

## Hijacking of Sikhi

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### PART 1

Sikhi as it is practiced today, is no longer the Sikhi that was taught to us by our Gurus. It is a spirituality that stands distorted, corrupted and tainted.

Its scripture - Gurbani - has been distorted through vedic and puranic slants in interpretations and translations.

Its history has been muddled in unbelievable tales of miracles called Sakhis.

Its general conduct has come to be dictated by an institutionalized clergy – a group that was soundly critiqued by our Gurus and clearly excluded from Sikhi.

And its religious practices consist primarily of those smuggled in from rejected and discarded rituals of pre-1469 faiths. Those practices that had been discarded and rejected by Guru Nanak.

It's a faith that has been hijacked from its unique path and equally distinct goals. How, when and why did this happen?

Contained within this series of Videos is the story of a spirituality hijacked. It's a agony filled story of the corruption and distortion of a divine spirituality named Sikhi that was painstakingly constructed over a period of 239 years (1469 -1708 AD) by our Gurus.

Bhai Gurdas ji says of Sikhi:

ਮਾਰਿਆ ਸਿੱਕਾ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਪੰਥ ਚਲਾਯਾ ॥

*Mariya Sikka Jagat Vich, Nanak Nirmal Panth Chalya.*

Nirmal means unique, one of its kind, free from contamination, and free from distortions. The meaning of the verse is thus: In the world of spirituality, the way of Guru Nanak has its trademark in its uniqueness.

The uniqueness of Sikhi was total and complete. Every aspect of Sikh Spirituality was uniquely different from the then existing ones.

The concept of a One Omnipresent Realizable God that is manifest in His Creation and realized within us; the Enlightenment of the Shabd as Guru; the spirituality's focus on the HERE and NOW are amongst Sikhi's foundational principles.

It is a philosophy that rejected ritual and advocated obtaining salvation while still alive, in the HERE and NOW.

It is a spirituality whose objective is to elevate the human into divine; a spirituality of the self, by the self and for the self – devoid of a clergy or any other intermediary between the human being and the Creator within.

Its Scripture is one that gave space to followers of different faiths. The emphasis of which is on humanity, gender equality and the need to elevate one's mind to Godly levels.

These are just some of the defining features of Sikhi in its original and authentic sense.

But to the greatest detriment of Sikhi's uniqueness, history would have it that THREE powerful groups - all of which were fake, deviant and / or anti Sikhi - would control our institutions, our literature, historical narratives, and our gurdwaras - and by extension the fate and psyche of Sikhi - for a long period of 207 years from 1718 till 1925.

I call this unfortunate pursuit the HIJACKING OF SIKHI. It was a calculated mission, and it was a forced quest to take Sikhi away from its intended uniqueness and destination. It was an endeavour to extricate or remove Guru Nanak from His own spiritual way. It was a deliberate effort to take Sikhi back to the same crossroads at which Guru Nanak stood in 1469 – but the effort was to steer Sikhi in the direction that Guru Nanak chose to AVOID. To take Sikhi on the path that Guru Nanak told us NOT to take.

In the 207 years of the hijacking, virtually everything about the uniqueness of Sikhi that was constructed by our Gurus in 239 years would be turned on its head. And everything that was thrown into the dustbins of spirituality by our Gurus and Bhagats would be systematically picked up and placed BACK on the altar of accepted Sikh religious practices.

The combined effect of the prolonged efforts of the hijacking would be that Sikhi would take on a severely ritualistic mode, its spirituality would focus on the Brahmin concocted lie of life after death; the enlightenment centric SHABD GURU would be replaced by the offering-worthy and worship or pooja-centric GRANTH GURU; the spiritually enlightening Shabd would be relegated to merely songs fit for singing and chanting; non-Gurbani poems with anti-Sikhi messages would be smuggled into Sikhi as kirtan; the divine and uplifting messages of Gurbani would be relegated to meaningless nonstop reciting and chanting by paid and hired hands; worthless physical worship of the Granth would be promoted as core spiritual activity; a Sikh clergy that first adopted, and then superseded the ways of the Brahmin would entrench itself within Sikhi with deep roots; Gurbani-rejected practices would become standard fare and the elevation of the mind would be corrupted by mythology and eventually replaced by the importance of mere outwardly appearance.

To the greatest detriment of Sikhi's uniqueness, an institutionalized clergy – a group that was soundly critiqued by our Gurus, would ensure that the religious practices of Sikhi would come to consist of those smuggled in from rejected and discarded rituals of pre-1469 faiths.

Within the belief system of the Hijacked Sikhi, the Sikh of today looks up to the heavens for a praise-thirsty clergy-concocted god sitting up there; prays to that god for miracles to resolve his worldly affairs; makes offerings to please that god; remains obsessed with the notion of rewards after death; considers the 1429 page Gurbani as a *mantra* to be chanted by the self or by hired hands to obtain material wealth, cures for disease as well as other askings.

The Sikh of today makes deals with his god to undertake Akhand Paths, Sehej Paths and Sukhmani paths if god would solve his problems. The SGGS is to him an object of worship or pooja – fit only for offering items and money. Understanding the SGGS is of no concern to him, consequently, Gurbani ideals such as a spirituality of virtues, humanity and equality hold no relevance to him.

The Sikh of today considers spirituality as being located within external symbols and outer garb. He believes his vices can be cleansed by a variety of rituals, offerings and deals such as pilgrimages, fixed number of paths, or dipping in pools of historic gurdwaras in India.

Sikhi thus stands as a faith that has been hijacked from its unique path and equally distinct goals. It is a Godly spirituality that has been corrupted into a clergy- concocted and clergy dominated religious dogma.

We know that Guru Nanak did not start a religion. He was a man of spirituality. He was man of humanity. He asked mankind to realize the Creator that was within us and connect deeply with humanity that was all around us. To leave the world a better place than the one that was gifted to us was his primary message.

His was a spirituality of the self, by the self, for the self. ਆਪਣ ਹਥੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕਾਜੁ ਸਵਾਰੀਐ ॥ *Apan Hathee Apna Apey Hee Kaaj Swareay*. SGGS 474. Sikhi was a spirituality that required us to walk the very same inner journey that Guru Nanak himself undertook. ਨਾਨਕ ਰਇਆ ਜਾਪੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ *Nanak Gya Japey Jaye*. SGGS 7. Sikhi was a spirituality of inner enlightenment that cut out inner ignorance. ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਜਨੁ ਸਚੁ ਨੇਤ੍ਰੀ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਅਗਿਆਨੁ ਅੰਧੇਰੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥ *Gur Gyan Anjun Sach Neytri Paya. Antur Chanan Agyan Andher Gvayia*. SGGS 124.

What we have today within the Sikh world is a religion, organized and institutionalized into a dogma, creed, and code – elements that our Gurus told us were anti-thesis to an inner journey of spirituality.

What we also have today is a gamut of rituals – mostly lifted from other religions, modified to fit “Sikh” situations or invented by our clergy. We have picked up – from the dustbins of spirituality – and placed on our religious pedestal - those discarded hodge podge of rituals that were thrown out by our Bhagats and Gurus.

This religion is run, dictated to and controlled by our clergy class. It is the invent of our clergy. It demands unquestioning blind faith and belief in even the most ridiculous and blasphemous of “sakhis” - each and every one that was composed by our clergy; a vast majority of which go against the dictates of Gurbani as contained within the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS).

The dictate of inner enlightenment has been discarded in place of blind faith.

Our Gurdwaras act as the headquarters of the clergy and as the primary institutions of propagating the doctrine of this creed. The clergy at the five Takhats stand ready to excommunicate anyone who questions this doctrine.

Sikh spirituality has been hijacked. The hijacked airplane of Sikh Spirituality has been diverted and has been force landed at a destination that was not intended to by our Gurus.

Guru Nanak gave us a spirituality. A universal spirituality. A divine spirituality. A spirituality for the entirety of mankind.

The hijackers have handed us a religion instead. A dogmatic religion. A ritualistic religion. In so doing they have robbed us of our spirituality.

Religion is belief in someone else’s claim of experience; Spirituality is searching your own experience.

Spirituality is a personal connection with the Creator. Religion is to bribe the clergy-concocted god to do our bidding through them.

Spirituality is about self-control. Religion is nothing more than crowd control. Spirituality results in the birth of an authentic self. Religion

creates a conditioned, dogmatic and self-righteous self; it creates a self who feels superior to those who do not subscribe to his or her dogma.

Spirituality is about building humanity and living it. Religion is about building structures of brick and stone, adorning them with marble and gold and subscribing to the clergy claim that our Guru resides therein.

Spirituality is about how I should live, about what is the meaning of life, where do I find it, and how do I feel connected. Religion is about what dogma and rituals I should follow.

Religion is a self-serving agreement between a group of people about how our religion is better than that of others, about how our religion leads to heaven and the others don't. Spirituality, on the other hand, is an agreement with myself about how I can be a better human being today than I was yesterday.

Religion has become a tool for power, control, wealth accumulation and domination. Religion is what Guru Nanak stood up against. Our clergy has transformed Sikhi into a religion, and we have embraced it as such.

In short, the uniqueness of Sikhi stands severely eroded.

Sikhi would simply appear to be an extension or worse, a badly plagiarized copy of the pre-1469 religious practices.

And Sikhs would proudly make such claims themselves: - that Sikhi was a combination of the best of Hinduism and Islam; that the SGGS was the "fifth Veyd" – that Gurbani was a simplified version of the 4 vedas; that Sikh Gurus and their children were "reincarnations" of mythological brahmanical gods and goddesses; that our Gurus were the protectors of Hinduism – that they were the Khatri muscle for the Brahmin mind; that Sikhi was an offshoot that could only grow under the shade of the big banyan tree that was Snatan theology, and that the Tenth Sikh Guru worshipped mythical entities such as Durga, Chandee, Shiva, Bhavani, and Bhagauti and composed an entire Granth in their honor - a blasphemous granth full of sexual depravity that would be installed within our Takhats. Installed right next to the Divine Sri Guru Granth

Sahib Ji – as if to challenge the supremacy, the sacrosanctity and the authority of the Shabd Guru. And millions of Sikhs would come to bow their heads to this fake granth every day without batting an eyelid.

The spiritual airplane of Sikhi would be systematically but surely hijacked and taken back to the destination it intended to break away from.

Looking at Sikhi practices as they exist today, it would appear as if Guru Nanak did NOT come to this world in 1469. That he never existed. That he never did give us a spirituality that was unique. For if he did, then why are his Sikhs practicing something else altogether? Why are Sikhs still conducting their spirituality as if living in 1468? Why are Sikhs undertaking acts and holding on to beliefs that were specifically discarded? And why are they doing it with blinding faith and fervour – ready to disown, ex-communicate, condemn, threaten, physically harm and even kill those Sikhs seeking to follow the authentic messages of Gurbani.

The saddest part of course is simply that a vast majority of Sikhs slept through it all. A bigger majority is still asleep. Wondering what the fuss is all about. As a result, the truth has become stranger than fiction. Sikhs who have become aware of the hijacking and desire to return to authentic Gurbani and SGGS based Sikhi are looked upon as “deviants” and “heretics” while the followers of the hijacked version are considered as “true” and “genuine” Sikhs.

These “self-proclaimed true and genuine Sikhs” have even taken it upon themselves to shout down, shut out, physically prevent, threaten and assault the peace loving Sikhs who wish to return to a Gurbani and SGGS based Sikhi spirituality.

But the awakening has come and is surely building up in momentum. Some of the factors that brought about this awakening include the internet, the “question everything” outlook of the millennials and, most importantly, the increasing incompatibility of hijacked Sikhi practices with modern day reason, logic and justification.

This incompatibility is glaring for any Sikh who attempts to obtain a genuine understanding of Gurbani within the SGGS and discovers that Gurbani is actually a spirituality that is presented within the premises of reason and logic.

This awakening is helped by a rising tide of Gurbani based Sikhi parchar that is undertaken by enlightened Sikhs who have come to realize the hijacked state of Sikhi. The awakening is further fuelled by a backlash against what is seen as a severely compromised Sikh leadership which does not have the interests of authentic Sikhi in their minds, but has instead sold their souls to corrupted elements.

The anger at our corrupt leadership in particular and at our self-serving clergy has forced ordinary thinking Sikhs to turn to the critics of our leaders and critics of our clergy for direction. These critics happen to be authentic Sikhi parcharaks as well as critical thinkers, writers, commentators and speakers.

Nevertheless, the hijacking and the resulting distortion, corruption and contamination of Sikhi continues to remain the most critical issue confronting spiritual Sikhs and is expected to remain so throughout the 21st Century. Understanding how and why it happened is thus important and forms the substantive content of these series of videos.

Let's begin with attempting to understand as to WHEN IT ALL BEGAN.

The hijacking of Sikhi began around 1718 – a mere decade after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh – our final Guru. It began after the fall of the Sikh Raj of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur. It can be argued that the fall itself was the work of the cunning, deception and betrayal by elements of the hijacker groups. In any case, the fall would be followed by the capture and execution of Baba Banda Singh and his entire army of Sikhs.

Authentic Sikhs – because there was a price on their heads and limbs – would take refuge in the jungles of Punjab, the desert regions of Bikaner in Rajasthan and the hills of Jammu and Kashmir.



The void and vacuum would allow Sikh gurdwaras, Sikh institutions and virtually everything connected to the Sikh psyche to fall into the hands of THREE groups who were either anti-Sikhi, deviant or even non-Sikhs. And it remained in their hands for a long and continuous period of time of more than two centuries. In other words, the hijacking of Sikhi would become a reality at the hands of these three groups.

The clearest evidence that these hijacker groups were anti- Sikhs lay in their ability to go around the business of running our gurdwaras, institutions and everything related to them – unhindered and unfettered – even as authentic Sikhs were hunted down, had a price on their heads and limbs; and were often betrayed by bounty hunters, greedy neighbours or by the hijacker groups themselves.

The bounty hunters and the rulers of the day left the hijackers alone, let them run our gurdwaras and institutions because the rulers knew they were not Sikhs, and the bounty hunters knew their heads would fetch no price.

The other equally compelling evidence was that these groups enjoyed the support and patronage of the two foreign powers that ruled Punjab for two and a half centuries – the Mughals and the British.

Both occupying rulers – first the Mughals and later the British - considered the Sikhi of Guru Nanak to be enemy of the state and remained hostile towards authentic Sikhs but actively supported these three anti-Sikhi groups in the name of divide and rule.

These groups are the *udasis*, *nirmlas* and *dera sants*. All of them would control Sikh gurdwaras, Sikh institutions, Sikhi parchar, and the Sikh psyche for TWO CENTURIES until 1925 – when the Sikh Reform Movement in the name of the Singh Sabha Movement would work tirelessly to liberate Sikhi from the clutches of the above mentioned three deviant groups.

Even then, the liberation of Sikhi would never be complete. All three groups infiltrated the reform movement and worked from within to

ensure the liberation failed and Sikhi remained tainted with pre-1469 elements. The remnants and proxies of the hijackers would regroup and re-strategize in order to continue their quest right into present times. They would turn out to be equally, if not more destructive - as we shall see in due course.

This Video series will lay out the roles played by the Hijacker groups in corrupting, distorting and damaging Guru Nanak's Sikhi. The next video will look at how the plot for the Hijacking of Sikhi unfolded with the first group of Hijackers – namely the *udasis*. Please continue to join me in this painful but important discovery relating to the Sikhi of Guru Nanak.