, he is awake to the wonders of God.”
(Sarang Var M5, 1224-8)

Fruits of the Divine Ambrosia

In the ocean of Naam are rising and falling the waves of the Divine Ambrosia. When one hears within himself the Melody of Naam, one is spellbound. He remains in ecstasy and intoxication day and night and all the wealth of the world appears valueless in comparison. This intoxication is referred to as wine by Muslim Saints.

“He is ever intoxicated, who drinks the Ambrosia. Other drinks intoxicate, but their effect soon wears off. The God-intoxicated person drinks Ambrosia; for him all other drinks become insipid.” (Asa M5, 377-11)

“Oh my mother, my mind is intoxicated with God, seeing my compassionate Lord I am in utter bliss, the Divine Ambrosia intoxicates me completely.” (Sarang Var M5, 1225-11)

It is the Master who grants this intoxication. Hafiz Sahib and others have, therefore, called Him Saqi, the wine-server. The Perfect Master gives his disciples the cup of this Ambrosia to drink and thus frees them from the bondage of the world. Hafiz Sahib asked for this ambrosial wine, saying: “Oh Server, give me that wine which is not to be found even in heaven.” Bhai Nand Lal also prayed for this wine, saying:

“Oh Server, give me a drink, a drink that will intoxicate. Oh Server, give me a drink which will solve every difficulty.”

The Gurbani mentions many of the benefits of the Divine Ambrosia. All perversions and egotism are destroyed. The mind is purified. Happiness and peace are gained. The intellect is sharpened and the lotus of the heart is turned upwards. The result is that one enjoys equipoise, crosses the ocean of existence and attains deliverance. He becomes immortal and is honored in the Court of the Lord. He dwells in his Original Home and meets the Lord.

The Gurbani also outlines the unfortunate consequences of not drinking the Divine Ambrosia.

Spiritual seekers should obtain this Ambrosia and thus make their lives fruitful. The Gurbani urges us to obtain this Ambrosia.

“All should enjoy this Ambrosia of the Lord - He, the Perfect One, the Master of all arts.”
(Gauri M5, 196-11)

Guru Naam or Gurumukh Naam

Naam is obtained through the Master by following His instructions. Only a devotee can obtain it. The Naam has also been described as Gurumat-Naam, Guru-Naam or Gurumukh-Naam. According to the Gurbani, Gurumat-Naam, Guru-Naam and Gurumukh-Naam are the same as the hidden Naam or Dhun-atmak Naam, Unstruck Music or Unutterable Sound.
Gurumat Naam

By Gurumat is meant Shabd, Divine Sound or Anhad Dhun (Ceaseless Music). It is indeed the True Naam.

“If one forgets not the Guru-given Name, one attains true honor the easiest way. Within us is the Treasure of the Shabd, by finding it we shed our ego.” (Gauri M1, 228-18)

“Thus is love-worship of the Lord realized, through the Guru one realizes the Lord’s Name.” (Asa M1, 414-7)

“Save me, save me, oh Lord; I take refuge with You; make my faith in the Gurumat-Naam firm and strong.” (Kalyan M4, 1325-18)

It is through the Grace of the Lord and through great good fortune that one gets the Guru-Naam or Gurumat-Naam.

“One contemplates on the Gurumukh-Naam; with the Lord’s Grace one meets a Master; by His Grace one merges with the Lord.” (Malar M4, 1265-4)

“If a man is very fortunate, he is attuned to the Gurumat-Naam. He then crosses the ocean of Maya and attachment and tastes the Divine Ambrosia.” (Kalyan M4, 1326-16)

The Gurumukh-Naam can be had from the Master only and it is only the devotee who can have it.

“No one save the Perfect Master knows; Maya and worldly attachment delude all others. It is through the Guru that one is blessed with the Lord’s Word.” (Asa M5, 423-12)

“The world is involved with virtue and vice, and with pleasure and pain which lead to sorrow. Only a devotee lives in bliss; he realizes the Gurumukh-Naam.” (Maru M3, 1052-12)

Benefits of the Guru-Naam

The Gurbani mentions various benefits of Guru-Naam. These are as follows:

1. All desires are fulfilled and happiness is obtained.

“He ever repeats the Guru-Naam, and all his desires are fulfilled.” (Gauri M5, 202-11)

“The Lord is the giver of all happiness; the Guru-Naam leads to it.” (Kabir, Bilawal, 856-6)

2. Sins, perversions and egotism are destroyed.

“All your sins and sorrows are destroyed; all your dirt is cleansed by the Guru through the Naam.” (Bihagara M4, 539-7)
“If one forgets not the Guru-given Name, one attains true honor the easiest way. Within us is the Treasure of the Word, by finding it we shed our ego.” (Gauri M1, 228-18)

“Selfhood and intense love of Maya are deep afflictions, for them the cure is the All-powerful Lord’s Name, with which the Guru has blessed me.” (Gujri M4, 502-7)

“He is detached; attached yet separate. He does what He likes; all that He wills comes to pass, when one dwells on the Lord’s Name by Guru’s Grace one’s separation from the Lord vanishes.” (Gujri Var M3, 514-3)

3. It gives equipoise to life.

“When one obtains the Gurumukh-Naam, one sleeps in poise and also wakes in poise, and one is merged in the Gurumukh-Naam, Oh Nanak, one contemplates on the true Naam.”

(Maru M4, 1069-18)
Nectar (Amrit)
Chapter 11

That thing is called Amrit (Nectar), Ab-e-Hayat (Elixir of Life), or Maha Ras (Divine Ambrosia) the partaking of which makes one immortal, and frees one from birth and death.

To obtain it, many ascetics have carried out severe penances and have undergone untold privations. They sought for it in sacred places, mountains, forests, rivers, rivulets and lakes. But they failed to find such a spiritual life-force anywhere. In fact, this wonderful Nectar cannot be found in the gross world. The botanist and other scientists have given up the search. They have not discovered it.

This Nectar is mentioned in the scriptures of all religions. Muslim Saints have called it Ab-e-Hewan or Ab-e-Hayat (Water or Elixir of Life). They have sung the praises of drinking it. According to Hindu Rishis, Mansarovar is a Pool of Nectar, by drinking which one becomes immortal. In the Vedas, at many places a mention is made of Som Ras, by drinking which the Rishis used to become immortal. Saints call this Mansarovar, the Sacred Pool or Chashma-e-Kausar, Spring of Immortality, Amritsar, Pool of Nectar.

It is said in the Bible that Christ rose up from the dead and brought the dead back to life. He also promised to give the Water of Life to a certain woman. This shows that he had the use of the Divine Nectar. Guru Nanak, his successors and other Saints drank deeply of this Nectar themselves and gave it to their disciples also.

What is Nectar?

We should ponder over the nature of Nectar. What is the Nectar referred to by the Gurus? The Gurbani mentions it. On considering the matter, it becomes clear that they have called Shabd or the Name, the Divine Nectar. They have advised their devotees to drink of it.

“The Nectar is the True Name; it cannot be described. He who drinks it is accepted. He merges in the Shabd.” (Sri Rag M3, 33-3)

“Nectar-sweet is the Name of the Lord, one gathers it through the Guru's Word.” (Bihagara M4, 538-12)

“The Lord's immaculate Nectar-Name is the cure-all for all the maladies of the world. Says Bhikhan, by the Guru's Grace, I reach the Door of Deliverance.” (Bhikhan, Sorath 659-15)

“The Guru blesses with the Nectar-Name of the Lord.” (Suhi M1, 729-15)

“The Name of the Lord is the Nectar; he who drinks it is rid of thirst.” (Malar Var M3, 1283-3)

“The Name of the Lord is Nectar in the Iron Age.” (Gauri M5, 318-16)

“Very sweet is the Guru's Word, which, as the Nectar of God, I find within myself. And whosoever tastes it attains the Blessed State, and his mind is cooled, his body is comforted.” (Parbhati M1, 1331-15)
“The Name of the Lord is Nectar; quench your thirst with it. The mind is then dyed in the Truth; and it merges in the Truth.” (Sri Rag M3, 35-8)

“Nanak, the Word is the only Nectar, and through the Guru it is received.” (Sorath M4, 644-6)

“When I lived on the mountain of ego, intense were my sensuous cravings. But when I saw I was so near the Lord’s presence, I accepted the Word, and stilled my thirst; I filled my soul with the Lord’s Nectar.” (Ramkali M1, 933-15)

The term Nectar has also been used to describe the Truth and the Unending Music.

“The Nectar is the treasure of the Name; a devotee finds it. Fortunate are the devotees. In whose heart it dwells.” (Ramkali M5, 961-11)

“The Unending Music showers the Divine Nectar, peace fills the mind and body.” (Majh M5, 105-15)

The Nectar has also been called Hari (the Lord), Hari Kirtan (singing praises of the Lord) and also the Supreme Ambrosia.

“Give up the three attributes of this world, and merge in the Shabd. The Lord and the immortal fruit are one; the Lord Himself makes one eat it.” (Sri Rag M3, 66-6)

“False are the colors of Maya; all that is apparent turns to ashes. Sweet as nectar is the Lord, go into the company of Saints and drink the Nectar.” (Majh M5, 134-12)

“I am blessed with the Nectar of the Lord which has quenched all my thirst.” (Suhi M4, 731-10)

“Nectar-sweet is the Lord’s Name, it is through the Guru that one dwells upon it. Purifying is the Lord’s Name, and contemplating on it one is rid of one’s pain.” (Kanra M4, 1316-9)

“The Lord’s praise is Nectar-sweet, but rare the one who tastes it. Nanak is rewarded with the One Name. And contemplating on it he lives.” (Asa M5, 400-2)

“Sweet is the taste of the Nectar-Name, which the Master makes us drink.” (Majh M3, 124-6)

The Gurbani tells us that this Nectar is unique and that it is the only True Nectar. It is the Naam of the Lord. There is no other Nectar. By drinking it, one is dyed in its color.

“They who are blessed with the Glory of the Naam, their mind is imbued with Your Love. Oh Nanak! There is only One Nectar; no, there is not another.” (Sarang Var M4, 1238-17)

In the Iron Age, the Naam of the Lord is the only Nectar.

“What is the Nectar in the Iron Age? The Naam of the Lord and naught else. This is a great treasure, and it is found with the Saints.” (M5 Ramkali M5, 888-15)
In the Nectar There is the Sound Principle

There is a sweet Melody and unending Music in the Nectar and this supports the entire universe. The Nectar is the Bread of life, the food of the soul.

“The mind strays and wanders; on meeting the Master it is stilled; one then enters the tenth door; there Ambrosia is the food, and the Melody of the Shabd resounds, which supports the entire universe. The Unending Music plays there; and one merges in the Truth. Oh Nanak, on meeting the Master the wandering mind is stilled, and one dwells in the Eternal Abode.”
(Asa M3, 440-19)

“When a Saint meets a Saint, contentment reigns supreme. The unutterable Truth is dwelt upon if one merges in the Perfect Master. One drinks Nectar and is contented; one is honored in the Court of the Lord. In all hearts rings the Music of the Lord's Flute; and one loves the Shabd day and night. Rare are they who know this; through the Guru this is made clear.”
(Sri Rag M1, 62-13)

There is Light in the Nectar

The power of inner sight is located behind the eyes. If one turns one's attention towards the inner sky and makes it still there, Light appears. In the beginning one sees flashes of lightning, a starry sky, sun, moon and several other kinds of Lights. When the soul crosses these regions and reaches Trikuti and Par-Brahm, it sees the sun and moon of the regions of Brahm and Par-Brahm respectively.

Tulsi Sahib and other Saints have mentioned these Lights in their writings:

“The Lord's Gospel is Nectar-sweet and glorious, and one tastes it through the Guru, the natural way. One's mind is illumined and dispelled is one's darkness, as the night is ended by the rising sun. And the Invisible, the Imperceptible and the Unknowable; He is seen by the true devotee.”
(Sri Rag M4, 87-18)

“Nectar-sweet is the Guru's Word; but rare is the one who tastes it. Into him comes Light, and he drinks the Ambrosia; and he hears the Melody at the Door of the Lord.”
(Majh M3, 113-13)

“Pure is His Light, Nectar-sweet is the Lord's Naam; and whosoever partakes of it, becomes immortal and desireless.”
(Ramkali M5, 886-19)

Where is the Nectar?

1. It is found within the body.

The Nectar or the Elixir of Life is not to be found in the outer world. It can be found in the inner or spiritual regions only. By drinking it, one becomes immortal. In order to drink it one has to go within one's body. What do the Saints mean when they talk of going within where the Nectar is found?
This body is the home of the soul. There are windows and doors in it, through which the soul wanders out into the outer world. It is, however, imprisoned within the body. Nine doors of the body, namely the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, one mouth and the two lower apertures are visible.

So long as the soul is busy in these nine doors, it remains without the Nectar. Besides these nine doors, however, there is another one, a secret door, behind the eyes. When the soul, after leaving the nine doors or withdrawing from them is concentrated at the tenth door, it then drinks the precious Nectar.

"Oh maiden fair, You tried all the nine doors, but you did not find the precious Treasure. Oh Kabir, the nine doors hold it not; the pure essence is realized in the tenth." (Kabir, Gauri 339-13)

"The body has nine doors, insipid are the tastes of their pleasures; it is in the tenth door that one gathers the Lord's Nectar." (Kalyan M4, 1323-13)

"Through the True Guru the Nectar drops into one's mind, and the Lord becomes manifest in the Tenth Door. There rings the ceaseless Melody of Shabd, and one merges in equipoise very easily." (Mam M4, 1069-10)

"I gave up searching for Him without; for the Guru has revealed Him in my own house; the Unending Music plays at the tenth door; there I was fed with the Nectar of Naam." (Maru M5, 1002-3)

The Nectar is obtained by going within the human body. There it yields its nine treasures. It simply cannot be found by means of any external observances.

"The Nectar-Name of the Lord is to me the nine Treasures, and it dwells within the body." (Gauri M5, 293-16)

Every heart is overflowing with this Nectar. Not one is without it.

"The Nectar is in every heart. Through the Guru's Word does one drink it." (Kabir, Kedara 1123-17)

The lake of Nectar is in all hearts. But it can be drunk through the Shabd only.

"Within is the well full of Nectar; through the Word does one draw it out and drink it." (Vadhans M3, 570-18)

This Nectar is inside of man himself, but the world seeks it outside. It is like the musk which is in the navel of a deer, but the deer searches for it outside in the forests and does not find it.

"The Nectar fills the house; but the proud ones know not its taste, as the deer knows not the musk within; and wanders about in delusion." (Sorath M3, 644-2)

A Sufi says, "Our Friend is in the house (our body) while we ceaselessly search for Him outside. The Nectar-water is full to the brim in the pitcher the inner sky but we wander in thirst."

"My Friend is in the house, but I am wandering in the world. The vessel is brimful with water; but I am wandering about athirst."
There is an inverted well in the sky (the top of the head) and its mouth opens towards the Kunj-lotus behind the eyes. The current of the Nectar is flowing from that well into the body. But the soul, forgetting that current, is wandering in the world outside and is suffering many privations.

Everything is in the house of the human body and there is nothing outside of it. Those who have received the Grace of the Guru are at peace both within and without. The current of the Nectar is falling in showers inside them and by drinking it they remain in bliss and ecstasy day and night. The soul that has been separated from the Nectar for many lives attains this state through the help of the Saints.

Guru Arjan Sahib says:

“All things are in Your home and not one is without; he who searches without is lost in doubt. The one who realizes the Lord within by the Guru's Grace is at peace both within and without. When the Nectar drops into one's self, and the mind hears the Shabd and drinks the Nectar, the devotee is ever in joy, and ever sports with the Lord. He who was separated from Him birth after birth, is united with the Lord. By the Master's Grace the dry tree blossoms into flowers; the seeker gets right advice and praises the Name; he becomes a devotee and unites with the Lord.” (Majh M5, 102-3)

The Nectar is Behind the Covering of the Mind

The nectar lies behind the covering of the mind. When the mind becomes still, the Nectar manifests itself. On attaining it one becomes immortal.

“I long for the Name of the Lord, I can live only if I get it. There is Nectar in the mind, by the Guru's Grace the Lord gives it.” (Gauri M4, 175-9)

“Oh Nanak, the Nectar is within the mind, but one attains it by the Guru's Grace alone. And they alone drink it with abandon, in whose lot it is written by the primeval God.” (Sarang Var M2, 1238-8)

When the mind is rid of its perversions and is purified, it obtains the essence of the Nectar.

“By the Guru's Grace the mind became pure, and now it sings the praises of the essence of the Nectar.” (Parbhati M3, 1334-8)

Who Can Taste the Nectar?

According to the Gurbani, he alone can drink the Nectar who dies while living or in other words, becomes dead (unattached) to the world while still living in it.

“They who are dead to their self and so alive, taste the Nectar; their mind through the Guru's Word is attuned to the Lord's Love.” (Asa M4, 447-5)

Our outer senses have free play while the subtle and causal senses are dormant. When the soul puts an end to the activities of the outer senses and travels within to the subtle and spiritual regions, it is called the state of dying while living. If the soul leaves the nine doors and becomes concentrated at the tenth door behind the eyes, it can then drink the Nectar.
How is the Nectar Obtained?

1. Through the Grace of the Lord:

This Nectar can be had through the kindness of the Lord. A man by himself can do nothing about it. Everybody may try to get it, but it is only when the Lord wishes that this fruit grows in the ground of one's heart.

“The Lord is the Nectar-Name, it is through His Grace that one attains it, Nanak, the Lord's Name is the Treasure of Bliss; so be ever attuned to it.” (Mal M3, 1258-15)

“All may sow the seed for their good; but that alone germinates which the Lord wills. The devotee of the Master sows the seed of Nectar, and he reaps the fruit of Nectar-Name.”

(Gauri M4, 304-7)

2. Through one's destiny:

It is only when it is so ordained and inscribed on the forehead that one can taste the Nectar of the Lord within.

“He for whom it is ordained, keeps it in his heart, the Lord's Gospel is Nectar-sweet and glorious, and he tastes it through the Guru's Word, the easy way.” (Sri Rag M4, 87-17)

3. Through the Perfect Master and His service:

The Nectar fills all space. No place is without it. But the proud and the vain people cannot have even a drop of it. “Water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink” – is their lot. The Nectar which is sought for by gods and goddesses and sages and hermits can be had only from the Master.

“The angelic beings and the sages search for the Nectar, but it can be had from the Master only; it is when the Master blesses one with the Nectar, that one enshrines the True One in the heart.”

(Ramkali M3, 918-14)

The Nectar cannot be had by one's own unaided efforts. Unless we take shelter with a Master who dispenses it, we cannot come upon it. This boon is the reward of serving the Master.

“The Nectar-Name, the cure-all, the immaculate water, one attains at the Guru's door. Oh Nanak, he who is so fated, receives it from the Master, and is cured of all diseases.”

(Sorath M5, 616-19)

“I drank the Lord's Nectar-Name from the Guru, the Lord's Name became my food, my garment. I loved the Name and reveled in it; oh Nanak, wonderful was its joy.” (Majh M5, 99-14)

“Oh my dear Master, beloved one; pray, let me be a sacrifice to You. Bless me with Your sight; You have blessed me with the Nectar-Name.” (Sri Rag M5, 52-4)

“He of Himself guides; and we dwell on the Lord's Name. By good fortune, we meet the True Guru, and taste the Nectar-Name.” (Gauri M3, 163-1)
“Nectar-sweet is the Divine Sound, Nectar-sweet is His Word. By serving the True Guru, it abides in our hearts.” (Majh M3, 119-3)

4. By surrendering to the Will of the Master and acting on His advice:

The Nectar is obtained by surrendering to the Will of the Master, acting according to His advice and by listening to His discourses.

“Oh mind, walk in the way of the Lord, then will you dwell in your Original Home, drink the Nectar and be in peace.” (Sri Rag M3, 37-2)

“In the Will of the Master lies the giving of the Nectar. Only a rare one obtains it.” (Sri Rag M3, 31-14)

“In the company of Saints one tastes the Treasure of the Nectar-Name.” (Sri Rag M4, 91-6)

“The Divine Nectar is delicious to the taste; it is only when you meet a Saint that you drink it.” (Majh M5, 134-11)

“Oh Nanak, he alone is alive who meditates on the Name; he keeps the company of Saints and drinks the Nectar.” (Gauri M5, 200-12)

This Nectar permeates every pore of a Perfect Master. A single glance from Him can transform a sinner into a Saint.

“Nectar abides in the Master; He is sublime, His station is high. Says Nanak, we worship our Lord by His Grace, those turned Godwards alone attain Him.” (Gauri M3, 300-16)

The Master is a Pool of Nectar. Only by great good fortune can one bathe in it and become pure.

“The Guru is a Pool of Nectar; those who are fortunate bathe in it. The dirt of all their births is then washed away, and they are attuned to the pure Name of the Lord.” (Sri Rag M4, 40-10)

The object of human birth is to obtain this Nectar and it can be had from a Perfect Master only. Different kinds of robes and garments and cunning are of no help. Through them one cannot obtain the Nectar-Name. And without the Nectar-Name, there is no escape from delusion.

“You have come into the world to gather the Nectar-Name; you obtain it through the Master. Give up then your cleverness and your ochre robes; in duality you gather not this Fruit.” (Sorath M1, 598-4)

Who Obtains the Nectar?

Only one out of several millions may get this Divine Nectar to drink.

“The Lord distributes the Elixir of the Nectar-Name; but only one in millions receives it and partakes of it.” (Parbhati M3, 1335-1)

“Sweet is the Nectar-Name of the Master; but rare is the one who tastes it.” (Majh M3, 113-13)
“The True Nectar is falling in showers; and the devotee drinks it. His mind is ever refreshed, and he sings the praises of the Lord.” (Asa M3, 428-11)

“They, the devotees who contemplate on the Lord, are blessed with His Nectar and are purged to purity. Dwell on the Lord’s Name so that you are cleansed of the inner dirt.” (Malar M1, 1254-7)

“Softly fall the showers of the Nectar-Name; and through the Grace of the Master I see my Beloved Lord.” (Asa M4, 442-19)

“The Lord's Gospel is Nectar-sweet and glorious and one tastes it through the Guru's Word, the natural way. His mind is illumined and his darkness dispelled, as the rising sun ends the night, and the invisible, the imperceptible and the unknowable is seen by a True Devotee.” (Sri Rag M4, 87-18)

The Nectar fills the body, but egotistical persons and those without a Master remain without it.

“Within one’s self is the Nectar; but those puffed up with pride know not its taste.” (Sorath Var M4, 644-2)

“I am a sacrifice to my Master who revealed to me the Truth. The world is deluded, the Nectar is wasted; the egotistical people know nothing of it.” (Malar M1, 1262-3)

Benefits of the Nectar

The Gurbani mentions numerous benefits that accrue from tasting the Nectar. As a result of enjoying the taste of the Nectar one gives up all other tastes and becomes truly detached.

“His mind is content, he hunger not, nor thirsts; he sees the Immaculate One in all hearts, only a detached one enjoys the Nectar; one steeped in the Love of the Guru's Word.” (Mam M1, 1039-3)

The Nectar fills everybody. He who tastes it knows its intense sweetness. By tasting it, one becomes immersed in it and is made fearless. He is not troubled by Kal (the Negative Power). He becomes free and brings about the release of his family.

“The Nectar fills everyone within; he who tastes it knows it. He becomes free of fear and is filled with the Divine Ambrosia. He receives it by the Lord's Grace, and thereafter is not afflicted by death.” (Maru M3, 1092-12)

“The Lord created the fourteen regions wherein men carry on their trade. They who are Godwards reap the profit. Death does not touch them who drink the True Nectar. They gain release for themselves and their kin; the whole world is saved for their sake.” (Sri Rag M4, 83-17)

The Nectar gives the nine Treasures and also occult and spiritual powers. It leads to happiness and peace. Fear, doubt, perversions and sins are destroyed. Egotism disappears and the craving for the illusory pleasures of Maya is quenched. The mind becomes still and pure, and one gains salvation and tranquility. One is accepted in the Court of the Lord after drinking the Nectar.
From this it is evident that the Nectar, so much praised by the Gurus, and the Nectar which one is urged to drink, is the Name or Shabd (Inner Music) which pervades all hearts. A Perfect Master with his loving and kindly glance can plant the Nectar-tree within us and enable us to drink the Nectar.

The Sikhs use Nectar prepared with the help of a sword. On looking into this matter, we find that this is prepared after repeating bani or a name. While repeating a name, its power permeates the materials or objects upon which one is concentrating. The Saints who are lovers of the Name are filled with Divine Light.

“When the full Light shines in their hearts, the Immortal One knows them to be pure.” (Pat Shahi 10)

Such Saints, by their Nectar-filled glance, can raise the dead. They bestow the boon of the Name upon barren minds. The glance of Saints has Nectar in it. One can become a Saint by a mere glance from one of them.

“By a Master’s Nectar-glance one becomes a Saint.” (Sukhmani 287-7)

One can drink the Nectar only through the Grace of the Master. Those persons are indeed fortunate who become immortal by partaking of it. They become like a bee at the Lotus Feet of the Master and enjoy lasting bliss.

“Drink the Lord’s Nectar and gain life-eternal. Remember Him and be ever in bliss. Live in joy, with desires all fulfilled; let not care approach you. Be like the black-bee, hugging the lotus feet of the Lord. Oh Nanak, find bliss in His service, as the rain bird finds joy in the rain-drop.”

(Gauri M5, 496-6)
Humility
Chapter 12

Outer Humility

In order to be deserving of the Lord's Grace we have to empty the heart of vainglory, for, unless a vessel is empty, it can contain nothing. Because of humility Kal and Maya cannot affect us. All the Saints have adopted it and adorned themselves with it.

What is false pride or vainglory? To be proud of a virtue we do not possess, or we possess merely as a gift from someone else, is false pride. We do not deserve to be respected or honored because we belong to a noble family of great deeds or because our ancestors selflessly gave in charity. We can understand it from an example. The Lord makes someone a treasurer. He has in that capacity heaps of money. How can he be proud of that? They are in trust with him and have to be disbursed according to the directions of the owner. If the treasurer is proud of this money, it is false pride. The owner can remove him whenever he likes. Similarly, a man may be riding a horse while putting on a costly costume and may feel proud of it. All this pride is misplaced. In reality, it is the horse or the costume or the tailor who made it, who should feel proud. It would be meanness on his part to snatch and appropriate the credit for this. Another person is proud of his beautiful hair, fair face, soft hand or healthy body and walks about the streets like a bloated bag. Such pride is false; pride such as this is due to that all powerful Creator and nature which made him or to the soul granted by the Lord. The Guru has said:

“Oh Nanak, those who are proud without virtue are really donkeys.” A man who is proud without possessing the virtues is really a donkey. One should be thankful to the Lord for His gifts.

“By whose Grace you have a beauteous face, always remember that wonderful Lord. By whose Grace you have got this good species, always remember that Lord day and night. By whose Grace you have a diseaseless body, contemplate that Lord with love.” (Gauri M5, 270:3, 5)

Another person is proud of his knowledge and talent. He is not entitled to this pride. This is due to the teacher who taught him and the intellect given to him by the Lord. Of what should a man be proud in this world? People are proud of wealth and property. These are evanescent like the declining shade. People are proud of youth, which is lost in disease and old age. In the first place, these do not remain the same but if they do, it is only for a short time. These fall like leaves of a tree.

“Wealth, youth and flowers last for a short time, like the Pabban (a small lotus plant) leaves, they wither away as they sprout.” (Sri Rag M1, 23-5)

Let those who are proud of family and its members see with their open eyes the value of getting entangled in the attachment of children and lured by their sweet talk and antics. Man is like a guest for the night who has to leave in the morning. Being here for a night it is useless to build schemes for ages. Houses, temples and wealth change like the shade of a tree. This world is like a sarai (resting place) visited by persons who constantly give place to others. Body, son, wife, family, etc., which he considers eternal, are with him for a few days only and would then have to be given up. None of these would accompany him. It is therefore useless and in vain to be proud of them. These are like a dream.
“Why are you falsely proud of this world which is like a dream? Nothing is yours in it, says Nanak.” (Salok M9, 1428-8)

Worldly pride and grandeur is like the saffron plant which multiplies when trampled upon. If one turns his back on worldly pride and pays attention to Reality, its realization increases constantly. The real beauty belongs to the soul in which dwell love, coolness, peace and calmness and through which the body is glorified. The body in which the Lord dwells is indeed beautiful.

“The body is the beauteous bride with whom abideth the Lord. Eternally she enjoys the love of her spouse catching hold of the Master's Word.” (Suhi M3, 754-6)

That knowledge is blessed and really praise-worthy which is utilized in trying to understand the Lord and in singing His glory. All other knowledge becomes the cause of our shame, for by swelling our ego it leads us millions of miles away from the reality and only the pride of knowledge remains.

It is generally observed that people parade their qualities in order to attain position and honor. In this way they become seekers after honor, titles and positions. Only that position or prestige is praiseworthy which springs in the heart of others because of our being full of virtues and owing to the tall stature of our simplicity and humility and not that gained by propaganda or spending money. Such pride and glory is to be despised.

The flowers that grow out of earth are beautiful. They however wither when plucked and rubbed between the fingers. They lose their freshness. Their scent and color disappear. Those who enjoy the smell and color of the flowers from a distance are happy. When they bring their noses in contact with them and smell them for a long time it has a bad effect and sometimes the hidden poison makes them deleterious. Similar is the case with worldly rank and honor. To love virtues and to make an effort to acquire them make us full of them. But to run after honors and positions and to try for them keeps us away from reality and makes us despicable. It leads to the fall of our soul. We should aim at realizing the Lord and not try for that which keeps us away.

“Give up worldly pride. When the Beloved is found one feels happy.” (Bilawal M3, 808-10)

It is true that one who finds pearls does not amass heaps of shells. Those who seek the Lord do not run after outer show and glory. They remain happy in the Will of the Lord and the greatness of their soul can be glimpsed in whatever work the Lord puts them on.

Inner Humility

From the previous discussion it is clear that it is not proper to be proud of worldly pleasures. The thought of countless bounties of the Lord and our innumerable sins and defects makes us beggars at His Door. We should therefore think as to which of His bounties we are acknowledging and what we are doing for them. As long as we believe that whatever good or evil we possess is not because of us but from Him, we cannot be proud of anything. What are the bounties which we have not received from the Lord! Having received them, what have we done to show our gratitude and in respect of which of them? If this line of thought leads to pride then the thought of our defects and ingratitude is a sure remedy. We always say that we are
nothing, we are of no consequence and others are better. But if others say the same thing about us, we would be very sorry as we think that our state is quite the reverse. Those who really inwardly believe that they are the lowest are really spiritual.

“Oh Kabir, I am the worst, everybody else is good. He who thinks so is my friend.”
(Kabir, Salok, 1364-17)

We try to make a show of avoiding the gaze of the world and hiding ourselves but in reality desire that it should run after us and find us out. We sit in meetings on a back bench or on a low seat so that we may be seated in the front or on a high seat. True humility never makes a show nor indulges in humble words. A really humble man not only wants to hide himself and his virtues but also tries to keep himself out of the sight of the world. With this end in view, he sometimes does acts which bring him a bad name so that he can hide himself under their cover. Yogis and Saints have behaved in this way. Gopichand and Bharthari lived in the house of a potter and engaged in austerities, but in order to keep off the ruler of that place and other people, they put up a show of quarrel over articles of food and invited criticism. Guru Nanak put on the garb of a hunter and took a dagger and dogs with him. All others stepped aside but Lehna Ji stuck fast to him.

Kabir Sahib took bottles in his hands and in the company of a woman disciple and Ravidas, the cobbler walked through the bazar singing hymns. There was water in the bottles but people thought it was wine. The water was poured before the Rajah. Ravidas said this had been done to extinguish the fire at the temple of Jagan Nath. Rajah sent his man to Jagan Nath. The man made enquiries and reported that on that day the temple had in fact caught fire and Kabir Sahib had extinguished it.

It therefore behooves us not to utter words of sham humility. If we do utter such words they should represent our real inner feelings. We should not lower our eyes unless our mind accepts humility and poverty. Unless we feel a genuine desire for humility and poverty we should not express it. Of course, as truly civilized and civil persons we should address others with respect and in accordance with good manners. We should behave humbly and to show regard for the guest, utter words in humility. This befits us as human beings. There can be no doubt that we should utter words which come from our heart to our guests. A truly humble heart desires that instead of his saying so, others should say of him that he is the most inconsequential and unimportant person. If anyone says this of him he does not feel offended but is happy to feel that there is at least one man who thinks of him as he himself does.

Some persons under the cover of humility give up inner prayers because of being imperfect. They do not think themselves fit for them. Some say that they do not advise others as they themselves are not perfectly faultless. Some do not wish to use their talents in the service of the Lord because they know their weakness best and are afraid, lest while doing service they should feel proud and while showing light to others may ruin themselves in the fire of pride and conceit. These thoughts do not arise when one is truly humble. These are only attempts to justify one's idleness and cowardice. They, on the one hand make a great show of feelings for the Lord and his incarnation, the Master, and on the other hand, under the cover of humility, want to keep themselves deprived of the great humility which He in His mercy wishes to shower on them. The Lord and Master desire that we should be perfect like Him and thus obtain His Grace.

“Oh Kabir, it avails not if one is cold or hot like water. The devotee should be like the Lord.”
(Kabir, Salok, 1372-9)
The man who has no confidence in himself puts forth arguments and reasons for not doing his duty but a man of prayer, although he feels utterly incompetent knowing fully well that he is not fit for it and cannot perform it, surrenders with full faith and fortitude everything to the Lord and His incarnation, the Master, and engages himself in carrying out the directions for fulfilling the task given to him by the Master.

The truth is that to think we know what we do not know is sheer ignorance. When we do not know a thing, it is absurd to make others believe that we know it. We should not exhibit our knowledge, skill and know-how. It is, however, not proper to feign ignorance. Of course, when we meet a person desirous of knowing that thing, we should not hide anything from him and tell him everything for his guidance. Humility should hide our virtues and perfections till such time as the need for redemption of our own soul exists. This is not a moral or worldly quality but a godly virtue.

In true humility we need not pass ourselves as fools or parade ourselves as wise men. Just as pride is opposite of humility, so deceit, pretense, cleverness, show, hypocrisy, cunning and worldly crookedness are opposite of calmness and right conduct. If the worldly wise, in order to gain their ends, dub right conduct as mean and foolish, the truly humble person should bear the backbiting and criticism cheerfully, the cause of this backbiting is not in him but in others. The Master has said:

“If you care for your good, do good to the mean persons.” (M1 Asa War 465-15)

Signs of Humility

True humility produces sweetness in our heart and the words uttered by us would be sweet. All life currents would also be delicious. The sweetness would be the same for all. Our neighbors and others would feel its sweetness. All our sayings and actions, whether great or small, would be full of humility. They would dye their relations and others in the same hue. Guru Nanak says that sweetness or humility and meekness is the essence of all virtues. He who has this virtue is the fountain-head of all virtues.

“Oh Nanak, sweetness and meekness are the essence of all virtues.” (Asa War, 470-15)

The Method of Acquiring True Greatness

In order to get true respect and prestige it is necessary to have humility and meekness. Only he who has them can worship and treat others with courtesy. Kabir Sahib says:

“Have humility, purity and meekness and treat others with courtesy. Oh Kabir, he is truly great who is good tempered.”

Some persons consider humility and meekness as weakness and helplessness. They believe in tit for tat. However, what can be achieved with humility cannot be had by using harsher methods. Fire has its own place but it is only when in humility it is reduced to ashes that it can be applied to the forehead. Those who wish to attain true greatness and glory should develop the above-mentioned virtues. Jesus Christ says:

“He that is least among you all, the same is great.”
He who considers himself to be the meanest is the greatest. Guru Arjan Sahib also says to the same effect:

“He who considers himself to be the meanest, consider him to be the highest.” (Gauri M5, 2661-7)

The tenth Guru has said that as a man progresses, he grows in humility also.

Lao-tse, the great Chinese Saint, while describing the virtues of a good man has mentioned love, sympathy, gentle disposition, frugality and humility or meekness amongst them. It is due to humility that such a man becomes a leader of men.

If one gives up these virtues and tries to become great through wealth, selfishness, pride, falsehood, deceit, cleverness, pretense, exhibition of knowledge or propaganda, it is conclusive proof of his being mean. He is like a date tree which can provide no shade to a traveler nor can its fruit remove the hunger, as being very high, it is out of reach. Kabir Sahib says:

“What does it matter if you are tall like a date tree? It provides no shade to the traveler and its fruit is too high.”

Fruits of Humility

We should make our hearts the source of love for the entire universe and should have so much humility that even if a person does evil to us, we should return love for the same. In truth, one who is embellished with humility loses the capacity of stinging others. Even if anyone harms him, he does not think evil of him. Sheikh Sa’adi says, “I have imbibed so much humility that people trample on me like an ant and I do not sting like a honey bee.”

“I am like an ant which is trampled. I am not like a bee which stings.”

Egoism or pride is not liked by the Lord. He showers His Grace on those whose mind is full of humility and meekness. Water does not gather at the top of hills but flows down and accumulates there. He who bends drinks water but he who holds his head high remains thirsty. Kabir Sahib says:

“Water does not accumulate at high places but does so at low places; he who bends, drinks; the stiff-necked remains thirsty.”

In order to obtain the bounty of Grace of the Lord the ground of our heart should be dyed in the hue of humility. The Lord does not like proud persons but showers His mercy on the humble. Saint James says: “God resisteth the proud but giveth Grace to the humble.”

Hafiz Sahib says, “The devout was proud and did not tread the path safely. The devotee, owing to humility, reached the destination.”

Humility is a good means of imbibing the virtues of others. If we wish to imbibe them, we should be humble and poor.

Guru Arjan Sahib says that you should come to him when you have become the dust of the feet of others.
“After becoming the dust of the feet of others come to me.” (Maru War M5, 1102-11)

The path of finding the Lord consists in becoming humble and meek because we cannot deserve His Grace and carry out wishes of the Indescribable unless we give up pride and vainglory and meet some God intoxicated Saint and become His servants.

“Those who are the Lord's own, live as servants of His servants. They surrender their mind and intellect at the feet of the Master and by His Grace carry out the directions of the Indescribable.” (Belawal M4, 834-16)

When we give up all pride and bow at His Door, our souls become pure and we are saved from being burnt by the fire of passions. When we become servants of His servants, we find a place at His Door.

“Wash His feet and serve the Master. He takes away the suffering and fever of the soul. When he becomes servant of His servants, he finds a place at His door.” (Asa M5, 377-17)

Pride goes before a fall and a proud man does not imbibe the virtues of others. The humble and the meek can get spiritual wealth from the spiritually-minded persons. After finding the path, he in all humility assiduously treads it. This is due to the Grace of the Lord and the Master. If we do not take a humble and meek attitude before doing a good deed, do not retain it while doing and do not consider it a gift by the Grace of the Lord and the Master after it is done, it is snatched from our hands by pride amidst our rejoicings. The way to God is firstly humility, secondly humility and thirdly humility. Again, unless humility precedes, accompanies and follows every good action which we perform, pride wrests wholly from our hands any good work on which we are congratulating ourselves.

How to Win Over the Lord

What is that knowledge, virtue, or best amongst diamonds we should get and which is that dress, by putting on which, we win over our Lord? Guru Arjan Sahib answers that that knowledge is humility, that virtue is simplicity, and that pure diamond is a sweet tongue. Wear the dress of these three and your consort will be in your power.

“What is that knowledge, virtue and thing which is dear to the spouse? What dress should be put on to win over the Lord? Humility is the knowledge, simplicity the virtue, and sweet-tongue the winning chant that are dear to Him. If the dress of all these three is put on, the Lord is won over.” (Farid Ji, Salok, 1384-14)

The saying of Saints and holy men give glimpses of this humility, meekness and simplicity. Hafiz says that on the path of love there is no difference between the rich and the poor. He prays: “O Master, you are a Beauteous King. Look at this beggar at Your Door also. I am very sinful, please pay no heed to my deeds; but as a King, be kind to a beggar and cast a look of mercy on this sinner also.”

“Oh the path of love, there is no difference between the rich and the poor. Oh Beauteous King, say a word to this beggar. I am a great sinner but look not at my sins. In kingly manner speak to this sinful beggar.”
A true spiritual seeker, being humble and meek, considers himself to be so inconsequential that he hesitates even in the presence of the Master and employs others to convey to Him the feelings of his heart. Hafiz uses even air as his messenger.

“Oh Wind, carry a message of love to that King of Beauty that besides the hundreds of Jamsheds and Kai Khusros have me as His slave. You may guide like Khizar this broken-hearted. I am walking on foot, while others are on horse-back.”

Oh wind, carry the message of my humble love to that King of Beauty at whose doors kings and monarchs are standing. Request Him to help me as my companions are mounted while I am tottering on foot on the way.

Sheikh Sa'adi says that a branch laden with fruit bends towards the ground. The Cyprus tree which is devoid of fruit stands erect. In truth when a horse-man reaches his destination, he gets down and walks on foot. He alone can derive full benefit from a Saint who goes to Him in humility. He who is full of pride of his wisdom seldom reaches Him and if he does so by mistake, what will he gain? If you want to be admitted to the Court of Saints, go with the cup of humility without any pride, as it is only when the cup is empty that the flagon bends towards it. If the cup is full to the brim, how can it contain anything more? Respectful humility is accordingly very necessary.

“The empty-handed have a higher rank than the rich. The flagon bends its neck to the empty cup.”

The Grace of the Lord and Master cannot be had forcibly. He melts only on hearing humble prayer. If you are meek and pray to him in humility, He may turn His face towards you and you obtain His Grace. Therefore give up all pride and vanity and place the cup of humility before Him, then it would not be surprising if He fills the cup of the beggar.

“Give up force and take to weeping; mercy is drawn to supplicant, oh mendicant! If you weep, you will gain His Mercy. Seek His mercy in your wailing.”

Give up reliance on your strength and take to weeping as mercy is drawn towards wailing. If you adopt wailing you will get mercy. Always pray for His mercy while weeping. To many persons humility is natural and some learn humility from the sufferings of the world but true humility can be learnt only in the company of the Saints. They are free from egoism. Humility is their true embellishment. On the removal of egoism, true wisdom dawns. Shams Tabrez says, “Give up pride and become like dust, as from dust springs green grass. If you become ash because of Divine Fire, then this ash will act as alchemy which would turn your iron into gold.”

“Give up egoism and become dust so that green grass may spring out of this dust. If you are reduced to ashes because of fire of yearning, your ash will become alchemy.”

There are verses in the hymns of the Saints which show their humility. After getting boons of high spiritual order they have expressed feelings of humility. “Oh Lord and Master, whatever is happening is due to Your Grace.”
Guru Nanak gives a beautiful illustration of humility. “Oh Lord, all the faults are in me. I have no virtue. How is union with the Lord consort possible? I have no beauty or shine in the eyes. I do not belong to a noble family and cannot utter sweet words. If a woman (soul) dresses plainly and is liked by her Lord then is she the ever happy wife. That Lord has no form or color and He is beyond the reach of thought. I am neither beautiful nor wise nor clever. Oh Lord, give me a place at Your feet.”

“I am full of defects and have no virtue; how can I meet my Lord? I am not beautiful and have no shining eyes. I am not of noble family and have no sweet tongue. A woman may dress plainly, she is ever a happy bride if dear to her Lord. He has no form or delineation, His limits no one can find. I am not beautiful, wise or clever oh Lord! Be kind and unite me to Yourself.”

(Suhi Ashtpadi M1, 750-12)

He further says, “I am a fool, without wisdom and being full of filth, how can I go and unite with the Lord? Others are full of virtues. No one knows my name even. Those of my friends who have won the love of the Lord are sitting under mango tree and enjoying its sweetness. They are happy. Those virtues are not in me. How can I blame anyone?”

“I am unwise and full of faults, how can I go to my Lord? Others are far better. No one knows my name. Those who have won the love of the Lord are enjoying it in the shade of the mango tree. These virtues are not in me: how can I blame anyone?” (Suhi M1, 762-6)

“We are unwise, foolish and deluded. Oh Master! Show us the way. Oh Nanak! A Gurmukh loves the Shabd and always sings the praise of the Lord.” (Gauri M3, 246-6)

“Thou knowest what would be our state without Thee oh True Guru. We would have roamed about helplessly, without support. Oh Blessed Thou, who hath raised us worms to Thy own state; oh Blessed, Blessed, is the Guru; Nanak, on meeting whom all our woes depart.”

(Gauri M4, 167-11)

“I am a poor unrespected orphan. The Lord held me to His bosom and made me His queen.”

(Asa M5, 394-8)

“I was a low caste unknown orphan without virtue and merit. Oh Nanak! He was kind and made me His slave.” (Belawal M4, 815-1)

Another Saint prays to the Lord in humility:

“My intellect was topsy-turvy, the Master set right my soul!” (Sar Bachan)

Paltu Sahib has shown his humility in a peculiar manner:

“There was another Paltu. I was mistaken for him and given devotion. Devotion was given to me by mistaking me for another of my name. I took the wealth meant for another and secreted it. It was fated for another but was given to me. I alone know it, nobody else does. I offered to return it, but it was not accepted. This was a mistake by the Great One; what He said I did Oh Paltu! You are a great sinner and the Lord committed a mistake. There was another Paltu. I was mistaken for him and given devotion.”
The humility of Tulsi Sahib appears from the following verses:

“I am unwise, helpless and of humble heart. By taking refuge in the Saints, I have recognized the Master. The Master is an unfathomable ocean of peace. He put me on the right path. I bow at His feet again and again. I humbly sing the praises of the Saints.”

“I am Thy slave with the whole of my mind. Considering me low you have found me. I am your slave forever and forever. No one can cross without a Saint.”

“Saints are merciful and compassionate. By taking refuge with them even the low caste swim across. There can be no beginning or end without a Saint. Tulsi the helpless has taken shelter with you. Whatever is done, is done by Saints. Without the Saints, the path cannot be found.”

Shamas-i-Tabrez expresses his helplessness and inability with humility. He says, “Oh Master! I am a lame and humble beggar. I have not as yet been able to quench the thirst of my longing soul to my satisfaction by drinking the intoxicating water of the river of your compassion and mercy. You know my deeds full well. My weaknesses and helplessness are before you. When I committed any fault I was helpless. After all I was ill. I have come to the door of the perfect spiritual healer for treatment. A healer treats the patient through mercy. Now is the time for giving bounty. Give me some out of your treasury. No doubt, I am a thorn but a thorn also grows on flower plants. An intelligent gold dealer uses grain of barley also with mashas to make up tolas (weights for weighing gold”).

“No doubt I am a thorn, but thorns also grows on a flower plant. An intelligent gold dealer puts barely in scales.”

Give a place to this unworthy being in Your Court although I am not fit for it.

“We are not fit for Your Court, but we are called Your slaves.”

The Results of Humility

The Lord is always present in person with those who pray in humility and with meekness. They play in the ocean of the Lord like fishes in water. The Lord is immanent in land and sea. If there is humility in heart, the Lord meets up openly.

“He pervades land and sea everywhere. If there is humility in heart, He meets openly. He who observes humility, poverty and praying, the Lord is with him like fish in water.”

The Lord is like a piece of candy which pervades you. Only an ant can pick up sugar from the sand, no elephant can do so. Similarly persons proud of caste, race or family cannot gain any virtue or learn any lesson from the creation of the Lord. Only a humble person can derive this benefit. Kabir Sahib says:

“Lord, in the form of sugar spread over the sand, cannot be picked up by an elephant. Oh Kabir! Give up caste and race, become an ant and pick it and eat it.” (Kabir, Ramkali, 972-10)
Guru Amar Das says that you should give up egoism and become slaves of the Master. Then you will realize the Lord.

“He who is slave of the slaves of the Lord finds the Lord after giving up egoism.” (Sorath M3, 600-13)

Guru Arjan, the very source of humility says, “Poverty is our mace and becoming dust of all is our sword. These are our chief weapons of defense. No evil-minded person can stand against them. This has been so said by the Perfect Master.”

“Poverty is our mace, to be dust is our sword. No one can withstand them, the Perfect Master has said it.” (Sorath M5, 28-14)

He who considers himself humble is really very noble. He whose mind has become dust of all, recognizes the Name of the Lord in every heart.

“He who knows himself to be low, he is to be counted as highest. He whose mind is the dust of all, he recognizes the Name of Hari (God) in all hearts.” (Gauri M5, 266-7)

The Lord, in His Grace, makes poverty dwell in his heart. His mind becomes humble. He is always happy. He enjoys bliss. He is not happy if the world lauds him, nor unhappy if it speaks ill of him. He is a redeemed soul and obtains bliss in the Court of the Lord hereafter. Guru Arjan says, “Oh my mind! become the dust of all so that you may live in happiness and bliss.”

“Oh my mind, become the dust of all so that you may have bliss, happiness and joy.” (Sorath M5, 614-11)

“He in whose mind dwells poverty, by His Grace, is emancipated here and enjoys bliss hereafter, oh Nanak.” (Gauri M5, 278-9)

“When mind becomes the dust of all, they are all friends. The Lord pervades all and all beings are sustained by His Mercy.” (Asa M5, 379-5)

It is Extremely Difficult to Give Up Pride

The world is worshipping woman and wealth. Their power is increasing. The rich and the poor are equally affected. Their influence affects all walks of life. It is extremely difficult to give them up, but still we come across persons who have done so. It is, however, far more difficult to give up pride and vainglory, partisanship and envy. Those who do so are very few. To give up Maya is difficult, but it is to no purpose if inner pride is not surrendered. Pride has brought about the fall of many great ascetics and destroyed them. If one gives up pride and sets fire to the considerations of vainglory, he then unites with the Name. Kabir says:

“It is easy to give up gold, or love of woman. It is rare to give up pride, vainglory or envy. What if one gives up Maya while pride is there! Pride humbled many ascetics, it devoured them. Blacken the face of pride and set fire to vainglory. Give up pride and vainglory and unite with Naam.”
There is always suffering where egoism or pride is present. Where there is doubt, there is grief. All these are chronic diseases. Kabir Sahib asks as to how they can be removed.

“There is suffering where there is egoism. There is grief where there is doubt. Oh Kabir, how can these be cured! They are chronic diseases.”

Kabir Sahib further says that by repeating the True Name the soul becomes happy. Alms giving or giving of food is charity. To cross the ocean of the world, humility acts as a boat. There is none worse than pride to drown us.

“Take to True Name and give alms - humility to cross and pride to drown.”

Guru Arjan teaches us to pray thus: “Oh Saints! Tell me that which leads to removal of pride, to seeing of Transcendental One in all beings and to becoming the dust of the feet of all. I may see the Lord present in person within me and my doubts may vanish.”

“Saints show this way to those who give up egoism. Those who see the Transcendental One in all elements and become the dust of all, they feel the presence of the Lord within them and their doubts vanish.” (Sorath M4, 616-17)

Guru Amar Das also says, “Oh Mind, do not think you know anything. A Gurmukh is always without pride.”

“Oh mind, have no pride of knowing anything, a Gurmukh is devoid of it.” (Asa M2, 441-9)

Oh creature, if you wish yourself well, then, while doing charity, be humble and meek.

“If you want your good, do charity and be meek.” (Asa War M1, 465-16)

“If in the balance one weigheth a thing, that which is heavier, alone toucheth down.” (Asa M1, 470-14)

To consider oneself humble is for his own good. This humility leads to greatness just as all bow to the phase of the moon on the second day.

“It is good to be small. Smallness (humility) achieves everything. Just as it is the moon on the second night to which all bow.” (Kabir Sahib)

A humble person can see all others but none notices him. He who can see him becomes a god from a man.

“The humble one can see all, no one looks at him. He who looks at the humble becomes a god from a man.” (Kabir Sahib)

Humility is not weakness. It is such a powerful thing that all the powers of the world have to bow to it. Man conquers himself with pridelessness. No one can defeat a prideless man; as behind his humility is acting the secret power of the Lord. Humility is an ornament of great men.
The Ideal of Spiritual Seekers

The aim of a seeker after spirituality should be high. In order to acquire spirituality one's aim should be high. Unless there is some definite object or aim, it is useless to hope to achieve it. When his aim or object is certain then every effort brings him nearer to it.

The condition of a common man is like that of a drifting man who floats in any direction the current takes him. We are floating in the river of traditions of this world. We follow the traditions. We do as our ancestors have done. We waste time in superstitions connected with the body. We never think of wants other than those of the body. We do not think of the soul or its plight.

It is necessary to give up false beliefs. Adopt right beliefs. Follow the right principles. Understand the reality. If you do not understand it, inquire about it, so that you may clearly see the place you are to cross and there may be no obstruction in treading the right path. Those who follow a path followed by others without due consideration get involved in some superstition. Their progress stops and they do not get spirituality. It is, therefore, an essential condition of success to keep before you the ideal. Ask of yourself as to what you want to be. What ideal have you set in life?

A large majority of persons are without an ideal and even if you find a man with an ideal he would consider the world as the ultimate goal. The seekers after spirituality would be only a few. Have a peep inside yourself. What do you want to be? You ask for spiritual wealth with your tongue but wish for other things in your heart. Intellect says that it is good to attain spirituality, but mind is involved in the body and bodily pleasures and does not wish for anything else. How then can one seemingly engaged in spirituality obtain success?

In the first place, you should have a clear-cut ideal and then a keen desire to attain it. It is only under such condition that there can be a hope of success, but in order to obtain it you should lessen your love for wealth, woman and world.

The Religion of Humanity

The man in whom the desire to know the mystery of life has awakened, has first to be a man. A man should possess the high virtues of a human being, otherwise he cannot be called a man. He cannot be man by simply having the form of a man or dressing like a man or behaving like him. There are many human robots but there are few who have virtues special to a human being. They are called the top of the creation because of their human virtues. A man devoid of humanity is worse than an animal. It was owing to these human virtues that he was considered higher in rank than anybody else and they were asked to worship him. He was, therefore, called His representative. He who is devoid of human virtues is really an animal in human form. It is therefore necessary that he should be a man of principles. This should be his ideal. This is the working principle. The highest duty of man is to imbibe human virtues.

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