

**The Message of Bhagats**  
**in**  
**Sri Guru Granth Sahib**

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Bhupinder Singh, Houston, Texas  
Paramjit Singh Sachdeva, Vienna, Virginia  
Karamjit Singh, Long Island, New York

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# Glossary

(This Glossary seeks to explain some key words used in the book. The Punjabi words are in *italics*)

- Bhagat:** One who is deeply devoted to God.
- Caste:** Traditionally, Hindu society is divided into a hierarchical 4-tier caste structure -- Brahmin (priests), Kshatriya (rulers, warriors), Vaishya (traders, farmers), and Shudra (laborers). The top three (Brahmin, Kshatriya & Vaishya) are considered the “upper” castes, and Shudra is considered the “lower” caste.
- Creator:** The Divine Being who has created everything -- men, animals, plants, insects, elements, planets, universe, constellations, and everything else.
- Darvesh:** From the Persian word meaning “poor, needy.” This is the term used to denote a member of a religious – specifically Sufi – fraternity.
- Deities:** Bhagats have referred to deities (Hindu gods) by different names, e.g., Ram, Krishan, Gobind, etc.
- God:** God (note the upper-case G in this usage). In Sikhism, the Divine Being (God) has been defined as the One who is Unformed and yet is in all forms. Thus, He is Un-manifest and Manifested. He is Eternal, all-knowing, and sublime bliss. His rules originate, govern, run, and terminate creation. Sikhs believe in One God for all mankind. In Gurbani, God is known by many names, but two commonly used names are Akal Purakh (literally, “Timeless Being”) and Waheguru.
- god:** See “Deities” above.
- Grihast Jeevan:** Literally: life of a householder. The Sikh Gurus practiced and emphasized the concept of life of a householder. This was a significant departure from the prevalent Hindu belief that to obtain salvation one had to become a recluse.
- Gurmukh:** A compound word Guru + mukh. It refers to one who has turned his/her face towards the Guru and follows and lives by (Shabad) Guru’s teachings in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS).
- Guru:** A compound word Gu + ru. ‘Gu’ means darkness and ‘ru’ means light. So, Guru (literally a teacher) means someone who takes one from a state of ignorance to a state of enlightenment or bliss. In the religious context, Sikhs use the term exclusively for the ten Sikh Gurus and Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
- He:** Noun; upper-case H when referring to God. Sikh Gurus and the Bhagats consider the entire mankind as brides, and God as the sole groom. In this sense, everyone is of feminine gender and only God is male.
- His:** Pronoun; for God. See ‘He’ for the reason for using the masculine gender.
- His Grace:** Bliss. Through God’s Grace one can obtain liberation/salvation. It also requires humility on the part of the seeker.
- Hukam:** Literally: order or command. It refers to God’s rules governing the creation, sustenance, and ending of the universe.

Husband:	Since the Gurus and Bhagats referred to God as the sole “male” in the entire creation and as their husband, the rest of mankind is considered His wife. Synonyms used: Dhan, Pir, Bhataar, and more.
<i>Jeevan Mukht:</i>	Literally: liberated while alive. Achieved by total acceptance of the Divine Will (Hukam). Such a person is equally accepting of the joys and sorrows in life.
Master:	When capitalized in this book, it refers to the spiritual Master, the Guru.
<i>Mool Mantar:</i>	It is the first verse in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It provides the foundational basis of Sikhi. It is Guru Nanak ji’s definition of God.
<i>Naam:</i>	Literally: Name. When used in this book, Naam refers to God specifically. Naam enables the perception of the unperceivable. Naam also refers to the dynamic, creative principle governing the whole of creation.
<i>Naam Simran:</i>	Literally: Remembrance of Naam. Naam Simran is not the reciting or chanting of God's name, but the internalization of the reality that we call "God" in one's psyche. It suggests a deeper or meditative understanding of and a realization of the vision of God, as explained in SGGS.
<i>Rahao Tuk:</i>	The word “Rahao” is derived from Raha which means to cause to remain, fix, support, or restrain. The word Tuk means a line or sentence. The line containing the "Rahao" contains the central idea of the Shabad. It asks us to wait or pause, and to contemplate on the line or Tuk.
<i>Sat Naam:</i>	Literally: True Name. As the Naam is eternally True (“Sat”), it is called Sat Naam. Everything else in creation is transient – it was not there in the beginning, and it will cease to exist in time, therefore it is not “eternally True” or “Sat”.
<i>Shabad:</i>	Shabad, as used in Gurbani, refers to a hymn in SGGS. For a complete list of Shabads in SGGS, please refer to the list of Shabads (ਤਤਕਰਾ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਕਾ) at the beginning of SGGS.
Sheikh:	Sheikh is an honorific title in the Arabic language. It commonly designates a religious/community/political leader who has inherited the title from his father or the previous head. The title carries the meaning of leader, head, elder, or a noble.
State of Sehaj:	Sehaj, a Sanskrit word, can be translated in several ways -- as one's natural or spontaneous state of being, or celestial or intuitive peace, intuitive poise, or natural or peaceful ease. So, ‘state of Sehaj’ can be considered as a state of intuitive equipoise. Self-realization is nothing but attainment of the state of Sehaj.
<i>Surat:</i>	Literally: wakefulness or awareness. As mentioned in SGGS, one advances to this state of awareness (Surat) by the Grace of God.
True Guru:	Literally: Satguru (ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ) for the Sikhs. The True Guru is the spiritual guide who helps one to attain the state of Sehaj and become Jeevan Mukht.
<i>Vaar:</i>	A form of poetic composition. Vaar is a narrative poem, sometimes in ballad style. Each stanza (Pauri) in a Vaar contains a complete idea.
Will:	The Will of God is His Hukam. See “Hukam” above.

# Preface

The compositions of 15 Bhagats are included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS). Guru Nanak ji had himself collected the Bhagats' compositions during his travels in India, and had personally handed them to his successor, Guru Angad ji. These compositions were then handed over, unchanged, to successor Gurus until these reached Guru Arjan ji, who in 1604 CE included them in the Adi Granth (which later became known as SGGS upon Guru Gobind Singh ji conferring the Guruship upon it, in 1708).

Compositions of these 15 Bhagats are consistent with Guru Nanak ji's vision and experience of God as enunciated in the '*Mool Mantar*' on page 1 of SGGS, preceding the Jap ji Sahib.

This book covers many of these compositions, along with their simple translations and explanations. It is an attempt to help the reader understand the primary messages of the Bhagats' compositions, and to recognize how closely these are aligned with the Sikh Gurus' teachings in SGGS.

The inclusion of Bhagats' compositions makes the Sikh scripture remarkable. Besides compositions of the Sikh religion's founder Guru Nanak ji and five of his successor Gurus, SGGS includes compositions of others who believed in the one Creator and considered all humans as equal. The inclusion of these compositions as 'Banee' elevated the standing of these Bhagats, who were mostly from the so-called lower caste of Hindus or socially ostracized segments of Indian society. Most of these Bhagats had little or no formal education because of their caste or profession, yet they attained such spiritual heights. The Gurus

recognized this spiritual accomplishment by including some of their compositions in SGGS.

The Bhagats' compositions often refer to mythological stories of Hindu gods, seemingly miraculous events, and ritualistic practices. By doing so, the Bhagats were able to connect with an audience comprised at the time mostly of Hindus familiar with such mythological stories and traditional (Hindu) religious practices in India.

In their Shabads in SGGS, the Gurus too sometimes refer to mythological stories connected with Hindu gods - Ram, Krishan, Vishnu, Inder, etc.; and to mythological figures - Pandav, Kaurav, Ravan, etc. to make their point clear to the masses which were familiar with those stories, without endorsing the religious rituals practiced during that time.

As is true for many Shabads in SGGS, a literal reading of the Bhagats' compositions does not provide a correct understanding of their true meaning. The central message becomes clear only when the composition, especially its '*Rahao Tuk*', is understood metaphorically, not literally. For the literal translations, and to explain their metaphorical meanings, the book relies mainly on the highly regarded writings of reputed scholars such as Prof. Sahib Singh and others.

Rather than dwelling on the Bhagats' own lives or on the mythological stories they refer to in their compositions, the book seeks to explain the Bhagats' compositions in the context of the teachings of SGGS. Guru Nanak ji and his successor Gurus occasionally elaborated on the Bhagats' compositions to clarify their central message, and to show its consistency with the Gurus' own Shabads.

The book also refers to some of Bhai Gurdas's "*Vaars*", which he wrote a few hundred years after the Bhagats had left this world. In the span of those few hundred years, many stories had got associated with some Bhagats, claiming that they had miraculous powers. The devotees' intent may have been to show respect and reverence for the Bhagats. Bhai Gurdas's reference to these stories was probably intended to explain his message to an audience familiar with these mythological and miraculous stories. Like the Bhagats' compositions, Bhai Gurdas's *Vaars* also should be understood metaphorically, not literally.

Every Shabad in SGGs is considered "GurBanee," whether composed by Gurus or Bhagats. Every Shabad is unambiguously consistent with the teachings of Guru Nanak ji and the other Gurus in SGGs. Banee (Shabad Guru) is the True Guru. It teaches humans how to lead a spiritually blissful life (and potentially become Jeevan Mukh). Everything in SGGs brings an understanding of and a dialogue with the Eternal so that we may understand the essence of God. The Bhagats' compositions are no exception.

Anyone bowing to the Shabad Guru in SGGs is also bowing to the compositions of these Bhagats in SGGs. When they are properly understood, it becomes evident that the Bhagats' compositions are completely consistent with the other Shabads in SGGs. The Gurus have personally attested to this, by themselves including them in the Sikh scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

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# 1. Bhagat Kabir

Bhagat Kabir (1440–1518 CE) was born in Banaras, a city in northern India which was considered an auspicious (religious) place by Hindus. He is revered by Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs alike. Through his writings, he became well known as a teacher and social reformer. Kabir did not believe in the ritualistic practices of Hindus, nor in their belief in deities, Brahmanism, and the caste system. He questioned the strict orthodoxy of Hindu as well as Muslim priests.

Authors disagree on Bhagat Kabir's year of birth and death. They also differ on whether he was born a Hindu or a Muslim. There are different stories associated with his background and early years. However, it is clear from Bhagat Kabir's compositions in SGGS that he considered himself simply a human. He criticized both Hindu and Muslim rituals, saying that none of the rituals are of any help in getting closer to God. He passionately believed in God. Bhagat Kabir believed that every human being had been created by Him.

In the following composition included in SGGS, he has criticized the Muslim ritual of circumcision. He also questions both Hindu and Muslim priests as to the basis or religious texts on which they make claims about God favoring either Hindus or Muslims. He says that since God made both Hindus and Muslims, He would not discriminate against either.

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਆਏ ਕਿਨਿ ਏਹ ਰਾਹ ਚਲਾਈ ॥  
ਦਿਲ ਮਹਿ ਸੋਚਿ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ ਕਵਾਢੇ ਭਿਸਤ ਦੋਜਕ ਕਿਨਿ ਪਾਈ ॥੧॥  
ਕਾ ਤੈ ਕਵਨ ਕਤੇਬ ਬਖਾਨੀ ॥  
ਪੜ੍ਹਤ ਗੁਨਤ ਐਸੇ ਸਭ ਮਾਰੇ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਖਬਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਨੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥



ਸਕਤਿ ਸਨੇਹੁ ਕਰਿ ਸੁੰਨਤਿ ਕਰੀਐ ਮੈ ਨ ਬਦਉਗਾ ਭਾਈ ॥  
 ਜਉ ਰੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਮੋਹਿ ਤੁਰਕੁ ਕਰੈਗਾ ਆਪਨ ਹੀ ਕਟਿ ਜਾਈ ॥੨ ॥  
 ਸੁੰਨਤਿ ਕੀਏ ਤੁਰਕੁ ਜੇ ਹੋਇਗਾ ਅਉਰਤ ਕਾ ਕਿਆ ਕਰੀਐ ॥  
 ਅਰਧ ਸਰੀਰੀ ਨਾਰਿ ਨ ਛੋਡੈ ਤਾ ਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਹੀ ਰਹੀਐ ॥੩ ॥  
 ਛਾਡਿ ਕਤੇਬ ਰਾਮੁ ਭਜੁ ਬਉਰੇ ਜੁਲਮ ਕਰਤ ਹੈ ਭਾਰੀ ॥  
 ਕਬੀਰੈ ਪਕਰੀ ਟੇਕ ਰਾਮ ਕੀ ਤੁਰਕ ਰਹੇ ਪਚਿਹਾਰੀ ॥੪ ॥੮ ॥

ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੭੭

*Hindu turak kahaa te aae kin eh raeh chalaiee. Dhil meh soch bichaar  
 kavaadhe bhisat dhojak kin payee. 1. Kaajee tai kavan kateb bakhaanee.  
 PaRhat gunat aaise sabh maare kinahoo(n) khabar na jaanee. 1. Rahao.  
 Sakat saneh kar su(n)nat kareeai mai na badhaugaa bhaiee. Jau re  
 khudhai moh turak karaigaa aapan hee kaT jaiee. 2. Su(n)nat ke'ee turak je  
 hoigaa aaurat kaa kiaa kareeai . Aradh sareeree naar na chhoddai taa te  
 hi(n)dhoo hee raheeeai.3. Chhaadd kateb raam bhaj baure julam karat hai  
 bhaaree. Kabirai pakaree Tek raam kee turak rahe pachihaaree.4.8.*

SGGS, p. 477

**Translation:** O quarrelsome person! (Instead of always arguing to prove your religion to be a true religion) contemplate within your mind from where the Hindus and Muslims have come from (other than from God)? Who put them on these different paths? (Since God has created both, how can He discriminate against either). (Just being Hindu or Muslim) who will go to heaven and hell? (i.e., just by calling yourself Muslim you cannot go to heaven and just being a Hindu one will not go to hell).1. **O Qazi, which books are you reading (and telling others that the Muslims will go to heaven and Hindus will go to hell)? Scholars like you (who are biased, read religious books with prejudiced eyes) have all died. None of them have discovered the inner meaning. 1. Pause.** Because of the love of a woman, if circumcision is done; I do not believe in it (that it has anything to do with getting close to God). If God wished me to be a Muslim, it would be cut off by itself. 2. If only circumcision makes one a Muslim, then what about a woman? Throughout the life, she is man's partner, and she does not leave him. (Therefore, instead of hanging in between) it is better to remain a Hindu. 3. **Give up debating about holy books and remember God**

(instead of meditating on God, you are engulfed in arguments), you fool, you are hurting yourself. Kabir has grasped hold of God's support, and the (confrontational) Muslims (engaged in futile arguments) have utterly failed.  
. 4. 8.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਕਾਜ਼ੀ! ਤੂੰ ਕਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਦੱਸ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈਂ ਕਿ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਬਹਿਸ਼ਤ ਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨੂੰ ਦੋਜ਼ਕ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ? ਤੇਰੇ ਵਰਗੇ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਤੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਤਅੱਸਬ ਦੀ ਪੱਟੀ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਬੰਨ ਕੇ ਮਜ਼ਹਬੀ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਕਿ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਦਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O Qazi, based on which books are you are saying that Muslims will go to heaven and Hindus will go to hell? Scholars like you, who are biased, read religious books with prejudiced eyes, and have not understood the truth that Akal Purakh has created all humans equal.

In his following composition included in SGGS, Bhagat Kabir questions the Hindu belief in the caste system. He criticizes Brahmins for considering themselves as belonging to an “upper caste” by birth:

ਗਰਭ ਵਾਸ ਮਹਿ ਕੁਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਤੀ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮ ਬਿੰਦੁ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਉਤਪਾਤੀ ॥੧॥  
ਕਹੁ ਰੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਬਾਮਨ ਕਬ ਕੇ ਹੋਏ ॥ ਬਾਮਨ ਕਹਿ ਕਹਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਮਤ ਖੋਏ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਜੋ ਤੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੀ ਜਾਇਆ ॥ ਤਉ ਆਨ ਬਾਟ ਕਾਹੇ ਨਹੀ ਆਇਆ ॥੨॥  
ਤੁਮ ਕਤ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਹਮ ਕਤ ਸੂਦ ॥ ਹਮ ਕਤ ਲੋਹੂ ਤੁਮ ਕਤ ਦੂਧ ॥੩॥  
ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੈ ॥ ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਕਹੀਅਤੁ ਹੈ ਹਮਾਰੈ ॥੪॥੭॥

ਗਉੜੀ ਕਬੀਰ, ਅੰਗ ੩੨੪

*Garabh vaas meh kul nahee jaatee. Braham bi(n)dh te sabh utapaatee. 1. Kahu re pa(n)ddit baaman kab ke hoe. Baaman keh keh janam mat khoe.1. Rahao. Jau too(n) braahaman brahamanee jaiia. Tau aan baaT kaah*

*nahee aaiaa. 2. Tum kat braahaman ham kat soodh. Hum kat lohoo tum kat dhoodh. 3. Kahu kabir jo braham beechaarai. So braahaman kaheeat haihamaarai .4. 7.*

SGGS, p. 324

**Translation:** In the dwelling of the womb, there is no ancestry or social status. All have originated from the Seed of God. (Everyone is created by God.) 1. **Tell me, O Pandit, O religious scholar: since when have you been a Brahmin? Do not waste your life (in ego) by continually claiming to be a Brahmin. 1. Pause.** If you are indeed a Brahmin, born of a Brahmin mother, then why weren't you born in by some other way? 2. How is it that you became a Brahmin, and I stayed of a low social status? How is it that I am formed of blood, and you are made of milk (instead of blood)? 3. Says Kabir, we consider that person to be a Brahmin who contemplates on God. 4. 7.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਜੋ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਉੱਚੀ ਜਾਤ ਦਾ ਮਾਣ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਮਨੁੱਖਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਜਾਈਂ ਗਵਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਾਰੇ ਜੀਵ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਅੰਸ਼ ਹਨ। ਉੱਚਾ ਉਹੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** Those who falsely proclaim of being born in an upper caste waste their life. Everyone is created by God. Only the ones who contemplate on God attain a higher status (or state of consciousness).

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## 2. Bhagat Kabir's God

Bhagat Kabir had a strong belief in God. In his compositions included in SGGGS, he addresses God by various names. Kabir preached a religion of love for all humanity, aimed at promoting unity amongst all castes, creeds, and all faiths. He spoke of God who is neither a man nor a woman, neither a human nor an angel, neither a yogi nor a celibate. God is neither a mother nor a son. He is endless, inside every human heart, and outside too, omnipresent. His nature and extent cannot be known, and He cannot be confined to a temple or a mosque. He has no body or blood. He is eternal and is neither born nor does He die. The births and deaths of all living beings are ordained by Him. He can be realized only through love and devotion for God. Those who realize Him are freed from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. They thus attain eternal bliss.

Bhagat Kabir's following composition makes it unmistakably clear what kind of God he is talking about.

ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਮਾਨਸੁ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਦੇਉ ॥ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਜਤੀ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਸੇਉ ॥  
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਜੋਗੀ ਨਾ ਅਵਧੂਤਾ ॥ ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਮਾਇ ਨ ਕਾਹੂ ਪੂਤਾ ॥੧॥  
ਇਆ ਮੰਦਰ ਮਹਿ ਕੋਨ ਬਸਾਈ ॥ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਕੋਊ ਪਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਨਾ ਓਦਾਸੀ ॥ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਰਾਜ ਨ ਭੀਖ ਮੰਗਾਸੀ ॥  
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਨ ਰਕਤੂ ਰਾਤੀ ॥ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਨੁ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਖਾਤੀ ॥੨॥  
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਤਪਾ ਕਹਾਵੈ ਸੇਖੁ ॥ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਜੀਵੈ ਨ ਮਰਤਾ ਦੇਖੁ ॥  
ਇਸੁ ਮਰਤੇ ਕਉ ਜੇ ਕੋਊ ਰੋਵੈ ॥ ਜੋ ਰੋਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਪਤਿ ਖੋਵੈ ॥੩॥  
ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਮੈ ਡਗਰੋ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਜੀਵਨ ਮਰਨੁ ਦੋਊ ਮਿਟਵਾਇਆ ॥  
ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਇਹੁ ਰਾਮ ਕੀ ਅੰਸੁ ॥ ਜਸ ਕਾਗਦ ਪਰ ਮਿਟੈ ਨ ਮੰਸੁ ॥੪॥੨॥੫॥

ਗੋਂਡ, ਅੰਗ ੮੭੧

*Naa ih maanas naa ih dheau. Naa ih jatee kahaavai seau. Naa ih jogee naa avadhootaa. Naa is mai na kaahoo pootaa. 1. Eiaa ma(n)dhar meh kauan basaiee. Taa kaa a(n)t na kouoo paayee. 1. Rahao. Naa ih girahee naa odhaasee. Naa ih raaj na bheekh ma(n)gaasee. Naa is pi(n)dd na rakatoo raatee. Naa ih brahaman naa ih khaatee. 2 Naa ih tapaa kahaavai sekh. Naa ih jeevai na marataa dhekh. Eis marate kau je kouoo rovai. Jo rovai soiee pat khovai. 3. Gur prasaadh mai ddagaro paiaa. Jeevan maran dhoo miTavaiaa. Kahu kabir ih raam kee a(n)s. Jas kaagadh par miTai na ma(n)s. 4. 2. 5.*

SGGS, p. 871

**Translation:** It (God) is not human, and It is not a god (deity). It is not called celibate, or a worshipper of Shiva. It is not a Yogi, and It is not a hermit. It has no mother nor is It anyone's son. (Yet It resides inside everyone). ||1||  
**Then what is It, which dwells in this temple of (our) body? No one can or has found Its limits. ||1||Pause||** It is not a householder, and It is not a renouncer of the world. It is neither a king, nor is It a beggar. It has no body, no drop of blood. It is not a Brahmin, and It is not a Kshatriya. (It resides in all of them, yet It is none of them) ||2|| It is not called a man of austere self-discipline, or a Sheikh. It does not live, and It does not die. If someone cries over It's death (which keeps the body alive), that person loses his honor. (It appears to take birth in everyone and die) ||3|| By Guru's Grace, (since) I have found the (true) Path (of life), both my birth and death have been erased (I am free of the birth & rebirth cycle). Says Kabir, (I have realized) that the one which resides inside me is part of It (God). It relates to each other like the ink and the paper on which it is written. 4. 2. 5

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਹਰੇਕ ਜੀਵ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਭੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖਰਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ। ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਜਨਮ-ਮਰਨ ਦਾ ਗੇੜਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** God resides in everyone, yet It is a separate entity. It is free from the cycle of birth and rebirth unlike all other living creatures.

Through the ages, people were conditioned to believe that certain rituals and practices could draw them closer to God or facilitate their “merger” in Him. Bhagat Kabir commented on such prevalent religious practices of people seeking to attain merger with God. He unambiguously condemns these practices and rituals and concludes that realization of God is only possible through devoted remembrance and meditation on God. He made it clear that the mind be made free of ego. He said that ritualistic practices would not get you anywhere on this spiritual journey. In one of his compositions in SGGGS, he says:

ਕਿਆ ਜਪੁ ਕਿਆ ਤਪੁ ਕਿਆ ਬ੍ਰਤ ਪੂਜਾ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਰਿਦੈ ਭਾਉ ਹੈ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੧॥  
 ਰੇ ਜਨ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਧਉ ਸਿਉ ਲਾਈਐ ॥ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਨ ਚਤੁਰਭੁਜੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
 ਪਰਹਰੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਅਰੁ ਲੋਕਾਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਪਰਹਰੁ ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ॥੨॥  
 ਕਰਮ ਕਰਤ ਬਧੇ ਅਹੰਮੇਵ ॥ ਮਿਲਿ ਪਾਥਰ ਕੀ ਕਰਹੀ ਸੇਵ ॥੩॥  
 ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਭੋਲੇ ਭਾਇ ਮਿਲੇ ਰਘੁਰਾਇਆ ॥੪॥੬॥

ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਗਉੜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੩੨੪

*Kiaa jap kiaa tap kiaa brat poojaa. Jaa kai ridhai bhaau hai dhoojaa. 1. Re jan man maadhau siau laieeai. Chaturaiee na chaturabhuj paieeai. Rahao. Parahar lobh ar lokaachaar. Parahar kaam karodh ahankaar. 2. Karam karat badhe ahanmev. Mil paathar kee karahee sev. 3. Kahu kabir bhagat kar paiaa. Bhole bhai mile raghuraiaa. 4. 6. SGGGS, p.324*

**Translation:** What use is chanting, and what use is penance, fasting or devotional worship, to one whose heart is filled with duality? **1. O brother, link your mind to God. Through cleverness (without remembering God), He is not obtained. 1. Pause.** Set aside your greed and worldly ways. Set aside your lust, anger, and egotism. 2. Ritual practices bind people in egotism; meeting together, they worship stones (but all these are futile). 3. Says Kabir, He is obtained only by devotional worship. Through childlike innocence and pure love, one can achieve union with God. 4. 6.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਖਾਤਰ ਤੇ ਲੋਕ-ਵਿਖਾਵੇ ਦੀ ਖਾਤਰ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਜਪ, ਤਪ ਆਦਿਕ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਤੇ ਸਿਆਣੇ ਬਣ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਵਿਖਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ - ਇਹ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਰੋ ਤੇ ਬਾਲ-ਬੁੱਧ ਰਹੋ।

**Central message:** For the sake of worldly possessions and to exhibit to others, people perform rituals and pretend to be clever. One cannot realize God through these rituals. If one is serious about realizing God, then one should meditate on God with a childlike innocence.

*[Note: It is important to understand the difference between innocence and ignorance. To treat an idol as God is not innocence, it is ignorance.]*

Bhagat Kabir also makes it clear that ritualistic practices are futile unless there is transformation within the human mind, and the mind becomes free of ego. He was against idol-worship. He commented as follows on the practice of plucking flowers and offering them to a stone idol as part of ritualistic worship:

ਪਾਤੀ ਤੋਰੈ ਮਾਲਿਨੀ ਪਾਤੀ ਪਾਤੀ ਜੀਉ॥

ਜਿਸੁ ਪਾਹਨ ਕਉ ਪਾਤੀ ਤੋਰੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਹਨ ਨਿਰਜੀਉ॥੧॥

ਭੂਲੀ ਮਾਲਿਨੀ ਹੈ ਏਉ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਜਾਗਤਾ ਹੈ ਦੇਉ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਾਤੀ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਡਾਰੀ ਫੂਲ ਸੰਕਰਦੇਉ॥

ਤੀਨਿ ਦੇਵ ਪ੍ਰਤਖਿ ਤੋਰਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਕਿਸ ਕੀ ਸੇਉ॥੨॥

ਪਾਖਾਨ ਗਢਿ ਕੈ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਦੇ ਕੈ ਛਾਤੀ ਪਾਉ॥

ਜੇ ਏਹ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਹੈ ਤਉ ਗੜ੍ਹਣਹਾਰੇ ਖਾਉ॥੩॥

ਭਾਤੁ ਪਹਿਤਿ ਅਰੁ ਲਾਪਸੀ ਕਰਕਰਾ ਕਾਸਾਰੁ॥

ਭੋਗਨਹਾਰੇ ਭੋਗਿਆ ਇਸੁ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਮੁਖ ਛਾਰੁ॥੪॥

ਮਾਲਿਨਿ ਭੂਲੀ ਜਗੁ ਭੁਲਾਨਾ ਹਮ ਭੁਲਾਨੇ ਨਾਹਿ॥

ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਹਮ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਖੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ॥੫॥੧॥੧੪॥ ਆਸਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਬੀਰ, ਅੰਗ ੪੨੯

*Paatee torai maalinee paatee paatee jeeau. Jis paahan kau paatee torai so paahan nirajeeau. 1. Bhoolee maalanee hai eau. Satguru jaagataa hai deo. 1. Rahao. Braham paatee bisan ddaaree fool sa(n)karadheau. Teen dev pratakh toreh kareh kis kee seau. 2. Paakhaan gadd kai moorat keen(h)ee de kai chhaatee paau. Je eh moorat saachee hai tau gaRhanahaare khaau. 3. Bhaat pahit ar laapasee karakaraa kaasaar. Bhoganahaare bhogiaa is moorat ke mukh chhaar. 4. Baalin bhoolee jag bhulaanaa ham bhulaane naeh. Kahu kabir ham raam raakhe kirapaa kar har rai. 5. 1. 14. SGGs, p. 479*

**Translation:** (To offer to the idol), the lady-gardener plucks off the leaves, flowers & petals, (but she does not know that) in every leaf, there is life. That stone (idol) for which she plucks off those leaves - is lifeless. 1. **(By serving the lifeless idol) lady-gardener is mistaken, (real One needs to be worshipped) God is the Living One. 1. Pause.** (O lady-gardener) the leaves are like Brahma, the branches are like Vishnu, and the flowers are like Shiva. When you openly destroyed these three gods, whose service are you performing (with your offerings)? 2. (The sculptor had) carved the stone and fashioned it into an idol, by placing his feet upon its chest. If this stone god were true (alive), it would have devoured the sculptor (for this insult). 3. Rice and beans, candies, cakes, and cookies - the priest enjoys these, while the mouth of the idol remains dry (because it is lifeless and cannot eat). 4. The lady-gardener is deluded, and the world is mistaken, but I am not. Says Kabir, God preserves me. God, my King, has showered His blessings upon me and has saved me from this delusion. 5. 1. 14.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਇਨਸਾਨ ਇੱਕ ਨਿਰਜਿੰਦ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਭੁੱਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸਲੀ ਇਸ਼ਟ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਤਾਂ ਜੀਉਂਦਾ ਜਾਗਦਾ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** Whoever serves a lifeless idol is mistaken. Only Akal Purakh, the True Guru, deserves to be worshipped.

**Central message:** God is alive forever. One who makes offerings to a lifeless idol is deceiving oneself.

Bhagat Kabir believed in the omnipresent, formless God who cannot be reached through rituals.

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### 3. Bhagat Kabir Challenges Rituals

#### Wearing a thread does not make one holy

Brahmins display external symbols to establish their (so called) “upper-caste” status and privilege. Brahmin and Kshatriya men can put a saffron mark on the forehead and wear a cotton thread (Juneau) across their upper body. A special religious “thread ceremony” is held for initiating upper-caste boys into adulthood, after which they can participate as adults in Hindu religious ceremonies and rituals. Wearing the thread is considered holy. Women and persons belonging to the Shudra (so-called) “lower-caste” are forbidden from wearing this thread.

Hindus believe in the caste system; and this practice of wearing a sacred thread (Juneau) is in accordance with their sacred texts (such as the Vedas). Bhagat Kabir did not accept this religious belief and practice. His response, which is recorded in SGGS in Raag Aasaa, is as follows:

ਹਮ ਘਰਿ ਸੂਤੁ ਤਨਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਤਾਨਾ ਕੰਠਿ ਜਨੇਉ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ ॥  
ਤੁਮੁ ਤਉ ਬੇਦ ਪੜਹੁ ਗਾਇਤ੍ਰੀ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਹਮਾਰੇ ॥੧॥  
ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿਹਬਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਨੈਨ ਨਾਰਾਇਨ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਬਸਹਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦਾ ॥  
ਜਮ ਦੁਆਰ ਜਬ ਪੂਛਸਿ ਬਵਰੇ ਤਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਹਸਿ ਮੁਕੰਦਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਹਮ ਗੋਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਗੁਆਰ ਗੁਸਾਈ ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਰਖਵਾਰੇ ॥  
ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਪਾਰਿ ਉਤਾਰਿ ਚਰਾਇਹੁ ਕੈਸੇ ਖਸਮ ਹਮਾਰੇ ॥੨॥  
ਤੂੰ ਬਾਮਨੁ ਮੈ ਕਾਸੀਕ ਜੁਲਹਾ ਬੂਝਹੁ ਮੋਰ ਗਿਆਨਾ ॥  
ਤੁਮੁ ਤਉ ਜਾਚੇ ਭੂਪਤਿ ਰਾਜੇ ਹਰਿ ਸਉ ਮੋਰ ਧਿਆਨਾ ॥੩॥੪॥੨੬॥

ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੨

*Hum ghar soot taneh nit taanaa ka(n)tt janeuoo tumaare. Tum(h) tau bedh paRahu gaitree Gobind ridhai hamaare. 1. Meree jihabaa bisan nain naarain hiradhai baseh Gobindaa. Jum dhuaar jab poochhas bavare tab kias kahas mukandhaa. 1. Rahao. Hum goroo tum guaar gusaiee janam janam rakhavaare. Kabahoo(n) na paar autaar charaih kaise khasam hamaare. 2. Too(n) baam(h)n mai kaaseek julahaa boojhahu mor giaanaa. Tum tau jaache bhoopat raaje har sau mor dhiaanaa. 3.4.26. SGGs, p. 482*

**Translation:** (O stupid Brahmin! You are proud of belonging to the upper class only because) You do have a cotton thread (Juneau) across your upper body (which we do not have around our upper body, but see), we have piles of the same cotton thread in our home. (In fact) We weave cloth daily out of that. (Your claim of reciting Gayatri and Vedas is also false because) You only recite Gayatri and Vedas with your lips (outwardly and without any devotion), whereas God Himself abides in my heart. **1. God resides on my tongue, my eyes, in my heart. O, ignorant Brahmin! What answer will you give when the angel of death asks you about your deeds? (What have you been doing your whole life?) 1. Pause.** For ages you have pretended to be our savior. We are like mere cows, but you claim to be our herdsman. You Brahmins were to lead us to liberation, but you have not done that. What kind of guardians are you? (You never guided us on how to cross this ocean-like world.) **2.** (It is true that) You are a Brahmin (means you are proud of your birth, and education that you received at Banaras, and I am a low caste weaver of Banaras (who is not allowed to receive the same education). But listen to my wisdom! (Let me share it with you!) You are always searching for landlords and kings to beg at their door, but I meditate (day and night) on God. **3. 4. 26.**

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਹੇ ਕਮਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ! ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਜੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਜੀਭ ਉੱਤੇ, ਮੇਰਿਆਂ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪਰ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਜਦੋਂ ਧਰਮਰਾਜ ਦੀ ਹਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਵਲੋਂ ਪੁੱਛ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਕਿ ਤੂੰ ਸਾਰੀ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਕੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈਂ, ਤਾਂ ਕੀਹ ਉਤਰ ਦੇਵੇਂਗਾ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O ignorant Brahmin! God resides within me, in my heart and mind. When the angel of death asks about your deeds and what you had been doing your whole life, what answer will you give?

## Reading of scriptures

Brahmins did not allow persons belonging to the lower caste to read Hindu scriptures. They claimed that only Brahmins had the exclusive right to attain spiritual heights, and thereby command everyone's respect. This way they perpetuated the status of the so-called "upper-castes". However, Kabir was a blessed soul. He not only challenged this practice, but he also pointed out the true nature of God's work in these words:

ਕੋਰੀ ਕੋ ਕਾਹੂ ਮਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਨਾਂ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਆਨਿ ਤਨਾਇਓ ਤਾਨਾਂ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
 ਜਬ ਤੁਮ ਸੁਨਿ ਲੇ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨਾਂ ॥ ਤਬ ਹਮ ਇਤਨਕੁ ਪਸਰਿਓ ਤਾਨਾਂ ॥੧॥  
 ਧਰਨਿ ਅਕਾਸ ਕੀ ਕਰਗਹ ਬਨਾਈ ॥ ਚੰਦੁ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਦੁਇ ਸਾਥ ਚਲਾਈ ॥੨॥  
 ਪਾਈ ਜੋਰਿ ਬਾਤ ਇਕ ਕੀਨੀ ਤਹ ਤਾਂਤੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਾਂ ॥  
 ਜੋਲਾਹੇ ਘਰੁ ਅਪਨਾ ਚੀਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਰਾਮੁ ਪਛਾਨਾਂ ॥੩॥  
 ਕਹਤੁ ਕਬੀਰੁ ਕਾਰਗਹ ਤੋਰੀ ॥ ਸੂਤੈ ਸੂਤ ਮਿਲਾਏ ਕੋਰੀ ॥੪॥੩॥੩੬॥ ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੪

*Koree ko kaahoo maram na jaanaa(n). Sabh jag aan tanaio taanaa(n). 1. Rahao. Jab tum sun le bedh puraanaa(n). Tab ham itanak pasario taanaa(n). 1. Dharan akaas kee karageh banaiee. Cha(n)dh sooraj dhui saath chalaiee. 2. Paiee jor baat ik keenee teh taa(n)tee man maanaa(n). Jolaahе ghar apanaa cheen(h)aa(n) ghaT hee raam pachhaanaa(n). 3. Kahat kabir kaarageh toree. Sootai soot milaae koree. 4. 3. 36. SGGs, p. 484*

**Translation: (You all had been insulting me by calling me a weaver, but you do not know that even God is a weaver), None of you understood the Almighty Weaver, who has stretched out the fabric of the whole world. 1. Pause.** (O Brahmin!), while you were listening to the Vedas and the Puranas, I spent time weaving. (You used your time learning religious scriptures to make a living; I used mine weaving to make a living. Thus, there is no difference between the two of us. How come you are proud of your knowledge of scriptures and of being a Brahmin?) 1. He (God, the Weaver) has made the earth and sky as His loom. Upon it, He moves the two bobbins of the sun and the moon. 2. The Weaver (God), using the foot pedals (the cycle of birth and death) has woven the universe. My mind is

pleased with that Weaver who has created everything. I, a weaver, have realized (that Weaver – God) and have found my own home, and recognize Him within my heart. 3. Says Kabir, when the Weaver combs, He blends my thread with His own. (i.e., He merges the universe in Himself). 4. 3.36.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ‘ਜੁਲਾਹਾ ਜੁਲਾਹਾ’ ਆਖ ਕੇ ਛੁਟਿਆਉਣ ਦੇ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਪਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਵੀ ਜੁਲਾਹਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਇਆ ਕਿ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਜੁਲਾਹਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸਨੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਰਾ ਜਗਤ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਾਨੋ ਤਾਣਾ ਤਣ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** You all try to belittle me by calling me a weaver, but you do not know that even God is a weaver. None of you realize that God, the Weaver, has stretched (woven) the entire creation.

Throughout his life, Bhagat Kabir proclaimed the existence of God. He strongly believed that all humans are created equal, and no one should be discriminated against based on the (so-called) “lower caste” status of their birth.

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## 4. God Makes a Devotee Fearless

All his life, Bhagat Kabir advocated against religious exploitation of the lower caste and associated ritualistic practices. Even while living in Banaras – one of the most sacred centers of the Hindu religion – he was not scared of the so-called “upper caste” or the religious “elite” around him. He was never afraid or demoralized despite many hurtful actions taken by such people, especially Brahmins who opposed his views. He was not fearful of discriminatory behavior by Muslims either. He faced every situation calmly, considering it the Will of God. He describes one such incident in his following composition in SGGS:

ਗੰਗ ਗੁਸਾਇਨਿ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰ ॥ ਜੰਜੀਰ ਬਾਂਧਿ ਕਰਿ ਖਰੇ ਕਬੀਰ ॥੧॥

ਮਨੁ ਨ ਡਿਗੈ ਤਨੁ ਕਾਹੇ ਕਉ ਡਰਾਇ ॥

ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲ ਚਿਤੁ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਗੰਗਾ ਕੀ ਲਹਰਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਟੁਟੀ ਜੰਜੀਰ ॥ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਛਾਲਾ ਪਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਕਬੀਰ ॥੨॥

ਕਹਿ ਕੰਬੀਰ ਕੋਉ ਸੰਗ ਨ ਸਾਥ ॥ ਜਲ ਥਲ ਰਾਖਨ ਹੈ ਰਘੁਨਾਥ ॥੩॥੧੦॥੧੮॥

ਭੈਰਉ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੬੨

*Ga(n)g gusain gahir ga(n)bheer. Ja(n)jeer baa(n)dh kar khare Kabir. 1. Mun na ddigai tan kaahe kau ddarai. Charan kamal chit rahio samai. Rahao. Ga(n)gaa kee lahar meree TuTee ja(n)jeer. Miragachhaalaa par baiThe Kabir. 2. Kaeh Ka(n)bir kouoo sa(n)g na saath. Jal thal raakhan hai raghunaath. 3. 10. 18.*

SGGS, p. 1162

(People opposing my religious views), Tied me up - Kabir - in chains and took me to the deep and profound mother Ganges (to drown me and kill me). 1. **(O brother), if one has his (her) consciousness immersed in God, his mind is not shaken (despite any trouble); then there is no benefit to be**

**gained by scaring that person (by torturing him). 1. Pause.** (But instead of drowning me) The waves of the Ganges broke the chains, and I, Kabir (started floating on the river as if I) was seated on a deer skin. 2. Says Kabir, listen O brother! (Your ritualistic practices and concept of bathing at holy places) cannot help you or become your companion. On the water, and on the land, only God is the Protector. 3. 10. 18.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਜਿਸ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਵਿਚ ਲੀਨ ਰਹੇ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਸ਼ਟ ਵੇਲੇ ਡੋਲਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ। ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਰੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਸ਼ਟ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਡਰਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਲਾਭ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** When one's consciousness is immersed in remembrance of God, his/her mind cannot be shaken despite any worldly troubles. It is futile to seek to thus cause injury to his/her body.

Bhagat Kabir showed unwavering faith and a calm state of mind during another life-threatening crisis described by him in SGGS.

ਭੁਜਾ ਬਾਂਧਿ ਭਿਲਾ ਕਰਿ ਡਾਰਿਓ ॥ ਹਸਤੀ ਕ੍ਰੋਧਿ ਮੂੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਮਾਰਿਓ ॥  
 ਹਸਤਿ ਭਾਗਿ ਕੈ ਚੀਸਾ ਮਾਰੈ ॥ ਇਆ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਕੈ ਹਉ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੈ ॥੧॥  
 ਆਹਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਜੋਰੁ ॥ ਕਾਜੀ ਬਕਿਬੋ ਹਸਤੀ ਤੋਰੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
 ਰੇ ਮਹਾਵਤ ਤੁਝੁ ਡਾਰਉ ਕਾਟਿ ॥ ਇਸਹਿ ਤੁਰਾਵਹੁ ਘਾਲਹੁ ਸਾਟਿ ॥  
 ਹਸਤਿ ਨ ਤੋਰੈ ਧਰੈ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥ ਵਾ ਕੈ ਰਿਦੈ ਬਸੈ ਭਗਵਾਨੁ ॥੨॥  
 ਕਿਆ ਅਪਰਾਧੁ ਸੰਤ ਹੈ ਕੀਨਾ ॥ ਬਾਂਧਿ ਪੋਟ ਕੁੰਚਰ ਕਉ ਦੀਨਾ ॥  
 ਕੁੰਚਰੁ ਪੋਟ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਨਮਸਕਾਰੈ ॥ ਬੁਝੀ ਨਹੀ ਕਾਜੀ ਅੰਧਿਆਰੈ ॥੩॥  
 ਤੀਨਿ ਬਾਰ ਪਤੀਆ ਭਰਿ ਲੀਨਾ ॥ ਮਨ ਕਠੋਰੁ ਅਜਹੁ ਨ ਪਤੀਨਾ ॥  
 ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਹਮਰਾ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ॥ ਚਉਥੇ ਪਦ ਮਹਿ ਜਨ ਕੀ ਜਿੰਦੁ ॥੪॥੧॥੪॥

ਰਾਗੁ ਗੌਂਡ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੮੭੦

*Bhujaa baa(n)dh bhilaa kar ddaario. Hasatee karop moo(n)dd meh maario. Hasat bhaag kai cheesaa maarai. Eiaa moorat kai hau balihaarai. 1. Aaeh mere Thaakur tumaraa jor. Kaajee bakibo hasatee tor. 1. Rahao. Rae mahaavat tujh ddaarau kaaT. Eiseh turaavahu ghaalahu. Hasat na torai dharai dhiaan. Vaa kai ridhai basai bhagavaan. 2. Kiaa aparaadh sa(n)t hai keen(h)aa. Baa(n)dh poT ku(n)char kau dheen(h)aa. Ku(n)char poT lai lai namasakaarai. Boojhee nahee kaajee a(n)dhiaarai. 3. Teen baar pateeaa bhar leenaa. Mun kaThor ajahoo na pateenaa. Keh Kabir hamaraa gobi(n)dh. Chauthe padh meh jan kee ji(n)dh. 4. 1. 4. SGGs, p. 870*

**Translation:** They tied my arms, bundled me up, and threw me (before the elephant). (The elephant driver) was infuriated and struck the elephant on the head. But the elephant (instead of squashing me under its feet) ran away trumpeting (in a different direction), (it seems the elephant is saying) I am a sacrifice to this image of God. 1. **O my God (and Master), the Qazi is shouting at the driver to drive the elephant (on Kabir), But You are my strength (I am not afraid of anything because of Your blessing). 1. Pause.** The Qazi (ordered the elephant driver to) hit the elephant (drive him over Kabir), otherwise I shall cut you into pieces. But the elephant did not move (it appears) the elephant is meditating (on God). 2. (They) rolled me into a bundle and threw me before the elephant. What sin had I, a devotee of God, committed? The Qazi was blind (due to his religious fanaticism), he could not understand it; (on the other side) the elephant was again and again bowing to the bundle (of my body). 3. (The Qazi ordered the elephant driver to stomp the elephant over me) three times, without success, yet his hardened attitude was not softened (in pity). Says Kabir, (the Qazi could not understand that) God is my Master. The soul of His humble servant dwells in the feet of God (no one can scare him). 4. 1. 4.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਸਿਮਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਬੰਦਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੁਰਤ ਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ-ਚਰਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਡਰਾ ਧਮਕਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ। ਉਹ ਪੂਰਨ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** Devotees of God have their consciousness centered on Him. Nothing can scare them in life. They truly become fearless (ਨਿਰਭਉ).

In these compositions, when taken literally, the personal experience described by Bhagat Kabir may be hard to believe and digest. These were not miracles performed by him to save his own life, or to impress the ruler and spectators, or to make them his followers. The message being conveyed by Kabir is that no matter what the threatening circumstances may be, our trust in God should not waver. One should continue meditating on God and accepting His Will.

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## 5. Union of Soul with God

There are many Shabads in SGGS by both Guru jis as well as by several Bhagats where they use the relationship between husband and wife as a metaphor to describe a devotee's relationship with God. Kabir uses this metaphor in a variety of ways, including by referring to a wedding dress and list of guests. Kabir considers himself as the bride, and God as the bridegroom. This metaphor has been traditionally employed by many devotees, referring to themselves as female and God as male. In their thinking, all human beings of the world are to be considered as brides, and God is the sole bridegroom. It is a declaration of the ultimate purpose of life, which is realization of God by humans.

Kabir's compositions are an expression of his experience of this communion with God. Just as the Indian bride at the time of her wedding, dresses in red color, Kabir says that he has dyed himself red. Bhagat Kabir's composition in SGGS is as follows:

ਤਨੁ ਰੈਨੀ ਮਨੁ ਪੁਨ ਰਪਿ ਕਰਿ ਹਉ ਪਾਚਉ ਤਤ ਬਰਾਤੀ ॥  
ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਸਿਉ ਭਾਵਰਿ ਲੈਹਉ ਆਤਮ ਤਿਹ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਾਤੀ ॥੧॥  
ਗਾਉ ਗਾਉ ਰੀ ਦੁਲਹਨੀ ਮੰਗਲਚਾਰਾ ॥  
ਮੇਰੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਆਏ ਰਾਜਾ ਰਾਮ ਭਤਾਰਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਨਾਭਿ ਕਮਲ ਮਹਿ ਬੇਦੀ ਰਚਿ ਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਉਚਾਰਾ ॥  
ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਸੋ ਦੂਲਹੁ ਪਾਇਓ ਅਸ ਬਡਭਾਗ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥੨॥  
ਸੁਰਿ ਨਰ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨ ਕਉਤਕ ਆਏ ਕੋਟਿ ਤੇਤੀਸ ਉਜਾਨਾ ॥  
ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਮੋਹਿ ਬਿਆਹਿ ਚਲੇ ਹੈ ਪੁਰਖ ਏਕ ਭਗਵਾਨਾ ॥੩॥੨॥੨੪॥ ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੨

*Tun rai-nee mun pun rap kar hau paachau tat baraatee. Raam rai siau bhaavar laihau aatam teh rung raatee.1. Gaau gaau ree dhulahanee ma(n)galachaaraa. Maerh gireh aae raajaa raam bhataaraa.1. Rahao. Naabh kamal meh bedhee rach le braham giaan auchaaraa. Raam rai so dhoolahu paio as baddabhaag hamaaraa. 2. Sur nar mun jan kautak aae koat tetees aujaanaa(n). Kaeh Kabir moh biaaeh chale hai purakh ek bhagavaanaa. 3.2.24* SGGS, p. 482

**Translation:** I make my body (to dye my mind) the dyeing vat (i.e., I keep my mind in the body so that it does not go astray). Within it (adding water of Naam, dye of devotion), I dye my mind (with the dye of virtues, red in the color of love). I make the five virtues my marriage guests [Truth (*Sat*), Contentment (*Santokh*), Compassion (*Daya*), Righteousness (*Dharam*), and Humility (*Nimarta*)]. I take my marriage vows with God, my King; my soul is imbued with His Love. 1. **Sing, sing, O recently married brides! (Five sense organs immersed in God's devotion) the marriage songs of God because God, my King, has come to my house (heart) as my Bridegroom (the creator of the universe).** 1. **Pause.** In my breath (taking the breath to the navel), I have made my bridal pavilion, and the Mantras of God's wisdom are being chanted to solemnize the wedding. I have obtained the King (God) as my Husband - such is my great good fortune. 2. The angels, holy men, silent sages, and countless deities have come in their heavenly chariots (which represents the spiritual flight of the deities) to witness this spectacle of the marriage. Says Kabir, I have been taken in marriage by God. 3. 2. 24.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਜਦੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੁੜ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਤਨੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਮਹਸੂਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਤਨੀ ਇਕ ਨਵੀਂ ਵਿਆਹੀ ਵਹੂਟੀ। ਪੰਜ ਗਿਆਨ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੇ - ਅੱਖ, ਕੰਨ, ਨੱਕ, ਜੀਭ, ਅਤੇ ਸਪਰਸ਼ - ਇਤਨੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਮਹਸੂਸ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਨਵੀਂ ਵਿਆਹਿਆਂ ਕੁੜੀਆਂ ਸੁਹਾਗ ਦੇ ਗੀਤ ਗਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹੋਣ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** When one's mind is in tune with God, one feels as blissful as a bride on meeting her bridegroom. The five sense organs – sight, touch, sound, smell, and taste – when immersed in God's devotion, feel as ecstatic as the newly-married brides, singing wedding songs.

In the above Shabad, Bhagat Kabir has used many metaphors. To make the message clear and unambiguous, Guru Nanak ji composed a similar Shabad in the same Raag. The Rahao Tuks of the two Shabads show close resemblance. Guru Nanak ji's Shabad in SGGGS is as follows:

ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਅਪਨੈ ਘਰਿ ਆਇਆ ਤਾ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਖੀਆ ਕਾਜੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥

ਖੇਲੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਮਨਿ ਅਨਦੁ ਭਇਆ ਸਹੁ ਵੀਆਹਣ ਆਇਆ ॥੧॥

ਗਾਵਹੁ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਕਾਮਣੀ ਬਿਬੇਕ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਹਮਰੈ ਘਰਿ ਆਇਆ ਜਗਜੀਵਨੁ ਭਤਾਰੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਗੁਰੂ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਹਮਰਾ ਵੀਆਹੁ ਜਿ ਹੋਆ ਜਾਂ ਸਹੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥

ਤਿਹੁ ਲੋਕਾ ਮਹਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਰਵਿਆ ਹੈ ਆਪੁ ਗਇਆ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥੨॥

ਆਪਣਾ ਕਾਰਜੁ ਆਪਿ ਸਵਾਰੇ ਹੋਰਨਿ ਕਾਰਜੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਕਾਰਜਿ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਦਇਆ ਧਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੂਝੈ ਕੋਈ ॥੩॥

ਭਨਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਪਿਰੁ ਏਕੋ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਸਾ ਸੋਹਾਗਣਿ ਹੋਇ ॥੪॥੧੦॥

ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੧, ਅੰਗ ੩੫੧

*Kar kirapaa apanai ghar aaiaa taa mil sakheea kaaj rachaiaa. Khel dhekh man anadh bhiaa sahu veeahan aaiaa. 1. Gaavahu gaavahu kaamane bibek beechaar. Hamarai ghar aaiaa jagajeevan bhataar. 1. Rahao. Guroo dhuaarai hamaraa veeahu j hoaa jaa(n) sahu miliaa taa(n) jaaniaa. Tih lokaa meh sabadh ravial hai aap giaa man maaniaa. 2. Aapanaa kaaraj aap savaare horan kaaraj na hoiee. Jit kaaraj sat sa(n)tokh dhiaa dharam hai gurmukh boojhai koiee. 3. Bhanat naanak sabhanaa kaa pir eko soi. Jis no nadhar kare saa sohaagan hoi. 4.10. SGGGS, p. 351*

**Translation:** When by His Grace, He came to my home (accepting my heart as His residence), then my companions (eyes, ears, tongue, etc.) joined to celebrate my marriage. Beholding this play (my effort), my mind became blissful; my Husband (Master) has come to marry me (to let me stay in His lotus feet). 1. **O brides (my sense organs) so sing, repeatedly, the songs of**

**wisdom and reflection (which can distinguish between virtue and evil). (O my tongue! Recite the glory of God so that I can refrain from blasphemy, O my ears! Listen to the glory of God so that I stop listening to blasphemy). My spouse, the Life of the world, has come into my home (heart).** 1. **Pause.** When I was married with Guru's guidance, I met my Husband (Master), and I came to know Him. The Word of His Shabad is pervading the three worlds; when my ego was quieted, my mind became happy. 2. He Himself arranges His own affairs; His affairs cannot be arranged by anyone else. By the affair of this marriage, truth, contentment, mercy, and faith are produced. Rare are the Gurmukhs who understand it! 3. Says Nanak that God alone is the Husband of all. She, upon whom He casts His Graceful Glance (He manifests in that heart), becomes the happy soul-bride. 4.10.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਗਿਆਨ-ਇੰਦਰਿਓ! ਚੰਗੇ ਮੰਦੇ ਦੀ ਪਰਖ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਗੀਤ ਮੁੜ ਮੁੜ ਗਾਵੋ। ਹੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਜੀਭ! ਸਿਫਤ-ਸਾਲਾਹ ਵਿਚ ਜੁੜ; ਤਾਕਿ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਲੋਂ ਹਟਣ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਆ ਜਾਏ। ਹੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੰਨੋ! ਸਿਫਤ-ਸਾਲਾਹ ਦੇ ਗੀਤ ਸੁਣਦੇ ਰਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਜੁ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਸੁਣਨ ਦੀ ਬਾਣ ਹਟੇ। ਮੇਰੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ-ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਖਸਮ-ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਆ ਵੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗਤ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦਾ ਆਸਰਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O my sense organs repeatedly sing the songs of wisdom and reflect on the distinction between virtue and evil. O my tongue! Recite the glory of God so that I can refrain from blasphemy, O my ears! Listen to the glory of God so that I stop listening to blasphemy. God, the life of the world, has come into my heart and has made His home there.

Bhagat Kabir also declares that this communion has enabled him to become one with God seamlessly. Now, he is enjoying celestial bliss and will not be reincarnated. He shares with us the blessed feeling of union with God in his composition in SGGS.

ਕੀਓ ਸਿੰਗਾਰੁ ਮਿਲਨ ਕੇ ਤਾਈ॥ ਹਰਿ ਨ ਮਿਲੇ ਜਗਜੀਵਨ ਗੁਸਾਈ॥੧॥

ਹਰਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿਰੁ ਹਉ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਬਹੁਰੀਆ॥ ਰਾਮ ਬਡੇ ਮੈ ਤਨਕ ਲਹੁਰੀਆ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਧਨ ਪਿਰ ਏਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਸੇਰਾ ॥ ਸੇਜ ਏਕ ਪੈ ਮਿਲਨੁ ਦੁਹੇਰਾ ॥੨॥

ਧੰਨਿ ਸੁਹਾਗਨਿ ਜੋ ਪੀਅ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਫਿਰਿ ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥੩॥੮॥੩੦॥

ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੩

*Keeo si(n)gaar milan ke taiee. Har na mile jagajeevan gusaiee. 1. Har mero pir hau har kee bahureeaa. Raam badde mai tanak lahureeaa. 1. Rahao. Dhan pir ekai sa(n)g baseraa. Sej ek pai milan dhuheraa. 2. Dha(n)n suhaagan jo peea bhaavai. Keh Kabir fir janam na aavai. 3.8.30. SGGs, p. 483*

**Translation:** I have decorated myself to meet my Husband (Master/God). But God, the Life of the World, the Sustainer of the Universe, has not come to meet me. 1. **God is my Husband, and I am God's naive bride. God is so great, and I am infinitesimally small. 1. Pause.** The bride (me, the human) and the Groom (God) dwell together. We lie upon the one bed, but (yet) the union is difficult. 2. Blessed is the soul-bride, who is pleasing to her Husband (Master). Says Kabir, she (human) shall not have to be reincarnated again. 3. 8. 30.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਸਮ ਹੈ, ਮੈਂ ਉਸਦੀ ਅੰਵਾਣ ਜਿਹੀ ਵਹੁਟੀ ਹਾਂ। ਮੇਰਾ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਖਸਮ-ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਬਹੁਤ ਵੱਡਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਨਿੱਕੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਬਾਲੜੀ ਹਾਂ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** God is my Husband, and I am God's naive bride. I have not enjoyed union with Him as God is so great, and I am infinitesimally small.

Kabir is saying that pretence and showmanship cannot bring us closer to God. He is everywhere, yet we are distant from Him. We can get closer to Him by sincere devotion alone.

After the death of this great mystic poet of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, since his message had resonated with people from both the Hindu

and Muslim communities, there was a tussle between Hindus and Muslims over his last rites. Eventually, in his memory a tomb and a Samadhi were constructed, which are revered even today. During his life and even in his death, Bhagat Kabir had united those practicing different faiths, which were often at loggerheads with each other.

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## 6. Bhagat Namdev's God

Bhagat Namdev (1270–1350 CE) was born in Naras-Vamani village (presently called Narsi Namdeo) in Maharashtra state. His father, a calico printer/tailor, was named Damshet, and his mother's name was Gonabai.

Most of the spiritual messages of Bhagat Namdev, just like those of the Sikh Gurus, emphasized the importance of living the life of a householder ("*grihast jeevan*"). He believed that even a married person with a family could attain enlightenment, contradicting the prevalent Hindu tradition of renouncing the world in search of spiritual salvation. He emphasized that one of the truest forms of devotional meditation is for the husband and wife to jointly seek the blessed experience of God.

Namdev's compositions condemning discrimination based on caste (high and low), Karam Kand (ritualistic practices), and idol worship are included in SGGS. He advocated belief in a God who is omnipresent (present everywhere) and omniscient (all knowing).

In his compositions in SGGS, Namdev variously addressed God as Madho, Keso, Sanval, Ram, Ramaia, Naraian, and Beethal.

### Beethal

It is erroneously believed by some people that Bhagat Namdev used the term "Beethal" to refer to an idol of the Hindu god Krishan. He was in fact referring to God. In SGGS, the compositions of Bhagats and of Sikh Gurus used prevalent terminology to address God. The following

examples from Bhagat Namdev's compositions make it clear that he had used "Beethal" to refer to God:

ਈਭੈ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਉਭੈ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਨਹੀ ॥

ਥਾਨ ਥਨੰਤਰਿ ਨਾਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਣਵੈ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਤੂੰ ਸਰਬ ਮਹੀ ॥੪॥੨॥

ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੫

*E'eebhai beeThal uobhai beeThal beeThal bin sa(n)saar nahee. Thaan thana(n)tar naamaa pranavai poor rahio too(n) sarab mahee. 4. 2.*

SGGS, p. 485

**Translation:** God is here, God is there; without God, there is no world at all. Prays Namdev, O God, You are totally permeating and pervading all places and interspaces. 4. 2.

ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਰੂੜੋ ਰੂਪੁ ਰੂੜੋ ਅਤਿ ਰੰਗੁ ਰੂੜੋ ਮੇਰੋ ਰਾਮਈਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ .....

ਸਾਧਿਕ ਸਿਧ ਸਗਲ ਮੁਨਿ ਚਾਹਹਿ ਬਿਰਲੇ ਕਾਹੂ ਡੀਠੁਲਾ ॥

ਸਗਲ ਭਵਣ ਤੇਰੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਬਾਲਹਾ ਤਿਉ ਨਾਮੇ ਮਨਿ ਬੀਠੁਲਾ ॥੫॥੩॥

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੬੯੩

*Teraa naam rooRo roop rooRo at ra(n)g rooRo mero raamieeaa. 1. Rahao.*

*.....Saadhik sidh sagal mun chaaheh birale kaahoo ddeeThulaa. Sagal*

*bhavan tero naam baalahaa tiau naame man beeThulaa. 5. 3. SGGS, p. 693*

**Translation: O my God, Your Name is so beautiful! Your figure is so beautiful! Your color is exceptionally beautiful. 1. Pause.....All the seekers, Siddhas and silent sages seek Him, but only a few behold Him. Just as Your Name is dear to all in the Universe, so is It dear to Namdev's mind. 5. 3.**



Namdev is using the word “Raamieeaa” in the Rahao Tuk, and “Beethulaa” in the last Tuk. Both these words refer to God.

ਆਜੁ ਨਾਮੇ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਮੂਰਖ ਕੋ ਸਮਝਾਉ ਰੇ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ -----

ਨਾਮੇ ਸੋਈ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਜਹ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਨ ਮਸੀਤਿ ॥੪॥੩॥੭॥ ਬਿਲਾਵਲੁ ਗੋਂਡ, ਅੰਗ ੮੭੪

Aaj naame beeThal dhekhiaa moorakh ko samajhaauoo re. Rahao.....

Naame soiee seviaa jeh dhehuraa na maseet. 4. 3. 7. SGGS, p. 874

**Translation:** O Pandit! I, Namdev, have realized God in this lifetime, (but you stayed ignorant, you could not realize God). Let me explain to you ignorant person (why you are not able to realize God). Pause. ....The Hindu is sightless; the Muslim has only one eye. The spiritual person is wiser than both. The Hindu worships at the temple, the Muslim at the mosque. Namdev serves that One and only God, who is not limited to either the temple or the mosque. 4.3.7.

Namdev is also making it clear that his “Beethal” is neither in the Hindu temple nor in the Muslim masjid. Instead, He is everywhere. He says that both Hindus and Muslims ignorantly claimed that God was only in their respective places of worship. According to Namdev, Hindus had concocted baseless stories about their deities.

In SGGS, the Gurus have also used the term “Beethal” for God, as is clear from following examples:

1. ਨਾਮੁ ਨਰਹਰ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਰਸ ਭੋਗ ਏਕ ਨਰਾਇਣਾ ॥ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ  
 ਰਸ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਅਨੰਤ ਬੀਠਲ ਸਾਸਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਇਣਾ ॥ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੯੨੫  
*Naam narahar nidhaan jin kai ras bhog ek narainaa. Ras roop ra(n)g ana(n)t beeThal saas saas dhiaainaa.* SGGS, p. 925

**Translation:** Those who have the treasure of God's Name in their heart, for them reciting God's Name is the enjoyment of all the sensual desires of the world. Meditating on God with every breath is the pleasure, joy, and beauty.

2. ਸਭ ਦਿਨ ਕੇ ਸਮਰਥ ਪੰਥ ਬਿਠੁਲੇ ਹਉ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਉ ॥ ਦੇਵਗੰਧਾਰੀ  
ਗਾਵਨ ਭਾਵਨ ਸੰਤਨ ਤੋਰੈ ਚਰਨ ਉਵਾ ਕੈ ਪਾਉ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਮ:੫, ਅੰਗ ੫੩੬
- Sabh dhin ke samarath pa(n)th beThule hau bal bal jaau. SGGS, p. 536*  
*Gaavan bhaavan sa(n)tan torai charan uvaa kai paau. 1. Rahao.*

**Translation: O God,** existing beyond the influence of illusion! Bless me so that I can stay at the feet of the pious persons who praise **You**, whom **You** like, who can show me the path to a perfect way of living.

1. Pause.

3. ਐਸੋ ਪਰਚਉ ਪਾਇਓ ॥ ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ  
ਕਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਦਇਆਲ ਬੀਠੁਲੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੁਝਹਿ ਬਤਾਇਓ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੨੦੫
- Aiso parachau paio. Karee kirpaa dhiaal beeathlai SGGS, p. 205*  
*satguru mujheh bataio. 1. Rahao.*

**Translation:** I have developed an intimate relationship (with God). With **God's** grace I have been blessed to have been in contact with the Guru. 1. Pause.

4. ਜੀਵਤੁ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ॥ ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ  
ਕਰਹੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਬੀਠੁਲੇ ਬਿਸਰਿ ਨ ਕਬ ਹੀ ਜਾਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੧੨੨੩
- Jeevat raam ke gun gai. Karahu kirpaa gopaal beeTHule SGGS, p. 1223*  
*bisar na kab hee jai. 1. Rahao.*

**Translation:** I live (blissful spiritual life) by singing the Glorious Praises of **God. O Creator of the universe!** Please be merciful (to me) so that I may never forget (Your Name, Naam).

Like the Gurus, Bhagat Namdev has used many names for God. Beethal is one of them. He has used it to imply God, who is everywhere.

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## 7. Bhagat Namdev's God Drinking the Milk

Bhagat Namdev's following Shabad in SGGS, seemingly tells a story of how he made the idol "drink milk", thereby enabling him (Namdev) to see God.

ਦੂਧੁ ਕਟੋਰੈ ਗਡਵੈ ਪਾਨੀ ॥ ਕਪਲ ਗਾਇ ਨਾਮੈ ਦੁਹਿ ਆਨੀ ॥੧॥

ਦੂਧੁ ਪੀਉ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੇ ਰਾਇ ॥ ਦੂਧੁ ਪੀਉ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨੁ ਪਤੀਆਇ ॥

ਨਾਹੀ ਤ ਘਰ ਕੋ ਬਾਪੁ ਰਿਸਾਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਸੁਇਨ ਕਟੋਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਭਰੀ ॥ ਲੈ ਨਾਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਆਗੈ ਧਰੀ ॥੨॥

ਏਕੁ ਭਗਤੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਬਸੈ ॥ ਨਾਮੇ ਦੇਖਿ ਨਰਾਇਨੁ ਹਸੈ ॥੩॥

ਦੂਧੁ ਪੀਆਇ ਭਗਤੁ ਘਰਿ ਗਇਆ ॥ ਨਾਮੇ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਭਇਆ ॥੪॥੩॥

ਭੈਰਉ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੬੩

*Dhoodh kaTorai gaddavai paanee. Kapal gai naamai dhuh aanee. 1. Dhoodh peeau gobi(n)dhe rai. Dhoodh peeau mero man pateeaai. Naahee ta ghar ko baap risai. 1. Rahao. Suoin kaToree a(n)mirat bharee. Lai naamai har aagai dharee. 2. Ek bhagat mere hiradhe basai. Naame dhekh narain hasai. 3. Dhoodh peeai bhagat ghar giaa. Naame har kaa dharasan bhiaa. 4. 3.*

SGGS, p. 1163

**Translation:** (O my God! Your servant,) Namdev has milked the brown cow and brought a cup of milk and a jug of water. 1. **O my Sovereign God! Please drink the milk (so that) my mind gets blissful. Otherwise, my heart and mind will be restless. 1. Pause.** Namdev has filled the pure heart-like-cup with the ambrosial milk and placed it before God (i.e., Namdev has drenched his heart with God's name and has offered it to God) and begs

God to drink the milk). 2. God looked upon Namdev; smiled (and said) this one devotee abides within my heart (and I love him). 3. God drank the milk, and the devotee experienced a super-conscious state of mind. Thus, (in this super-conscious state) Namdev received the Blessed Vision of God. 4. 3.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ, ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਆਰ ਹੋਵੇ, ਉਸ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕੀਤਿਆਂ ਦਿਲ ਵਿਚ ਠੰਢ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** By lovingly serving (meditating on) God, one experiences true bliss.

To understand the full meaning of the Shabad, in-depth analysis requires that the following aspects of the Shabad (i.e., some of the words used, and what they refer to) be carefully examined:

- 1. Outcome of drinking the milk:** Those who believe in the story say that Namdev was able to see God upon the idol's drinking milk. It defies logic. If Namdev was successful in meeting God with idol worship, he would have continued with idol worship for the rest of his life. However, another of his Shabads "Aneeley kunbh....." shows that he was opposed to idol worship.
- 2. Innocence (a state of mind):** The story says that Namdev was "innocent" when his father asked him to offer milk to the idol in his absence. The following Shabad of Bhagat Ravidas in SGGS makes a reference to God in relation to the story of Bhagat Namdev offering milk to God.

ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰੇ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਜਨ ਗਏ ਨਿਸਤਰਿ ਤਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਕਬੀਰ ਉਜਾਗਰ ॥ ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਕੇ ਕਾਟੇ ਕਾਗਰ ॥੧॥  
ਨਿਮਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਦੂਧੁ ਪੀਆਇਆ ॥ ਤਉ ਜਗ ਜਨਮ ਸੰਕਟ ਨਹੀ ਆਇਆ ॥੨॥  
ਜਨ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਰਾਮ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਾਤਾ ॥

ਇਉ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਨਰਕ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਤਾ ॥੩॥੫॥

ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੭

*Har har har har har har hare. Har simarat jan ge nisatar tare. 1. Rahao. Har ke naam Kabir ujaaga. Janam janam ke kaaTe kaagar. 1. Nimat naamadheau dhoodh peeaiaa. Tau jag janam sa(n)kaT nahee aaiaa. 2. Jan ravidhaas raam ra(n)g raataa. Eiau gur parasaadh narak nahee jaataa. 3. 5.*

SGGS, p. 487

**Translation: By meditating on God with every breath, the humble are carried across to salvation. 1. Pause.** Through God's Name, Kabir became famous and attained respect (in the world) and the accounts of his past incarnations were torn up. 1. Because of Namdev's meditation on God's name, God drank the milk he offered, and he shall not have to suffer the pains of reincarnation into the world again. 2. Servant Ravidas is imbued with God's Love. By Guru's Grace, he shall not have to go to hell. 3. 5.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਨਾਮ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਦੀ ਬਰਕਤਿ ਨਾਲ ਨੀਵੀਂ ਜਾਤ ਵਾਲੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਵੀ ਸੰਸਾਰ-ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਤੋਂ ਤਰ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਾਤ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਬਾਧਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਦੀ।

**Central message:** By meditating on God's name, even those belonging to the (so-called) lower caste shall cross the world's ocean, i.e., succeed in achieving salvation — the goal of this human life. Caste is not a barrier to realizing God.

The essence of a Shabad is in its Rahao Tuk. In this Shabad, the technique for crossing (the world's ocean) is explained as meditating on God – not idol worship (by chanting

ritualistically in front of an idol). Ravidas is providing examples of two Bhagats – Kabir and Namdev. Bhagat Kabir became famous by reflecting on God. Bhagat Namdev realized God by meditating on Him. Namdev was already practicing reciting God’s name before this episode of God (supposedly) “drinking milk”.

**3. Was there an idol at his home?** The story says that Namdev’s father used to bathe the idol every day and offer it milk. His father was from a “low” caste. As mentioned earlier, the Hindu caste system as practiced was discriminatory, with almost no privileges to the lower caste. It is hard to believe that being a low caste person; the father could have kept an idol at home. This was strictly a prerogative of the “higher” caste Hindus and priests. During those days, people from the (so-called) lower caste were not even permitted to go near a temple lest the temple get defiled. It implies that the story is concocted. There never was an idol at home, to which Namdev had tried to offer milk while his father was away.

**4. Golden bowl:** The Shabad says that Namdev used a bowl made of gold to offer milk to the idol. It is difficult to believe that Namdev – a low caste person doing menial work – could afford a bowl made of gold to offer milk to the idol. In this context, it is interesting to refer to the following Shabad of Namdev in SGGS:

ਸੁਇਨੇ ਕੀ ਸੁਈ ਰੁਪੇ ਕਾ ਧਾਗਾ ॥ ਨਾਮੇ ਕਾ ਚਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਉ ਲਾਗਾ ।੪।੩।ਅੰਗ ੪੮੫

*Suine kee sooiee rupe kaa dhaagaa. Naame kaa chit har sau laagaa.*

4. 3.

SGGS, p. 485

**Translation:** My needle (God’s Name) is made of gold, and my thread is silver (i.e., by His Grace, my mind is pure). (With this needle and thread) Namdev's mind relates to God. 4. 3.

Taken literally, Namdev, being a tailor, was supposedly using a needle of gold to stitch clothes. It will also be difficult to believe that he was using silver (Rupee) for stitching. Gold and silver have been used as metaphors. Both gold and silver are precious metals and are considered pious for Hindu religious ceremonies. Thread follows the needle to sew clothes. Similarly, Guru’s Shabad (golden needle) connects (silver thread) the Devotee’s spiritual state (*Surat*) to God.

**5. Father of the house:** The Shabad “Doodh katorey Panee.....”, refers to the father of the house (Ghar ko Baap) in the Rahao Tuk. As we can see from the following examples in SGGS, the “Ghar” in SGGS is used for the human body, and “Father” of the body is the spirit (Aatma).

- 1 ਘਰ ਕੇ ਜਿਠੇਰੇ ਕੀ ਚੂਕੀ ਕਾਣਿ ॥ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੩੭੦  
*Ghar ke jiThere kee chookee kaan.* SGGS, p. 370  
I am no longer swayed by my elder brother-in-law (the fear of death).
- 2 ਘਰ ਕੀ ਨਾਇਕਿ ਘਰ ਵਾਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਵੈ ॥ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੩੭੧  
*Ghar kee naik ghar vaas na dhevai.* SGGS, p. 371  
She (This illusion) has become the mistress of my home, and she does not allow me to live in it (does not let me have a state of blissful living).
- 3 ਸਉਕਨਿ ਘਰ ਕੀ ਕੰਤਿ ਤਿਆਗੀ ॥ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੩੯੪  
*Saukan ghar kee ka(n)t tiaagee.* SGGS, p. 394

My Husband (Master) has driven out the one who was my rival (illusion).

4 ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਪੰਚ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਪੰਚੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ॥

ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੩, ਅੰਗ ੪੨੫

*Ghar meh pa(n)ch varatadhe pa(n)che veechaarees.*

SGGS, p. 425

The five passions pervade in the heart of learned people, but here the five are well-behaved (they stay within the limit).

5 ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥

ਸੂਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੭੩੯

*Ghar meh Thaakur nadhar na aavai.*

SGGS, p.739

(One attached to worldly things) he does not even come to see his God living inside him.

6 ਘਰਿ ਰਹੁ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਮੁਗਧ ਇਆਨੇ ॥

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਅੰਗ ੧੦੩੦

*Ghar rahu re man mugadh iaane.*

SGGS, p. 1030

Remain in your own home (self), O my foolish and ignorant mind.

There are numerous other instances in SGGS which make it clear that “Ghar” means ‘human body’. Also, the word ‘Reesai” in the Rahao Tuk of the main Shabad under discussion means “to take care”.

## 6. Who drank the milk?

In the Rahao Tuk, Namdev has addressed God as “Gobindey Rai”. As we have seen, Namdev addressed God with many names. The word used by Namdev and others for idols is “Thakur”. This is clear from the following Shabad in SGGS.

ਆਨੀਲੇ ਕੁੰਭ ਭਰਾਈਲੇ ਉਦਕ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਉ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਕਰਉ ॥

ਬਇਆਲੀਸ ਲਖ ਜੀ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਹੋਤੇ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਭੈਲਾ ਕਾਇ ਕਰਉ ॥੧॥

ਜੜ੍ਹ ਜਾਉ ਤਤ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਭੈਲਾ ॥ ਮਹਾ ਅਨੰਦ ਕਰੇ ਸਦ ਕੇਲਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥



ਆਨੀਲੇ ਫੂਲ ਪਰੋਈਲੇ ਮਾਲਾ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੀ ਹਉ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਉ ॥  
 ਪਹਿਲੇ ਬਾਸੁ ਲਈ ਹੈ ਭਵਰਹ ਬੀਠਲ ਭੈਲਾ ਕਾਇ ਕਰਉ ॥੨॥  
 ਆਨੀਲੇ ਦੂਧੁ ਰੀਧਾਈਲੇ ਖੀਰੰ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਉ ਨੈਵੇਦੁ ਕਰਉ ॥  
 ਪਹਿਲੇ ਦੂਧੁ ਬਿਟਾਰਿਓ ਬਛਰੈ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਭੈਲਾ ਕਾਇ ਕਰਉ ॥੩॥  
 ਈਭੈ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਉਭੈ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਬੀਠਲੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਨਹੀ ॥  
 ਥਾਨ ਥਨੰਤਰਿ ਨਾਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਣਵੈ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਤੂੰ ਸਰਬ ਮਹੀ ॥੪॥੨॥ ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੫

*Aaneele ku(n)bh bharaieele uoodhak Thaakur kau isanaan karau. Bialees lakh jee jal meh hote beeThal bhailaa kai karau. 1. Jatr jaau tat beeThal bhailaa. Mahaa ana(n)dh kare sadh kelaa. 1. Rahao. Aaneele phool paroieele maalaa Thaakur kee hau pooj karau. Pahile baas liee hai bhavareh beeThal bhailaa kai karau. 2. Aaneele dhoodh reedhaieele kheera(n) Thaakur kau naivedh karau. Pahile dhoodh biTaario bachharai beeThal bhailaa kai karau. 3. E'eebhai beeThal uobhai beeThal beeThal bin sa(n)saar nahee. Thaan thana(n)tar naamaa pranavai poor rahio too(n) sarab mahee. 4. 2 SGGs, p. 485*

**Translation:** (If) I bring a pitcher, fill it with water and bathe God (then that bathing is not acceptable to God) because countless species of beings live in the water. (But my) God already lives (in those species) (and was taking the bath, then) how can I bathe (the idol). 1. **Wherever I go, God is there (as He exists in everyone) and He continually plays in supreme bliss. 1. Pause.** If I bring flowers to weave a garland to worship God (then those flowers cannot be acceptable to God because) the bumble bee has already sucked out the fragrance. (But my God) already lives (in the bumble bee). God (already lives in the bumble bee and was sucking the fragrance of the flowers) then why should I use it to worship the idol? 2. If I carry milk and cook it to make pudding to feed the idol (then that milk cannot be acceptable because) the calf has already tasted the milk (but my God) already lives (in the calf and has tasted the milk) then why should I use it for the idol? 3. (In the universe), God is here; God is there; without God, there is no world of existence at all. Namdev prays to that God. You are permeating and pervading all places and interspaces. 4.2.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਮੈਂ ਜਿਧਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹਾਂ, ਉੱਥਰ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ (ਸਭ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੋ ਕੇ) ਬੜੇ ਅਨੰਦ ਚੋਜ ਤਮਾਸ਼ੇ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** Wherever I go, I see (God, my) “Beethal” (in everyone, and in everything). He is ever playing in supreme bliss.

Everywhere in the Shabad, when Bhagat Namdev is referring to idol worship, he is using the word “Thakur”. But when referring to God, he is using the term “Beethal”. It is clear from Namdev’s Shabad “Doodh katorey Panee.....”, that “Gobindey Rai” refers to God. Namdev says he made someone (the idol) drink the milk. Also, Ravidas says so in his Shabad mentioned under item 3 above. So, the question arises: Who “drank the milk” offered by Namdev?

The story makes sense **only** if it is understood metaphorically, and not literally. Neither the idol (nor any god) was made to “drink milk” in the literal sense. It was his meditation that led Namdev to God. Bhagat Namdev is offering his pure heart (golden bowl) full of meditation (sweet milk). Thus, “drinking” of the milk is symbolic of acceptance of Namdev’s efforts. Bhagat Namdev thus attained the state of *Sehaj* (peace and tranquility) (Bhagat *Ghar giyaa*).

Overall, Bhagat Namdev’s message is that inconsequential acts – like bathing of idols, and offering them flowers, etc. – do not yield oneness with God. Realization of God is attained only by remembrance of His Name and feeling His presence everywhere.

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## 8. Prayers Turning an Idol

There are two Shabads in SGGGS composed by Bhagat Namdev which are about praying to God. These Shabads seemingly suggest that by doing so, the “idol” of Beethal turned towards Namdev.

In using the word “Beethal,” Namdev is referring to God, as explained in Chapter 6. The word Beethal is derived from the Sanskrit word Vishthal, which refers to a Hindu deity that resides in a forest. This deity is considered an incarnation of god Vishnu, who is worshipped by Hindus, including in Maharashtra state where Namdev lived.

It is also important to remember that as explained in previous Chapters, many of Namdev’s Shabads should be understood metaphorically, and not literally. The literal translation can be misleading or can easily lead to misinterpretation (as is the case for many other Shabads in SGGGS).

The relevant Shabads of Bhagat Namdev are given below. After the Shabad (in Punjabi), first the literal English translation is given and then the metaphorical explanation is given (in Punjabi), followed by the message in English. It is the metaphorical explanations that convey the correct meaning of the Shabad and of its Rahao Tuk.

## The First Shabad of Namdev

ਹਸਤ ਖੇਲਤ ਤੇਰੇ ਦੇਹੁਰੇ ਆਇਆ ॥ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਤ ਨਾਮਾ ਪਕਰਿ ਉਠਾਇਆ ॥੧॥  
ਹੀਨੜੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਦਿਮ ਰਾਇਆ ॥ ਛੀਪੇ ਕੇ ਜਨਮਿ ਕਾਹੇ ਕਉ ਆਇਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਲੈ ਕਮਲੀ ਚਲਿਓ ਪਲਟਾਇ ॥ ਦੇਹੁਰੈ ਪਾਛੈ ਬੈਠਾ ਜਾਇ ॥੨॥  
ਜਿਉ ਜਿਉ ਨਾਮਾ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਉਚਰੈ ॥ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾਂ ਕਉ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਫਿਰੈ ॥੩॥੬॥

ਭੈਰਉ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੬੪

*Hasat khelat tere dhehure aaiaa. bhagat karat naamaa pakar uThaiaa. 1. HeenaRee jaat meree jaadhim raiaa. chheepe ke janam kaahe kau aaiaa. 1. Rahao. lai kamalee chalio palaTai. Dhehurai paachhai baiThaa jai. 2. Jiau jiau naamaa har gun ucharai. Bhagat janaa(n) kau dhehuraa firai. 3. 6.*

SGGS, p. 1164

**Translation:** Laughing and playing (enthusiastically), I came to Your Temple, O God. While Namdev (I) was worshipping, (but since people call me of low caste) I was grabbed and driven out (of the temple). 1. **(If) I am of a low caste, O God; why was I born into a family of fabric dyers? 1. Pause.** I picked up my blanket and went back, to sit behind the temple. 2. As Namdev uttered the Glorious Praises of God, the temple turned towards God's humble devotee. 3. 6.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਉੱਚੀ ਜਾਤ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਸ਼ੂਦਰ-ਅਖਵਾਂਦਿਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਹੋ ਰਹਿਆਂ ਵਧੀਕੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਅੱਗੇ ਰੋਸ। ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਇਹ ਰੋਸ ਸ਼ੂਦਰ-ਅਖਵਾਂਦੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਵੈਮਾਨ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉੱਚ-ਜਾਤੀਏ ਦੀ ਆਕੜ ਘਟਦੀ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** Namdev is complaining to God regarding the humiliation of a person belonging to the so-called low caste by those belonging to the upper castes. By meditating on God's name, the persons belonging to the low caste gain self-respect; and this reduces the negative impact on them due to the arrogance of the so-called upper caste persons.

## The Second Shabad of Namdev

ਮੋ ਕਉ ਤੂੰ ਨ ਬਿਸਾਰਿ ਤੂ ਨ ਬਿਸਾਰਿ ॥

ਤੂ ਨ ਬਿਸਾਰੇ ਰਾਮਈਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਆਲਾਵੰਤੀ ਇਹੁ ਭ੍ਰਮੁ ਜੋ ਹੈ ਮੁਝ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਭ ਕੋਪਿਲਾ ॥

ਸੂਦੁ ਸੂਦੁ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਰਿ ਉਠਾਇਓ ਕਹਾ ਕਰਉ ਬਾਪ ਬੀਠੁਲਾ ॥੧॥

ਮੂਏ ਹੂਏ ਜਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦੇਹੁਗੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਕੋਇਲਾ ॥

ਏ ਪੰਡੀਆ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਢੇਢ ਕਹਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਪੈਜ ਪਿਛੰਉਡੀ ਹੋਇਲਾ ॥੨॥

ਤੂ ਜੁ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲੁ ਕਹੀਅਤੁ ਹੈਂ ਅਤਿਭੁਜ ਭਇਓ ਅਪਾਰਲਾ ॥

ਫੇਰਿ ਦੀਆ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਨਾਮੇ ਕਉ ਪੰਡੀਅਨ ਕਉ ਪਿਛਵਾਰਲਾ ॥੩॥੨॥ ਮਲਾਰ, ਅੰਗ ੧੨੯੨

*Mo kau too(n) na bisaar too na bisaar. Too na bisaare raamieeaa. 1. Rahao. Aalaava(n)tee ih bhram jo hai mujh uopar sabh kopilaa. Soodh soodh kar maar uThaio kahaa karau baap beeThulaa. 1. Mooe hooe jau mukat dhehuge mukat na jaanai koilaa. E pa(n)ddeeeaa mo kau ddedd kahat teree pajj pichha(n)auddee hoilaa. 2. Too ju dhiaal kirapaal kaheeat hai(n) atibhuj bhio apaaralaa. Pher dheeeaa dhehuraa naame kau pa(n)ddeean kau pichhavaaralaa. 3. 2. SGGs, p.1292*

**Translation: Please do not forget me; please never forget me, O God. 1. Pause.** The temple priests have this misconception that they belong to the upper caste, which is why they are furious with me. Calling me low-caste and untouchable, they beat me and drove me out; what should I dejected do now, O Beloved God? 1. If You liberate me after I am dead, no one will know that I am liberated. These Pandits, and religious scholars, call me low-born; when they say this, they tarnish Your honor as well (Why should anyone meditating on You be called as one belonging to low caste?). 2. You are kind and compassionate (to everyone irrespective of their caste); the power of Your Arm is unrivalled (How can anyone bully Your devotee?). (Upon hearing Namdev's request) God turned the temple around to face Namdev, with its back towards the Brahmins. 3. 2.

ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ: ਸਿਮਰਨ ਦਾ ਨਤੀਜਾ – ਨਿਰਭੈਤਾ, ਅਣਖ ਅਤੇ ਸਵੈਮਾਨ।

**Central message:** By meditating on God, one becomes fearless and gains self-respect.

For understanding these two Shabads, it is important to know a little bit about Namdev's background. It is known that Namdev spent a significant part of his life in Pandarpur. Everyone in Pandarpur knew that Namdev was a tailor by profession. According to the Hindu caste system, he was from a (so-called) "low caste". In accordance with the prevailing practices, he would not have been allowed by priests ("high caste" custodians) into Beethal's temple for worship on a regular basis.

However, it is possible that one day – while Namdev was absorbed in thoughts about God and was in a spiritually elevated state of mind – he went to the temple. As expected, the priests pushed Namdev out, calling him a low caste. Had Namdev been a worshipper of Beethal (idol) and a regular visitor, this would not have happened. Hence, if the Shabad is taken literally, this whole incident is inconceivable. Also, it is notable that in the Rahao Tuk, Namdev is addressing God as 'Raamaieeaa', while in other places he addresses Him as 'Beethula'.

From the above comments on these two Shabads, it appears that Namdev was perhaps pushed out of the temple. When he rested behind the temple, he continued meditating on God. He was not an idol-worshipper and was not thinking of the idol inside the temple. Instead, he was thinking of God, and could feel the presence of God within himself.

The literal translations of the Shabads give the incorrect impression that Namdev is referring to the benefits of worshipping idols of Hindu gods (as Beethal). When understood metaphorically, both the Shabads are in fact conveying an especially important message against the caste system practiced by Hindus (which the Gurus opposed). Namdev strongly advocates in favor of the spiritual rewards of praying only to God rather than idols, much as the Gurus taught us.

Other examples of this can also be given. Translating a Shabad literally clearly disregards the central message of Sikhi and can take us on a wrong path. For example,

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਜਹਾਜ਼ ਹੈ ਚੜੇ ਸੋ ਉਤਰੇ ਪਾਰ।

Nanak naam jahaaj hai charey so utrey paar.

Nanak says God's Name (Naam) is a ship. If you get on it, you will be able to get across.

It would be wrong to think that the literal translation gives the correct message. There is in fact no physical ship called 'Naam', so boarding it cannot take us to the other side. In the referenced Shabads, Bhagat Namdev is describing his mental state. The correct meaning of his Shabads can only be understood metaphorically.

It must also be reiterated here that "Shabad Guru" in SGGS is the True "Guru" of the Sikhs. Every Shabad in SGGS must be respected as GurBanee, whether it is composed by Gurus, Bhagats, or by Bhattas. Every Shabad teaches us how to attain a life of eternal bliss, and how to live morally and in accordance with God's Will. This world then becomes heavenly. When properly understood, no Shabad describes actions which are impossible for a human (i.e., "miracles"). The Gurus say clearly that all physical actions follow the laws of nature (*Hukam*).

We also know that all the compositions in the Adi Granth compiled by Guru Arjan ji in 1604 are fully consistent with the earlier Gurus' teachings and Guru Nanak ji's message in the Mool Mantar. SGGs teaches us that God is formless and does not manifest on this earth as a god (deity) or incarnation (such as Krishan), or as a man-made (stone) idol. The Mool Mantar in SGGs states clearly that God is timeless and is not born in a life-form. Anyone or anything that is born will eventually perish; but God will not.

SGGS has many Shabads about the benefits of praying to God; and none of the Shabads in SGGs – including the two Shabads of Namdev discussed above – accept or endorse idol worship.

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## 9. Sheikh Farid – Humility & Kindness

Sheikh Farid (1173–1265 CE) was born in village Kothowal near Multan, now in Pakistan. His full name was Farid-ud-din Masoud. His father's name was Jamal-ud-din Suleman, and mother's name was Karsum Bibi. His mother was deeply religious. By lineage, she belonged to the family of Hazrat Ali.

Farid lived a simple life. He got his early education in Arabic and Persian from his grandfather Qazi Suaib. At the age of 16, Farid went on a Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca with his parents. At a young age he met his murshid (master), Qut-buddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, a noted Sufi saint. His mentor gave Farid a room in his khanqah (monastery) and advised him that the sole purpose of taking birth in this world is to realize God. To achieve this, one must shun attachment to the pleasures of the world. After Qut-buddin Bakhtiyar died, Farid assumed the mantle of his mentor. Sheikh Brahm, whom Guru Nanak ji (later) met in 1500 CE at Pak Pattan, was the 11th descendant of Sheikh Farid. Guru Nanak ji collected Farid's compositions from Sheikh Brahm.

Farid was popularly known to his followers as "Shakarganj," which literally translates as "treasury of sugar" but metaphorically means "the abode of sweetness or kindness". He touched many lives and showed them the true path to a spiritually meaningful life. He was extremely kind. Anyone having a conversation with him experienced tranquility. He preached that humility and kindness are the essence of all human virtues.

Two of Sheikh Farid's couplets included in SGGS highlight humility and kindness, and are as follows:

1. ਇਕੁ ਫਿਕਾ ਨ ਗਾਲਾਇ ਸਭਨਾ ਮੈ ਸਚਾ ਧਣੀ ॥  
ਹਿਆਉ ਨ ਕੈਹੀ ਠਾਹਿ ਮਾਣਕ ਸਭ ਅਮੋਲਵੇ ॥ ੧੨੯ ॥ ਸਲੋਕ ਸੇਖ ਫਰੀਦ ਕੇ, ਅੰਗ ੧੩੮੪

*Eik fikaa na gaalai sabhanaa mai sachaa dhanee. Hiaau na kaihee Thaehe maanak sabh amolave. 129.* SGGS, p.1384

**Translation:** Do not utter even a single harsh word (because) God abides in all. Do not break anyone's heart (because) all (living beings) are priceless jewels. 129.

2. ਸਭਨਾ ਮਨ ਮਾਣਿਕ ਠਾਹਣੁ ਮੂਲਿ ਮਚਾਂਗਵਾ ॥  
ਜੇ ਤਉ ਪਿਰੀਆ ਦੀ ਸਿਕ ਹਿਆਉ ਨ ਠਾਹੇ ਕਹੀ ਦਾ ॥ ੧੩੦ ॥

*Sabhanaa man maanik Thaaahan mool machaa(n)gavaa. Jae tau pireeaa dheer sik hiaau na Thaahe kahee dhaa. 130.*

**Translation:** The hearts of all are like precious jewels; to harm (anyone) is not good at all. If you desire your Beloved (God), then do not break anyone's heart.

Guru Nanak ji later elaborated on these Saloks in this way:

ਸਿੰਮਲ ਰੁਖੁ ਸਰਾਇਰਾ ਅਤਿ ਦੀਰਘ ਅਤਿ ਮੁਚੁ ॥  
ਓਇ ਜਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਆਸ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਨਿਰਾਸੇ ਕਿਤੁ ॥  
ਫਲ ਫਿਕੇ ਫੁਲ ਬਕਬਕੇ ਕੰਮਿ ਨ ਆਵਹਿ ਪਤ ॥  
ਮਿਠਤੁ ਨੀਵੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਗੁਣ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਤਤੁ ॥  
ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਨਿਵੈ ਆਪ ਕਉ ਪਰ ਕਉ ਨਿਵੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਧਰਿ ਤਾਰਾਜੂ ਤੋਲੀਐ ਨਿਵੈ ਸੁ ਗਉਰਾ ਹੋਇ ॥  
ਅਪਰਾਧੀ ਦੂਣਾ ਨਿਵੈ ਜੋ ਹੰਤਾ ਮਿਰਗਾਹਿ ॥  
ਸੀਸਿ ਨਿਵਾਇਐ ਕਿਆ ਥੀਐ ਜਾ ਰਿਦੈ ਕੁਸੁਧੇ ਜਾਹਿ ॥ ੧ ॥

ਰਾਗ ਆਸਾ, ਅੰਗ ੪੭੦

*Salok mahalaa pehilaa. Si(n)mal rukh sarairaa at dheeragh at much. Oi j  
aaveh aas kar jaeh niraase kit. Phal fike ful bakabake ka(n)m na aaveh pat.  
MiThat neevae naanakaa gun cha(n)giaaieeaa tat. Sabh ko nivai aap kau  
par kau nivai na koi. Dhar taaraajoo toleeaai nivai su gauraa hoi.  
Aparaadhee dhoonaa nivai jo ha(n)taa miragaeh. Sees nivaiaai kias theeaa  
jaa ridhai kusudhe jaeh. 1.* SGGS, p.470

**Translation:** The simmal tree is straight as an arrow; it is very tall and is huge. But birds which visit it (expecting to get sweet fruits to eat), depart disappointed. Its fruits are tasteless, its flowers are nauseating, and its leaves are useless. **Sweetness and humility, O Nanak, are the essence of virtue and goodness.** (Generally, in the world), everyone bows down for selfish reasons; no one bows down to benefit someone else. When something is placed on the balancing scale and weighed, the side which descends is heavier (i.e., one who bows is considered the greater). (Bowing means humility at heart, not physically bowing. If it means physical bowing, then) the sinner, like the deer hunter, bows down twice as much. But what can be achieved by bowing the head when the heart is impure? 1.

Guru Nanak ji used the example of Simmal (also spelt Semal) to elaborate on the significance of humility. The Simmal tree (botanical name Bomba Ceiba, and common name silk-cotton) is fast growing, with beautiful and attractive red flowers. The birds are attracted to it for food. But they get disappointed as its fruit is acrid and bitter, and its flowers are without any nectar. In other words, they are of no use, despite being attractive and gorgeous looking. When understood properly (i.e., metaphorically), the correct message is that outward piety and ritualistic behavior is fruitless, and only a person's inner virtues and goodness can help him/her spiritually.

Sheikh Farid believed that humans have an opportunity in this world to become saintly (*Darvesh*). But, because of greed, people become evil. He believed that to become saintly, one does not have to

abandon family life. One can be a householder and yet meditate to realize God. Sheikh Farid's many compositions in SGGS define the following as the characteristics of a saintly person (Darvesh): humility, absence of greed, faith in God, desire to serve humanity, and not hurting anyone, honest living, and always remembering God.

These virtues of a saintly person are consistent with Guru Nanak ji's own Shabads and teachings in SGGS.

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## 10. Sheikh Farid – Simple Living

As noted in Chapter 9, many of Sheikh Farid's compositions describe the characteristics of a saintly person who, while living a normal householder's life, can still realize God. However, as is true for many other Shabads in SGGS, a proper understanding of Sheikh Farid's Saloks requires that these be understood metaphorically, and not literally. Some examples are given below.

### Simple Food

Taken literally, Sheikh Farid's following two Saloks give the impression that his practices were against the laws of nature when it comes to food:

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਰੋਟੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਕਾਠ ਕੀ ਲਾਵਣੁ ਮੇਰੀ ਭੁਖ॥

ਜਿਨਾ ਖਾਧੀ ਚੋਪੜੀ ਘਣੇ ਸਹਨਿਗੇ ਦੁਖ॥੨੮॥

ਸਲੋਕ ਸੇਖ ਫਰੀਦ ਕੇ, ਅੰਗ ੧੩੭੯

*Faridhaa roTee meree kaaTh kee laavan meree bhukh. Jinaa khaadhee choparee ghane sahanige dhukh. 28.* SGGS, p.1379

**Translation:** Farid, (earned through honest labor) my bread is simple (as dry as wood), and hunger is my appetizer. Those who eat buttered bread will suffer in terrible pain (i.e., simple bread earned through honest means is better). Consuming rich, gourmet food causes misery). 28.

ਰੁਖੀ ਸੁਖੀ ਖਾਇ ਕੈ ਠੰਢਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਪੀਉ॥

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਦੇਖਿ ਪਰਾਈ ਚੋਪੜੀ ਨਾ ਤਰਸਾਏ ਜੀਉ॥੨੯॥

ਅੰਗ ੧੩੭੯

*Rukhee sukhee khai kai Tha(n)ddaa paanee peeau. Faridhaa dhekh paraiee choparee naa tarasaae jeeau. 29.* SGGS, p.1379

**Translation:** Eat simple food (earned through honest labor), and drink cold water. Farid, if you see someone relishing gourmet food, do not get tempted. 29.

Sheikh Farid was a householder, and he led a balanced life. He was a role model, and his actions were a road map for others. However, some people allege that Sheikh Farid used to bite on a piece of wooden bread to satisfy his hunger. This defies the laws of nature and is obviously incorrect. One needs nourishment when hungry. The misunderstanding is the result of a literal translation of Sheikh Farid's Saloks 28 and 29.

When correctly understood, in Salok 29 Sheikh Farid is suggesting that one should eat simple food. In Salok 28, he is suggesting that eating a coarse meal (earned through honest labor) satisfies hunger – just as hunger can become a good sauce (Laavan), acting as an appetizer. So, Sheikh Farid is advising not to indulge in lavish, elaborate, tasty foods for gastronomical pleasures. Often greed and jealousy lead people to resort to dishonest means to sustain such a lavish lifestyle. Instead, one should have simple food, earned with honest means.

Familiarity with popular metaphors helps in making the meanings abundantly clear. Wooden bread alludes to simple bread left exposed for some time (as it becomes hard to bite). Coarse and dry food, without trappings of any expensive add-ons, equates to simple ordinary dishes. Similarly, buttered bread equates to lavishly garnished or exotic food.

Throughout SGGS, Guru jis have resorted to metaphors to speak the language of the ordinary rural people to connect with them.

Metaphors have always been popular to drive home a vital point. Metaphors, when properly understood, succinctly convey the true meaning – just as “a picture is worth a thousand words”.

For a proper understanding of his compositions in SGGS, we also need to read Sheikh Farid’s Saloks 16-36 as one group. Further, we need to understand their metaphorical rather than literal meaning. In these Saloks, Sheikh Farid is describing characteristics of a householder who is also a saintly person. The characteristics of such a person are tolerance, freedom from greed, belief in God, service to others, not hurting anyone, and honest living. Such persons humbly accept their social and financial circumstances and are always thankful.

To get an even deeper understanding of the above Saloks, we also need to look at the instructions of Guru ji’s in SGGS regarding food:

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਖਾਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਅੰਗ ੧੬

*Baabaa hor khaanaa khusee khuaar. Jit khaadhai tan peeReeaaai man meh chaleh vikaar. 1. Rahao.* SGGS, p.16

**Translation:** O Baba, the pleasures of some foods cause needless inconvenience. Eating them, the body gets sick, and ill thoughts enter the mind. 1. Pause.

In the above Shabad, Guru Nanak ji says that food is essential for the survival of the body. This is fully in accordance with the laws of nature. One should stay away from any food which harms the body. Food should be simple and should be taken only as needed. One can meditate on God’s Name (Naam) only if the body is healthy and strong. A healthy mind abides in a healthy body.

## Householder's Life

Taken literally, Sheikh Farid's following Saloks give the false impression that he is advocating torturing his body and retreating to a forest to meet God.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਤਨੁ ਸੁਕਾ ਪਿੰਜਰੁ ਥੀਆ ਤਲੀਆਂ ਖੁੰਡਹਿ ਕਾਗ ॥

ਅਜੈ ਸੁ ਰਬੁ ਨ ਬਾਹੁੜਿਓ ਦੇਖੁ ਬੰਦੇ ਕੇ ਭਾਗ ॥੯੦॥

ਸਲੋਕ ਸੇਖ ਫਰੀਦ ਕੇ, ਅੰਗ ੧੩੮੨

*Faridhaa tan sukaa pi(n)jar theeaa taleeaa(n) khoo(n)ddeh kaag. Ajai su rab na baahuRio dhekh ba(n)dhe ke bhaag. 90.* SGGs, p.1382

**Translation:** Farid, my withered body (because of indulging in vices) has become a skeleton. (Yet, these) crows are pecking at my palms (i.e., worldly pleasures and vices are pecking at my heart). Behold the ill fate of mortal beings (who indulged in vices), even now, they have not received God's blessings. 90.

The above couplet describes the essence of a devotee's love for God. With old age the body gets emaciated and weak (the crows and vultures boldly peck on him to eat away his flesh). Yet, (he is requesting these predators to spare his eyes, for) he might still have a glimpse of his beloved God.

ਕਾਗਾ ਕਰੰਗ ਢੰਢੋਲਿਆ ਸਗਲਾ ਖਾਇਆ ਮਾਸੁ ॥

ਏ ਦੁਇ ਨੈਨਾ ਮਤਿ ਛੁਹਉ ਪਿਰ ਦੇਖਨ ਕੀ ਆਸ ॥੯੧॥

*Kaagaa kara(n)g dda(n)ddoliaa sagalaa khaiia maas. E dhui nainaa mat chhuhau pir dhekhan kee aas. 91.*

**Translation:** The crows have searched my skeleton and eaten all my flesh (desires for worldly pleasure and vices are still pecking at my deteriorated body). I beg of the vices not to touch my eyes; I yearn to see my God. 91.



ਕਾਗਾ ਚੁੰਡਿ ਨ ਪਿੰਜਰਾ ਬਸੈ ਤ ਉਡਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥  
ਜਿਤੁ ਪਿੰਜਰੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਹੁ ਵਸੈ ਮਾਸੁ ਨ ਤਿਦੁ ਖਾਹਿ ॥ ੯੨ ॥

*Kaagaa choo(n)dd na pi(n)jaraa basai ta uddar jaeh. Jit pi(n)jarai meraa sahu vasai maas na tidhoo khae. 92.*

**Translation:** O crow do not peck at my skeleton; if you did not have an option and have landed on it, please fly away. Do not eat the flesh from that skeleton (O vices! do not entice my mind), within which my Husband God abides. 92.

Before we analyze the above Saloks, let us also look at Sheikh Farid's views on where to find God.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਜੰਗਲੁ ਜੰਗਲੁ ਕਿਆ ਭਵਹਿ ਵਣਿ ਕੰਡਾ ਮੋੜੇਹਿ ॥  
ਵਸੀ ਰਬੁ ਹਿਆਲੀਐ ਜੰਗਲੁ ਕਿਆ ਚੁਢੇਹਿ ॥ ੧੯ ॥ ਸਲੋਕ ਸੇਖ ਫਰੀਦ ਕੇ ਅੰਗ ੧੩੭੮  
*Faridhaa ja(n)gal ja(n)gal kiaa bhavah van ka(n)ddaa moReh. Vasee rab hiaaleeaaai ja(n)gal kiaa ddooddeh. 19.*

**Translation:** Farid, why do you wander from jungle to jungle, crashing through the thorny trees? God abides in (your) heart; why are you looking for Him in the jungle? 19.

The above Salok clearly says that according to Sheikh Farid, God resides in a person's heart. Here, he is reminding himself of the futility of renouncing the world and searching in the jungles. In Salok 43 too he had shared about his earlier misguided effort of looking for God in the jungles.

It is interesting to ponder why Sheikh Farid is talking about torturing his body with hunger, and that crows peck on his skeleton-like body. We can see that in his following composition, Bhagat Kabir has

also used the word “crow” metaphorically for “vices” which peck on a person’s heart.

ਕਾਗ ਉਡਾਵਤ ਭੁਜਾ ਪਿਰਾਨੀ ॥

ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਇਹ ਕਥਾ ਸਿਰਾਨੀ ॥੪॥੨॥

ਸੂਹੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੭੯੨

*Kaag uddaavat bhujaa piraanee.*

*Kaeh Kabir ieh katha siraanee. 4.2.*

SGGS, p.792

**Translation:** Kabir says (I beg you to bless me with Your Name. While waiting for You) my arm is tired driving away the crows (I am tired of fighting the vices. (On the other hand, when my life is over) the story of my life ends. 4.2.

In his Saloks 90-92 (one can also see Saloks 88 and 89), Sheikh Farid speaks of the dangers of living life in the grip of human vices. In SGGS, the Fourth Nanak also uses the word “crow” to mean a heart filled with vices.

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਰੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਤਿਵਾਦੀ ਜਿਤੁ ਨਾਤੈ ਕਉਆ ਹੰਸੁ ਹੋਹੈ ॥ ਗੁਜਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪, ਅੰਗ ੪੯੨

*A(n)mirat sar Satguru sativaadhee jit naatai kuooaa ha(n)s hohai.* SGGS, p.492

**Translation:** The Guru, the Speaker of Truth, is the pool of Ambrosial Nectar (the provider of spiritually blissful life); bathing (spiritually) within it, the crow (a heart always living in vices) becomes a swan (a person filled with God’s name).

Hence, if we look at all of Sheikh Farid’s Saloks collectively – and understand them metaphorically rather than literally – he provides the following advice for becoming a pure-hearted person who can still realize God:

Do not speak ill of anyone; treat everyone as a friend; do not depend on others; serve others; do not be greedy; engage in honest living; always remember God; get up early in the morning; be humble; speak sweetly and softly; and do not hurt anyone.

His compositions in SGGS provide guidance on how to be a pious person, have a blissful life, and realize God even while living the life of a simple householder. The life of indulgence is not compatible for a spiritual seeker; instead, it produces physical and mental agony.

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# 11. Bhagat Ravidas – Only Good Deeds Matter

Bhagat Ravidas (1399–1520 CE) was born at Seer Goverdhanpur, Varanasi, U.P., India. His father's name was Raghu Ram and his mother was Kalsa Devi. His father was a shoe merchant. When Bhagat Ravidas grew up, he took up the profession of shoe repairing. From the early age of seven, Ravidas was predisposed to share his food with others and serve saintly persons. He was married and spent his life as a householder.

Bhagat Ravidas was a great religious preacher, poet, and social reformer. He was a monotheist (i.e., a believer of one God), and his thoughts are in alignment with Guru Nanak ji's teachings (Gurmat). He greatly admired Bhagat Kabir and Bhagat Namdev.

Bhagat Ravidas believed in God, and not in ritualistic practices or idol worship. His following Shabad in SGGGS makes it clear:

ਦੂਧੁ ਤ ਬਛਰੈ ਥਨਹੁ ਬਿਟਾਰਿਓ ॥ ਫੂਲੁ ਭਵਰਿ ਜਲੁ ਮੀਨਿ ਬਿਗਾਰਿਓ ॥੧॥  
ਮਾਈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਪੂਜਾ ਕਹਾ ਲੈ ਚਰਾਵਉ ॥ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਫੂਲੁ ਅਨੂਪੁ ਨ ਪਾਵਉ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਮੈਲਾਗਰ ਬੇਰੇ ਹੈ ਭੁਇਅੰਗਾ ॥ ਬਿਖੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਬਸਹਿ ਇਕ ਸੰਗਾ ॥੨॥  
ਪੂਪ ਦੀਪ ਨਈਬੇਦਹਿ ਬਾਸਾ ॥ ਕੈਸੇ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਹਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਦਾਸਾ ॥੩॥  
ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਅਰਪਉ ਪੂਜ ਚਰਾਵਉ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਪਾਵਉ ॥੪॥  
ਪੂਜਾ ਅਰਚਾ ਆਹਿ ਨ ਤੇਰੀ ॥ ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਕਵਨ ਗਤਿ ਮੋਰੀ ॥੫॥੧॥

ਗੁਜਰੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੫੨੫

*Dhoodh ta bachharai thanahu biTaario. Phool bhavar jal meen bigaario. 1. Maiee gobi(n)dh poojaa kahaa lai charaavau. Avar na fool anoop na*

*paavau. 1. Rahao. Mailaagar berhe hai bhuia(n)gaa. Bikh a(n)mrit baseh ik sa(n)gaa. 2. Dhoop dheep niebedheh baasaa. Kaise pooj kareh teree dhaasaa. 3. Tan man arapau pooj charaavau. Gur parasaadh nira(n)jan paavau. 4. Poojaa arachaa aah na toree. Keh ravidhaas kavan gat moree. 5.1.*

SGGS, p.525

**Translation:** The calf has contaminated the milk in the teats. The bumble bee has contaminated the flower (by sucking its nectar first), and the fish the water (milk, flower & water are thus no longer pure, worthy of offering to God). 1. O mother, where shall I find any offering (which is untouched and pure) for God's worship? I cannot find any other flowers worthy of the incomparable God (therefore, can I not worship God?). 1. Pause. The snakes encircle the sandalwood trees (sandalwood is no longer pure). Poison and nectar dwell there together (in the same environment). 2. Even incense, lamps, food are not worthy of offering (fragrance has already escaped), how should Your servants worship You (since nothing pure is available to offer You)? 3. **I dedicate and offer my body and mind to You (these are only things I can offer). By God's Grace, I attain God.** 4. If I cannot worship You by offering anything which is pure, Says Ravidas, what would be my state (regarding salvation after death) if I am unable to offer You anything? 5. 1.

[Note – In Hindu religious practice, milk, flower, water, sandalwood, lamp, and some specific grains etc. are considered pure and worthy of offering to gods during worship. Here, Ravidas is commenting sarcastically on the purity of these items. He argues that only purity of body and mind can please God, who resides inside everyone.]

For a proper understanding of this Shabad, it must be understood metaphorically, and not literally. The metaphorical meaning, first in Punjabi and then in English is:

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਲੋਕ ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵਤਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੂਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨੇ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸੁੱਚੇ ਜਲ, ਫੁੱਲ ਤੇ ਦੁੱਧ ਆਦਿਕ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ; ਪਰ ਇਹ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਜੁਠੀਆਂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਅਜਿਹੀਆ ਚੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਭੇਟਾ ਨਾਲ ਖੁਸ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਰਿਝਦਾ ਹੈ ਸੁੱਚੇ ਮਨ ਦੀ ਭੇਟ ਨਾਲ (ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਨਾਲ)।

**Central message:** People try to please deities by offering water, milk, flowers, etc., which they consider to be pure. Ravidas argues that these have already been touched and/or contaminated by someone else, and

thereby are no longer pure. God cannot be pleased with these items. **He can only be pleased by offering a pure mind (i.e., by doing virtuous deeds).**

In SGGS, there are many references to mythical stories connected with Prahlad, Ram, Ravan, Duryodhan, etc. Some Shabads by Guru jis and Bhagats mention heaven, Hindu gods, and other figures, but mythical Hindu stories are not endorsed by the Gurus. The audience (public) at the time of Guru jis consisted mostly of Hindus who were knowledgeable about these mythical stories, so the Guru jis often referred to the mythological figures in these stories to illustrate their (i.e., Sikhism's) **different** perspective regarding God.

Hundreds of years after Bhagat Ravidas had died, Bhai Gurdas wrote about Ravidas's fame prevalent amongst the Hindu masses:

ਨ੍ਹਾਵਣਿ ਆਇਆ ਸੰਗੁ ਮਿਲਿ ਬਾਨਾਰਸ ਕਰਿ ਗੰਗਾ ਥੇਟਾ ।  
ਕਢਿ ਕਸੀਰਾ ਸਉਪਿਆ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੈ ਗੰਗਾ ਦੀ ਭੇਟਾ ।  
ਲਗਾ ਪੁਰਬੁ ਅਭੀਚ ਦਾ ਡਿਠਾ ਚਲਿਤੁ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਅਮੇਟਾ ।  
ਲਇਆ ਕਸੀਰਾ ਹਥੁ ਕਢਿ ਸੂਤੁ ਇਕੁ ਜਿਉ ਤਾਣਾ ਪੇਟਾ ।  
ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾਂ ਹਰਿ ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਬੇਟਾ ॥੧੭॥

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਵਾਰ ੧੦.੧੭

*Nhaavan aaiaa sa(n)g mil baanaaras kar ga(n)gaa theta. Kadd kaseeraa saupiaa Ravidhaasai ga(n)gaa dhee bheTaa. Lagaa purab abheech dhaa ddittaa chalit acharaj ameTaa. Liaa kaseeraa hath kadd soot ik jiau taanaa peTaa. Bhagat janaa(n) har maa(n) piau beta. 17.*

**Translation:** Once, a group of people went to Kasi (Banaras) for a sacred dip in the Ganga. Ravidas gave one Kasira (one-fourth of a penny) to one member and asked him to offer it to the Ganga. A great festival of Abhijit Naksatr (star) was taking place then, where the public saw this wonderful episode. Ganga, herself taking out her hand, accepted that paltry amount, Kasira, and proved that Ravidas was one with Ganga as warp and weft are to a fabric. **For bhagats (saintly persons) God is their mother, father, and son, all in one.**

This Vaar needs to be understood metaphorically, and not literally. As explained above, **Ravidas believed in one God. He was against ritualistic offerings to idols.** With the passage of time, stories ascribing miracles to Bhagats got prevalent in Hindu society. In his Vaar, Bhai Gurdas is referring to the prevalent story. His main intent is to show that Bhagat Ravidas was close to God.

This central message is evident from the Rahao Tuk of the above Shabad by Bhagat Ravidas, and also from the last sentence of the associated Vaar by Bhai Gurdas. Bhagat Ravidas was always engrossed in the Naam, even feeling God's love as the love of a mother, father, and son.

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## 12. Love of God vs Rituals

Bhagat Ravidas believed that God is all-abiding. He considered God to be the closest of all and was immersed in His remembrance. His deep yearning for and intense love of God is reflected in these words:

ਜਉ ਤੁਮ ਗਿਰਿਵਰ ਤਉ ਹਮ ਮੋਰਾ ॥ ਜਉ ਤੁਮ ਚੰਦ ਤਉ ਹਮ ਭਏ ਹੈ ਚਕੋਰਾ ॥੧॥

ਜਉ ਤੁਮ ਦੀਵਰਾ ਤਉ ਹਮ ਬਾਤੀ ॥ ਜਉ ਤੁਮ ਤੀਰਥ ਤਉ ਹਮ ਜਾਤੀ ॥੨॥

ਸਾਚੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਹਮ ਤੁਮ ਸਿਉ ਜੋਰੀ ॥ ਤੁਮ ਸਿਉ ਜੋਰਿ ਅਵਰ ਸੰਗਿ ਤੋਰੀ ॥੩॥

ਰਾਗੁ ਸੋਰਿਠ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਰਿਵਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੬੫੮

*Jau tum girivar tau hum moraa. Jau tum cha(n)dh tau ham bhae hai chakoraa. 1. Jau tum dheevaraa tau ham baatee. Jau tum teerath tau ham jaatee. 2. Saachee preet ham tum siau joree. Tum siau jor avar sung toree. 3.*

SGGS, p. 658

**Translation:** If You are the mountain, God, then I am the peacock. If You are the moon, then I am the partridge (gazing at the moon constantly) in love with it. 1. If You are the lamp, then I am the wick. If You are the sacred place of pilgrimage, then I am the pilgrim. 2. **I am joined in true love with You, God. After closeness with You, I have broken off with all others.** 3.

Here, we see that Bhagat Ravidas was totally imbued in God's love, which he considers as the true form of love. He emphasizes that by joining with God, he has broken off with others. This type of love is selfless and pristine, as there are no expectations in return. This is the highest and purest form of love which yields realization of God.

Guru Nanak ji too acclaims God's love in these words:

ਮੋਹੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪਿਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਰਾਮ ॥

ਬਿਲਾਵਲ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਅੰਗ ੮੪੩

*Mohee praem pirae prabh abinaasee raam.*

SGGS, p.843



**Translation:** I am enticed by the love of my Husband, the Eternal, the Imperishable God.

Bhagat Ravidas was a saintly person. His love of God acted like a magnet and attracted others to seek his company. He spread a message that “God created man, and not the other way around” — meaning that everyone is created by God and has equal rights on this earth. Bhagat Ravidas staunchly preached the message of universal brotherhood and tolerance.

Ganga Aartee (the Hindu ritual of offering prayer to the Ganga River) is held daily at dusk. Bhagat Ravidas expounded on the Aartee, the traditional Hindu ritual of lighting of lamps in front of god(s), in these words – which must be understood metaphorically, not literally:

ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਆਰਤੀ ਮਜਨੁ ਮੁਰਾਰੇ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਝੂਠੇ ਸਗਲ ਪਾਸਾਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਆਸਨੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਉਰਸਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਕੇਸਰੋ ਲੇ ਛਿਟਕਾਰੇ ॥

ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਭੁਲਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਚੰਦਨੋ ਘਸਿ ਜਪੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਲੇ ਤੁਝਹਿ ਕਉ ਚਾਰੇ ॥੧॥

ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਦੀਵਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਬਾਤੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਤੇਲੁ ਲੇ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਸਾਰੇ ॥

ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਲਗਾਈ ਭਇਓ ਉਜਿਆਰੇ ਭਵਨ ਸਗਲਾਰੇ ॥੨॥

ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਤਾਗਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਫੂਲ ਮਾਲਾ ਭਾਰ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਸਗਲ ਜੂਠਾਰੇ ॥

ਤੇਰੋ ਕੀਆ ਤੁਝਹਿ ਕਿਆ ਅਰਪਉ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਤੁਹੀ ਚਵਰ ਢੋਲਾਰੇ ॥੩॥

ਦਸ ਅਠਾ ਅਠਸਠੇ ਚਾਰੇ ਖਾਣੀ ਇਹੈ ਵਰਤਣਿ ਹੈ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਸਾਰੇ ॥

ਕਹੈ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੋ ਆਰਤੀ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਹਰਿ ਭੋਗ ਤੁਹਾਰੇ ॥੪॥੩॥

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਭਗਤ ਰਿਵਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੬੯੪

*Naam tero aaratee majan muraare. Har ke naam bin jhootte sagal paasaare. 1. Rahao. Naam tero aasano naam tero aurasaa naam teraa kesaro le chhiTakaare. Naam teraa a(n)bhulaa naam tero cha(n)dhano ghas jape naam le tujheh kau chaare. 1. Naam teraa dheevaa naam tero baatee naam tero tel le maeh pasaare. Naam tere kee jot lagaiee bhio aujjaaro*

*bhavan sagalaare. 2. Naam tero taagaa naam fool maalaa bhaar attaareh sagal joottaare. Tero keeaa tujheh kaaa arapau naam teraa tuhee chavar ddolaare. 3. Dhas attaa attasatte chaare khaanee ihai varatan hai sagal sa(n)saare. Kahai Ravidas naam tero aaratee sat naam hai har bhog tuhaare. 4. 3.*

SGGS, p.694

**Translation: O God! Ignorant people worship idols, but for me Your Name is Your adoration and is cleansing bath at holy places. O brother! Without the Name of God all ostentatious displays are useless. 1. Pause.** Your Name is my prayer mat upon which the Brahmin sits to perform idol worship, and Your Name is the stone to grind the sandalwood. Your Name is the saffron. One worshipping the idol grinds saffron to sprinkle on the idol which I take and sprinkle in offering to You. Your Name is the water, and Your Name is the sandalwood. The chanting of Your Name is the grinding of the sandalwood. I take it and offer all this Your Name as sandalwood and saffron to You. 1. Your Name is the lamp, and Your Name is the wick. Your Name is the oil I pour into it. Your Name is the light applied to this lamp, which enlightens and illuminates the entire world. 2. Your Name is the thread, and Your Name is the garland of flowers. The eighteen loads of vegetation from which people pluck flowers to offer to Your idol are all too impure to offer to You. Why should I offer to You, that which You Yourself created? Your Name is the fan, which I wave over You. 3. Instead of meditating on Your Name; the whole world (mankind) is engrossed in the eighteen Puranas (Scriptures), and the sacred shrines of pilgrimage (thus they are lost in) the four types of creation. **Says Ravidas, Your Name is my Aartee, my lamp-lit worship-service. Sat Naam is the food which I offer to You.**

*Note: Gurbani says all living creatures can be categorized into four types based on procreation:*

*Andaj (born from an egg),  
Jeraj (from womb),  
Setaj (from sweat) and  
Utbhuj (from earth).*

**ਭਾਵ:** ਆਰਤੀ ਆਦਿਕ ਦੇ ਅਭੰਬਰ ਕੂੜੇ ਹਨ। ਸਿਮਰਨ ਹੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦਾ ਸਹੀ ਰਸਤਾ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** All activities associated with idol worship are useless. **(Instead) meditating on God is truly worthwhile.**

Thus, understood metaphorically, Bhagat Ravidas says in this Shabad that for him Naam is in everything, everywhere, and in every action performed during the Aartee ritual. His reference to Hindu pilgrimage sites, Puraanas (Hindu sacred texts), and “four sources of creation” is also a way of explaining his understanding of the all-pervasive God to an audience familiar with these Hindu ritualistic practices and religious beliefs.

Bhagat Ravidas’s views on Hindu priests’ arrogance of being “high caste” Brahmins is as follows:

ਤਰ ਤਾਰਿ ਅਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨੀਐ ਰੇ ਜੈਸੇ ਕਾਗਰਾ ਕਰਤ ਬੀਚਾਰੰ ॥

ਭਗਤਿ ਭਾਗਉਤੁ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਤਿਹ ਉਪਰੇ ਪੂਜੀਐ ਕਰਿ ਨਮਸਕਾਰੰ ॥੨॥

ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਕੁਟ ਬਾਂਢਲਾ ਢੋਰ ਢੇਵੰਤਾ ਨਿਤਹਿ ਬਾਨਾਰਸੀ ਆਸ ਪਾਸਾ ॥

ਅਬ ਬਿਪ੍ਰ ਪਰਧਾਨ ਤਿਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਡੰਡਉਤਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਮ ਸਰਣਾਇ ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਦਾਸਾ ॥੩॥੧॥

ਮਲਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਰਿਵਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੨੯੩

*Tar taar apavitr kar maaneeai re jaise kaagaraa karat beechaara(n).  
Bhagat bhaagaut likheai teh uopare poojeeai kar namasakaara(n).2.  
Meree jaat kuT baa(n)ddalaa ddor ddova(n)taa niteh baanaarasee aas  
paasaa. Ab bipr paradhaan teh kareh dda(n)ddaut tere naam saranai  
ravidhaas dhaasaa. 3. 1.* SGGS, p. 1293

**Translation:** The palmyra palm (toddy) tree is considered impure (as it yields wine), and its leaves are considered impure as well. But if devotional prayers are written on paper made from its leaves, then people bow in reverence and worship before it. It is my occupation to prepare and cut leather; each day, I carry the carcasses out of the city. Now, the important Brahmins of the city bow down before me; **Ravidas, Your slave, seeks the Sanctuary of Your Naam.**

**Central message** of this Shabad becomes clear when we understand its metaphorical meaning, which is:

ਸਿਮਰਨ ਨੀਵਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਚਾ ਕਰ ਦੇਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

Meditation on God elevates a person to a higher spiritual level.

Despite his fame, Ravidas considered that the absence of pride was his main spiritual achievement. Bhagat Ravidas credits God and His Grace for all his personal accomplishments in life. He says elsewhere:

ਐਸੀ ਲਾਲ ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਕਉਨੁ ਕਰੈ ॥

ਗਰੀਬ ਨਿਵਾਜੁ ਗੁਸਈਆ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਥੈ ਛਤ੍ਰੁ ਧਰੈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਰਾਗੁ ਮਾਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਰਿਵਦਾਸ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੦੬

*Aisee laal tujh bin kaun karai. Gareeb nivaaj gusieea meraa maathai chhatr dharai. 1.*

SGGS, p. 1106

**Translation:** Such Love, who else but You could do such a thing? O Patron of the poor, Master of the World! You have put the canopy of Your Grace over my head (i.e., brought me under your protection and care). 1. Pause.

Here again, Bhagat Ravidas attests to his firm belief in worship of God and says that we should refrain from idol worship or rituals of any kind.

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## 13. Bhagat Jaidev

Bhagat Jaidev (1170—1245 CE) was born in Kenduli, about twenty miles from Suri, in the modern district of Birbhum in West Bengal, India. His father was Bhoidev, a Brahmin of Kanauj, and his mother was Bamdevi. Jaidev was a celebrated Sanskrit poet. He became the most famous of the five distinguished poets who were appointed to the court of Lakshman Sen, king of Bengal, who dates from the year 1170. The five poets were called the five jewels of Lakshman Sen's court, and the king was so proud of them that he erected a monument to preserve their names for succeeding generations.

Bhagat Jaidev believed that God is all-knowing and can do anything. Man, however great, powerful, and famous he may be, is nothing in front of Him. In fact, whatever a human being is, it is due to God's Grace.

His two Shabads are included in SGGS. In his first composition he suggests that everyone should meditate only on God, the embodiment of ambrosial nectar. Doing so liberates one from the cycle of rebirth, the agony of old age, and fear of death:

ਪਰਮਾਦਿ ਪੁਰਖਮਨੋਪਿਮੰ ਸਤਿ ਆਦਿ ਭਾਵ ਰਤੰ ॥  
ਪਰਮਦਭੁਤੰ ਪਰਕ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਪਰੰ ਜਦਿਚਿੰਤਿ ਸਰਬ ਗਤੰ ॥੧॥  
ਕੇਵਲ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਮਨੋਰਮੰ ॥ ਬਦਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਤਤ ਮਇਅੰ ॥  
ਨ ਦਨੋਤਿ ਜਸਮਰਣੇਨ ਜਨਮ ਜਰਾਧਿ ਮਰਣ ਭਇਅੰ ੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਇਛਸਿ ਜਮਾਦਿ ਪਰਾਭਯੰ ਜਸੁ ਸ੍ਰੁਸਤਿ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਕ੍ਰਿਤੰ ॥  
 ਭਵ ਭੂਤ ਭਾਵ ਸਮਬ੍ਰਿਅੰ ਪਰਮੰ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨਮਿਦੰ ॥੨॥  
 ਲੋਭਾਦਿ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਪਰ ਗ੍ਰਿਹੰ ਜਦਿਬਿਧਿ ਆਚਰਣੰ ॥  
 ਤਜਿ ਸਕਲ ਦੁਹਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਦੁਰਮਤੀ ਭਜੁ ਚਕ੍ਰਧਰ ਸਰਣੰ ॥੩॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤ ਨਿਜ ਨਿਹਕੇਵਲਾ ਰਿਦ ਕਰਮਣਾ ਬਚਸਾ ॥  
 ਜੋਗੇਨ ਕਿੰ ਜਗੇਨ ਕਿੰ ਦਾਨੇਨ ਕਿੰ ਤਪਸਾ ॥੪॥  
 ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੇਤਿ ਜਪਿ ਨਰ ਸਕਲ ਸਿਧਿ ਪਦੰ ॥  
 ਜੈਦੇਵ ਆਇਉ ਤਸ ਸਫੁਟੰ ਭਵ ਭੂਤ ਸਰਬ ਗਤੰ ॥੫॥੧॥

ਗੁਜਰੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜੈਦੇਵ, ਅੰਗ ਪ੨੬

*Purakhamanopima(n) sat aadh bhaav rata(n). Paramadhabhuta(n) parakirat para(n) jadhichi(n)t sarab gata(n). 1. Keval raam naam manorama(n). badh a(n)mirat tat mia(n). Na dhanot jasamaranen janam jaraadh maran bhia(n). 1. Rahao. Eichhas jamaadh paraabhaya(n) jas savaisat sukirat kirata(n). Bhav bhoot bhaav samabiyea(n) parama(n) prasa(n)namidha(n). 2. Lobhaadh dhirasaT par giraha(n) jadhibidh aacharana(n). Tuj sakal dhuhakirat dhuramatee bhaj chakaradhar sarana(n). 3. Har bhagat nij nihakevalaa ridh karamanaa bachasaa. Jogen ki(n) jagen ki(n) dhaanen ki(n) tapasaa. 4. Gobind gobi(n)dhet jap nar sakal sidh padha(n). Jaidev aaiau tas safuTa(n) bhav bhoot sarab gata(n). 5.1.*

SGGS, p. 526

**Translation:** In the very beginning was God, unrivalled, the Lover of Truth and reservoir of all virtues. He is wonderful (beyond description), embodiment of truth, all pervading consciousness, bliss. No one can comprehend Him completely. **1. Dwell only upon the beautiful Naam, the embodiment of ambrosial nectar and reality. Remember Him in meditation. Fear of (re)birth, old age and death will not trouble you. 1. Pause.** If you desire to escape the fear of the Messenger of Death, then praise God joyfully, and do good deeds. In the past, present, and future, He is always the same; He is the embodiment of supreme bliss. **2. Seek the path of good conduct, forsake greed, and do not look upon other's property and women. Renounce all evil actions and evil inclinations and seek the Sanctuary of God. 3. Worship God, in thought, word and deed.** What good is practising Yoga, giving feasts and charity, and observing penance?

(i.e., Saints know that practicing Yoga, giving feasts, and observing penance are not helpful for spiritual progress; only remembering Him is fruitful). 4. **Meditate on God;** He is the source of all the spiritual powers. **Jaidev has abandoned all other means and has come to Him for salvation. He exists everywhere now, existed in the past, and will exist in the future.** 5.1.

It is interesting to note that there is a Shabad in the same Raag by Guru Nanak ji with similar lyrics and meaning. It is on page 505 of SGGS, and is as follows:

ਭਗਤਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਆਰਾਧਿਤੰ ਸਚੁ ਪਿਆਸ ਪਰਮ ਹਿਤੰ ॥

ਬਿਲਲਾਪ ਬਿਲਲ ਬਿਨੰਤੀਆ ਸੁਖ ਭਾਇ ਚਿਤ ਹਿਤੰ ॥੧॥

ਜਪਿ ਮਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਰਣੀ ॥

ਸੰਸਾਰ ਸਾਗਰ ਤਾਰਿ ਤਾਰਣ ਰਮ ਨਾਮ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਗੁਜਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਅੰਗ ੫੦੫

*Bhagat prem aaraadhita(n) sach piaas param hita(n). Bilalaap bilal bina(n)teeaa sukh bhai chit hita(n). 1. Jap man naam har saranee. Sa(n)saar saagar taar taaran ram naam kar karanee. 1. Rahao. SGGS, p. 505*

**Translation:** Those devotees who worship God in loving adoration, they thirst for God, with infinite affection. They tearfully beg and implore (at God's feet) in love and affection, and their consciousness is at peace. 1. **O my mind! Meditate on the Naam and seek His Sanctuary. God's Name (Naam) is (like) a boat to cross over the world-ocean (helps one go through life in a state of bliss). Practice such a way of life. 1. Pause.**

Guru Nanak ji's complete Shabad has many other similarities as well with Bhagat Jaidev's Shabad. This cannot be a mere coincidence. These similarities provide unmistakable evidence that Guru Nanak ji had collected Bhagat Jaidev's composition (during his first Udaasi or missionary travel) while visiting many places of Hindu pilgrimage in

India. Some people mistakenly say that Guru Arjan ji collected the compositions of various Bhagats; but the strong similarity in the two foregoing compositions, even some common words, same Raag as well as Ghar, leave no doubt about the fact that Guru Nanak ji himself collected the Bhagats compositions and passed these on to His successor.

[Note: For more evidence for this conclusion, see Prof. Sahib Singh's *ਆਦਿ ਬੀੜ ਬਾਰੇ* (published by Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1970), or its English translation *About Compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib* by Dr. Daljit Singh (published by Lok Sahit Parkashan, Amritsar, 1996).]

In the second composition, Bhagat Jaidev says that by praising God who has always been in existence from the very beginning, he (Bhagat Jaidev) has been able to experience closeness to God:

ਚੰਦ ਸਤ ਭੇਦਿਆ ਨਾਦ ਸਤ ਪੂਰਿਆ ਸੂਰ ਸਤ ਖੋੜਸਾ ਦਤੁ ਕੀਆ ॥  
 ਅਬਲ ਬਲੁ ਤੋੜਿਆ ਅਚਲ ਚਲੁ ਥਪਿਆ ਅਘੜੁ ਘੜਿਆ ਤਹਾ ਅਪਿਉ ਪੀਆ ॥੧॥  
 ਮਨ ਆਦਿ ਗੁਣ ਆਦਿ ਵਖਾਣਿਆ ॥ ਤੇਰੀ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸੰਮਾਨਿਆ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
 ਅਰਧਿ ਕਉ ਅਰਧਿਆ ਸਰਧਿ ਕਉ ਸਰਧਿਆ ਸਲਲ ਕਉ ਸਲਲਿ ਸੰਮਾਨਿ ਆਇਆ ॥  
 ਬਦਤਿ ਜੈਦੇਉ ਜੈਦੇਵ ਕਉ ਰੰਮਿਆ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੁ ਲਿਵ ਲੀਣ ਪਾਇਆ ॥੨॥੧॥

ਰਾਗੁ ਮਾਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੈਦੇਉ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੦੬

*Cha(n)dh sat bhedhial naadh sat poorial soor sat khoRasaa dhat keeaa.  
 Abal bal toRial achal chal thapial aghaR ghaRial tahaa apiau peeaa. 1.  
 Mun aadh gun aadh vakhaaniaa. Teree dhubidhaa dhiraasat sa(n)maaniaa.  
 1. Rahao. Aradh kau aradhial saradh kau saradhial salal kau salal  
 sa(n)maan aaiiaa. Badhat jaidheau jaidhev kau ra(n)mial braham nirabaan  
 liv leen paiaa. 2.1.*

SGGS, p. 1106



**Translation:** By the Grace of the Guru: The breath is drawn in through the left nostril; it is held in the central channel of the Sushmanaa, and exhaled through the right nostril, repeating God's Name sixteen times (i.e., all steps involved in Yoga, in meditating on God. Because of vices, the mind is weakened). I have realized that You and I are the same. I drink the Ambrosial Nectar (of Your Name). 1. **Oh! My mind, by meditating on the Name of God, the Source of virtue, my vision that You and I are separate has melted away. 1. Pause.** I worship the One who is worthy of being worshipped. I trust the One who is worthy of being trusted. Like water merging in water, I merge in God. Says Jaidev, I meditate and contemplate the Luminous, Triumphant God (free of all vices). I am lovingly absorbed in God. 2. 1.

There is a Shabad in SGGGS by Guru Nanak ji with similar lyrics and meaning, and in the same Raag. It is as follows:

ਸੂਰ ਸਰੁ ਸੋਸਿ ਲੈ ਸੋਮ ਸਰੁ ਪੋਖਿ ਲੈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਮਰਤੁ ਸੁ ਸਨਬੰਧੁ ਕੀਜੈ ॥  
 ਮੀਨ ਕੀ ਚਪਲ ਸਿਉ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਮਨੁ ਰਾਖੀਐ ਉਡੈ ਨਹ ਹੰਸੁ ਨਹ ਕੰਧੁ ਛੀਜੈ ॥੧॥  
 ਮੂੜੇ ਕਾਇਚੇ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾ ॥

ਨਹ ਚੀਨਿਆ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦੁ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਅੰਗ ੯੯੧

*Soor sar sos lai som sar pokh lai jugat kar maratu su sanaba(n)dh keejai.  
 Meen kee chapal siau jugat man raakheeaai uddai neh ha(n)s neh ka(n)dh  
 chheejai.1. MooRe kaiche bharam bhulaa. Neh cheeniaa paramaana(n)dh  
 bairaagee. 1. Rahao.*

SGGS, p. 991

**Translation:** O Yogi! Get rid of your nature of being of agitated mind (heat up the Sun energy of the right nostril), include nature of being in peace of mind (i.e., cool down the moon energy of the left nostril); practice meditating on God with every breath (this is breath-control). (In reality, this is the method to be in tune with God), make such a change. In this way, the fickle mind can be held steady; the soul shall not fly away (towards vices),

and the body will not crumble (to vices). 1. You fool, why are you deluded (by Pranayaam) and going astray (from reality of life)? You have not been able to realize the source of supreme bliss. 1. Pause.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਹੇ ਮਨ! ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਜਪ, ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਓਟ ਫੜ। ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਮੋਰਥ ਬਣਾ। ਇਹ ਨਾਮ ਸੰਸਾਰ-ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਰ ਲੰਘਣ ਲਈ ਜਹਾਜ਼ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** O my mind! Meditate on God's Name (Naam), lean on God. Meditating on God's Name should be your aim. This will get you across the world-ocean (i.e., through everyday living).

Bhagat Jaidev was a learned person and a poet, greatly respected for his dedication and commitment to meditation on God. Over time, many stories to highlight Bhagat Jaidev's greatness got attached to him. Some of them show Bhagat Jaidev as a super-human with miraculous powers. Bhai Gurdas has drawn attention to one such story in the following words:

ਅਖਰੁ ਇਕੁ ਨ ਆਵਤੈ ਪੁਸਤਕੁ ਬੰਨਿ ਸੰਧਿਆ ਕਰਿ ਆਵੈ।  
ਗੁਣ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਘਰਿ ਆਇ ਕੈ ਭਗਤ ਰੂਪਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਲੇਖੁ ਬਣਾਵੈ।  
ਅਖਰ ਪੜ੍ਹਿ ਪਰਤੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਹੋਇ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨ ਅੰਗਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ।  
ਵੇਖੈ ਜਾਇ ਉਜਾੜਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਿਰਖੁ ਇਕੁ ਆਚਰਜੁ ਸੁਹਾਵੈ।  
ਗੀਤ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਸੰਪੂਰਣੇ ਪਤਿ ਪਤਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਵੈ।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ , ਵਾਰ ੧੦.੧੦

*Akhar ik na aavaRai pusatak ba(n)neh sa(n)dhiaa kar aavai. Gun nidhaan ghar aai kai bhagat roop likh lekh banaavai. Akhar paReh parateet kar hoi visamaadh na a(n)g samaavai. Vekhai jai ujaaR vich birakh ik aacharaj suhaavai. Geet govind sampoorano pat pat likhiala (n)t na paavai.*

Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 10.10

**Translation:** He (Jaidev) could not put the words together, and hence closing his book went out in the evening. In his absence, God, the repository of all virtues, appeared in the form of the devotee and Himself wrote all the words for him. Jaidev got elated seeing and reading those words. He went out in the wilderness and saw a wonderful tree in the deep forest. Every leaf had the songs of Govind (referring to God here) written on it.

As is the case for other Bhagats whose compositions are included in SGGs, this story must be understood metaphorically, not literally. Though the compositions were written by Bhagat Jaidev, his followers found them to be so meaningful that they began to speculate that the words were instead written for Bhagat Jaidev by God (Govind) Himself. In this way, they (mistakenly) appropriated God's providence for some of Bhagat Jaidev's literary works.

Bhagat Jaidev travelled all over the country preaching the gospel of the love of God. He lived a long life and died in the village where he was born, in 1245 CE, in happy retirement.

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## 14. Bhagat Sadhna

Bhagat Sadhna (1180 CE—unknown) was born in village Sehwan in Hyderabad, Sindh province, now in Pakistan. Born into a family of butchers, he took up the family profession of slaughtering goats and selling meat. As there were many shady trees and a drinking water source near his shop, it was frequented by all sundry travelers. Sadhus (Hindu religious mendicants) passing by would also rest in the shaded areas around his place. As he was extremely interested in spiritual topics, he often engaged in discussions with these Sadhus.

There are many stories associated with Bhagat Sadhna's composition in SGGs, e.g., worshiping a stone statue of Hindu god Vishnu, a princess attempting to lure Bhagat Sadhna for marriage, etc. The renowned scholar Prof. Sahib Singh has analyzed each of these stories in detail and has come to the unambiguous conclusion that all these stories associated with Bhagat Sadhna's life are without merit. [For reference please see ਭਗਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਟੀਕ - ਪਹਿਲਾ ਭਾਗ, published by Singh Brothers, Amritsar, India.]

There is only one composition of Bhagat Sadhna in SGGs. It is in Raag Bilaaval and is on page 858. Bhagat Sadhna's Shabad is as follows:

ਨ੍ਰਿਪ ਕੰਨਿਆ ਕੇ ਕਾਰਨੈ ਇਕੁ ਭਇਆ ਭੇਖਧਾਰੀ ॥  
ਕਾਮਾਰਥੀ ਸੁਆਰਥੀ ਵਾ ਕੀ ਪੈਜ ਸਵਾਰੀ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਤਵ ਗੁਨ ਕਹਾ ਜਗਤ ਗੁਰਾ ਜਉ ਕਰਮੁ ਨ ਨਾਸੈ ॥  
ਸਿੰਘ ਸਰਨ ਕਤ ਜਾਈਐ ਜਉ ਜੰਬੁਕੁ ਗ੍ਰਾਸੈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਏਕ ਬੁੰਦ ਜਲ ਕਾਰਨੇ ਚਾੜ੍ਹਕੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ॥  
ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਗਏ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਫੁਨਿ ਕਾਮਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥ ੨ ॥  
ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਜੁ ਥਾਕੇ ਥਿਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੈਸੇ ਬਿਰਮਾਵਉ ॥  
ਬੁਡਿ ਮੁਏ ਨਉਕਾ ਮਿਲੈ ਕਹੁ ਕਾਹਿ ਚਢਾਵਉ ॥ ੩ ॥

ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਛੁ ਹਉ ਨਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਆਹਿ ਨ ਮੋਰਾ॥

ਅਉਸਰ ਲਜਾ ਰਾਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਧਨਾ ਜਨੁ ਤੋਰਾ॥੪॥੧॥

ਬਾਣੀ ਸਧਨੇ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੮੫੮

*Nirap ka(n)niaa ke kaaranai ik bhiaa bhekhadhaaree. Aamaarathee suaarathee vaa kee pajj savaaree. 1. Tav gun kahaa jagat guraa jau karam na naasai. Singh saran kat jaieeaaai jau ja(n)buk graasai. 1. Rahao. Ek boo(n)dh jal kaarane chaatirak dhukh paavai. Praan ge saagar milai fun kaam na aavai.2. Praan ju thaake thir nahee kaise biramaavau. Boodd mooe naukaa milai kahu kaeh chaddaavau. 3.Mai naahee kachh hau nahee kichh aah na mora. Aausar lajaa raakh leh sadhna jan tora.4.1 SGGS, p .858*

**Translation:** God! You protected the honor of a selfish person who was full of lust, disguised as a religious person seeking relationship with a princess<sup>(1)</sup>. It means You protected him from lustful vices. **1. O Enlightener of the world, what merit is Yours if my previous misdeeds do not get erased (means, if I continue on the path of vices based on my previous deeds) then what is the use of praising You (meditating on Your Name)? Why seek safety from a lion if one is to be eaten by a jackal? 1. Pause.** For the sake of a single raindrop, the songbird suffers in pain (cries and waits). What is the use of an ocean of water if it is found after the songbird dropped dead from thirst? (Meaning: O God! If my soul perishes in vices for want of one drop of Your name-nectar, then what is the use of the ocean full of blessings afterwards). 2. (While patiently waiting for Your blessings) my life has grown weary (of vices). If I drown (in ocean of vices) and die, and then a boat comes along, tell me, who shall climb the boat? 3. **I am nothing, I have nothing, and nothing belongs to me (besides this human life, which is my best chance to redeem myself). I, Sadhna is Your humble servant. Now, protect my honor (and save me in this life from drowning in this ocean of vices). 4.**

(1) Note: The reference here is to an ancient lustful story where a person disguises himself as a religious person seeking the hand of the princess. Bhagat Sadhna is referring to this story in the first couplet to explain about God's nature of saving humankind. The main point is in the Rahao Tuk, i.e., he is begging God to save him from human vices in this life.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਹੇ ਜਗਤ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਜੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਫਲ ਨਾਸ ਨਾਹ ਹੋਇਆ (ਭਾਵ, ਜੇ ਮੈਂ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਮੰਦ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੰਸਕਾਰਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੁਣ ਭੀ ਮੰਦੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆ) ਤਾਂ ਤੇਰੀ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਆਉਣ ਦਾ ਕੀਹ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ? ਸ਼ੇਰ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਪੈਣ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਲਾਭ, ਜੇ ਫਿਰ ਭੀ ਗਿੱਦੜ ਖਾ ਜਾਏ?।੧।ਰਹਾਉ। -----ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਮੇਰੀ ਕੋਈ ਪਾਂਇਆਂ ਨਹੀਂ, ਮੇਰਾ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਆਸਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ; (ਇਹ ਮਨੁੱਖਾ ਜਨਮ ਹੀ) ਮੇਰੀ ਲਾਜ ਰੱਖਣ ਦਾ ਸਮਾ ਹੈ, ਮੇਰੀ ਲਾਜ ਰੱਖ (ਤੇ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਵਿਚ ਡੁੱਬਣ ਤੋਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਬਚਾ ਲੈ)।

**Central message:** O God! If I do not get free from my previous sinful deeds (as I continue performing sinful deeds because of my mindset) then what is the use of coming to your protection? What is the use of sanctuary of a lion if can be hunted down by a jackal? 1. Pause. ----- O God! I feel incapable of protecting myself from these powerful vices on my own. As my life is coming closer to the end – while the vices keep up their relentless attack – I beg God to save me before life ends. I further request that since I have always been seeking God’s protection, I believe that (with such help from God) I would not continue to suffer the consequences of my past misdeeds.

Bhagat Sadhna travelled throughout various parts of the Indian subcontinent preaching the love of God. During his travels he might have met and accompanied Bhagat Namdev. Bhagat Sadhna spent the last days of his life at Sirhind, teaching others; and he died there.

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## 15. Bhagat Trilochan

Bhagat Trilochan (1267 CE—unknown) was born in village Barsi in Solapur district in Maharashtra, India. He belonged to the so-called Vaishya caste. He was a contemporary of Bhagat Namdev. Their homes were not far from each other. He heard about the fame of Bhagat Namdev and set out to meet him. Trilochan traveled to Narsi Bamni for an audience with Bhagat Namdev. The conversation between them is captured by Bhagat Kabir in his Saloks, and is included in SGGS as follows:

ਨਾਮਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿਆ ਕਹੈ ਤਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਮੀਤ ॥

ਕਾਹੇ ਛੀਪਹੁ ਛਾਇਲੈ ਰਾਮ ਨ ਲਾਵਹੁ ਚੀਤੁ ॥੨੧੨॥ ਸਲੋਕ ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ, ਅੰਗ ੧੩੭੫

*Naamaa maiaa mohiaa kahai Trilochan meet. Kaahe chheepahu chhailai raam na laavahu cheet. 212.* SGGS, p. 1375

**Translation:** Trilochan says, O Namdev, the material world (maya) has enticed you, my friend. Why are you printing designs on these sheets, and not focusing your consciousness on God?

As we can see here, Bhagat Trilochan was shocked to find Namdev engaged in making money, utilizing his training as a calico printer. Trilochan asked a pointed question as to why he was engaged in futile pursuits. Bhagat Namdev replies as follows:

ਨਾਮਾ ਕਹੈ ਤਿਲੋਚਨਾ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਰਾਮੁ ਸੰਮਾਲਿ ॥

ਹਾਥ ਪਾਉ ਕਰਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਸਭੁ ਚੀਤੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੨੧੩॥

ਅੰਗ ੧੩੭੫

*Naamaa kahai Trilochanaa mukh te raam sa(n)m(h)aal. Haath paau kar kaam sabh cheet nira(n)jan naal. 213.* SGGS, p. 1375

**Translation:** Namdev answers, O Trilochan, say God's Name with your tongue. With your hands and feet, do all your work, but let your consciousness remain with God.

Bhagat Namdev further elaborated on his response with examples from daily life, as under:

ਆਨੀਲੇ ਕਾਗਦੁ ਕਾਟੀਲੇ ਗੂਡੀ ਆਕਾਸ ਮਧੇ ਭਰਮੀਅਲੇ ॥  
ਪੰਚ ਜਨਾ ਸਿਉ ਬਾਤ ਬਤਉਆ ਚੀਤੁ ਸੁ ਡੋਰੀ ਰਾਖੀਅਲੇ ॥੧॥  
ਮਨੁ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮਾ ਬੇਧੀਅਲੇ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਕਨਿਕ ਕਲਾ ਚਿਤੁ ਮਾਂਡੀਅਲੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਆਨੀਲੇ ਕੁੰਭੁ ਭਰਾਈਲੇ ਉਦਕ ਰਾਜ ਕੁਆਰਿ ਪੁਰੰਦਰੀਏ ॥  
ਹਸਤ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਬੀਚਾਰ ਕਰਤੀ ਹੈ ਚੀਤੁ ਸੁ ਗਾਗਰਿ ਰਾਖੀਅਲੇ ॥੨॥  
ਮੰਦਰੁ ਏਕੁ ਦੁਆਰ ਦਸ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਗਉ ਚਰਾਵਨ ਛਾਡੀਅਲੇ ॥  
ਪਾਂਚ ਕੋਸ ਪਰ ਗਉ ਚਰਾਵਤ ਚੀਤੁ ਸੁ ਬਛਰਾ ਰਾਖੀਅਲੇ ॥੩॥  
ਕਹਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਤਿਲੋਚਨ ਬਾਲਕੁ ਪਾਲਨ ਪਉਢੀਅਲੇ ॥  
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਕਾਜ ਬਿਰੂਧੀ ਚੀਤੁ ਸੁ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਰਾਖੀਅਲੇ ॥੪॥੧॥

ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੯੭੨

*Aaneele kaagadh kaaTeele gooddee aakaas madhe bharameeale. Pa(n)ch janaa siau baat batuooaa cheetu su ddoree raakheeale. 1. Mun raam naamaa bedheeale. Jaise kanik kalaa chit maa(n)ddeeale. 1. Rahao. Aaneele ku(n)bh bharaieele uoodhak raaj kuaar pura(n)dhare'e. Hasat binodh beechaar karatee hai cheetu su gaagar raakheeale. 2. Mandhar ek dhuaar dhas jaa ke guoo charaavan chhaaddeeale. Paa(n)ch kos par guoo charaavat cheetu su bachharaa raakheeale. 3. Kahat naamadheau sunahu tilochan baalak paalan pauddeeale. Antar baahar kaaj biroodhee cheetu su baarik raakheeale. 4. 1.*

SGGS, p. 972

**Translation:** (O Trilochan, as a boy) brings paper, cuts it and makes a kite, and flies it in the sky, keeps talking with his friends, yet he keeps his



attention on the string (attached to the kite). 1 **(O! Trilochan) my mind has been pierced by the Naam, like the goldsmith, whose attention is held by his work (while talking to others and paying attention to gold in the burning furnace).**1 Pause. (O Trilochan) young girls in the city take pitcher (go outside the city), fill it with water, laugh, play, and talk with friends, yet keep their attention focused on the pitcher of water (perched on top of their heads). 2. (O Trilochan) cows are let loose out of the mansion to graze in the field (whilst they may be grazing miles away) they still keep their attention focused on the calves (similarly, my organs work to earn livelihood for the body, yet my mind stays focused on God). 3. Says Namdev (I provide you with one more example), listen, O Trilochan, the child is laid down in the cradle, his mother works inside and outside, yet she holds her child in her thoughts. 4.1.

ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ: ਕੰਮ-ਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਸੁਰਤ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਨੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** While working to earn a living, the mind can and should always remain focused on God.

The above response, with illustrations from daily life, impressed Trilochan. He heeded the advice and started practicing it daily. After the visit with Bhagat Namdev, Trilochan returned to his village and started serving religious mendicants who came that way. Slowly, the daily meditation and service of religious men transformed Trilochan. The cravings for the material world disappeared from his mind, and he was rid of the fear of death. Thereafter, Bhagat Trilochan always sought the company of spiritually minded people. He served saintly persons and started believing that association with them (Sangat) influenced his thinking and conduct. He sought the company of those who, like him, sought God's protection and mercy. He used to sing:

ਕੋਈ ਕੋਈ ਸਾਜਣੁ ਆਇ ਕਹੈ ॥ ਮਿਲੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੀਠੁਲਾ ਲੈ ਬਾਹੜੀ ਵਲਾਇ ॥

ਮਿਲੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਰਮਈਆ ਮੈ ਲੇਹਿ ਛਡਾਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਸਿਰੀਰਾਗੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨ ਕਾ ਅੰਗ ੯੨

*Koiee koiee saajan aai kahai. Mil mere beeThulaa lai baahaRee valai. Mil mere ramieeaa mai leh chhaddai.1. Rahao* SGGS, p. 92

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਕੋਈ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਜਨ (ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ) ਆ ਕੇ ਇਉਂ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ - ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਮੈਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ, ਗਲਵੱਕੜੀ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਮਿਲ। ਹੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ! ਮੈਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ, ਮੈਨੂੰ (ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਮੋਹ ਤੋਂ) ਛੁਡਾ ਲੈ, ਜਮਦੂਤ ਵਗਾਤਗ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਮ੍ਹਣੇ ਮੈਥੋਂ (ਪਲ ਮਾੜ੍ਹ ਭੀ) ਅਟਕਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕੇਗਾ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** Rare, exceedingly rare, is that person who comes and says, "O my Beloved, take me into Your Embrace! O my God, I beg for your realization, please save me from attachment to material world, I would not be able to face the messenger of death even for a moment!"

In the following Shabad, Bhagat Trilochan clearly explains the utter futility of rituals. The only way to attain permanent bliss is by meditating on God:

ਅੰਤਰੁ ਮਲਿ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਨਹੀ ਕੀਨਾ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੇਖ ਉਦਾਸੀ ॥

ਹਿਰਦੈ ਕਮਲੁ ਘਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਨ ਚੀਨਾ ਕਾਹੇ ਭਇਆ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ॥੧॥

ਭਰਮੇ ਭੂਲੀ ਰੇ ਜੈ ਚੰਦਾ ॥ ਨਹੀ ਨਹੀ ਚੀਨਿਆ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਖਾਇਆ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਬਧਾਇਆ ਖੰਥਾ ਮੁੰਦਾ ਮਾਇਆ ॥

ਭੂਮਿ ਮਸਾਣ ਕੀ ਭਸਮ ਲਗਾਈ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਤਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ॥੨॥

ਕਾਇ ਜਪਹੁ ਰੇ ਕਾਇ ਤਪਹੁ ਰੇ ਕਾਇ ਬਿਲੋਵਹੁ ਪਾਣੀ ॥

ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਈ ਸੋ ਸਿਮਰਹੁ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੀ ॥੩॥

ਕਾਇ ਕਮੰਡਲੁ ਕਾਪੜੀਆ ਰੇ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਕਾਇ ਫਿਰਾਹੀ ॥

ਬਦਤਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨੁ ਸੁਨੁ ਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਕਣ ਬਿਨੁ ਗਾਹੁ ਕਿ ਪਾਹੀ ॥੪॥੧॥

ਗੁਜਰੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨ ਜੀਉ, ਅੰਗ ੫੨੫

*Antar mal niramal nahee keena baahar bhekh udhaasee. Hiradhai kamal ghaT braham na cheen(h)aa kaahe bhiaa sa(n)niaasee. 1. Bharame bhoolee re jai cha(n)dhaa. Nahee nahee cheeni(h)aa paramaana(n)dhaa. 1. Rahao. Ghar ghar khaiaa pi(n)dd badhaiaa khi(n)thaa mu(n)dhaa maiaa. Bhoom masaan kee bhasam lagaiee gur bin tat na paiaa. 2. Kai japahu re kai tapahu re kai bilovahu paanee. Lakh chauraaseeh jini(h) upaiee so simarahu nirabaanee. 3. Kai kamandal kaparhia re athsath kai firahee. Badit Trilochan sun(u) re pranee kan bin(u) gaah(u) ki pahee.4.1* SGGS, p. 525

**Translation:** If someone has not cleansed the filth from within, but is dressed as a recluse, has not recognized God in the heart, then there is no use becoming a Sannyaasee (in guise only)? 1. **O Jai Chand, everyone is deluded (that by dressing as a recluse one can realize God, but it is wrong), the embodiment of supreme bliss cannot be realized thus. 1. Pause.** If someone nourishes the body with food begged from door to door, wears the patched coat and the earrings of the beggar, for the sake of wealth, applies the ashes of a cremated on to the body, but without a Guru, then one cannot find the essence of reality. 2. Why bother to chant your spells? Why bother to practice austerities? Why bother to churn water (a futile act: churning milk produces butter; churning water, nothing)? Meditate on God – who is free of all vices – and has created all species of beings. 3. Why bother to carry the water-pot and wear a dress made of patches? Why bother to visit numerous famous holy places of pilgrimage? Says Trilochan, listen, O mortal: if one has no corn, there is no use trying to thresh. 4. 1.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਸਾਰੀ ਲੋਕਾਈ (ਇਸ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਵਿਚ) ਭੁੱਲੀ ਪਈ ਹੈ (ਕਿ ਨਿਰਾ ਫਕੀਰੀ ਭੇਖ ਧਾਰਿਆਂ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾਂ ਮਿਲ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਕਦੇ ਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੈਂਦੀ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** Everyone has this illusion that by dressing as a religious person one can get closer to God, it is wrong. One does not realize God by wearing religious garb alone.

In the following Shabad, Bhagat Trilochan is addressing his own soul, and is saying that one should not blame God – because one gets happiness or suffering because of one's own deeds.

ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਨਿੰਦਸਿ ਕਾਇ ਭੂਲੀ ਗਵਾਰੀ ॥  
ਦੁਕ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਥਾਰੋ ਕਰਮੁ ਰੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਸੰਕਰਾ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਬਸਤਾ ਸੁਰਸਰੀ ਇਸਨਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਕੁਲ ਜਨ ਮਧੇ ਮਿਲਿੋ ਸਾਰਗ ਪਾਨ ਰੇ ॥  
ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਕਲੰਕੁ ਮਫੀਟਸਿ ਰੀ ॥੧॥  
ਬਿਸ੍ਵ ਕਾ ਦੀਪਕੁ ਸ੍ਵਾਮੀ ਤਾ ਚੇ ਰੇ ਸੁਆਰਥੀ ਪੰਖੀ ਰਾਇ ਗਰੁੜ ਤਾ ਚੇ ਬਾਧਵਾ ॥  
ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਅਰੁਣ ਪਿੰਗੁਲਾ ਰੀ ॥੨॥  
ਅਨਿਕ ਪਾਤਿਕ ਹਰਤਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਨਾਥੁ ਰੀ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਭ੍ਰਮਤਾ ਲਹੈ ਨ ਪਾਰੁ ਰੀ ॥  
ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਕਪਾਲੁ ਮਫੀਟਸਿ ਰੀ ॥੩॥  
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਸੀਅ ਧੇਨ ਲਛਿਮੀ ਕਲਪਤਰ ਸਿਖਰਿ ਸੁਨਾਗਰ ਨਦੀ ਚੇ ਨਾਥੰ ॥  
ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਖਾਰੁ ਮਫੀਟਸਿ ਰੀ ॥੪॥  
ਦਾਧੀਲੇ ਲੰਕਾ ਗੜੁ ਉਪਾੜੀਲੇ ਰਾਵਣ ਬਣੁ ਸਲਿ ਬਿਸਲਿ ਆਣਿ ਤੋਖੀਲੇ ਹਰੀ ॥  
ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਕਛਉਟੀ ਮਫੀਟਸਿ ਰੀ ॥੫॥  
ਪੂਰਬਲੋ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਕਰਮੁ ਨ ਮਿਟੈ ਰੀ ਘਰ ਗੇਹਣਿ ਤਾ ਚੇ ਮੋਹਿ ਜਾਪੀਅਲੇ ਰਾਮ ਚੇ ਨਾਮੰ ॥  
ਬਦਤਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨ ਰਾਮ ਜੀ ॥੬॥੧॥

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤਾਂ ਕੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਲੋਚਨ, ਅੰਗ ੬੯੫

*Naarain ni(n)dhas kai bhoolee gavaaree. Dhukirat sukirat thaaro karam ree.  
1. Rahao. Sa(n)karaa masatak basataa surasaree isanaan re. Kul jan madhe  
miliyeo saarag paan re. Karam kar kala(n)k mafeeTas ree. 1. Bisavai kaa  
dheepak savaiaamee taa che re suaarathee pa(n)khee rai garuR taa che  
baadhavaa. Karam kar arun pi(n)gulaa ree. 2. Anik paatik harataa tirabhavan*

*naath ree teerath teerath bhramataa lahai na paar ree. Karam kar kapaal mafeeTas ree. 3. A(n)mirat saseea dhen lachhimee kalapatar sikhar sunaagar nadhee che naatha(n). Karam kar khaar mafeeTas ree. 4. Dhaadheele la(n)kaa gaR upaaReele raavan ban sal bisal aan tokheele haree. Karam kar kachhauTee mafeeTas ree. 5. Poorabalo kirat karam na miTai ree ghar gehan taa che moh jaapeeale raam che naama(n). Badhat trilochan raam jee. 6.1.*

SGGS, p. 695

**Translation: Why do you slander God? You are ignorant and deluded. Pain and pleasure are the result of your own actions. 1. Pause.** The moon dwells in Shiva's forehead (as per Hindu mythology); it takes its cleansing bath in the Ganga. Among the men of the moon's family, Krishna was born; even so, the stains from its past actions remain on the moon's face. 1. Arun was a charioteer; his master was the sun, the lamp of the world. His brother was Garuda, the king of birds; and yet, Arun was made a cripple, because of the karma of his past actions. 2. Shiva, the destroyer of countless sins, Master of the three worlds, wandered from one sacred shrine to another. And yet, he could not erase the karma of cutting off Brahma's head. 3. Though the nectar, the moon, the wish-fulfilling cow, Lakshmi, the miraculous tree of life, Sikhar the Sun's horse, and Dhanavantar the wise physician - all arose from the ocean, and the lord of entire creation; and yet, because of its (bad) karma, its saltiness has not left it. 4. Hanuman burnt the fortress of Sri Lanka, uprooted the garden of Ravan, and brought medicinal herbs for the wounds of Lachhman to please Hindu god Ram; and yet, because of his karma, he could not be rid of his loin cloth. 5. **Trilochan says, the karma of past actions cannot be erased (by worshiping idols, bathing at holy places etc.). O my soul, this is why I meditate on the Naam. (I do not blame God for my pains. I got it because of my own deeds).** 6. 1.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਦੋਸ਼ ਦੇਣਾ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ। ਮਨੁੱਖ ਅਪਨੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੁੱਖ-ਸੁੱਖ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** It is wrong to blame God. One gets suffering or happiness because of one's own deeds.

In the above Shabad, there is extensive mention of Hindu mythology. Bhagat Trilochan is referring to Hindu gods (such as Shiva, Brahma, and Vishnu) and to mythological figures (such as Arun, Dhanavantar, Krishan, Hanuman, Ram, and Lachhman) in prevalent Hindu sacred texts and folklore. He does this to make his point clear to a predominantly Hindu audience familiar with such mythological stories.

However, his central message is that all the rituals mentioned in the Shabad – as examples of common Hindu rituals and religious practices – are of no use. Only by performing good deeds and mediating on God can one make progress on the spiritual journey.

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## 16. Bhagat Beni

There is limited biographical information about Bhagat Beni (mid-15<sup>th</sup>–mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, CE). He is considered a contemporary of Guru Nanak ji. Some believe that he was born in a village named Asni in Bihar. A festival is held in Asni every year to celebrate his life. By birth, Bhagat Beni was a Hindu of the Brahmin caste. He became a learned scholar. The poet Kal refers to Bhagat Beni's praise of God and his meditative nature in the following verse in SGGS:

ਭਗਤੁ ਬੇਣਿ ਗੁਣ ਰਵੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਆਤਮ ਰੰਗੁ ਮਾਣੈ ॥

ਜੋਗ ਧਿਆਨਿ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨਿ ਬਿਨਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ॥ ਸਵਈਏ ਮਹਲੇ ਪਿਹਲੇ ਕੇ ੧, ਅੰਗ ੧੩੯੦

*Bhagat ben gun ravai sahaj aatam ra(n)g maanai. Jog dhiaan gur giaan binaa prabh avar na jaanai.* SGGS, p. 1390

**Translation:** The devotee Beni sings His Praises; He is the Master of Yoga and meditation and has spiritual wisdom. He knows none other than God.

Three of Bhagat Beni's compositions are included in SGGS under the Siri Raag (p. 93), Ramkali (p. 974), and Prabhati (p. 1351) musical measures. In these compositions, he has severely denounced in an apt and enigmatic tone the practice of ritualistic practices. He has advised us, instead, to always remember God who is the provider of all. His composition on page 93 of SGGS is as follows:

ਰੇ ਨਰ ਗਰਭ ਕੁੰਡਲ ਜਬ ਆਛਤ ਉਰਧ ਧਿਆਨ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗਾ ॥

ਮਿਰਤਕ ਪਿੰਡਿ ਪਦ ਮਦ ਨਾ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਏਕੁ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਸੁ ਨਾਗਾ ॥

ਤੇ ਦਿਨ ਸੰਮਲੁ ਕਸਟ ਮਹਾ ਦੁਖ ਅਬ ਚਿਤੁ ਅਧਿਕ ਪਸਾਰਿਆ ॥

ਗਰਭ ਛੋਡਿ ਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਮੰਡਲ ਆਇਆ ਤਉ ਨਰਹਰਿ ਮਨਹੁ ਬਿਸਾਰਿਆ ॥ ੧ ॥  
 ਫਿਰਿ ਪਛੁਤਾਵਹਿਗਾ ਮੂੜਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਕਵਨ ਕੁਮਤਿ ਭ੍ਰਮਿ ਲਾਗਾ ॥  
 ਚੇਤਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਮ ਪੁਰਿ ਜਾਹਿਗਾ ਜਨੁ ਬਿਚਰੈ ਅਨਰਾਧਾ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
 ਬਾਲ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਚਿੰਦ ਰਸ ਲਾਗਾ ਖਿਨੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਮੋਹਿ ਬਿਆਪੈ ॥  
 ਰਸੁ ਮਿਸੁ ਮੇਧੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਬਿਖੁ ਚਾਖੀ ਤਉ ਪੰਚ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਸੰਤਾਪੈ ॥  
 ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਮਤਿ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਅਰਾਧਿਆ ॥  
 ਉਛਲਿਆ ਕਾਮੁ ਕਾਲ ਮਤਿ ਲਾਗੀ ਤਉ ਆਨਿ ਸਕਤਿ ਗਲਿ ਬਾਂਧਿਆ ॥ ੨ ॥  
 ਤਰੁਣ ਤੇਜੁ ਪਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਅ ਮੁਖੁ ਜੋਹਹਿ ਸਰੁ ਅਪਸਰੁ ਨ ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ॥  
 ਉਨਮਤ ਕਾਮਿ ਮਹਾ ਬਿਖੁ ਭੂਲੈ ਪਾਪੁ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਨ ਪਛਾਨਿਆ ॥  
 ਸੁਤ ਸੰਪਤਿ ਦੇਖਿ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਗਰਬਿਆ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਤੇ ਖੋਇਆ ॥  
 ਅਵਰ ਮਰਤ ਮਾਇਆ ਮਨੁ ਤੋਲੇ ਤਉ ਭਗ ਮੁਖਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਵਿਗੋਇਆ ॥ ੩ ॥  
 ਪੁੰਡਰ ਕੇਸ ਕੁਸਮ ਤੇ ਧਉਲੇ ਸਪਤ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਲੋਚਨ ਸ੍ਰਮਹਿ ਬੁਧਿ ਬਲ ਨਾਠੀ ਤਾ ਕਾਮੁ ਪਵਸਿ ਮਾਧਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਤਾ ਤੇ ਬਿਖੈ ਭਈ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਕਮਲੁ ਕੁਮਲਾਣਾ ॥  
 ਅਵਗਤਿ ਬਾਣਿ ਛੋਡਿ ਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਮੰਡਲਿ ਤਉ ਪਾਛੈ ਪਛੁਤਾਣਾ ॥ ੪ ॥  
 ਨਿਕੁਟੀ ਦੇਹ ਦੇਖਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਉਪਜੈ ਮਾਨ ਕਰਤ ਨਹੀ ਬੂਝੈ ॥  
 ਲਾਲਚੁ ਕਰੈ ਜੀਵਨ ਪਦ ਕਾਰਨ ਲੋਚਨ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੂਝੈ ॥  
 ਥਾਕਾ ਤੇਜੁ ਉਡਿਆ ਮਨੁ ਪੰਖੀ ਘਰਿ ਆਂਗਨਿ ਨ ਸੁਖਾਈ ॥  
 ਬੇਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਰੇ ਭਗਤਹੁ ਮਰਨ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਿਨਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ੫ ॥

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਗ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਬੇਣੀ ਜੀਉ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੯੩

Rae nar garabh ku(n)ddal jab aachhat uradh dhiaan liv laagaa. Mritak  
 pi(n)dd padh madh naa ahinis ek agiaan su naagaa. Tae dhin sa(n)mal kasaT  
 mahaa dhukh ab chit adhik pasaariaa. Garabh chhodd mirat ma(n)ddal  
 aaiaa tau narahar manahu bisaariaa. 1. **Phir pachhutaavahigaa moorRiaa  
 too(n) kavan kumat bhram laagaa. Chet raam naahee jam pur jaahigaa jan  
 bicharai anaraadhaa. 1. Rahao.** Baal binodh chi(n)dh ras laagaa khin khin  
 moh biaapai. Rus mis medh a(n)mrit bikh chaakhee tau pa(n)ch pragaT



sa(n)taapai. Jap tap sanjam chhodd sukirat mat raam naam na araadhiaa. Auchhaliaa kaam kaal mat laagee tau aan sakat gal baa(n)dhiaa. 2. Tarun tej par tria mukh johed sar apasar na pachhaaniaa. Aunamat kaam mahaa bikh bhoolai paap pu(n)n na pachhaaniaa. Sut sa(n)pat dhekh ih man garabiaa raam ridhai te khoiaa. Avar marat maiaa man tole tau bhag mukh janam vigoiaa. 3. Pu(n)ddar kes kusam te dhaule sapat paataal kee baanee. Lochan srameh budh bal naaThee taa kaam pavas maadhaanee. Taa te bikhai bhiee mat paavas kaiaa kamal kumalaanaa. Avagat baan chhodd mirat ma(n)ddal tau paachhai pachhutaanaa. 4. NikuTee dheh dhekh dhun upajai maan karat nahee boojhai. Laalach karai jeevan padh kaaran lochan kachhoo na soojhai. Thaakaa tej uddiaa man pa(n)khee ghar aa(n)gan na sukhaiee. Beni kahai sunahu re bhagatahu maran mukat kin payee. 5. SGGs, p. 93

**Translation:** O man! When you were coiled in the cradle of the womb, upside-down, you were absorbed in meditation (of God). (Then) You took no pride in your perishable body; night and day were all the same to you - you lived unknowing, in the silence of the void (of ignorance). Remember the terrible pain and suffering of those days now that you have spread out the net of your consciousness far and wide (in the worldly affairs). Since you left the womb and entered this mortal world; you have forgotten God from your mind. 1. **Later (once life is over), you will regret, and repent - you fool! Why are you engrossed in evil-mindedness and skepticism? Think of God, or else you shall be led to the City of Death. Why are you wandering around, out of control? 1. Pause.** (First), You played like a child, craving sweets every moment. (Since) You become more entangled in worldly attachments, the five vices torture you. Abandoning meditation, penance and self-restraint, and the wisdom of good actions, you do not worship and adore God (Naam). You are overflowing with sexual desire, and your intellect is stained with darkness; you are held in the grip of sexual desires. 2. In the heat of youthful passion, you look with desire upon the faces of other men's wives; you do not distinguish between good and evil. Drunk with sexual desire and other great sins, you go astray, and do not distinguish between vice and virtue. Gazing upon your children and your property, your mind is proud and arrogant; you cast out God from your

heart. When others die, you calculate how much wealth you will get; you waste your life in the pleasures of sexual organs. 3. Your hair is whiter than the jasmine flower, and your voice has grown feeble, as if it comes from the seventh underworld. Your eyes water, and your intellect and strength have left you; but still, your sexual desire churns and drives you on. And so, your intellect has dried up through corruption, and the lotus flower of your body has wilted and withered. You have forsaken the Banee, the Word of the Immortal God, in this mortal world; in the end (of your life), you shall regret and repent. 4. Gazing upon the tiny bodies of your children (and grandchildren), love has welled up within your heart; you are proud of them, but you do not understand. You wish for the dignity of a long life, but your eyes can no longer see (you will leave everything behind). Your light has gone out, and the bird of your mind has flown away; you are no longer welcome in your own home and courtyard. Says Beni, listen, O devotee: who has ever attained liberation after such a death? (If one stayed entangled in worldly desires while living and could not be liberated while living). 5.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਮੂਰਖ! ਤੂੰ ਕਿਹੜੀ ਮੱਤੇ, ਕਿਹੜੇ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ ਵਿਚ ਲੱਗਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈਂ? (ਸਮਾਂ ਹੱਥੋਂ ਗਵਾ ਕੇ) ਫੇਰ ਹੱਥ ਮਲੇਂਗਾ, ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਮਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਜਮਪੁਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਧਕਿਆ ਜਾਵੇਂਗਾ, (ਤੂੰ ਫਿਰਦਾ ਹੈਂ) ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਅਮੋੜ ਬੰਦਾ ਫਿਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** After death (once life is over), you will regret, and repent - you fool! Why were you engrossed in evil-mindedness and skepticism? Think of God, or else you shall be led to the City of Death. Why are you wandering around, out of control?

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਜਗਤ ਦੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਵਿਚ ਫਸ ਕੇ ਜੀਵ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਭੁਲਾ ਦੇਂਦਾ ਹੈ; ਸਾਰੀ ਉਮਰ ਵਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬੁਢੇਪੇ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਰੇ ਅੰਗ ਕਮਜ਼ੋਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਣ ਤੇ ਭੀ ਹੋਰ ਹੋਰ ਜੀਉਣ ਦੀ ਆਸ ਕਰੀ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਲ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਰਤਦਾ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਨੁੱਖਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਜਾਈਂ ਗਵਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Central Message:** One gets entangled in worldly affairs and wastes his whole life engaged in various human vices. When all organs get weak in old

age, one still wishes for a long life. One does not meditate on God. Thus, the entire life goes waste.

Since Bhagat Beni was born into a Hindu Brahmin family, he was fully aware of the religious beliefs and ritualistic practices of Brahmins. However, he believed that these practices were of no spiritual value. Only by meditating on God can one experience spiritual bliss. In SGGS, he explains this belief as follows:

ਇੜਾ ਪਿੰਗੁਲਾ ਅਉਰ ਸੁਖਮਨਾ ਤੀਨਿ ਬਸਹਿ ਇਕ ਠਾਈ ॥  
ਬੇਣੀ ਸੰਗਮੁ ਤਹ ਪਿਰਾਗੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਜਨੁ ਕਰੇ ਤਿਥਾਈ ॥੧॥  
ਸੰਤਹੁ ਤਹਾ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਰਾਮੁ ਹੈ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਗਮਿ ਚੀਨੈ ਬਿਰਲਾ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਤਹਾਂ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਰਮਈਆ ਹੋਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਦੇਵ ਸਥਾਨੈ ਕਿਆ ਨੀਸਾਣੀ ॥ ਤਹ ਬਾਜੇ ਸਬਦ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
ਤਹ ਚੰਦੁ ਨ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਪਉਣੁ ਨ ਪਾਣੀ ॥ ਸਾਖੀ ਜਾਗੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਾਣੀ ॥੨॥  
ਉਪਜੈ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਛੀਜੈ ॥ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸਿ ਗਗਨੰਤਰਿ ਭੀਜੈ ॥  
ਏਸੁ ਕਲਾ ਜੋ ਜਾਣੈ ਭੇਉ ॥ ਭੇਟੈ ਤਾਸੁ ਪਰਮ ਗੁਰਦੇਉ ॥੩॥ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਬੇਣੀ ਜੀਉ, ਅੰਗ ੯੭੪

*EeiRaa pingulaa aaur sukhamaanaa teen baseh ik Thaiee. Binee sa(n)gam  
teh piraag man majan kare tithaiee. 1. Sa(n)tahu tahaa nira(n)jan raam hai.  
Gur gam cheenai biralaa koi. Tahaa(n) nira(n)jan ramieeaa hoi. 1. Rahao.  
Dhev sathanai kias neesaanee. Teh baaje sabadh anaahadh baanee. Teh  
cha(n)dh na sooraj paun na paanee. Saakhee jaagee gurmukh jaanee. 2.  
Upajai giaan dhuramat chheejai. Anmirat ras gagana(n)tar bheejai. Es  
kalaa jo jaanai bheau. BheTai taas param gurdheau. 3. SGGS, p. 974*

**Translation:** The energy channels of the EeiRaa, Pingala and Shukhmanaa: all three dwell in one place in the body. This is the true place of confluence of the three rivers: this is where my mind takes its cleansing bath (i.e., one has no need for practice of EeiRaa-Pingala-Shushmanaa). 1. **O Saints, God**

**dwells there (inside human heart); only rare persons understand this by Guru's grace. All-pervading God lives there.1 Pause.** (If someone asks) What is the insignia of God's dwelling? (The answer is) The unstruck (celestial) sound of the Shabad vibrates there. (To remove the darkness of mind) There is no moon or sun, no air or water. The Gurmukh becomes aware and knows the Teachings. 2. (When one is in tune with God) Spiritual wisdom wells up, and evil-mindedness departs; the nucleus of the sky (the mind) is drenched with Ambrosial Nectar. By knowing the secret of this art, one meets God. 3.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਸੰਤ ਜਨੋ! ਮਾਇਆ-ਰਹਿਤ ਰਾਮ ਉਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿਚ (ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ) ਵਸਦਾ ਹੈ, ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਸੋਹਣਾ ਰਾਮ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੀ ਸਰਨ ਪੈ ਕੇ ਬਣਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O saintly ones, God dwells inside the human heart; and only a few people understand this by God's Grace. They reach within and become acquainted with the all-pervading God there.1 Pause. (i.e., to seek God, one has to look inward).

Bhagat Beni believed that spiritual liberation can only be attained when a person is alive, and not after death. He expressed his views about (so-called) "sacred" Hindu rituals in these words:

ਤਨਿ ਚੰਦਨੁ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਪਾਤੀ ॥ ਰਿਦ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕਰ ਤਲ ਕਾਤੀ ॥

ਠਗ ਦਿਸਟਿ ਬਗਾ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗਾ ॥ ਦੇਖਿ ਬੈਸਨੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਮੁਖ ਭਾਗਾ ॥੧॥

ਕਲਿ ਭਗਵਤ ਬੰਦ ਚਿਰਾਂਮੰ ॥ ਕੂਰ ਦਿਸਟਿ ਰਤਾ ਨਿਸਿ ਬਾਦੰ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਨਿਤਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਸਰੀਰੰ ॥ ਦੁਇ ਧੋਤੀ ਕਰਮ ਮੁਖਿ ਖੀਰੰ ॥

ਰਿਦੈ ਛੁਰੀ ਸੰਧਿਆਨੀ ॥ ਪਰ ਦਰਬੁ ਹਿਰਨ ਕੀ ਬਾਨੀ ॥੨॥ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤੀ ਬੇਣੀ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੩੫੧

*Tun chandhan masatak paatee. Ridh antar kar tal kaatee. Thag dhisaT bagaa liv laagaa. Dhekh baisano praan mukh bhaagaa. 1. Kal bhagavat bandh chiraa(n)mun. Karaoor dhisaT rataa nis baadhan. 1. Rahao. Nitaprat*

*isanaan sareera(n). Dhui dhotee karam mukh kheeran. Ridhai chhuree sa(n)dhiaanee. Par dharab hiran kee baanee.2.* SGGs, p. 1351

**Translation:** You rub your body with sandalwood paste, and place basil leaves on your forehead. But within your heart is a lethal knife. You look like a thug; pretending to meditate, but like a heron you stand and wait on people to cheat them. You try to look like a Vaishnaav as if the breath of life has escaped you (i.e., you appear to be a pious person). **1. You (engulfed in vices) pray for hours to an idol. But your gaze is evil, and your nights are wasted in worldly affairs. (Your overt meditation on the idol is of no use).**  
**1. Pause.** You (engulfed in vices) perform daily cleansing rituals, wear two loincloths, perform (other) religious rituals and put only milk in your mouth. But in your heart, you have drawn out the sword (to kill). You routinely steal the property of others. 2.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: (ਹੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਈ ਮਨੁੱਖ! ਤੂੰ ਉਂਝ ਤਾਂ) ਕਲਜੁਗੀ ਸੁਭਾਵ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਵਿਰਤ ਹੈਂ, ਪਰ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਚਿਰ ਤੱਕ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈਂ, ਤੇਰੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਟੇਢੀ ਹੈ। (ਤੇਰੀ ਨਿਗਾਹ ਵਿਚ ਖੋਟ ਹੈ), ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤ ਤੂੰ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਧੰਧਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੱਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈਂ। (ਤੇਰੀਆਂ ਇਹ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਬੰਦਨਾਂ ਕਿਸ ਅਰਥ?)।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** You, engulfed in vices, pray for hours to an idol (i.e., put on a facade, to impress others), but your gaze is evil (full of cruelty), and your nights are wasted in worldly affairs. Your outward exhibition of the worship of idols is of no use.

Within a few hundred years of Bhagat Beni's death, many fictional stories of "miracles" got associated with him. In these stories, his admirers attributed supernatural and miraculous powers to him. Their intention may have been to show that he was somehow larger than life. Bhai Gurdas narrates one such story in the following words:

ਵਡਾ ਸਾਂਗੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਓਹ ਇਕ ਮਨਿ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ।

ਪੈਜ ਸਵਾਰੈ ਭਗਤ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਾ ਹੁਇ ਕੈ ਘਰਿ ਚਲਿ ਆਵੈ।  
ਦੇਇ ਦਿਲਾਸਾ ਤੁਸਿਕੈ ਅਣਗਣਤੀ ਖਰਚੀ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਵੈ।  
ਓਥਹੁੰ ਆਇਆ ਭਗਤ ਪਾਸਿ ਹੋਇ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਹੇਤੁ ਉਪਜਾਵੈ।

ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾਂ ਜੈਕਾਰੁ ਕਰਾਵੈ ॥੧੪॥

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਵਾਰ ੧੦.੧੪

*Vadaa Saangu Varatadaa Aoh Ik Mun Pramaysaru Dhiaavai. Paij Savaarai Bhagat Dee Raajaa Hoi Kai Ghari Chali Aavai. Dayi Dilaasaa Tusi Kai Anaganatee Kharachee Pahunchaavai. Aodahu Aaiaa Bhagati Paasi Hoi Daiaalu Haytu Upajaavai. Bhagat Janaan Jaikaaru Karaavai.14. Vaar 10.14*

**Translation:** One day while concentrating on God with single-minded devotion, a strange miracle happened. To protect the glory of the devotee, God Himself in the form of a King went to his house. In great joy, He assured Beni's wife and made available all the necessities and some money for expenditure. From there He went to His devotee Beni and caressed him affectionately. This way He always has His devotees acclaimed.

As is the case for many other compositions in SGGs, this story too must be understood metaphorically, and not literally. Bhagat Beni was a well-educated scholar with humble temperament. But, of course, God did not literally go "Himself, in the form of a King", to his house. However, metaphorically speaking, through meditation Bhagat Beni came to the realization of God. In the last line of the Vaar, Bhai Gurdas says that those who live life according to God's principles, as devotees of God, earn the respect and praise of others. He is illustrating this point by using a prevalent story connected with Bhagat Beni.

The central message of all of Bhagat Beni's Shabads in SGGs is the same. He severely denounces Hindu rituals and other austerities of "Hath Yoga". He asks the common man to learn and practice the real essence of true religion – which is the remembrance of God and meditation on His Name (Naam).

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## 17. Bhagat Ramanand

Bhagat Ramanand (1400–1470 CE) was born in Prayag, which was later renamed Allahabad, the name by which it is still known today. His mother was Sushila, and his father was Punya Sadan Sharma. Both were Gaur Brahmins. He was a famous religious teacher of his time, whose equally famous disciples were Kabir, Ravidas, Sain, Dhanna, and Pipa.

Bhagat Ramanand rose above caste considerations and taught his ideology of “equality of all” even to persons from the so-called lower caste. Ramanand believed that in the spiritual pursuit, one must forget one's (supposed) “caste identity” and social status. He believed that everyone had an equal right to meditate on God, in the same way that everyone had equal rights to air, water, and the earth. Through religious teaching of the poor and people of the “lower” caste, he took a radical departure from existing religious and social practices.

Only one composition of Bhagat Ramanand is included in SGGS. It is on page 1195 and is as follows:

ਕਤ ਜਾਈਐ ਰੇ ਘਰ ਲਾਗੋ ਰੰਗ ॥

ਮੇਰਾ ਚਿਤੁ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਮਨੁ ਭਇਓ ਪੰਗੁ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਏਕ ਦਿਵਸ ਮਨ ਭਈ ਉਮੰਗ ॥ ਘਸਿ ਚੰਦਨ ਚੋਆ ਬਹੁ ਸੁਗੰਧ ॥

ਪੂਜਨ ਚਾਲੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਠਾਇ ॥ ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬਤਾਇਓ ਗੁਰ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਮਾਹਿ ॥ ੧ ॥

ਜਹਾ ਜਾਈਐ ਤਹ ਜਲ ਪਖਾਨ ॥ ਤੂ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਸਮਾਨ ॥

ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਸਭ ਦੇਖੇ ਜੋਇ ॥ ਉਹਾਂ ਤਉ ਜਾਈਐ ਜਉ ਈਹਾਂ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ ੨ ॥

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੈ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਤੋਰ ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਸਕਲ ਬਿਕਲ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕਾਟੇ ਮੋਰ ॥

ਰਾਮਾਨੰਦ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਰਮਤ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਾਟੈ ਕੋਟਿ ਕਰਮ ॥ ੩ ॥ ੧ ॥

ਰਾਮਾਨੰਦ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੯੫

*Kat jaieeai re ghar laago ra(n)g. Meraa chit na chalai man bhio pa(n)g. 1. Rahao. Aik divas man bhiee uma(n)g. Ghas cha(n)dhan choaa bahu suga(n)dh. Poojan chaalee braham Thai. So braham bataio gur man hee maeh. 1. Jahaa jaieeai teh jal pakhaan. Too poor rahio hai sabh samaan. Bedh puraan sabh dhekke joi. Uoohaa(n) tau jaieeai jau iehaa(n) na hoi. 2. Satguru mai balihaaree tor. Jin sakal bikal bhram kaaTe mor. Raamaana(n)dh suaamee ramat braham. Gur kaa sabadh kaaTai koT karam. 3.1 .*

SGGS, p. 1195

**Translation: Where should I go? (Now) My home (heart) is filled with bliss. My consciousness does not go out wandering. My mind has become steady. 1. Pause.** One day, a desire welled up in my mind. I ground up sandalwood, along with several fragrant oils. I went to a temple to worship. (Now) my teacher has shown me that God (whom I considered to be in the temple) resides within my own mind. 1. Wherever I go (for a pilgrimage or in a temple), I find only water and stones. But You are totally pervading and permeating in all. **I have searched through all the Vedas and the Puranas. I would go there, only if God were not here (in my heart).** 2. I am a sacrifice to You, O my Guru. You have cut through and eliminated all my confusion and doubt. **Ramanand's master is the All-pervasive God.** The Word of the Guru's Shabad eradicates the (bad) karma of millions of past actions. 3.1.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! ਹੋਰ ਕਿਥੇ ਜਾਈਏ? (ਹੁਣ) ਹਿਰਦੇ-ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਮੌਜ ਬਣ ਗਈ ਹੈ; ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨ ਹੁਣ ਡੋਲਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਥਿਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O Brother! Where else should I go. Now, I find bliss within me. My mind does not wander, it is always at peace.

Though Bhagat Ramanand was born into a Brahmin family, in the above Shabad he condemns the temple-oriented ritualistic practices of the so-called Hindu upper castes. He says that bathing in “holy” places or the worship of idols does not help attain a mental state of higher consciousness. By following the path suggested by the True Teacher, all doubts get cleared, and one realizes that the all-pervasive God resides



within oneself. Only a True Teacher's Shabad can help overcome millions of bad karmas of past actions.

The incident of Bhagat Kabir accepting Bhagat Ramanand as his religious teacher is succinctly captured by Bhai Gurdas in his Vaar as follows:

ਹੋਇ ਬਿਰਕਤੁ ਬਨਾਰਸੀ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਰਾਮਾਨੰਦੁ ਗੁਸਾਈਂ ।  
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਠਿ ਕੈ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਗੰਗਾ ਨ੍ਰਾਵਣ ਤਾਈਂ ।  
ਅਗੋ ਹੀ ਦੇ ਜਾਇ ਕੈ ਲੰਮਾ ਪਿਆ ਕਬੀਰ ਤਿਥਾਈਂ ।  
ਪੈਰੀ ਟੁੰਬਿ ਉਠਾਲਿਆ ਬੋਲਹੁ ਰਾਮ ਸਿਖ ਸਮਝਾਈ ।  
ਜਿਉ ਲੋਹਾ ਪਾਰਸੁ ਛੁਹੇ ਚੰਦਨ ਵਾਸੁ ਨਿੰਮੁ ਮਹਕਾਈ ।  
ਪਸੂ ਪਰੇਤਹੁ ਦੇਵ ਕਰਿ ਪੂਰੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ।  
ਅਚਰਜ ਨੋ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਮਿਲਾਈ ।  
ਝਰਣਾ ਝਰਦਾ ਨਿਝਰਹੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅਘੜ ਘੜਾਈ ।  
ਰਾਮ ਕਬੀਰੈ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਭਾਈ ॥੧੫॥

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਵਾਰ ੧੦.੧੫

*Hoye birakat banaarasee rahi(n)dhaa raamaana(n)dh gusaiee(n). Amrit  
vele uTh kai jaa(n)dhaa ga(n)gaa nhaavan taiee(n). Ago hee dhe jai kai  
la(n)maa piaa Kabir tithaiee(n). Pairee Tu(n)b uThaaliaa bolahu raam sikh  
samajhaiee. Jiau lohoo paaras chhuhe cha(n)dhan vaas ni(n)m mahakaiee.  
Pasoo paretahu dhev kar poore Satguru dhe vaddiaaiee. Acharaj no  
acharaj milai visamaadhahi visamaadh milaiee. Jharanaa jharadhaa  
nijharahu gurmukh baanee aghaR ghaRaiee. Raam Kabirai bhedh na  
bhaiee. 15.*

Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 10.15

**Translation:** Being detached from the world, Brahmin Ramanand lived in Banaras. He would rise early in the morning and go to the Ganga to bathe. Once even before Ramanand came there, Kabir went and lay down in his (Ramanand's) path. Touching him with his feet, Ramanand awakened Kabir and told him to (repeatedly) say "Ram", the true spiritual teaching. Just as the iron touched by a (mythical) touchstone becomes gold, and the margosa tree (Azadirachta indica) is made fragrant by sandalwood, the

wondrous Guru turns even animals and ghosts into spiritual beings. Meeting the wondrous Guru, the disciple wonderfully merges into the great wonderful God. Then from the Self springs a fountain and the words of the Gurmukh shape a beautiful form. Now, Ram and Kabir became identical, and nothing separated them.

When understood metaphorically, the meaning of Bhai Gurdas's Vaar becomes clear. Though he is using examples from Hindu rituals that the common public of that time was familiar with, the essence of his message, when properly understood, is the same as Guru jis' message in SGGS. It is that: Meditation and love of God helps brings us closer to God; and with His Grace, we can make progress towards becoming a Gurmukh.

Bhagat Ramanand was known for composing his works and discussing spiritual themes in vernacular Hindi (as opposed to Sanskrit). This made such knowledge accessible to the masses. Several well-known books in Hindi and Sanskrit are attributed to him.

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## 18. Bhagat Sain

Bhagat Sain (1400–1490 CE) was born in village Sohal Thathian, in Amritsar District of Punjab state. His father was Mukand Rai and his mother was Mata Jivni (also known as Jiwan Devi). His father was a barber. He got married to Sahib Devi at Lahore, and had a son named Nayi. Sain was a barber at the court of Raja Ram of Rewa, then called Bandhavgarh.

In SGGS, Guru Arjan ji has described the spiritual achievements of Bhagat Sain through selfless service in these words:

ਨਾਈ ਉਧਰਿਓ ਸੈਨੁ ਸੇਵ ॥

ਬਸੰਤੁ ਮਹਲਾ ੫, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੯੨

*Naiee udhario sain sev.*

SGGS, p. 1192

**Translation:** Sain the barber was saved through his selfless service.

Bhagat Sain's following composition is included on page 695 of SGGS:

ਧੂਪ ਦੀਪ ਘ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਾਜਿ ਆਰਤੀ ॥ ਵਾਰਨੇ ਜਾਉ ਕਮਲਾ ਪਤੀ ॥੧॥

ਮੰਗਲਾ ਹਰਿ ਮੰਗਲਾ ॥ ਨਿਤ ਮੰਗਲੁ ਰਾਜਾ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਕੋ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਉਤਮੁ ਦੀਅਰਾ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਬਾਤੀ ॥ ਤੁਹੀ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਕਮਲਾ ਪਾਤੀ ॥੨॥

ਰਾਮਾ ਭਗਤਿ ਰਾਮਾਨੰਦੁ ਜਾਨੈ ॥ ਪੂਰਨ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦੁ ਬਖਾਨੈ ॥੩॥

ਮਦਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਭੈ ਤਾਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੇ ॥ ਸੈਨੁ ਭਣੈ ਭਜੁ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦੇ ॥੪॥੨॥

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਭਗਤ ਸੈਣ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੬੯੫

*Dhoop dheep ghirat saaj aaratee. Vaarane jaau kamalaa pate. 1. Mangalaa har mangalaa. Nit mangal raajaa raam rai ko.1. Rahao. Uootam dheearaa niramal baatee. Tu-hee niranjan kamalaa paatee. 2. Raamaa bhagat raamaanand jaanai. Pooran paramanand bakhaanai. 3. Madan moorat bhai taar gobindhe. Sain bhanai bhaj paramanandhe. 4. 2 .SGGS, p. 695*

**Translation:** I offer myself as sacrifice to You (offering myself as sacrifice is really) worshipping You with incense, lamp, and ghee. 1. **Hail to You, God, hail to You! Again and again, hail to You, God, Ruler of all! With Your grace there is permanent bliss (of your Name inside me).** 1. **Pause.** O God! You are immaculate and pure (You are) sublime lamp and pure wick (for worshipping You). 2. One who performs devotional worship of the all-pervading God, he enjoys the supreme joy and bliss with His Grace. 3. Says Sain, (Oh! my mind) remember God, the embodiment of supreme joy, who carries me across the terrifying world-ocean. 4. 2.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਹਰੀ! ਹੇ ਰਾਜਨ! ਹੇ ਰਾਮ! ਤੇਰੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਦਾ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਮ ਦਾ ਅਨੰਦ ਮੰਗਲ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** By God's grace, through meditation, I constantly experience within me the bliss of Naam.

Bhai Gurdas explains in his Vaar 10.16 that a devotee's grandeur is manifested by the grace of God Himself. Bhai Gurdas illustrates this point through a legendary story associated with Bhagat Sain:

ਸੁਣਿ ਪਰਤਾਪੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਸਿਖੁ ਹੋਆ ਸੈਣੁ ਨਾਈ।  
 ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਰਾਤੀ ਕਰੈ ਭਲਕੈ ਰਾਜ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਜਾਈ।  
 ਆਏ ਸੰਤ ਪਰਾਹੁਣੇ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਹੋਆ ਰੈਣਿ ਸਬਾਈ।  
 ਛਡਿ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਸੰਤ ਜਨ ਰਾਜ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਨ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈ।  
 ਸੈਣ ਰੂਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਾਇ ਕੈ ਆਇਆ ਰਾਣੈ ਨੋ ਰੀਝਾਈ।  
 ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾਂ ਨੋ ਵਿਦਾ ਕਰਿ ਰਾਜ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਗਇਆ ਸਰਮਾਈ।  
 ਰਾਣੈ ਦੂਰਹੁੰ ਸਦਿ ਕੈ ਗਲਹੁੰ ਕਵਾਇ ਖੋਲਿ ਪੈਨੁਾਈ।  
 ਵਸਿ ਕੀਤਾ ਹਉਂ ਤੁਧੁ ਅਜੁ ਬੋਲੈ ਰਾਜਾ ਸੁਣੈ ਲੁਕਾਈ।  
 ਪਰਗਟੁ ਕਰੈ ਭਗਤਿ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥੧੬॥

*Sunn parataap kabeer dhaa dhoojaa sikh hoaa sain naiee. Prem bhagat raatee karai bhalakai raaj dhuaarai jaiee. Aae sa(n)t paraahune keeratan hoaa rain sabaiee. Chhadd na sakai sa(n)t jan raaj dhuaar na sev kamaiee. Sain roop har jai kai aaiaa raanai no reejhaiee. Saadh janaa(n) no vidhaa kar raaj dhuaar giaa saramaiee. Raanai dhoorahu(n) sadh kai galahu(n) kavai khol painhaiee. Vas keetaa hau(n) tudh aj bolai raajaa sunai lukaiee. paragaT karai bhagat vaddiaaiee. 10. 16. Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 10.16*

**Translation:** Hearing the glory of Kabir, Sain also became a disciple. In the night he would immerse himself in loving devotion (of God) and in the morning, he would be in service at the doors of the king. One night some sadhus came to Sain and the whole night was spent in singing hymns in God's praises. Sain could not leave the company of the saints and consequently could not perform the king's service the following morning. God Himself took the form of Sain. He served the king in such a way that the king was overjoyed. Bidding farewell to the saints, Sain hesitantly arrived at the palace (fearful of what was in store for him). Sighting him from a distance, the king beckoned him to come closer. He took off his own robes and offered them to Bhagat Sain. 'You have captivated me with your service', said the king and his words were heard by one and all. God Himself manifests the grandeur of His devotee. 16.

The statement in Bhai Gurdas's Vaar that "God Himself took the form of Sain" is of course not meant to be taken literally. It was Bhai Gurdas's way of communicating with the ordinary public. The Vaar's proper meaning can only be understood metaphorically. Bhagat Sain was so devoted to God and was so engrossed in meditation on Naam, that God showered Bhagat Sain with His Grace, and enabled him to attain spiritual heights even while performing his regular daily duties.

Bhagat Sain had many disciples of various Hindu castes, low and high. One of his most famous disciples was a Brahmin named Kordass. Bhagat Sain imparted him religious teachings and explained to him the

true way of life. He contributed to reducing unjust and immoral social systems like the Hindu caste system, untouchability, segregation etc. There is a temple called Dera Baba Sain Bhagat, Partab Pura, Phillaur, in Jalandhar in his memory. Bhagat Sain died in 1490 CE at Banaras.

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## 19. Bhagat Dhanna

Bhagat Dhanna (1415–1475 CE) was born into a family of farmers in village Dhuan Kalan, in Tonk District of Rajasthan. His father was Bhai Panna and mother was Mai Reva. Three compositions of Bhagat Dhanna are included in SGGS.

**Bhagat Dhanna's first Shabad** on page 487 of SGGS is as follows:

ਭ੍ਰਮਤ ਫਿਰਤ ਬਹੁ ਜਨਮ ਬਿਲਾਨੇ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਧੀਰੇ ॥  
ਲਾਲਚ ਬਿਖੁ ਕਾਮ ਲੁਬਧ ਰਾਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਬਿਸਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਹੀਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਬਿਖੁ ਫਲ ਮੀਠ ਲਗੇ ਮਨ ਬਉਰੇ ਚਾਰ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥  
ਗੁਨ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਬਢੀ ਅਨ ਭਾਂਤੀ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਫਿਰਿ ਤਾਨਿਆ ॥੧॥  
ਜੁਗਤਿ ਜਾਨਿ ਨਹੀ ਰਿਦੈ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਜਲਤ ਜਾਲ ਜਮ ਫੰਧ ਪਰੇ ॥  
ਬਿਖੁ ਫਲ ਸੰਚਿ ਭਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੇ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਨ ਬਿਸਰੇ ॥੨॥  
ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਵੇਸੁ ਗੁਰਹਿ ਧਨੁ ਦੀਆ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਮਾਨੁ ਮਨ ਏਕ ਮਏ ॥  
ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਮਾਨੀ ਸੁਖੁ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਅਘਾਨੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਭਏ ॥੩॥  
ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਇ ਸਮਾਨੀ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਅਛਲੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਿਆ ॥  
ਧੰਨੈ ਧਨੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਧਰਣੀਧਰੁ ਮਿਲਿ ਜਨ ਸੰਤ ਸਮਾਨਿਆ ॥੪॥੧॥

ਆਸਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਧੰਨੇ ਜੀ ਕੀ, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੭

*Bhramat firat bahu janam bilaane tan man dhan nahee dheere. Laalach bikh kaam lubadh raataa man bisare prabh here. 1. Rahao. Bikh fal meeTh lage man baure chaar bichaar na jaaniaa. Gu-n te preet baddee an bhaa(n)tee janam maran fir taaniaa. 1. Jugat jaan nahee ridhai nivaasee jalat jaal jam fa(n)dh pare. Bikh fal sa(n)ch bhare man aaise param purakh prabh man bisare. 2. Gyan praves gureh dhan dheea dhiaan maan man ek maae. Prem bhagat maanee sukh jaaniaa tirapat aghaane mukat bhe. 3.*

*Jot samai samaanee jaa kai achhalee prabh pahichaaniaa. Dhannai dhan paiaa dharaneedhar mil jan sa(n)t samaaniaa. 4. 1* SGGS, p. 487

**Translation:** One wanders through countless incarnations (while craving for worldly material and pleasures), the body perishes and mind stays restless, even the wealth does not always stay with the person. Attached to, and stained by the poisons of desire and greed, the mind forgets the jewel-like valuable God. 1. Pause. O my stupid mind! The poisonous fruit seems sweet to the confused mind, which does not know the difference between good and evil. Turning away from virtue, his love for other things increases, and he weaves again the web of birth and death. 1. O my mind! You do not know the way to God, who dwells within your heart; burning in the trap of desires, you are caught by the noose of death. Gathering the poisonous fruits, you fill the mind with them, and forget God. 2. Whomsoever the Guru has blessed with the wealth of spiritual wisdom, he practices meditation, his mind becomes one with Him; he embraces loving devotional worship for God, achieves inner peace, is satisfied and satiated, and is liberated. 3. One who is filled with God's Light recognizes God (who is not deceived by the material world). I, Dhanna, have also obtained God, the Sustainer of the World; in the company of humble Saints, am absorbed mentally in Naam. 4. 1.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** (ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਮੋਹ ਵਿਚ) ਭਟਕਦਿਆਂ ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਇਹ ਸਰੀਰ ਨਾਸ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਮਨ ਭਟਕਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਧਨ ਭੀ ਟਿਕਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ। ਲੋਭੀ ਜੀਵ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ-ਰੂਪ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਵਿਚ, ਕਾਮ-ਵਾਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਰੰਗਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਅਮੋਲਕ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਵਿਸਰ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** One wanders through countless incarnations (in the attachment of Maya – worldly materials and pleasures), the body perishes, while the mind keeps wandering. Even the wealth does not stay with the person. The greedy creature remains imbued with desire and greed for poisonous substances (material world). In lust, the mind forgets the priceless, jewel-like, God.



Bhagat Dhanna is saying in the last sentence of the above Shabad that he realized God in the company of saintly persons. However, these terms, as well as the central message of the entire Shabad, must be understood metaphorically, not literally. To explain Bhagat Dhanna's composition further, just next to Bhagat Dhanna's above Shabad, Guru Arjan ji has added his own Shabad. It is on the same theme and is also on page 487 of SGGGS. It is as follows:

ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸੰਗਿ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਮਨੁ ਲੀਣਾ ॥  
ਆਢ ਦਾਮ ਕੋ ਛੀਪਰੋ ਹੋਇਓ ਲਾਖੀਣਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਬੁਨਨਾ ਤਨਨਾ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕੈ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਬੀਰਾ ॥  
ਨੀਚ ਕੁਲਾ ਜੋਲਾਹਰਾ ਭਇਓ ਗੁਨੀਯ ਗਹੀਰਾ ॥੧॥  
ਰਵਿਦਾਸੁ ਢੁਵੰਤਾ ਢੋਰ ਨੀਤਿ ਤਿਨਿ ਤਿਆਗੀਮਾਇਆ ॥  
ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥੨॥  
ਸੈਨੁ ਨਾਈ ਬੁਤਕਾਰੀਆ ਓਹੁ ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਸੁਨਿਆ ॥  
ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਸਿਆ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਭਗਤਾ ਮਹਿ ਗਨਿਆ ॥੩॥  
ਇਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਸੁਨਿ ਕੈ ਜਾਟਰੋ ਉਠਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਾਗਾ ॥  
ਮਿਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਸਾਈਆ ਧੰਨਾ ਵਡਭਾਗਾ ॥੪॥੨॥

ਆਸਾ ਮ:੫, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੭

*Mahalaa panjavaa. Gobi(n)dh gobi(n)dh gobi(n)dh sa(n)g naamadheau man leenaa. Aadd dhaam ko chheeparo hoio laakheenaa. 1. Rahao. Bunanaa tananaa tiaag kai preet charan kabiraa. Neech kulaa jolaaharaa bhio guneey gaheeraa. 1. Ravidas dduva(n)taa ddor neet tin tiaagee maiaa. ParagaT hooa saadhasa(n)g har dharasan paiaa. 2. Sain naiee butakaareeaa oh ghar ghar suniaa. Hiradhe vasiaa paarabraham bhagataa meh ganiala. 3. Eeh bidh sun kai jaaTaro uTh bhagatee laagaa. Milae pratakh gusaieeaa dhanna vaddabhaagaa. 4.2.* SGGGS, p. 487

**Translation: (Bhagat) Namdev's mind was always absorbed in Naam. (With His blessing), the calico-printer, worth half a penny, became worth millions (since he was no longer dependent on anybody)1. Pause.**

Abandoning weaving and the stretching of cotton thread, Kabir cherished love of God's lotus feet. A weaver from a lowly family became an ocean of virtues. 1. (Earlier) Ravidas used to carry dead cows every day. (Since) he renounced the world of Maya, he became famous by keeping company of the learned persons (Saadh Sangat), the company of the saintly, and obtained the Blessed Vision of God. 2. Sain, the barber, the village drudge, was praised by every householder. God dwells in his heart, and he is counted among the devotees. 3. **Hearing this, Dhanna the Jaat applied himself to devotional worship. Dhanna was blessed by personally experiencing God.** 4. 2.

In this Shabad, Guru Arjan ji says clearly that the various Bhagats (Namdev, Kabir, Ravidas, Sain, and Dhanna) became enlightened, or achieved prominence, or gained respect of the sangat, or realized God through constant meditation of Him. Of course, Bhagat Dhanna did not literally meet God in person. Guru Arjan ji also says that the other Bhagats started worshipping God in the company of saintly persons (Sadh Sangat). When Dhanna learned about it, he felt blessed and followed them. He too started worshipping God in the company of saintly persons.

**The second composition of Bhagat Dhanna is as follows:**

ਰੇ ਚਿਤ ਚੇਤਸਿ ਕੀ ਨ ਦਯਾਲ ਦਮੋਦਰ ਬਿਬਹਿ ਨ ਜਾਨਸਿ ਕੋਈ ॥  
ਜੇ ਧਾਵਹਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡ ਖੰਡ ਕਉ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੈ ਸੁ ਹੋਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਜਨਨੀ ਕੇਰੇ ਉਦਰ ਉਦਕ ਮਹਿ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਕੀਆ ਦਸ ਦੁਆਰਾ ॥  
ਦੇਇ ਅਹਾਰੁ ਅਗਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਖੈ ਐਸਾ ਖਸਮੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥੧॥  
ਕੁੰਮੀ ਜਲ ਮਾਹਿ ਤਨ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਪੰਖ ਖੀਰੁ ਤਿਨ ਨਾਹੀ ॥  
ਪੂਰਨ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਮਨੋਹਰ ਸਮਝਿ ਦੇਖੁ ਮਨ ਮਾਹੀ ॥੨॥  
ਪਾਖਣਿ ਕੀਟੁ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਹੋਇ ਰਹਤਾ ਤਾ ਚੇ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥  
ਕਹੈ ਧੰਨਾ ਪੂਰਨ ਤਾਹੁ ਕੋ ਮਤ ਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਡਰਾਂਹੀ ॥੩॥੩॥

ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੫, ਅੰਗ ੪੮੮

*Rae chit chetas kee na dhayaal dhamodhar bibeh na jaanas koiee. Jae dhaaveh brahama(n)dd kha(n)dd kau karataa karai su hoiee. 1. Rahao. Jananee kere udhar udhak meh pi(n)dd keeaa dhas dhuaaraa. Dhei ahaar agan meh raakhai aaisaa khasam hamaaraa. 1. Ku(n)mee jal maeh tan tis baahar pa(n)kh kheer tin naahee. Pooran paramaana(n)dh manohar samajh dhekh man maahee. 2. Paakhan keeT gupat hoi rahataa taa cho maarag naahee. Kahai dha(n)naa pooran taahoo ko mat re jeeaa ddaraa(n)hee. 3. 3.*

SGGS, p. 488

**Translation: O my consciousness, why don't you remain conscious of God? Do not recognize anyone else. You may run around the whole universe, but that alone happens what God wishes. 1. Pause.** In the water (Amniotic fluid) of the mother's womb, He fashioned the body with ten gates (2 ears, 2 eyes, 2 nostrils, 1 mouth, 1 anus, 1 sex organ, and 1 secret opening). He gave it sustenance and preserved it in fire of the womb – (O mind see) my God is such (merciful). 1. The mother turtle (lives) in the water, and her babies are out of the water (on the sand). (Babies) have no wings (to fly to their mother to get food), and (mother turtle) has no teats (to provide milk to babies). God, the embodiment of supreme bliss takes care of them. See this and understand it. 2. The worm lies hidden inside the stone – there is no way for him to escape out in search of food. Says Dhanna, God takes care of him there. Fear not, O living creature (for sustenance). 3. 3.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਹੇ (ਮੇਰੇ) ਮਨ! ਦਇਆ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਿਮਰਦਾ? (ਵੇਖੀਂ) ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਤੇ ਆਸ ਨਾਹ ਲਾਈ ਰਖੀਂ। ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਸਾਰੀ ਸਿਸ਼੍ਰਿਟੀ ਦੇ ਦੇਸਾਂ ਪਰਦੇਸਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਭਟਕਦਾ ਫਿਰੇਂਗਾ, ਤਾਂ ਭੀ ਉਹੀ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਜੋ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਕਰੇਗਾ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O (my) consciousness! Why don't you remain conscious of compassionate God? (See) You should not place your hopes on anyone else. Even if you wander the whole universe, still that alone will happen what the Creator wishes.

This composition of Bhagat Dhanna is thus in full alignment with Sikhi principles, as per the teachings of the Sikh Gurus in SGGS.

**The third composition of Bhagat Dhanna** is generally sung with the Aarti Shabad and is as follows:

ਗੋਪਾਲ ਤੇਰਾ ਆਰਤਾ ॥

ਜੋ ਜਨ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰੰਤੇ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਕਾਜ ਸਵਾਰਤਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਦਾਲਿ ਸੀਧਾ ਮਾਗਉ ਘੀਉ ॥ ਹਮਰਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਕਰੈ ਨਿਤ ਜੀਉ ॥

ਪਨੀਆ ਛਾਦਨੁ ਨੀਕਾ ॥ ਅਨਾਜੁ ਮਗਉ ਸਤ ਸੀ ਕਾ ॥੧॥

ਗਉ ਭੈਸ ਮਗਉ ਲਾਵੇਰੀ ॥ ਇਕ ਤਾਜਨਿ ਤੁਰੀ ਚੰਗੇਰੀ ॥

ਘਰ ਕੀ ਗੀਹਨਿ ਚੰਗੀ ॥ ਜਨੁ ਧੰਨਾ ਲੇਵੈ ਮੰਗੀ ॥੨॥੪॥ ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਭਗਤ ਧੰਨਾ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੬੯੫

*Dhanna. Gopal teraa aarataa. Joe jan tumaree bhagat kara(n)te tin ke kaaj savaarataa. 1. Rahao. Dhaal seedhaa maagau gheeu. Humaraa khusee karai nit jeeau. Pan(h)eeaa chhaadhan neekaa. Anaaj magau sat see kaa. 1. Guoo bhais magau laaveree. Eik taajan turee cha(n)geree. ghar kee geehan cha(n)gee. Jan dha(n)naa levai ma(n)gee. 2.4. SGGs, p. 695*

**Translation: O God - sustainer of the earth, I am a beggar at Your doorstep (please fulfil my needs); You fulfil all needs of those humble beings who worship You with devotion. 1. Pause.** Lentils, flour, and ghee - these things, I beg of You. My mind shall ever be pleased. Shoes, fine clothes, and grain of seven kinds - I beg of You. 1. I beg of You, water buffalo who gives lots of milk, and a fine Arabian horse (a cherished breed). I, Your humble servant Dhanna, also begs You for a good wife to care for my home. 2.4.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਦਰ ਦਾ ਮੰਗਤਾ ਹਾਂ। (ਮੇਰਿਆਂ ਲੋੜਾਂ ਪੂਰਿਆਂ ਕਰ); ਜੋ ਜੋ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਤੇਰੀ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੂੰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਸਿਰੇ ਚਾੜ੍ਹਦਾ ਹੈਂ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O Lord, the Sustainer of the earth! I am a begger at your doorsteps (please fulfill my needs); You fulfill all needs of those humble beings who worship You with devotion.

The word “Aarta” in the Shabad rhymes with “Aarti,” and is sung with the “Aarti” Shabads. The word Aarta is from Sanskrit and means

“beggar”. However, Bhagat Dhanna’s Shabad on page 695 has nothing to do with the traditional Aarti ritual performed by Hindus. It does not contain any word related to the materials (e.g., flowers, incense, lamp, etc.) used by them as essential elements for performing an Aarti. Instead, in this Shabad, Bhagat Dhanna is requesting (begging) God for the necessities essential for sustaining human life on earth.

It is true that God provides for everything without our asking for it. Yet, there is no prohibition on asking for necessities for living a decent life on this earth. There are quite a few Shabads in SGGS where a devotee seeks items necessary to make a living. It must also be noted that one should only pray for basic needs; and not for indulgences or extravagances. Also, one should not ask anything from anyone other than from God.

SGGS says, for example, that:

- ਮਾਂਗਉ ਰਾਮ ਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਥੋਕ ॥  
ਮਾਨੁਖ ਕਉ ਜਾਚਤ ਸ੍ਰਮ ਪਾਈਐ, ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਮੋਖ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮ: ੫, ਅੰਗ ੬੮੨

*Maa(n)gau raam te sabh thok. Maanukh kau jaachat sram paieeai prabh kai Simran mokh. 1. Rahao.*

SGGS, p. 682

**Translation:** I beg only from God for all things. Begging from people can lead to embarrassment. But meditating on God can provide for living (daily) needs, as also the ultimate Salvation. Pause.

- ਮੈ ਤਾਣ ਦੀਬਾਣ ਤੂ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੇ ਸੁਆਮੀ, ਮੈ ਤੁਧੁ ਆਗੈ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥  
ਮੈ ਹੋਰ ਥਾਉ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਿਸੁ ਪਹਿ ਕਰਉ ਬੇਨੰਤੀ, ਮੇਰਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਤੁਧ ਹੀ ਪਾਸਿ ॥੧॥੧੨॥

ਸੂਹੀ ਮ: ੪, ਅੰਗ ੭੩੫

*Mai taan dheebaan toohai mere suaamee mai tudh aagai ardhaas. Mai hor  
thaau naahee jis peh karau bena(n)tee meraa dhukh such tijh hee paas. 2.*  
SGGS, p. 735

**Translation:** You alone are my anchor, and support, O my Master: my prayer is only before You. There is no other place where I can offer my prayers: I can open my pains and pleasures only to You. 2.

Bhai Gurdas in his Vaar 10.13 explains that to seek God one must become innocent and pure. To illustrate his point, he mentions one of the prevalent mythical stories connected with Bhagat Dhanna's life. The Vaar is as follows:

ਬਾਮੁਣ ਪੂਜੈ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਧੰਨਾ ਗਊ ਚਰਾਵਣਿ ਆਵੈ।  
ਧੰਨੈ ਡਿਠਾ ਚਲਿਤੁ ਏਹੁ ਪੁਛੈ ਬਾਮੁਣੁ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ।  
ਠਾਕੁਰ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰੈ ਜੋ ਇਛੈ ਸੋਈ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵੈ।  
ਧੰਨਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਜੋਦੜੀ ਮੈ ਭਿ ਦੇਹ ਇਕ ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ।  
ਪਥਰੁ ਇਕੁ ਲਪੇਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇ ਧੰਨੈ ਨੋ ਗੈਲ ਛੁਡਾਵੈ।  
ਠਾਕੁਰ ਨੋ ਨ੍ਹਾਵਾਲਿ ਕੈ ਛਾਹਿ ਰੋਟੀ ਲੈ ਭੋਗੁ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਵੈ।  
ਹਥਿ ਜੋੜਿ ਮਿਨਤਿ ਕਰੈ ਪੈਰੀ ਪੈ ਪੈ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਮਨਾਵੈ।  
ਹਉ ਭੀ ਮੁਹੁ ਨ ਜੁਠਾਲਸਾਂ ਤੂ ਰੁਠਾ ਮੈ ਕਿਹੁ ਨ ਸੁਖਾਵੈ।  
ਗੋਸਾਈ ਪਰਤਖਿ ਹੋਇ ਰੋਟੀ ਖਾਹਿ ਛਾਹਿ ਮੁਹਿ ਲਾਵੈ।  
ਭੋਲਾ ਭਾਉ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਮਿਲਾਵੈ ॥੧੩॥

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਵਾਰ ੧੦.੧੩

*Baamhan poojai dhevate Dhanna guoo charaavan aavai. Dhannai ddiThaa  
chalit eh puchhai baamhan aakh sunaavai. Thaakur dhee sevaa karai jo  
ichhai soiee fal paavai. Dhanna karadhaa jodhaRee mai bh dheh ik je tudh  
bhaavai. Pathar ik lapeT kar dhe Dhannai no gail chhuddaavai. Thaakur no  
nhaavaal kai chhaeh roTee lai bhog chaRhaavai. Hath joR minat karai  
pairee pai pai bahut manaavai. Hau bhee muh na juThaalasaa(n) too*

*ruThaa mai kih na sukhaavai. Gosaiee paratakh hoi roTee khaeh chhaeh  
muh laavai. Bholaa bhaau gobind milaavai. 13. Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 10.13*

**Translation:** A Brahmin would worship gods (in the form of stone idols) where Dhanna used to graze his cow. On seeing his worship, Dhanna asked the Brahmin, what was he doing. “Service to the Thakur gives the desired fruit,” replied the Brahmin. Dhanna requested, “O Brahmin! If you agree, kindly give one Thakur to me.” The Brahmin tagged a stone on to a bell, gave it to Dhanna, just to get rid of him. Dhanna bathed the Thakur and offered him bread and buttermilk. With folded hands and falling at the feet of the stone, he begged for his service to be accepted. Dhanna said, “I will also not eat, because how can I be happy if you are annoyed.” (Seeing his true and loving devotion) God was forced to appear and eat his bread and buttermilk. **In fact, innocence like that of Dhanna can lead to the achievement of closeness to God.**

This Vaar narrates an incident and a conversation between a Brahmin and Bhagat Dhanna – but, of course, God did not actually “appear and eat his bread and buttermilk.” Hence, this Vaar too should be understood metaphorically, and not literally. Its message – that true and loving devotion to God can bring us closer to Him – is completely consistent with the teachings of the SGGs.

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## 20. Bhagat Pipa

Bhagat Pipa (1425 CE—unknown) was born into a Rajput royal family (Kshatriya caste) at Gagaraungarh, in the present-day Jhalawar district of Rajasthan. He became the king of Gagaraungarh at a young age, succeeding his father. He abdicated the throne to become a mystic poet.

He was a philanthropist and a pious man at heart who served religious mendicants wholeheartedly. He went to Banaras and adopted Bhagat Ramanand as his mentor and teacher. Bhagat Pipa was in search of spiritual solace and said that one should search within oneself for God. He disdained the idea of seeking God in the external world.

There is only one composition of Bhagat Pipa in SGGS. He says that the body itself is God's temple (Kaiau deval). One should look inward to find God. One need not make stone images of Him and burn incense or light candles in front of them.

Bhagat Pipa's composition on page 695 of SGGS is as under:

ਕਾਯਉ ਦੇਵਾ ਕਾਇਅਉ ਦੇਵਲ ਕਾਇਅਉ ਜੰਗਮ ਜਾਤੀ ॥

ਕਾਇਅਉ ਧੂਪ ਦੀਪ ਨਈਬੇਦਾ ਕਾਇਅਉ ਪੂਜਉ ਪਾਤੀ ॥੧॥

ਕਾਇਆ ਬਹੁ ਖੰਡ ਖੋਜਤੇ ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਪਾਈ ॥

ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਆਇਬੋ ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਜਾਇਬੋ ਰਾਮ ਕੀ ਦੁਹਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਜੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡੇ ਸੋਈ ਪਿੰਡੇ ਜੋ ਖੋਜੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਵੈ ॥

ਪੀਪਾ ਪ੍ਰਣਵੈ ਪਰਮ ਤਤੁ ਹੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਹੋਇ ਲਖਾਵੈ ॥੨॥੩॥ ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਭਗਤ ਪੀਪਾ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੬੯੫



*Kaaiyau dhevaa kaiaau dheval kaiaau ja(n)gam jaatee. Kaiaau dhoop dheep nieebedhaa kaiaau poojau paatee. 1. Kaaiaa bahu kha(n)dd khojate nav nidh payee. Naa kachh aaibo naa kachh jaibo raam kee dhuhaiee. 1. Rahao. Joe brahama(n)dde soiee pi(n)dde jo khojai so paavai. Pipa pranavai param tat hai Satguru hoi lakhaavai. 2. 3.* SGGS, Pg. 695

**Translation:** (Search) within the body, as God (resides there). (Therefore, searching within) the body is for me becoming a Jangam (a worshipper of Shiva who travels to places of pilgrimage looking for God), and my body is the place of pilgrimage. (Searching within the body) is for me lighting my incense, lamps, and my offerings. **1. I searched throughout many realms, (eventually) I found all treasures (Naam) within the body. I have realized that nothing comes, and nothing goes (means, I have become free of birth-and-death cycle); in my body only His remembrance takes place (with His Grace). 1. Pause.** The One who pervades the Universe also dwells in the body; whoever seeks Him, finds Him (inside the body). Pipa prays; God is the supreme essence; He reveals Himself through the Guru. 2. 3.

ਰਹਾਉ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: ਦੇਸ ਦੇਸਾਂਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਖੋਜ ਕੇ (ਆਖਰ ਆਪਣੇ) ਸਰੀਰ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਹੀ ਮੈਂ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ-ਰੂਪ ਨੌਂ ਨਿਧਿ ਲੱਭ ਲਈ ਹੈ, (ਹੁਣ ਮੇਰੀ ਕਾਇਆਂ ਵਿਚ) ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਤੇਜ-ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਹੈ, (ਉਸ ਦੀ ਬਰਕਤ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰੇ ਲਈ) ਨਾ ਕੁਝ ਜਮਦਾ ਹੈ ਨਾਹ ਮਰਦਾ ਹੈ।) (ਭਾਵ, ਮੇਰਾ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਮਿਟ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ)।੧।ਰਹਾਉ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** I searched through many realms. (Eventually) I found all treasures (Naam) within the body. I have become free of birth-and-death cycle); in my body only His remembrance takes place (with His Grace). 1. Pause.

Bhagat Pipa emphasizes the following four points in his composition:

1. Do not remember God superficially. Do it with true devotion.
2. Remembering God is the real worship.
3. God resides inside everyone and permeates the whole universe. He is the Creator of the universe.
4. Only the Guru can help one meet God.

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## 21. Bhagat Bhikhan

Bhagat Bhikhan (1480—1574 CE), was a Hindu religious preacher. He was one of the most learned men of the time of Emperor Akbar. He lived a remarkably simple life. A married man and householder, he was held in high repute for his piety and learning. He was guided by pious and high thinking. For many years, he was engaged in teaching and instructing the people. His fame spread far and wide. Two of Bhagat Bhikhan's compositions are included in SGGS.

### The First composition of Bhagat Bhikhan

This composition of Bhagat Bhikhan on page 659 of SGGS is as follows:

ਨੈਨਹੁ ਨੀਰੁ ਬਹੈ ਤਨੁ ਖੀਨਾ ਭਏ ਕੇਸ ਦੁਧ ਵਾਨੀ ॥  
ਰੂਧਾ ਕੰਠੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨਹੀ ਉਚਰੈ ਅਬ ਕਿਆ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਰਾਨੀ ॥੧॥  
ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਹੋਹਿ ਬੈਦ ਬਨਵਾਰੀ ॥ ਅਪਨੇ ਸੰਤਹ ਲੇਹੁ ਉਬਾਰੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਮਾਥੇ ਪੀਰ ਸਰੀਰਿ ਜਲਨਿ ਹੈ ਕਰਕ ਕਰੇਜੇ ਮਾਹੀ ॥  
ਐਸੀ ਬੇਦਨ ਉਪਜਿ ਖਰੀ ਭਈ ਵਾ ਕਾ ਅਉਖਧੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥੨॥  
ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਜਲੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਇਹੁ ਅਉਖਧੁ ਜਗਿ ਸਾਰਾ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਕਹੈ ਜਨੁ ਭੀਖਨੁ ਪਾਵਉ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰਾ ॥੩॥੧॥ ਸੋਰਠ ਭਗਤ ਭੀਖਨ, ਅੰਗ ੬੫੯

*Nainahu neer bahai tan kheenaa bhe kes dhudh vaanee. Roodhaa ka(n)Th sabadh nahee ucharai ab kiaa kareh paraanee. 1. Ram rai hoh baidh banavaaree. Apane sa(n)teh leh ubaaree. 1. Rahao. Maathe peer sareer jalan hai karak kareje maahee. Aisee bedhan upaj kharee bhiee vaa kaa aaukhadh naahee. 2. Har kaa naam a(n)mirat jal niramal ih aaukhadh jag saaraa. Gur parasaadh kahai jan Bhikhan paavau mokh dhuaaraa. 3. 1*

SGGS, p. 659

**Translation:** (O human! in old age due to weakness) water flows down from your eyes, your body has become frail, and hairs have become milky-white. Your throat is choked (with phlegm) and cannot utter even one word clearly; what are you doing even now? (Why are you not meditating on God? Why are you still attached to the body?) 1. **O God! You, Yourself become the Physician and save Your devotees from attachment to body).** 1. **Pause.** (O human! Because of old age) your head aches, body burns, and heart is filled with anguish. (Every part of the body is in pain.) Such is the disease that has struck me; there is no medicine to cure it (still we are attached to the body). 2. (To get rid of the attachment to the body) **Naam, the ambrosial water, is the only medicine in the world.** Says servant Bhikhan, By Guru's Grace, I have found the Door of Salvation and am free of the bodily attachment. 3.1.

**In the Rahao Tuk,** the word “Ram” does not refer to god “Ram” of the Hindu epic Ramayana. Instead, it refers to the all-pervading God. The Shabad also says that “Naam, the ambrosial water, is the only medicine in the world.” This composition of Bhagat Bhikhan resembles that of Sheikh Farid which speaks about the vulnerability of old age. Bhagat Bhikhan's advice is to drink the nectar of Naam whilst one is alive.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਹੇ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਰਾਮ! ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ! ਜੇ ਤੂੰ ਹਕੀਮ ਬਣੇਂ ਤਾਂ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਹ ਅੱਭਿਆਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈਂ, ਭਾਵ - ਤੂੰ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਹਕੀਮ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਹ ਅੱਭਿਆਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈਂ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O wonderful God! (Only) You are the physician who can save your devotees (from attachment to the body).

## The Second composition of Bhagat Bhikhan

This composition of Bhagat Bhikhan on page 659 of SGGGS is as follows:

ਐਸਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਤਨੁ ਨਿਰਮੋਲਕੁ ਪੁੰਨਿ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥  
ਅਨਿਕ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਿ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਰਾਖਿਆ ਰਤਨੁ ਨ ਛਪੈ ਛਪਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਕਹਤੇ ਕਹਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਗੂੰਗੇ ਕੀ ਮਿਠਿਆਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਰਸਨਾ ਰਮਤ ਸੁਨਤ ਸੁਖ ਸ੍ਰਵਨਾ ਚਿਤ ਚੇਤੇ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਈ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਭੀਖਨ ਦੁਇ ਨੈਨ ਸੰਤੋਖੇ ਜਹ ਦੇਖਾਂ ਤਹ ਸੋਈ ॥੨॥੨॥ ਸੋਰਠ ਭਗਤ ਭੀਖਨ, ਅੰਗ ੬੫੯

*Aisaa naam ratan niramolak pu(n)n padhaarath paiaa. Anik jatan kar hiradhai raakhiaa ratan na chhapai chhapaiaa.1. Har gun kahate kahan na jaiee. Jaise goo(n)ge kee miThiaaiee.1. Rahao. Rasanaa ramat sunat sukh sravanaa chit chete sukh hoiee. Kahu Bhikhan dhui nain sa(n)tokhe jeh dhekhaa(n) teh soiee.2. 2* SGGs, p. 659

**Translation:** Such is the Naam, the invaluable jewel, the most sublime wealth, which I have found through good deeds. By various efforts, I have enshrined it within my heart; this jewel cannot be hidden even if one tries to hide it. 1. **(The bliss one experiences while singing) The Glorious Praises of God cannot be explained by speaking. It is like the sweet candies given to a mute (as the mute cannot explain the sweetness he is experiencing).** 1. **Pause.** (This jewel – Naam,) The tongue speaks, the ears listen, and the mind contemplates God; they find peace and comfort. Says Bhikhan, my eyes are content (by contemplating on God); wherever I look, there I see God. 2. 2.

**ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼:** ਉਂਝ ਉਹ ਸੁਆਦ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਜੋ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਗੂੰਗੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਖਾਧੀ ਮਿਠਿਆਈ ਦਾ ਸੁਆਦ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗ ਸਕਦਾ – ਗੂੰਗਾ ਦੱਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** (After all, that taste) cannot be described (which comes) while singing the praises of God, which is like the sweet candy eaten by a mute person (who cannot speak about the sweetness he is experiencing).

Here, Bhagat Bhikhan describes the effect of Naam-Simran on a person's body, soul, and mind. The taste of Naam is indescribable, says Bhagat Bhikhan, just as a mute man cannot explain the taste of sweet candy. If you ask this mute person to describe his experience of the

taste of candy, he will remain silent, as he cannot speak. But he will just smile, and that smile says everything.

Similarly, the knower of the Absolute Truth (Naam) becomes speechless and silent, and thus behaves like a mute. God (Naam) provides indescribable comfort and joy to the mind. Remembering Him is comforting. Bhagat Bhikhan says that his eyes have experienced contentment by remembering God. Now, in whichever direction he looks, he perceives God.

**ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ:** ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਇਕ ਐਸਾ ਅਮੋਲਕ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਰਤਨ ਨੂੰ ਅਨੇਕ ਜਤਨ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਭੀ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਚ (ਗੁਪਤ) ਰੱਖੀਏ, ਤਾਂ ਭੀ ਲੁਕਾਇਆਂ ਇਹ ਲੁਕਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਉਹ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋ ਹੀ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

**Central message:** Naam (God) is like a precious jewel. It can only be obtained by one's good deeds and God's Grace. Once the gift of Naam has been received, one may try to hide this precious jewel in the heart, yet it cannot be hidden. Others will perceive the purity of the devotee's heart.

The essence of both the Shabads of Bhagat Bhikhan is that it is man's deeds that cause him suffering and lack of contentment. Caught in the web of Maya (material world) and love for his body, man is engaged in seeking quick fixes, like adding patches of leather for mending a shoe. However, he can secure liberation from such a situation only if God bestows His Grace on him. Then the path to spiritual liberation will become open to him. God's Grace would be bestowed upon him provided he always remembers and devotes himself fully to God, who is the Curer of all ills of the world.

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## 22. Bhagat Parmanand

Bhagat Parmanand (1483–1574 CE) was a highly respected religious preacher and poet. He was born into a Brahmin family in village Kannauj, District Farrukhabad. He is believed to have lived at Barsi, to the north of Pandharpur, in present-day Sholapur district of Maharashtra state in western India. He died at age 91, after a long and fruitful life.

**Bhagat Parmanand's one composition** is included in SGGS. It is on page 1253, and is as follows:

ਤੈ ਨਰ ਕਿਆ ਪੁਰਾਨੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਕੀਨਾ ॥  
ਅਨਪਾਵਨੀ ਭਗਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਉਪਜੀ ਭੂਖੈ ਦਾਨੁ ਨ ਦੀਨਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਕਾਮੁ ਨ ਬਿਸਰਿਓ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਨ ਬਿਸਰਿਓ ਲੋਭੁ ਨ ਛੂਟਿਓ ਦੇਵਾ ॥  
ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਨਹੀ ਛੂਟੀ ਨਿਫਲ ਭਈ ਸਭ ਸੇਵਾ ॥੧॥  
ਬਾਟ ਪਾਰਿ ਘਰੁ ਮੂਸਿ ਬਿਰਾਨੋ ਪੇਟੁ ਭਰੈ ਅਪ੍ਰਾਧੀ ॥  
ਜਿਹਿ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਜਾਇ ਅਪਕੀਰਤਿ ਸੋਈ ਅਬਿਦਿਆ ਸਾਧੀ ॥੨॥  
ਹਿੰਸਾ ਤਉ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਨਹੀ ਛੂਟੀ ਜੀਅ ਦਇਆ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਲੀ ॥  
ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਥਾ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਨ ਚਾਲੀ ॥੩॥੧॥੬॥

ਸਾਰੰਗ ਭਗਤ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੨੫੩

***Tai nar kiaa puraan sun keenaa. Anapaavaneeh bhagat naheeh upajee bhookhai dhaan na dheenaa. 1. Rahao. Kaam na bisario karodh na bisario lobh na chhooTio devaa. Par ni(n)dhaa mukh te naheeh chhooTee nijal bhieeh sabh sevaa. 1. BaaT paar ghar moos biraano peT bharai apraadhee. Jeh paralok jai apakeerat soieeh abidhiaa saadhee. 2. Hi(n)saa tau man te naheeh chhooTee jeeeh dhiaa naheeh paaleeh. Paramaanand saadhasangat mil kathaah puneet na chaaleeh. 3. 1.6.*** SGGS, p. 1253

**Translation: You have accomplished nothing by listening to the Puranas (one of the many Hindu scriptures). Neither eternal devotion has welled up within you nor have you served the needy. 1. Pause.** (By listening to Puranas) You have not forgotten lust, and you have not forgotten anger; greed has not left you either. Your mouth has not stopped slandering and gossiping about others. All your effort (for reading the Puranas) has gone waste. 1. (Even after listening to Puranas) You fill your belly by breaking into the houses of others and robbing them. But when you go to the world beyond, your guilt will be well known, by the acts of foolishness which you committed. 2. O Parmanand! (By listening to sacred books) Cruelty has not left your mind; you do not cherish kindness for other living beings. You have not joined the Saadh Sangat (Company of the Holy) to talk about God (which can make you pure). (You have not developed any interest to keep company of the Holy).3. 1. 6.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! ਪੁਰਾਣ ਆਦਿ ਧਰਮ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਤੂੰ ਖਟਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਕੁਝ ਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ; ਤੇਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਨਾਹ ਤਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਦੀ ਅਟਲ ਭਗਤੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਈ ਤੇ ਨਾਹ ਹੀ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਲੋੜਵੰਦ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕੀਤੀ।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** O brother! By (simply) listening to (and not following) the teachings of religious books, you have accomplished nothing; neither the eternal devotion has welled up within you nor did you serve the needy.

In this composition, Bhagat Parmanand specifically mentions “the Puranas” (which are sacred Hindu texts), but his message covers other religious scriptures as well. He is quite clear that the mere reading of scriptures is futile if that action has not also inspired one to serve fellow beings. He commends sincere devotion of God, which can be accomplished much more easily in the company of religious preachers and saintly persons (as in a Sadh Sangat). He also says that human vices such as lust, wrath, avarice, and slander must be expunged from the mind, for they render all service to others fruitless.

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## 23. Bhagat Surdas

Bhagat Surdas (1478–1586 CE) was a preacher, poet, and musician. He was a saintly person. His parents had named him Madan Mohan at birth, but as he did not like the name, he changed it to Surdas. Bhagat Surdas's dates of birth and death are somewhat uncertain. Some say he was born in 1478 CE, while others say he was born in 1528 CE in Siri village near Delhi. Some others believe that he lived from 1483 to 1573 CE.

Even though Bhagat Surdas was born completely blind, he became a scholar of Persian, Hindi, and Sanskrit. His lilting music and fine poetry attracted many followers and earned him many laurels. As his fame spread far and wide, the Mughal emperor Akbar (1542-1605 CE) became his patron. Akbar was a great admirer of learned people. He appointed Bhagat Surdas the governor of a state. Being a person of simple and compassionate nature, Bhagat Surdas used his position to help the poor.

There is just one line composed by Bhagat Surdas in SGGS.

ਛਾਡਿ ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਮੁਖਨ ਕੋ ਸੰਗੁ ॥

*Chhaadd man har bimukhan ko sa(n)g.*

ਸਾਰੰਗ ਭਗਤ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੨੫੩

SGGS, p. 1253

**Translation:** O mind, do not even associate with those who have turned their backs on God.

In general, in SGGS the name of the Bhagat who composed the Shabad is written above the Shabad(s). Bhagat Surdas's verse is an exception. The name of the composer is not written before the Shabad. However, the authorship of the Shabad becomes clear from the heading of the next Shabad, which says “ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ”. Here,



Guru Arjan ji is explaining how to leave the company of those who have turned their backs on God. Guru ji is thus elaborating on the preceding composition by Bhagat Surdas.

Guru Arjan ji 's Shabad, also on page 1253 of SGGGS, is as follows:

ਸਾਰੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਗ ਬਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੋਕ ॥

ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਅਰਪਿ ਸਰਬਸੁ ਸਭੁ ਅਰਪਿਓ ਅਨਦ ਸਹਜ ਧੁਨਿ ਤੋਕ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪੇਖਿ ਭਏ ਨਿਰਬਿਖਈ ਪਾਏ ਹੈ ਸਗਲੇ ਥੋਕ ॥

ਆਨ ਬਸਤੁ ਸਿਉ ਕਾਜੁ ਨ ਕਛੁਐ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਬਦਨ ਅਲੋਕ ॥੧॥

ਸਿਆਮ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਤਜਿ ਆਨ ਜੁ ਚਾਹਤ ਜਿਉ ਕੁਸਟੀ ਤਨਿ ਜੋਕ ॥

ਸੂਰਦਾਸ ਮਨੁ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਹਥਿ ਲੀਨੋ ਦੀਨੋ ਇਹੁ ਪਰਲੋਕ ॥੨॥੧॥੮ ॥

ਸਾਰੰਗ ਭਗਤ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਅੰਗ ੧੨੫੩

*Har ke sang base har lok. Tun mun arap sarabas sabh arapio anadh sahaj dhun jhok.1. Rahao. Dharshan pekh bhe nirabikhiee paae hai sagale thok. Aan basat siau kaaj na kachhooaai su(n)dhara badhan alok.1. siaam su(n)dhara taj aan ju chaahat jiau kusaTee tan jok. Bhagat Surdas ji mun prabh hath leeno dheeno ih paralok.2.1.8.*

SGGS, p. 1253

**Translation: (O Surdas!) The people of God dwell with God (thus, (metaphorically) they part company with those who have turned their back on God). They dedicate their minds and bodies to Him; they dedicate everything to Him. They are intoxicated with the celestial melody of intuitive ecstasy. 1. Pause.** Gazing upon the Blessed Vision of God's Darshan, they are cleansed of corruption. They obtain absolutely everything (i.e. they get rid of ill desires). They have nothing to do with anything else; they gaze on the beautiful Face of God. 1. (O Surdas!) But one, who forsakes the elegantly beautiful God, and harbors desire for anything else, is like a leech on the body of a leper (and suck the contaminated blood). But hey Surdas! For those, whose mind God holds in His Own Hands, they are blessed in this world and the world beyond (i.e., they live in a state of bliss in this world and the world beyond). 2. 1. 8.

ਰਹਾਉ ਦੀ ਤੁੱਕ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼: (ਹੈ ਸੂਰਦਾਸ!) ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਬੰਦੇ (ਸਦਾ) ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਵਸਦੇ ਹਨ। (ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਹਿਜ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਬੇ-ਮੁਖਾਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਥ ਛੁੱਟ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ); ਉਹ ਆਪਣਾ ਤਨ ਮਨ ਆਪਣਾ ਸਭ ਕੁਛ (ਇਸ ਪਿਆਰ ਤੋਂ) ਸਦਕੇ ਕਰ ਦੇਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਨੰਦ ਦੇ ਹੁਲਾਰੇ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਸਹਿਜ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਤਾਰ (ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਬੱਝ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ)।

**Message of the Rahao Tuk:** (O Surdas!) People who do devotional worship of God (always) abide with God (in this way their companionship is cut off from those who have turned their back on God). They dedicate their minds, bodies, and everything (out of this love), they are intoxicated with celestial melody of intuitive ecstasy.

It is interesting to note that although the Shabad has been composed by Guru Arjan ji , in the last Tuk the name of Bhagat Surdas has been used instead of Guru ji as the composer (as “Nanak”), as is the convention in SGGS.

The explanation for this usage is as follows: There are a few Saloks in SGGS among Sheikh Farid’s Saloks which are in fact composed by the Third Nanak and the Fifth Nanak. In those Saloks, the name used is “Farid” instead of Nanak. Guru jis felt a need to expand on Farid’s Saloks to clarify the point unambiguously. Since the compositions were in connection with Sheikh Farid’s Saloks, the Bhagat’s name was used in the Saloks. But as the Saloks were composed by Guru jis, they made this clear by adding “Mahla 3” and “Mahla 5” in the beginning of the Saloks. The same practice was followed by Guru Arjan ji when he elaborated on the composition by Bhagat Surdas on page 1253 of SGGS, as given above.

In India, Bhagat Surdas’ poems are credited with improving the literary value of the Hindi language, transforming it from a rustic to a polished language. His numerous Padas (verses) composed in Brajbhasha are considered a treasure house of the best in Hindi poetry.

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5. "Sikhi to the Max", website, for the transliteration and English translation of Gurbani. (Adapted by the authors for clarity and consistency). <https://www.sikhithemax.org/>
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7. *An Introduction to Sri Guru Granth Sahib* by Gurbachan Singh Talib, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala, for Appendix 1 (# of compositions of Bhagats in SGGs).
8. *Se Bhagat Satgur Man Bhae* by Roop Singh (Editor). Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC).

## Appendix 1: Compositions of Bhagats in SGGS

	<b>Bhagat's Name</b>	<b># of Compositions</b>
1	Bhagat Kabir	534
2	Bhagat Namdev	62
3	Sheikh Farid	123
4	Bhagat Ravidas	40
5	Bhagat Jaidev	2
6	Bhagat Sadhna	1
7	Bhagat Trilochan	5
8	Bhagat Beni	3
9	Bhagat Ramanand	1
10	Bhagat Sain	1
11	Bhagat Dhanna	4
12	Bhagat Pipa	1
13	Bhagat Bhikhan	2
14	Bhagat Parmanand	1
15	Bhagat Surdas (Note: Only one line is by him, and rest of the Shabad is by Guru Arjan ji )	1

## Appendix 2: Bhagats in Chronological Order

#	Bhagat	Period (CE)
1	Bhagat Jaidev	1170-1245
2	Bhagat Sheikh Farid	1173-1265
3	Bhagat Sadhna	1180-unknown
4	Bhagat Trilochan	1267-unknown
5	Bhagat Namdev	1270-1350
6	Bhagat Ravidas	1399-1520
7	Bhagat Sain	1400-1490
8	Bhagat Ramanand	1400-1470
9	Bhagat Dhanna	1415-1475
10	Bhagat Pipa	1425-unknown
11	Bhagat Kabir	1398-1518
12	Bhagat Beni	Mid 15 <sup>th</sup> – mid 16 <sup>th</sup> century
13	Bhagat Surdas	1478-1586
14	Bhagat Bhikhan	1480-1574
15	Bhagat Parmanand	1483-1574

*Note:* Authors differ on the dates of birth and death of Bhagats. They also differ on other aspects of Bhagats' life – place of birth, religion, miracles associated with their lives. To be consistent, most of the data has been taken from Sikhi Wiki.

## Other Books by the Authors

### Books by Bhupinder Singh:

1. *Connecting with the Master* - A collection of essays on topics related to Sikhism (Sanbun, 2006)
2. *Gurmat Quotient (GQ)* - Book on development of Spirituality (Sanbun, 2008)
3. *Rehraas - With meaning and commentary in English* (Sanbun, 2008)
4. *Why are we Here?* – Book on exploring the purpose of human life (Sanbun, 2009)
5. *Fish Eat Fish World* – An Illustrated Children’s book (Gracious, 2017)
6. *Humility* – A Spiritual Journey (Gracious, 2018)
7. *In Bully’s Eyes* – An Illustrated Children’s book on Bullying (Unique, 2019)

### Books by Paramjit Singh Sachdeva:

1. *Appreciating Sikhism* (New Delhi, UBSPD, 2008).
2. *Appreciating All Religions — Religious Literacy in Small Bites* (Bloomington, Author House, 2011).
3. *Sikh Dharam*, Punjabi translation of *Appreciating Sikhism* (Chandigarh, Unistar Books, 2015).

### Books by Karamjit Singh & volunteers of Sri Hemkunt Foundation:

1. *Guru Nanak ji* (English & Panjabi, for ages 6-8)
2. *The Second – Fourth Nanaks* (English & Panjabi, for ages 6-8).
3. *The Fifth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 6-8).
4. *The Sixth – Eighth Nanaks* (English & Panjabi, for ages 9-11)
5. *The Ninth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 9-11)
6. *The Tenth Nanak* (English & Panjabi, for ages 9-11)
7. *The Sikhs 1718-1801* (English & Panjabi, for ages 12-14)

## Back Cover

Guru Amardas ji has said about the Bhagats:

ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਚਾਲ ਭਗਤਾ ਜੁਗਹੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ॥੧੪॥

kahai naanak chaal bhagataa jugahu jug niraalee. 14.

SGGS, p 918

Says Nanak, the lifestyle of the devotees, in every age, is unique and distinct.

This book highlights messages of the 15 Bhagats whose compositions are included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS). It covers many of their compositions, along with simple translations and explanations. The main purpose is to help the reader understand the primary messages of the Bhagats' compositions, and to recognize how closely aligned these are with the Sikh Gurus' teachings in SGGS.

The Bhagats' compositions often refer to mythological stories of Hindu gods, seemingly miraculous events, and ritualistic practices. By doing so, the Bhagats were able to connect with an audience comprised at that time mostly of Hindus already familiar with such mythological stories and traditional (Hindu) religious practices in India.

Rather than dwelling on the Bhagats' own lives or on the mythological stories they refer to in their compositions, this book seeks to explain the Bhagats' compositions in the context of the teachings of SGGS. Guru Nanak ji and his successor Gurus occasionally elaborated on the Bhagats' compositions to clarify their central message, and to show its consistency with the Gurus' own Shabads.

The book seeks to convince a reader that when properly understood, the Bhagats' compositions are fully consistent with the other Shabads in SGGS. The Gurus have personally attested to this, by themselves including them in the Sikh scripture, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.