Dr. Jagraj Singh was born in village Mari Megha, Tehsil Kasur, District Lahore. (now Tehsil Patti, District Tarn Taran) in the Sikh heartland called ‘Majha’ (Central Punjab), the land of early Sikh veterans. He had his preliminary education in District Board Middle School at Mari Megha. He passed his matriculation examination from Majha Khalsa High School Khaira and F. Sc. medical from Khalsa College, Amritsar. where Dr. Taaran Singh was his professor of divinity. He was trained as an allopath at Arya Medical School Ludhiana. Thereafter, he had a short stint with government service in the Punjab. But soon he resigned from his government job and started his private practice at the historic town of Sri Hargobindpur in Gurdaspur district. Before his migration to USA in 1998, he practiced there for about thirty five years. During all these years of his life he witnessed the partition of the Sikh homeland in 1947, the Punjabi Suba agitation by the Sikhs, and the reorganization of the Punjab, the emergency of Indo-China war, emergency imposed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, two Indo-Pak wars, Operation Blue Star, Operation Black Thunder and the aftermath. He had the good luck of coming into personal contact with almost all important Sikh political and religious leaders of the afore-said period.

His grand-mother Sardarni Aas Kaur (died 1960) used to tell him the stories of the Sikh rule, Anglo-Sikh wars and the aftermath, which she had heard from her grand mother-in-law, wife of Kumedan Bagga Singh, who was part and parcel of that regime. Kumedan suffered an attack of stroke at the surrender ceremony held at Kasur after the defeat of the Sikhs in the first Anglo-Sikh war at Sabtrahan. He died next day at their village Mari Megha. His father Sardar Bapuwan Singh (died 1982) was a highly religious person and had great knowledge of oral Sikh history and religion. He learned both from his father.

Mari Megha is located about 20 miles south-east of Lahore, two miles off the road leading from Lahore to Harke and the historic villages of Mari Kambokey (Sukha Singh), Waan(Tara Singh), Pahuwind (Baba Deep Singh), Singhpura (Navab Kapur Singh), Peohlay (Bhai Tari Singh), Sur Singh (Bhai Mahan Singh), Cihina (Bhai Bidhi Chand), Padhana (Garja Singh and Bota Singh), Jhabaal (Mal Bhago) i.e. within its ten mile radius.

All Sikh Gurus or their parents were born within a radius of about fifty miles around Lahore. The Moghul, Muslim governments of the Punjab and Hindustan was forced by the Sikhs through armed struggle to accept their suzerainty over the Parganas of Jhabal, Patti, Dipatpur, Kanganwali and Chunian areas along the north-west bank of Beas and Surlej rivers. These areas were granted to the Sikhs as Jagir (estate) with Amritsar as their headquarter in the province of Lahore in the Punjab in 1733 A. D., by the Moghul. Muslim governments and their leader Kapur Singh was given the title of Navab. Eleven out of the total twelve Sikh Misls who successfully destroyed the Muslim domination and rule in the Punjab and established Sikh rule in their homeland (Punjab) belonged to this area.
Glimpses of Sikhism
Glimpses of Sikhism

Dr. Jagraj Singh

Publisher:
B.Chattar Singh Jiwan Singh
Amritsar
© Author

ISBN : 978-93-
First Edition : June 2018
Price :

Publisher :
B.Chattar Singh Jiwan Singh
Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar
Ph. 91-183-5011003, 2542346, 2547974
Fax : 91-183-5017488
E-Mail : csjssales@hotmail.com
csjspurchase@yahoo.com
Web site : www.csjs.com

The Author is solely responsible for all ideology, Hinduism, Sikhism, Gurbani, History and facts given in this book. Publisher is not responsible for any kind of discrepancies arising out of these.

Publisher

(Printed in India)

Printer : C.J.Printer, Amritsar
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>What is Sikhism?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>God in Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Theory of creation / Cosmology / Genesis according to Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nature and Divine discipline according to Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process of human development according to Gurbani / Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Various stages of human life according to Gurbani / Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behaviour of man during various stages of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal of human life according to Gurmat / Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How long could be our life span?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is death?-Death of life as per Gurbani?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Death of universe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World and worldly life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Basic postulate of Sikhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invocation of Sikhism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (6)
Chapter 5
Scriptures of Sikhism
Gurdwara—Sikh place of worship
Punjabi language and Gurmukhi script of the Sikhs and Sikhism
Chapter 6
Sikhs are not Hindus
Sikh identity and Hindu Muslim hostility towards the Sikhs and Sikhism
The exodus
Infiltration of Brahmanism into Sikhism
Birth of Singh Sabha and social separation of the Sikhs and Hindus
Legal separation of the Sikhs and Hindus
Chapter 7
Ethics of Sikhism
Sexual morality in Sikhism
Chapter 8
Rejection of Caste system of Hinduism by Sikhism
Chapter 9
Rejection of various concepts of Hinduism by Sikhism
Chapter 10
Rejection of authority of scriptures of Hinduism by Sikhism
Chapter 11
Rejection of Sacraments of Hinduism by Sikhism
Chapter 12

Glimpses of Sikhism (7)
Rejection of Yoga (Yogic philosophy of Hinduism by Sikhism)

Chapter 13
Rejection of mythology of Hinduism by Sikhism

Chapter 14
Un-Sikh and anti-Sikh practices of Hinduism and their rejection in Sikhism

Chapter 16
Sikhism versus Hinduism

Chapter 17
Sikhism versus other religious systems

Glossary of commonly used terms in Sikhism

Bibliography
Preface

It is universally agreed upon now that man evolved in Africa and gradually spread over the entire globe. According to Dr. H.D Sankalia, the renowned anthropologist, “It is more or less established that at the end of First Glacial Period and into the beginning of the second Ice Age, Early Man entered the foothills of the Northwest Punjab, in the area traversed by Soan, Haro and other rivers within the Indus-Jhelum Doab. Early man spread into the area comprised by Rawalpindi and Attock districts of the Punjab, and the Jammu and Kashmir States”. Recent Genomic studies reveal that these people arrived in India from Central Asia (Kazakstan area) by travelling south of the rugged and mountainous Pamir Knot, some 30,000 years ago. Early humans lived here as gatherers and hunters, who gradually developed into a great civilization—The Harappan civilization, now known as “The Indus Valley Civilization”, which is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The natives here farmed the lands and were called “Jatts—ਜਟ”, which is the oldest named tribe in India whose name is found even in Mahabharta. About four thousand years ago the people of Indus valley in the Indian subcontinent had reached a very high level of civilization and spirituality when people of an Aryan tribe who rode horses, worshiped fire, reared cattle, ate beef and spoke an Indo-European language which originated on the steppes of Eurasia entered into the Indus valley from Asia Minor (Seistan-Persia-modern Iran) region, through the passes in the Koh Hindu Kush mountains as graziers of cattle and settled in the northern Punjab in the Kashmir region around Taxila, which is now Pakistan. In the Rig Veda we see the Aryans settling down in the Indus valley and worshipping all the powers of nature such as air (Vayu), water (Varuna), sun (Surya),
moon (Soma) and fire (Agni).

The native practitioners of spirituality in the Indus valley called themselves Jogis or Siddhas, who believed in One Supreme Eternal Reality, whom they called Brahma and they had a script called Brahmi / Siddhmatrica. Some of Aryans learnt spirituality from the Punjabi Jogis / Siddhas. The Aryans, having knowledge of Brahma (God), designated themselves as Brahmans and became priests, the custodians of the religion and spirituality. They called their religion Sanatan mat / Sanatan dharma, which literally meant ancient religion, which is now popularly called Hinduism. It is here that they developed a slang of local Punjabi dialect, ‘Sehaskriti’ and called it ‘Brahm Bhasha’, literally meaning language of God for their worship purposes, but subsequently it was named Sanskrit. Brahmans made it their religious language, which was neither spoken nor understood by common mass of people. Around 1000 BC, the Aryans produced scriptures in Brahm Bhasha and named them Vedas, literally meaning books of knowledge, which were memorized verbally and passed on from generation to generation orally. Around 500 BC Rishi Panini wrote Sanskrit grammar, Ashtadhiay in Taxilla in the hills of the Punjab (The Penguin history of Early India from orgins to AD 1300, Romila Thapar, p, 163). The script used was Siddhmatrica, renamed by the Aryans as Sharda. The Vedas gave birth to Vedic culture, which gave birth to caste system in India. Manu the Hindu law giver wrote Manu Simriti around 600 BC. Subsequently they created more religious scriptures--Shastras, Simrities, Purans and so on and reinterpreted the message of religious texts to their advantage. The words Bip and Bipar mean Brahman, whereas Bipran means Brahmans and Bipran kee reet means Brahmanical culture / ways / ideology. Since those times, the Aryan Brahmans, as custodians of spirituality and religion in the Indian subcontinent have been holding central control of religious practices in Hinduism. Hindu scriptures created by Brahmans themselves, gave them high headedness of
highest order and they reinterpreted the message of religious texts to their own advantage. They reserved the right to education for only themselves. Only they were entitled to access to knowledge written in Vedas, Shastras, Simrities, Purans and so on. The Brahmans only could perform prayers (Poojas) and could worship gods and goddesses for the benefit of all people. Their authority was unquestionable. Even the kings could not rule out their verdicts. Once a person was born as Brahman, this was enough for him to enjoy the status of Brahman. Whatever he learnt from his father was adequate to make him qualified for all his duties his ancestors were performing. The Brahmans reserved the right to learn Sanskrit, the language of Vedas and other scriptures, and learning the special Mantras for various occasions in a Hindu household. They designed occasions for birth, naming ceremonies, initiation ceremony (Janeu Sanskar), Mundan ceremonies, Shub mahoors for opening new business set up, Lagan ceremonies, special ceremonies for pregnant women (Goad bharai), Mirtak Sanskar (Funeral ceremony) for example. With the passage of time this unquestionable lot was stupefied with greed and power. They divided the society into four Varnas (Jatis i.e., castes) and life into four Ashrams (stages). They were protectorates of religious institutions. They made rules for entry to the places of worship. They denied this fundamental right to worship to a very significant majority of so called Aashoots (untouchables). They spread the virus of hatred in the minds of other upper castes in the society. These deprived people were forced to do all menial jobs for the benefit of upper classes in the society. In return they were neither paid for any work they did for them nor were they rewarded in any way. Hatred and abuse were the only rewards given to several generations throughout India. Brahmins on the contrary were treated like gods. Their visits to residences were considered as divine blessing on the family. The Hindu routine of life was guided and controlled by this highly placed class of Brahmans. Some of the injunctions of Manu the
Hindu law giver as laid down in his Manu Simriti are given here:

* During the days of distress and destitution, the members of a caste can engage in the work of lower caste, but under no circumstances is he to undertake the work of the higher caste. (Chapter X/99-100)

* The Shudra is forbidden to study, the Vedas, the Shastras and the scriptures (Chapter x/127-128)

* It is reprehensible for a Brahman to study the Vedas before a Shudra (Chapter IV/99)

* The Shudra should be fed the left overs of his master’s food and clothed with his tattered and discarded dress (Chapter X/25).

* The Shudra is not allowed to amass wealth (Chapter x/129).

* If a Shudra abuses a man of higher caste, his tongue should be cut off (Chapter viii).

* If a Shudra sits near a Brahmin on the same floor, the flesh of his bottoms should be sheared off (Chapter viii/281).

* If a Shudra talks of religious matters to a Brahman, molten lead or boiling oil be poured in his mouth and ears (Chapter viii/272).

* The atonement for the killing of a Shudra is the same as that for killing of a cat or a dog or a frog or a lizard or any other animal.

The Shudras were treated like dogs and cattle. They could not rise higher up in the scale and do the work of Kashatriyas. If per chance a Shudra attained some worthwhile stature in political arena, he could under no circumstances be admitted to a higher caste. No amount of wealth or personal status of political nature or courage or scholasticism could raise a Shudra to a higher caste. What is shocking and highly damnable is that this was done in the name of religion and God, supported by the so-called gospels of God.

Hindus were made to believe that man is reborn after death and
this cycle continues indefinitely unless salvation (Mukti) is achieved for which the Hindu priest (Brahman) told methods in the form of rituals to be performed by the followers of Hinduism. These rituals of three types: Karam Kanda (rituals mentioned in Vedas / Shastras) dealing with sacrificial acts, Upasna Kanda (rituals dealing with actions pertaining to worship) and Giyan Kanda (rituals dealing with spiritual knowledge). The Brahmin laid stress on the Karam Kanda and Upasna Kanda, because they helped to maintain his importance and make monetary gains. He did not show much interest in Giyan Kanda, because he himself was devoid of any spiritual knowledge. Guru Nanak says, “You expect others to call you wise, O Pandit! But you are devoid of knowledge (spiritual) and meditation (GGS, p.1290).

The Hindu psyche injected in the minds of most Hindus is governed by the dictum of Brahmanic supremacy. Most of the Sanskaras or rituals are performed by reading the respective Mantras by the priest who performs such rituals for the people (Yajmans). These Mantras are known only to these actively involved Brahmans, who are paid well by these Yajmans. Sanskrit is the religious language of Brahmanism / Hinduism, therefore all religious service takes place in Sanskrit. A common Hindu does not know Sanskrit and hence cannot read the required scriptures for various rituals. He had no direct access to God, but had to reach Him through the institution of Pandits / Brahmans. Not only does this institution controlled the process of worship of God, even the solemnizing of various auspicious and inauspicious occasions in the family had become so much ritualized that Brahman had become an inevitable part of Hindu’s life. Dependence of common men in the Hindu society on such necessary services is so acute that even if a person wants to sideline these priests, other members of the society giving psychological warnings of evils to fall if the task is not handed over to the priests. Even a dying person puts his wish about rituals required to be performed by the family members. There are short cuts known to priests only when their palms
are greased well, they deviate and reduce the time schedule. People get what they want by bribing them at all occasions of ritualistic chorus according to their convenience. Society by and large does not dare to stand in their way. This is going on from one generation to another in spite of understanding among the more reasonably level headed people.

These services were denied to the members of low caste fraternity of Hindus. They are ill treated to an extent that their dead bodies are also denied ritualistic disposal. According to the high-headedness of priestly segment, they are destined to go to hell and need no purification of their souls. A born Shudra, lives as Shudra and dies as Shudra. God will also put them in the separate place where high caste will not even peep into. Their shadows are also impure and can cause immense harm to the souls of dead from high castes. Brahmans, at that time, enjoyed the super-most status in the society, which made him living god for every regal decision of the ruling class. He has ruled not only the heart and mind of Indian masses since past many thousand years, but also has remained undisputed god man for millions in this country.

Guru Nanak founded Sikhism in 1496 AD; in Punjab as revealed to him by the “Supreme Eternal Reality” i.e. God at Sultanpur Lodhi, in Punjab, in the Indian subcontinent among the two already well established religions of Hinduism and Islam. He declared, ‘Oneness of God’ and ‘Oneness of man’ and laid down the complete ideology of Sikhism which developed and matured over a period spanning over two hundred and three years under the guidance of his nine successors. Guru Nanak spearheaded the cause of these under cared millions from all walks of life. Sikh thought treated every human soul at par. “The deeds are more important of a person than his pedigree”, said he. He exposed the social, religious and political leaders of his time and their methods cutting at the very roots of misrepresentation of religious doctrines of Hinduism by Brahmans and those of Islam by
Mullas and Qazis. He preached virtues should receive preference over outward acts in daily life. He rejected all rituals which the clever religious leaders had invented to maintain their hold on the common man in order to maintain their supremacy and gain material benefits. He condemned the escapist life of Jogis and advocated full participation in social and domestic life. In Asa dee Var he has discussed the doctrines, rituals, rites practices and life of Yogis, Brahmans and Turks (Muslims) and given their right interpretation which forms the foundations of Sikhism.

Sikhism was formally consecrated by the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab on the Vaisakhi day 1699 AD; corresponding with 30th March 1699. He formally declared the abolition of caste system in Sikhism by administering Pahul to the initiates from the same communion bowl (Amrit Bata). On this day he laid down the Sikh religious code of conduct, distinct from Hinduism and Islam and he said:

\[
\text{Jab lag Khalsa rahay naira tab lag tej deoon main sara,}
\]
\[
\text{Jab ih gahein bipran kee reet mein na karoon in kee parteet.}
\]

(Sarb Loh Granth—Patshahi 10)

Meaning: “As long as Khalsa strictly maintains its separate identity, I will lend him my full support, when he adopts the Brahmanical ways (culture), then I shall not believe him”

(Guru Gobind Singh)

Sikhism one of the youngest and modern religions of the world is based on belief in One God and recognizes the equality of all human beings and is marked by its rejection of polytheism, ritualism, hypocrisy, idolatry, caste system, gender discrimination, celibacy and
asceticism. Its philosophy called ‘Gurmat’ lays great stress on leading a life full of virtues (Shub karman—love, truthfulness, compassion, righteousness full of good intentions, devoid of ego, instead of acts of outward show popularly called rituals. It is the latest religion in the series of religions introduced to the humanity for its spiritual survival.

Gurbani simplified the concept of religion in context with mysterious, transcendental and beyond those rituals which were not real in human reach and had a direct access to God while living the life of a Gurmukh instead of a Manmukh. The whole Gurbani consists of a dialogue describing a prescribed way of life for a Gursikh by practicing the life that draws strength from practice of egalitarianism, humility, honest devotion to God and same love for all his created human beings.

The Brahman had hierarchized the society on two important basis, caste and gender. Guru Nanak and his successors forcefully attacked and successfully weaned the followers of the new faith, “Sikhism” from the divisive Hindu caste system, gender discrimination, idolatry, celibacy, asceticism, renunciation and other ritualistic practices of Hinduism. They advocated leading a life of householder full of virtues, devoid of rituals, superstitions, caste, gender discrimination and hypocrisy. They disapproved religious intolerance and stood as a rock against ritualism. Guru Nanak attacked directly on caste system. He said, “Fakkar jaati, fakkar nao, sabhna jeean ikka chhao” i.e, False is the distinction of caste and status. Everybody has equal protection of God” (GGS, p.83). He rejected the distinction between man and man on the basis of birth and caste. He emphasized the idea of brotherhood and equality. He further clarified that individual could achieve higher status by practicing righteous behavior. It did not matter which caste or economic status he came from. He stressed upon the achievement of status by a person on the basis of his deeds, “Jaat janam neh poochhiye sach ghar leho
“bata-ay. So jaat so paat hai jehe karam kamaye” (GGS, p.1330).

Gurbani / Gurmat (Sikhism) rejects the notion that Brahmans were born with purity and low castes were impure by birth, “Garabhvais mein kul nahin jaati, Brahm bind te sab upati. Kaho re Pandit Brahmin kab te ho-ay. Brahm keh keh janam mat kho-ay. Je toon Brahmin Brahmani Jaaya, tao ann dwar kahay nahin aiah. Tum kat Brahman ham kat sud, hum kat lohu tum kat doodh. Kaho Kabir jo brahm beecharay, so Brahman kahiat hai hamaray” (GGS, p.324).

Second important inequality ordained in Hinduism is based on gender discrimination. Though man and woman are different biologically, there is no justification to place them in hierarchy. In context of Varna, woman was considered physically impure due to certain biological features. Hence she was considered physically impure to certain biological features. Hence she was prescribed not to indulge in certain religious rituals and social ceremonies. Gurbani negates philosophy of physical impurity both in men and women. Discrimination against women in terms of physical impurity during menstruation and child birth, has been protested in Gurbani, “Jion joru sir nahnvi avay vaaaro vaaar, juthay joota much vasay nit nit hoay khuvar” (GGS, p.472). The discrimination on this account is illogical and against the law of nature. This is sheer ignorance of mind, which needs to be shed off, “Saach kateb bakhaane Alho naar purkh nahi koi, padhe gune nahn kachh baure, jao dil meih khabar na hoi—The book tells thee that God is true. He is neither male nor female. Thou gainest nothing by reading the reflecting, O mad man, if thou obtainest not understanding in thy mind (GGS, .483). Guru Nanak says, “Bhand jammiey bhand nimiey bhand mangan viaho—Nanak bhande bahra eko sachcha soay” (GGS, p.473). Gurbani clarifies the greatness of a person, man or woman, based on deeds and not on the gender bias. It is the humility one follows in every
aspect of life that makes a person great and not the worldly riches one may possess, “Jis ke antar raj abhimaan so narakpati hovat suan. Jo jaane mein jobanvant, so hovat bista ka jant” (GGS, p.278).

Regarding Hindu concept of salvation Gurmat says, “If salvation can be achieved by washing in water then a frog has a better chance because he remains in water every day” (GS, p.484). Similarly regarding union (Jog-Yoga) with the God, Gurbani says, “If union could be obtained by wandering around naked, then all deer of the forest would be liberated. What does it matter whether someone goes naked or wears deer skin, if he does not remember the Lord within his soul? If the spiritual perfection of Siddhas could be obtained by shaving the head, then why haven’t the sheep found salvation? If someone could save himself by celibacy, O siblings of destiny why then haven’t eunuchs obtained the state of supreme dignity?” (GGS, p.324).

Gurmat confronts superstition with scientific argumentative approach (Bibek Buddhi). For example the Pandas at Hardawar questioned the Guru’s so called sacrilegious act of throwing water to the west when everybody was throwing it towards the sun in the east. The Guru said, “I am throwing water to my crops at Kartarpur”. The Pandas asked, How can your water reach hundreds of miles in Kartarpur?”. The Guru replied, “If your water can reach billions of miles at the sun why can’t my water a few hundred miles on earth?” The lesson went home to the Pandas and the general public that had gathered to see the spectacle.

Gurmat has ever advocated for the betterment of life on the globe. Kirt karni (Work to earn honest living), Vand chhakna (Share the meals with the needy), Naam Japna (Remembering God) are three cardinal principles of Gurmat. This principle provides comfort to man, meet his moral and spiritual needs and provides satisfaction of purposeful living. Gurbani not only attacks in-egalitarian philosophy, it
also offers an alternative way of life style with different priorities. Here religion, attainment of God and related issues have been taken out of the domain of temples and mosques and put in the center of his home and easily reachable, irrespective of gender or caste distinction. It is stated that outer physical beauty, wealth, shrewdness, arrogance or even pride of knowledge, cannot get one happiness and solace. 

The path of Gurmat, therefore is to revolutionize the human character to create ideal personalities from the society so that society gets rid of all such superstitions, useless rituals and evils from the ambit of prevailing human society. Therefore it is revolutionary and much wider multi-dimensional principle for human race. It is full of love, compassion and human understanding in the fields of social, political, economic, good will, universal brotherhood and spiritual up-lift. It speaks for every human being. Sikh Ardas ends with “Nanak Naam chardi kala teray bhanay sarbat daa bhala”. Thus the disguising as a saintly person with lots of greed for wordly pusuits at heart would not fetch anything. Without the true service to God (by doing service to mankind) man would never attain true happiness. This is a reaction, to the very institutionalization of ritual symbolization of God with some kinds of colour of dress (outward garb of godliness), which may infact be totally false and deceitful. Hence Gurbani’s insistence upon real and unreal, true and false and fraudulent is very significant. It negates a blind submission to any kind of hierarchization, ritual, social, economical and so on. By putting on a particular garb on does not become Jogi, Sant, Pandit or Qazi, it is the deeds that count. In Sikhism one has to be on practical path for a respectable and satisfying ideal human, selective for virtues and be prepared to shun rituals and compulsions. He has to learn the art of co-existence and shun the hatred for others with whom his ideologies don’t match

At personal level I have no objection against the Brahman community. But Brahmanism as an ideology has been propounded by
members of Brahman community to divide the (Indian) society on a permanent basis as a result of which India’s political sovereignty as a nation has been disintegrating and this is the negative aspect of Brahmanism. Exploitation of ritualistic practices of religion for one’s personal vested interests downgrading the spiritual and Divine aspects of religion by linking one’s trade with religion, fleecing the common masses in the name of charity by making them victims of superstition and hollow rituals, promoting one’s own ritualistic trade through the propagation of the nine planetary configurations, serving one’s own monetary interests by devising various kinds of beneficent or malefic effects of particular moments, planets, of days and months, belief and propagation of untouchability, association of purity and impurity with the task of cooking, creating superstitions, charts and suggesting various kinds of tantric (occult) solutions—these are various malpractices of Brahmanism. A true religion unites and integrates the society rather than creating divisive walls of superstition and prejudice based on birth and caste.

Sikhism has no aversion for any one and not the least for Hindus. This book only expounds differences in various thought currents in both the religions. All the topics under various chapters have been authenticated with quotations from the scriptures constituting the canon of the Sikh faith. I am confident that the Sikhs living in various parts of the world in particular and followers of other religions in general will be able to understand Sikhism better and benefitted by this work. Suggestions for improvement will be most welcome. I wish the readers a happy reading of the text ahead.

Jagraj Singh

Tampa Florida, February, 2017
Chapter 1

What is Sikhism?

Sikhism /Sikhi (Sikh Dharma) is a major religion of India and fifth largest faith in the world. It is the youngest and most modern religion among the religions of the world. It was founded by Guru Nanak in 1496 A.D, as revealed to him by the ‘Supreme Spiritual Reality (Akaal Purkh) at Sultanpur Lodhi in Punjab in the Indus valley in the Indian subcontinent. Sikhism is a simple, monotheistic, non-ritualistic religion that allows its followers to live a religious life while taking care of their worldly duties. It preaches oneness of God and oneness of man and denounces ritualism, idolatry, asceticism, celibacy, down grading of women, gender inequality, hypocrisy and the caste system in strongest terms. Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family but he refused to formally get himself initiated into Brahmanism / Hinduism and severely criticized its divisive caste system, ritual practices and gender inequality, as recorded in the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib in Asa Dee Vaar. Guru Arjan, the fifth Nanak, formally declared the separate existence of Sikhism by writing it in the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib on page 1136. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Nanak formally consecrated Sikhism on the Vaisakhi day 1699 AD at Anandpur Sahib in the Punjab, prescribed a distinct religious code of conduct for the Sikhs and propagated the Nash doctrine, thereby abolishing the caste system in Sikhism, which forms the bed rock of the Brahmanical religion, “Varn Ashram Dharma”now popularly called “Hinduism”. Although Sikh Gurus preached Sikhism in India and adjoining countries for a period spanning over about two
centuries but it was formally adopted en-mass by the jatts of the central Punjab called Majha.

The followers are of Sikh religion / Sikhism are called “Sikhs”. Presently it has about twenty-five million adherents in the entire world, out of which about fifteen million live in “Punjab”, a region in the north-west of India that has long served to connect South Asia with Middle East and Central Asia and was a sovereign country ruled by the Sikhs, till its annexation by the British in 1849 AD.

Map of the Punjab under Sikh rule and the British India-1846
About six million Sikhs live outside the Indian Punjab (in India) and the remaining live in the rest of the world. Of these about half a million Sikhs are located in the United Kingdom, another half million are in North America out of which around three hundred fifty thousand are residing in Canada and about one hundred fifty thousand in the United States of America. They are present in substantial numbers in Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Norway and other Asian, African and European countries. To say it in another way, they are found all over the world.

Wherever they have gone, they have built their own religious places of worship, 'the Gurdwaras', which in addition to being place of worship, also serve as centers of the Sikh culture. Sikh Gurdwaras built in Sikh style all over the world stand uniquely different from the Hindu Temples, Muslim Mosques, Christian Churches, Jewish Synagogues and Buddhist Monasteries. Gurdwara literally means Guru’s door, but religiously in Sikhism it means Guru’s house / Guru’s abode / The house of the divine. It is the Sikh center of spiritual, social, educational and political activities. Usually there are four parts of the complex: The main hall for worship purposes, Langar (The community kitchen), Serai (inn i.e; residential area) and the school. All major Gurdwaras have all these facilities, but in small Gurdwaras one or more of these facilities may not be available. Every Gurdwara, besides religious worship, is expected to provide food and lodging to visitors / travelers, free of cost. The Sikh national flag called Nishan Sahib, one of the sings of Sikh sovereignty is hoisted in front of every Gurdwara ever since the Sikhs lost the Sikh State in 1849 CE. It is made up of a triangular piece of deep yellow (Basanti) colour cloth with insignia of Sikhism (Deg Teg Fateh) imprinted on it and hoisted on a wooden or metal pole having Khanda (double edged sword) surmounted on the top. It is always taller than the Gurdwara building and the visitor can spot it from a distance and can assure himself that
Shoes are not allowed inside the Gurdwara, because the Sikhs consider shoes ceremoniously unclean. The visitor has to go bare foot inside the Gurdwara. Every Gurdwara has a Jora Ghar (shoe house) outside the main complex for depositing the shoes. The Sikh worship is congregational therefore the main structure in the Gurdwara is a big hall, where the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib wrapped in fine Rumalas is seated over a small raised platform in a Palki (Planquin) with a small tent called Chandoa / Chanani, hanging from the ceiling. Except when being read, it is kept covered. The Granthi (Sikh priest) waves Chaur (fan made yak hair) over Guru Granth Sahib. Chanani and Chaur are symbols of royalty and their presence is not functional but Guru is Sachcha Paatshah (True king).

In a Gurdwara there are no images, altar or pulpit, the object of Sikh reverence is the scripture (Guru Granth Sahib) itself. Outside the inner premises there is provision of clean water for washing hands and feet. In Punjab and India the visitors / devotees go inside the Gurdwara bare feet after washing their hands at the entrance. The
devotees enter the main hall and bow before Guru Granth Sahib, make obeisance (offering) and offer prayer, walk around it and if they wish, find a space in the hall, sit cross legged on the floor in a position facing Guru Granth Sahib to listen the Ragis (religious musicians) proclaim verses from its sacred pages. Generally, a Gurdwara remains open to every visitor through out the day, so that worshippers can offer prayers at any time convenient to them. However in Punjab and India two services are held daily in every Gurdwara, one in the morning and one in the evening. Everyday early in the morning, before sun rise, Guru Granth Sahib is brought in the Gurdwara hall from its resting place. All present stand up with bowed heads and folded hands, as mark of respect. In the Gurdwara hall Guru Granth Sahib is placed on Manji Sahib with nice bedding on a raised platform. Guru Granth Sahib is covered with fine rumalas. Then Ardas (Sikh national prayer) is offered. After this Hukam (The order i.e; command) from Guru Granth Sahib is read. It is followed by Asa Dee Vaar. For the rest of the day the Ragis perform kirtan or a Sikh scholar may perform Katha i.e. religious discourse. In a Gurdwara, only hymns from Guru Granth Sahib, Verses of Guru Gobind Singh or verses written by Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal can be sung. In the evening after recitation of Rehras and Anand Sahib, Guru Granth Sahib is closed (unless continuous un-interrupted recitation of Guru Granth Sahib—Akhand Path is going on), Ardas is offered, Karah Parshad is distributed and then Guru Granth Sahib is ceremoniously wrapped in Rumalas and taken to its special place for the night.

Sikhs do not have a special day of worship. They can do on any day and all days of the week. Outside Punjab and outside India, most Sikhs visit the Gurdwara on the rest day of the particular country they live, for example in Muslim countries it takes place on Fridays, while in other countries such as Britain, Canada, and United States of America, the main service is held on Sunday. Any one, Sikh or non-
Sikh may visit Gurdwara, attend congregation and dine in Guru ka Langar (the community kitchen) but proper protocol has to be maintained. Carrying of tobacco, alcohol or any other intoxicant is strictly prohibited inside a Gurdwara. A head covering is mandatory inside a Gurdwara. This is a mark of respect to the Guru Granth Sahib.

Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Amritsar also known as Hari Mandir in Punjab and India and Golden Temple in the western world, is the world seat of Sikhism as the Kabba in Mecca for Muslims, Vatican in Rome for Christians and Varanasi in India for Hindus. Akaal Takhat
in Amritsar is the Supreme Seat of Temporal Authority in Sikhism and Amritsar itself is the Theo-political capital of the Sikhs and Sikhism. The Sikh doctrine, “Deg Teg Fateh” is found imprinted in Emblematic form on the Sikh National Flag called \textit{Nishan Sahib}, letter heads of Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committe SGPC and Sharomani Akali Dal.

Sikhism took its birth at the fag end of the fifteenth century in Punjab in the Indian subcontinent, among two already well established religions of Hinduism and Islam. Punjab at that time was under Islamic rule, with Hinduism as dominant religion. Religion in both communities (Hinduism and Islam) was limited only to ritualistic practices, rather than inner illumination. The religious leaders of both communities, Mullahs and Brahmans, themselves did not by and large practice what they preached. There was great cultural decadence in all facets of the society. The Hindu had divided the society into four castes (groups) and the lowest in the hierarchy were called \textit{Shudras} or untouchables who were treated worse than animals. The plight of women was no better. The Hindu addressed the non-Hindus as \textit{Malechhas} (unclean). The Muslims called non-Muslims as ‘\textit{Kafirs}’ (non-believers) and observed that the Muslim society was to be enlarged and strengthened progressively through the policy of “enforcement of Islamic laws through sword”—“\textit{as shara tahat us-saif}”. The Islamic rulers also were very unjust and oppressive in their governance and had demoralized the entire Hindu society.

Guru Nanak founded Sikhism, as revealed to him by ‘The Supreme Eternal Reality’—(God) in 1496 CE, at Sultanpur Lodhi in Punjab, in the Indian subcontinent, to fill the vacuum of cultural decadence and religious confusion. He declared oneness of God and universal brotherhood of man. He said, “\textit{Na koe Hindu na Musalmaan}—There is neither any Hindu nor any \textit{Musalmaan}. He (God) is our common father, we are all His children and he takes care
Sikhism believes in equality of all human beings and forbids discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, class, religion and gender and guarantees equal rights/opportunities to all. It strongly denounces the divisive Hindu caste system (Varan Ashram Dharma), which limits one's right to worship, learning (education) and choose a profession. It grants everyone the right to become a warrior / soldier and a priest. Guru Gobind Singh in Dasam Granth says, -“Maanas kee jaat sabay ekay pehchanbo” -“Treat all mankind alike”. Hinduism is divisive in character and divides the society on the basis of caste, which forms the bed rock of the Brahmánical religion also known as Varn Ashram Dharma.

In order to establish equality in the society Guru Nanak stepped beyond the frontier in defiance of the 3000 years old divisive caste rules of Hinduism. He laid down the fundamentals of Sikhism and founded its basic institutions. The fundamentals of Sikhism are: Naam Japo (Remember God in words, mind and actions), Kirt Karo (Work hard honestly to earn your living), Wand ke Chhako (Share your earnings with the needy). He also founded the basic institutions of Sikhism based on equality, social justice and tolerance. The basic institutions of Sikhism are: Sangat, Pangat and Langar.

Sangat (Holy congregation): is the first and foremost basic institution of Sikhism founded by Guru Nanak in order to abolish caste, establish equality and propagate love and affection among people. Sangat literally means association / company. Religiously in Sikhism, the gathering of the Sikhs for the remembrance of God / Practice of Naam Bani) is called Sangat.
**Pangat:** The second basic institution of Sikhism established by Guru Nanak is *Pangat*, which literally means row, religiously in Sikhism it means sitting together in a row as equals. It was also meant to abolish caste, remove un-touch-ability, establish equality, inculcate love and teach humility before each other. After meditation he asked people to sit in a row on the ground and eat together, irrespective of their social background or economic status.

**Langar (Communal meal):** The third basic institution established by Guru Nanak to remove caste, establish equality, teach sharing with the needy and inculcate love among people is langar, the sacred food, cooked in community kitchen (*Langar khana*) and served free of cost in the Langar Hall attached to the Sikh place of worship (Gurdwara). All who visit Gurdwara sit down together in a row (Pangat) and partake of the simple food offered with loving care as equals, regardless of distinction of caste, creed, colour, country or status in life. Only vegetarian food is served in Guru ka langar so that it could cater to the people of all faiths.

Guru Nanak preached in the vernacular (language) of the people of the Punjab (Punjabi) and composed sacred religious hymns in it, in preference to Sanskrit, which till then was the traditional medium for religious poetry or philosophy. The vernacular of the Punjab region, now called Punjabi till then was only a dialect and did not have its own script for its real pronunciation and expressions. Guru Nanak developed the script for local vernacular, which was named 'Gurmukhi' by his successor, Guru Angad Dev. Thus Guru Nanak gave to the Sikhs a script for their spoken language which was different from Hindus (Sanskrit--Vedas) and Muslims (Arabic-Quran). Thus he broke the monopoly of Brahmin over learning, who boasted about his knowledge of Sanskrit.

Guru Nanak denounced polytheism, henotheism, idolatry,
superstition, renunciation, asceticism, celibacy, hypocrisy and ritualism to appease the deities. In his utterances he severely criticized the religious leaders of all the then prevalent faiths in India for their shortcomings. Of Islam's specialists in jurisprudence, he said, The qazi sits to administer justice. He turns his beads and mutters the name of God (Khuda). He takes bribe and denies justice. If questioned, he reads out something” (GGS, p.951). For Mullahs, the religious leaders of Islam, he said, “For an ignorant hungry (destitute) mullah mosque is a means to satisfy his hunger i.e., worldly needs (GGS, p.1245), to which the pious poor would come bringing donations. About the Brahmins he said, “Those who wield throat cutting knife wear sacred thread (Janeu)” (GGS, p.471). Then he says, “Leave aside the Qazis and Brahmins the marriage rituals are performed by ‘Satan’ (GGS, p.722). He was highly critical of Jogis and Siddhas who led an escapist life of renunciation, asceticism and celibacy. He praised the householder’s life, who served the society. He preached, “Do not touch his feet who calls himself a Guru or Pir and goes for begging. O Nanak, only he knows the right path who earns his livelihood through hard labour and shares it with others (GGS, p.1245). He also upbraided the rulers of his time and said, “The kings are tigers and the courtiers are dogs, they go and harass the sitting and the sleeping ones--” (GGS, p.1288).

People subdued under rigors of caste system, the oppressive alien rule and religious bigotry, could not be expected to take over the social responsibilities and adjust to the liberation offered by the new society over-night. The infant Sikh society had to be nurtured for some time to prevent its relapse into the parent societies. So he introduced the system of succession to carry his mission forward. The message of Nanak was transmitted through his nine successors. The Sikh Gurus were:
2. Guru Angad, born in 1504 (Guruship 1539 - 52).
4. Guru Ram Dass, born in 1534 (Guruship 1574 - 81).
5. Guru Arjan Dev, born in 1563 (Guruship 1581 - 1606).
6. Guru Hargobind, born in 1595 (Guruship 1606 - 44).
8. Guru Har Krishan, born in 1656 (Guruship 1661 - 64).
9. Guru Teg Bahadur, born in 1621 (Guruship 1664 - 75).

The holy scripture of Sikhism, “Aad Granth” (now Guru Granth Sahib), the world seat of Sikhism (Gurdwara Darbar Sahib/ Golden Temple) in Amritsar were created by the fifth Guru Arjan Dev in 1604 AD, thereby establishing separate religious identity of Sikhism. He declared the independent position of Sikhism by writing in Aad Granth (now Guru Granth Sahib), in Rag Bhairon, on page 1136---“I do not keep the Hindu fast (Vart) or observe the Muslim Ramadan. I serve only the One Supreme Being who alone is my refuge. I serve the One Master who ministers justice to both Hindus and Muslims. I neither worship like the Hindu or like the Muslim go to Mecca. I serve Him alone and no other. I do not pray to idols nor say the Muslim prayer.Taking the formless One in my mind I make obeisance there to the Supreme Being, for we are neither Hindu nor Mussalman.

Of all world religions, Sikhism alone can, with fullest justification, claim to possess the gospels of its founders in their original purity. Truths revealed to Prophets and seers have been often mixed, in
course of time with spurious and imperfect additions through the ignorance, prejudices or ill-conceived zeal of their followers and lost their purity. The sagacity and the foresight of the Sikh Gurus envisaged the possibility of such a situation in respect of their own scriptures and they took steps to ensure against this eventuality. Guru Arjan compiled the holy Granth embodying the Sikh teachings under his personal supervision and created for all times the imperishable and yet visible embodiment of the Gurus as also of their wisdom. He started the compilation in 1601 and completed it in 1604. He thus placed all mankind under a permanent debt of gratitude by bequeathing to it the highest moral and spiritual Truths in the purest form as were revealed to the Gurus. These were clothed in various dialects and languages of the people of the land of their birth and were thus made accessible to every person without any distinction of caste, creed, colour or race. It was recensed by Guru Gobind Singh in 1706 when he entered the Gurbani of 9th Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur, at Talwandi Sabo, now called Damdama Sahib. It was installed as Guru Eternal on October 5, 1708 by Guru Gobind Singh and since then it is called ‘Guru Granth Sahib’.

The Sikhs believe Guru Granth Sahib as ‘living’ embodiment of ten Gurus and it is the only focus of Sikh faith. Guru Granth Sahib is treated with same respect as the human Gurus received. In addition to the hymns of the Sikh Gurus it contains the writings and hymns of saints and preachers with different religious backgrounds, whose philosophy conformed to the spirit of Sikhism. It is a literary classic and a spiritual treasure. It throws light on the path leading to the highest goal of spirituality. It contains eternal truth, proclaims God, and shows the way of His realization. It lays down moral and ethical rules for the development of soul and religious commandments for the progress of morality and attainment of salvation. In it philosophy is propounded through the songs of love and devotion. The message of love, truth,
contentment, humility, fatherhood of God, brotherhood of man, restraint of passions, mercy on living beings, purity of mind and body and clothing, search for the self and Higher Soul, equality of man and equality of man and woman, service to others, liberalism in the matter of food and clothing, and references to the political, economic and social life of people of Hindustan during the fifteenth century and sixteenth century constitute the main contents of Guru Granth Sahib. It is a guide to Sikh way of life. References to Veda (Hindu scriptures) and Katebas (Semitic scriptures) are also found in it. Guru Granth Sahib rejects all types of Karam Kandas (ritualism) and formalism for spiritual attainment and propagates a life of inner illumination. It lays stress on selfless action performed in the best interest of the society. It condemns asceticism, which has the effect of negativism. It lays stress on the dynamic attitude towards life. It supports normal family life (Grahisti Jiwan) and social commitment. It recommends leading of a pure life whilst fighting temptations and imperfection of the world. It is the only scripture where each and every conceivable aspect of human life has been addressed, discussed and analysed. Mythological references are only illustrative and do not indicate any Guru's belief in mythological personages or their actions. In its present lithographed diction, Guru Granth Sahib contains about 5894 Hymns and verses mainly in Punjabi, Hindi, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Sindhi, Lehndi, Dhaki, Bengali and Marathi in Gurmukhi script on 1430 pages, composed and arranged in well known 31 Ragas i.e; tunes / musical settings (Gurmat Sangeet), except for the initial 13 and last 78 pages. It is the treasure of Indian languages and musical Ragas. Guru Granth Sahib is the only scripture in the world, which mentions with respect Ram, Gobind, Hari, Allah, Karim etc; (names for God) used by different religions and which includes writings of holy people born in other religions (Hinduism, Islam) in addition to the Sikh Gurus. It is the only source of Sikh philosophy that has been written by the Gurus.
themselves and whose authenticity has never been questioned. It is the only scripture, which has travelled through the generations without the change of a single letter. It is final and unalterable scripture. Guru Granth Sahib is treated to be the presence of the Guru himself in the Sangat. It is the presiding deity in every Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) and every visitor there bows before it in reverence before assuming his / her seat. When moved it is carried on the head accompanied by five initiated Sikhs.

Till the creation of Granth, preaching of Sikhism had been carried out by Sikh Gurus through the word of mouth and it had no separate religious existence distinct from Hinduism and Islam. Because of its principles, Sikhism was acceptable to both Hindus and Muslims. The erosion of their faiths surprised the religious leaders of both Hinduism (Brahmins/Pandits) and those of Islam (The Qazis/Mulas). Therefore, they regarded it as threat to their respective faiths. The Muslim administration, in addition, perceived it as threat to its political power. The tensions that followed between the Sikhs, Hindus and the Muslim government resulted in the execution of Guru Arjan Dev at Lahore and the consequent move of the Sikh center from Amritsar to Kiratpur in the Shivalik foot hills in the 1635 CE.
by five more Gurus.

Sikhism developed, matured and became established to work its way in the world at the end of two centuries under the guidance of its ten Gurus. It was formally consecrated by its tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh on the Vaisakhi day 1699 AD at Anandpur Sahib in the Shivalik foot-hills in the Punjab, through his Sikh initiation ceremony-Amritpaan (Sikh baptism). On this day Guru Gobind Singh gave finishing touch to Sikhism. He laid down distinct Sikh religious code of conduct (Sikh Rehatmaryada) and gave the Sikhs a distinct corporate identity.

He called the initiated Sikhs 'Khalsa' (Arabic word literally meaning Sovereign), who now represent and spearhead the tasks of Sikh religion and are recognizable throughout the world as bearded and turbaned Sikhs, supporting the articles of their faith, called five K’s—Kesh (unshorn hair), Kangha, Kachh, Kara and Kirpan.

Religiously turban is a must for a Sikh to keep the unshorn hair on the head covered.
Before his departure from this mortal world in 1708 AD, Guru Gobind Singh abolished the personal human Guruship and transferred the authority from individual leaders to the scriptures and the community itself. He vested the Eternal Guruship into the holy Sikh scripture, “Granth Sahib” and granted it the status of Eternal Guru of the Sikhs, which since then is known as “Guru Granth Sahib” (GGS) and is the symbolic head of Sikhism. He vested the temporal leadership into the community itself under the patronage of Guru Granth Sahib and named it “Guru Khalsa Panth”. Thus from the moment of its initiation by Guru Nanak to its ritual consecration by Guru Gobind Singh, a period of barely 200 years, Sikhism not only acquired its distinctive church and institutions, songs and scriptures, signs and symbols, but also, an unmistakable form or stance.

Presently Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism are the major religions of the world, with Sikhism being in the fifth place followed by Judaism in the sixth with a following of about fourteen million. However, Sikhism is the youngest among all of them.

Sikhism is the latest religion for the present space age and answers the problems of modern man. It satisfies the scientific and juristic minds of today, being without any myth and superstitions in which man had been made to indulge by some previous faiths and systems. It is a religion of comprehensive moral and ethical values to elevate the man spiritually, morally and socially. Its aim is to convert the self-centered mind to God tuned by Name of God in the mind and the control of mind from the narrow egoistic tendencies to higher conscious to be activated for all the socio-political affairs during one’s life and finally unite the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. There is no scope for miracles and mysteries in Sikhism.

Sikhism is a practical way of life to overpower the evils of the day and to lead a truthful life. Sikhism instructs the Sikhs how during
life one should conduct oneself and how one should exert influence on the society for a moral and altruistic change. The meditation in the name of God (the one and only one), the Creator of the entire creation as to be included in one’s mind and the total submission to His will and commandments while doing pious deeds is the way of life in Sikhism. It teaches love between man and God and love between man and man, to earn one’s livelihood with one’s hard labour and honest means and share with the needy, selfless service to the needy, equality and dignity of every human being.

Sikhism is a revealed religion based on a definitive revelation like Semitic religions of the West and therefore, it can be clearly distinguished from the earlier Indian religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, etc, which have an anonymous mysticism as their source of validity. It is not simply a set of views or doctrines, but a way of life according to a definite model, ‘The Guru’, for which the Sikh Gurus gave lessons for over a period of two hundred years and themselves, led the life of that model. Those who perfected it came to be known as Sikhs (literally meaning, the learned). “सिख धर्मात्मा गुरु धर्मात्मा” i.e. “Sikhism is the teaching of the Guru (Gurmat)” (GGS, Ml, p.465).

Sikhism is a religion of knowledge both spiritual as well as temporal wisdom and not a blind faith, “अकलैं साहिब साहिब अकलैं पैयं मान”—with thoughtful logic should one worship God, with same logic should one seek honour” (GGS, p. 1245). It strongly denounces ritualism (Karm kand). It lays stress on the practice of religious life of inner illumination and not on formalism or ritualism. It is independent and distinct from all prevailing religions in this world. It is not an offshoot of one faith or syncretic blend of different and often conflicting faiths. Sikhism is basically a religion of action and human freedom. It is a religion with comprehensive ethical system based on
moral laws, which no science has ever challenged. It elevates mankind spiritually, morally and socially with its deep ethical system. It teaches the highest and purest principles that serve to bind man with man.

The philosophy of Sikhism is different from the philosophy of all the previously existing religions of the world. It envisages that a true Sikh loves all humanity, earns his livelihood by all fair means, shares his earnings with the deprived and strives for the realization of God by abiding His Will and seeking Grace. Sikhism believes in the doctrines of *Karma*, transmigration, reincarnation, salvation-(Mukti), *Surag* (Heaven), *Narak* (Hell), *Hukam / Raza* (Will of God) and Grace, but according to its own way. Because of theistic kinship with other religious systems the Sikh Gurus did not quarrel with the religious terms used by earlier religions rather they deliberately used them and redefined them in the light of their own philosophy and Sikh mystical experience.

Sikhism believes in law of *Karma* but according to its own ideology. Good actions have good results and bad actions have bad effects. A person has to suffer for his / her unsatisfactory behaviour. Guru Nanak says, “Do not blame others for your sufferings, it is a result of your actions. You have harvested whatever you sowed, why should you embroil others?” (GGS, p.433). The soul is the farmer. It has been given a field in the form of body. When the seed of action is sown, the consequences must follow. Whatever the seed of actions is sown in the body, the harvest is reaped accordingly, “As you sow so shall you reap” (GGS M5, p. 134). Gurbani says, “Having sown Acasia Arabica, the farmer searches for juicy grapes. He weaves wool but wants to wear silk” (GGS, p. 1379). Gurbani further says, “Man’s every action will be taken into account—i.e, “Man will be accountable for the words he speaks, the food he eats, the path along he walks. He will be accountable for what he hears and see. His every
breath will be accounted for” (GGS, p.15). Gurbani also says, “Do the deeds by which thy face shines” (GGS, p. 397). It also says, “One should do actions by which he may not feel ashamed in the presence of the Lord (GGS, p. 1381).

Sikhism does not believe in the Hindu theory of ‘Law of Karma’. In Sikh religious terms karam means action, which could be in the form of a ritual or a positive effort. Sikhism vociferously rejects all ritualistic practices of Hinduism, “Karam dharm pakhand jo deesay tin jam jaagati lootay. Nirban keertan gavoh kartay ka nimakh simrat jit chhootay—The ritual poses of piety and hypocrisies, which are seen, them plunders Yama, the tax collector. Sing thou the pure praise of the Creator, contemplating whom, even for an instant, thou shall be saved” (GGS, p. 747). Sikhism only believes in making a positive effort to earn one’s living and remember God in order to lead a comfortable and worryfree life, “Udam kareindian jeeo toon kamawandian sukh bhunch dhiaindian toon Prabhu mil Nanak utri chint (GGS, p. 522). According to the ideology of Sikhism ‘Karma’ is not independent of God. Everything happens under the Will of God. God’s Grace becomes a means of release from the ‘Law of Karma’. The chain of ‘Karma’ obviously cannot bind God rather His Grace breaks this chain.

Sikhism believes in God’s Grace. God’s grace according to Guru Granth Sahib is that quality of God’s nature, which is the source of man’s undeserved blessings particularly those which have to do with his realization of God, “Nanak says, God is realized through the Grace of God--Nanak nadreen nadir pachhan” (GGS, p. 1343). “Nanak says no one is redeemed without the Grace of God” (GGS, p.661).

Sikhism believes in Divine Will (Cosmic law) to which the Sikh Gurus gave a generic name as ‘Hukam’, which literally means
Command. The holy scripture of Sikhism, Guru Granth Sahib says:

* The whole creation is the product of *Hukam*, which is indescribable (GGS, p.1).
* By Lord’s order all are created and by His order they do businesses (GGS, p. 55).

*Hukam* as Supreme or Infinite Will (Cosmic Law) is mentioned at many places in Guru Granth Sahib. It existed before the creation when there was complete nothingness. Being the “Infinite Self-consciousness of God”, *Hukam* is supremely one with Him. It is as infinite as God. In another sense *Hukam* is supreme command. The universe moves, according to it, “Everybody and everything is controlled by His command, which none can escape” (Japji)

Sikhism believes in a life of prayer and service of humanity (*Sewa* and *Simran*). It expounds *Antrang Bhagati*, which is purely devotional and rejects *Behrang Bhagati*, which is ritualistic. It is essentially a religion of devotion whereas the body has to work for the welfare of the family and society, the mind has to remain in tune with the Lord (GGS, p.1376). Its approach to life is realistic therefore it is most modern, practical and rational among all the world religions. Basically it is anti-ritualistic and has no ordained priestly class. It is highly critical of all intermediaries exploiting the masses in the name of religion. It does not foster blind faith. It is a life affirming religion and there is an integral combination between empirical and spiritual life of man. It does not accept any dichotomy in life whether it is ‘personal and social’, ‘spiritual or material’, ‘faith and reason’ or any other such differentiation. It believes in now and here and does not believe in the other worldliness. It has a positive attitude towards world and emphasizes that normal family life (*Grahisti Jiwan*), lived with virtuous conduct leads to salvation.
The concept of salvation in Sikhism is different from other Indian religious systems in which it means liberation / deliverance from the cycle of birth and death (Sansara). Sikhism does not subscribe to this view. It believes in liberation from ego, ignorance and spiritual emancipation now and here i.e; Jiwan Mukti, meaning salvation while being alive and not redemption from rebirth and death. The holy book of Sikhism, Guru Granth Sahib says, “O God, who will see that salvation, which you will grant me after death” (GGS, p.1292). It is concerned with the current life and rejects concept of past or next life and so also the concept of hell and heaven. Gurbani says, “He alone is said to be emancipated in life, who has eliminated ego from within him (GGS, p.1009). Moreover Hinduism, Sufism (Islam) and Christianity seek personal salvation catering to the needs of individuals. They are unconcerned about the evils of society and barbarities of the rulers of the time. In Sikhism there is nothing like private or personal salvation, just as God is benevolently looking after the entire world, in the same way God man’s sphere of and responsibility is equally wide and un-hedged by any self-created barriers. It caters for the spiritual well being of the society as a whole, “He himself is emancipated and emancipates the world, Nanak says to that slave of Lord, one may ever make an obeisance” (GGS, p. 295). This is the fundamental difference between a salvation religion and a universal salvation religion catering for the spiritual well-being of society as a whole.

Followers of all major traditional belief systems except Sikhism seek salvation by practicing asceticism, renunciation, celibacy, worshiping various deities and observing various rituals etc. In order to achieve it the seeker escaped into a monastery, slipped into a forest or retreated into some mountain cave. It was believed that world was a snare and one must run away from it in order to save himself. Sikhism does not want its followers to be escapists. It wants them to
be active and responsible participants in everyday life and attain salvation from within the hubbub of the world. Guru Nanak says, “Salvation is not incompatible with laughing, eating, playing and dressing well” (GGS, p. 522). Unlike Yogis, Siddhas and Sadhus (ascetics) who had developed an escapist attitude towards life and had no worthwhile interest in the problems of the society, Sikhism is a religion of workers and householders and preaches dignity of labour, "Udam karaindia jio toon kamawandian sukh bunch, dhiaindian toon Prabhu mil Nanak Utri chint"(GGS, p.522). It forbids renunciation and all types of ascetic practices and accepts householder's life as the forum of all spiritual activities and growth. It condemns the escapist life of Jogis, Siddhas and Sadhus and their way of living on alms (Biksha-Bhikhia). It believes in shouldering all social responsibilities by leading householder's life (Grahisti jiwan), earning one's living through hard work and sharing it with the needy and less fortunate”, (GGS, p. 1245). It treats this world as field of action and regards its renunciation like a soldier running away from the battlefield. It preaches a life of truth, right actions and controlled desire, "Truth is highest virtue, but higher still is truthful living” (GGS, p.62). It strongly denounces ritualism. Sikhism believes in obedience to God, “Hukam rajaee chalna Nanak likhia naal i.e, Nanak says, “It is ordained that one should follow the Divine Will” (GGS, p.1). But simultaneously it believes in making positive effort, “Udam karaindia jeeo toon kamavandian sukh bhunch” (GGS, p.522).

Sikhism believes in peaceful means (Ahimsa-Ahinsa) and not violence, but in Sikhism it is not unconditional like Buddhism. It has its own philosophy. It does not believe in Ahimsa that stood as a bar against the religious man or a religious society trying to confront socio-political aggression. A society that has to accept the social responsibility of confronting injustice cannot remain wedded to the hurdle of Ahimsa. According to Sikhism it is righteous to use sword,
when all other peaceful means fail. Guru Gobind Singh says, “When all peaceful means fail it righteous to put your hand on the hilt of sword”. Among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and radical saints, Ahinsa is deemed to be a cardinal virtue and meat eating is a prohibition, but according to Guru Nanak, only fools argue whether to eat meat or not who can define what is meat and what is not, who knows where the sin lies, being a vegetarian or non-vegetarian (GGS, p.1289). Also: “Living beings feed upon living beings”(GGS, p.955). He further says, “Every food grain that we eat has life in it.” He further adds, "Water is the primal source of life, which assists growth of all living beings" (GGS, Var Asa, MI, p.472).

Sikhism like all major religions of the world has some basic theological concepts which are supreme and inviolate. Belief in the existence of God is the basic theological concept of Sikhism. It is a monotheistic faith and strictly forbids polytheism and henotheism, “Ika bani ik guru ika sabad veechaar” (GGS, p.646). It proclaims that there is one Supreme Eternal Reality not of any particular religion, but of all mankind, under whatever name He is remembered: God, Rama, Allah, Jehova, Waheguru etc, all mean the same, “-Koi bolay Ram Ram koi Khuda-ay koi sevay gosanyan koi Allahay” (GGS, p.885). Sikhism does not believe in the Hindu theory of trinity (Trimurti) of God: Brahma (The creator) Vishnu (The sustainer), Shiva (The destroyer). In Sikhism, Ishta or the choosen ideal is God Himself and none of His incarnations or substitutes. It proclaims fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, "-Ek pita ekas ke ham barik toon mera gurhaee" (GGS, p.611). It says, God is Nirgun (Transcendent) as well Sargun (Immanent), Nirgun aap sargun bhi uhi-He is absolute as also Personal Reality" (Ibid, Gauri Sukhmani M5, p.287). Dualism of God in heaven and men on earth has no meaning in Sikh thought. It is a faith concerned with the realization of God within us now and here. He (God) resides in every heart and the
so called diversity is an illusion: "Why goeth thou to the forest in search of God. He liveth in all and is yet distinct. He abideth with thee also. As fragrance dwells in a flower or reflection in a mirror so doth He (God) dwells inside everything, seek Him, therefore, in thy-self” - Ibid, Dhanasri, M9, p.684). Whoever, through grace, becomes aware of the inner activity of the immanent God as Guru, and responds to that voice in obedience to God's command (Hukam), attains spiritual liberation while in body. At death the soul (atma or jot) will live in the divine presence, never to be reincarnated.

Sikhism believes that this universe is God's creation and it operates under His order (Hukam). Unlike Vedanta (Hinduism), it believes in the reality of God and reality of the world and does not dismiss world out of hand as mere Maya or illusion. Guru Nanak says, "God is a reality (exists) and his creation is a reality - Ibid, M1, Japji, pauri 34, p.7). It regards the world as house of God and He lives in there. “Ih jag sachchay ki hai Kotharee sachchay ka vich vaas (GGS, p.463)”.

Sikhism explicitly rejects the authority of the Vedas and their Brahmin interpreters, because these neither reach nor preach the reality of God but only speak of materialism, leading the man to blind deeds and not to emancipation in the fourth stage of grace of God. Sikhism does not believe in its concepts of hell, heaven and reincarnation etc. as preached by Vedanta i.e; Hinduism. As per Sikh thought heaven and hell are not places for living hereafter, they are part of spiritual topography of man and do not exist otherwise. They refer to good and evil stages of life respectively and can be lived now and here during our earthly existence. Sikhism does not believe in after life. It believes in now and here. Truthful living in the noble fear of God is heaven. Having no faith in God and living an unethical life is hell.

Sikhism rejects the myth based gods (Devtas), goddesses
Devis) and incarnations (avtaars) of God of Hinduism and the consequent superstitious practices. Unlike Hinduism, Sikhism is rooted in history and not in Mythology, rather it frowns at mythology. It strictly forbids idol (Moorti) worship, stone (Saligram) worship, grave and tomb worship, picture worship, worship of sun, moon, earth, trees etc. Sikhism totally rejects all the outward symbolism of Hinduism—its sacred thread (Janeu), frontal mark (Tilak), cutting of body hair etc. Sikhism totally rejects the rites, rituals and customary traditions of Hinduism—The pilgrimage to Hindu holy places, pilgrimage to the sacred rivers and tanks (Talab), the ritual baths in some rivers and tanks, observance of Shradhs (giving the gracious feasts), performing penance and worship enduring bodily pain and self tortures, yogic asanas and futile exercises and many more practices of Hinduism to wipe out sins and achieve salvation. It also strictly forbids ritual fasting (Varat). It does not believe in the notion of auspicious and in-auspicious days, magic, miracles, occult powers, superstitions, good and bad omens, Jantras, Mantras, Tantras or any other ritual practices to appease the deities. It does not believe in the Hindu concept of pollution and ritual purification. It also does not believe in vegetarianism, sacredness of cow, sacredness of fire (Havan), making burnt offerings and sacrifices. Instead it initiates a moral code distinct from the Hindu ethics among its followers. Mythology, hypocrisy and ritualism have no place in Sikhism.

Sikhism does not agree with the view of Hinduism and Buddhism that human body was impure and must be subjected to ascetic practices, tortuous exercises or to rigorous penances so that its desires were killed and emancipation of the soul attained. On the contrary it regards the human body as "The temple of the God (Brahm Jot -Supreme Soul- Rama)" worthy of adoration and reverence. According to Gurbani, Ram (God) resides in human body and the human soul-"Atma" and "The Supreme Soul-Rama (‘Parmatma’ are
fundamentally same, -“Atam mein Ram, Ram mein Atam” (Ibid, Rag Bhairon M1, p.1153). Therefore it is sin against God to torture the body.

Sikhism does not believe that life is sinful in origin or that it was evil and source of suffering inherent in it. On the contrary it believes that having emerged from a ‘pure source’ was, pure in essence, “Aap satt kia sabh satt, tis prabh tay sagli utpat” (GGS, p.294). As regards Islam, Sikhism does not believe in doom’s day--Kiamat ka din (yom-e-akhrat).

Like all other religions and societies of the world Sikhism too has its own ceremonies related with various phases of life. Sikh ceremonies are not rituals or occasions for display of affluence and ego, but acts of thanksgiving and prayers suited to the occasion. All Sikh ceremonies are simple, but significant and are held in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib. They are devotional in substance and congregational in character. All Sikh religious ceremonies start in the morning and are over by afternoon. Every Sikh ceremony, happy or sad is concluded with recitation of Anand Sahib Bani, Ardas and distribution of Karah Parshad.

Sikhism preaches a secularism, which respects other people's right to be different. It does not believe in imposing its values on others. It is not a religion of chosen people, but instead it is the religion of entire humanity. It rises above regional barriers, "The Guru wishes the well-being of all the creation".

Democracy an important aspect of modern society is the guiding rule of the Khalsa. Everyone present in the congregation (Sangat / Sarbat Khalsa) is free to present his / her views and it is for the sangat (congregation) to accept or reject them through consensus. Democracy in Sikhism does not mean numerical majority, but consensus.

Glimpses of Sikhism (46)
Music in Islam is religiously regarded as illegal (*Haram*), but it occupies prime position in Sikhism. The entire holy book of Sikhism, “Guru Granth Sahib except for the initial thirteen and concluding seven pages is structured on the basis of Ragas.

As regards dancing, Sikhism does not prohibit any sensible hobby, entertainment pleasure or enjoyment (GGS, p.465). However, ritualistic dancing or clapping with hands in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib is strictly prohibited (GGS, p.364).

Woman, who was given the most inferior place in the Hinduism, is elevated to the highest hierarchy of human beings in Sikhism and she symbolizes "the principle of eternal creation". Guru Nanak says, "*So kion manda akhiay jit jamein rajaan*"-"How we can call them evil who give birth to kings (Ibid, p.473)?" It strictly forbids veiling of women, their seclusion from society, slander, burning of widows on the pyre of their dead husbands (*Sati*) and female infanticide.

Marriage in Sikhism is called 'Anand Karaj', "A blueprint for blissful union". It is not regarded as a contract, but a sacrament--an act of socio-spiritual union of two souls, "They are not said to be husband and wife, who sit together. Rather they alone are called husband and wife who have one soul in two bodies" i.e, *Dhan pir ih na aakhian behan ikathay ho-ay. Ek jot doay moortee dhan pir kahee-ay so-ay* (GGS, p.788).

Celibacy in Hinduism is regarded as a means to achieve bliss, but Sikhism does not subscribe to this view. Guru Nanak says, -“*Bind raakh jau tareeya bhai, khusray kion na parm gat paee*” i.e If one were to be saved by celibacy, then the eunuchs should attain the highest bliss!” (GGS, p.324). "Those who call them celibates do not know the way and so they leave their homes in search of God, “*Jatee sadaway jugat na jaanay chhad bahay ghar baar*” (GGS, p.469).
Sikhism accords prime priority for the maintenance of sexual morality among its followers, the Sikhs. Adultery is a taboo in Sikhism, “Jaisay sang bistir sion haiy ray taiso he ih par greh” i.e; "As is the companionship of a venomous serpent, so is the ravishing of another's wife” (GGS, Asa M5, p.403).

The use of alcohol (Sharab) and all other intoxicants is strictly prohibited in Sikhism. Gurbani says, "By drinking which, intellect departs, madness enters the brain, man distinguishes not between mine and thine and is buffeted by his Master. By drinking which the Lord is forgotten and the mortal receives punishment at His court. Drink thou not, at all the false wine, as far as it lies in thy power" i.e, “Jit peetay mat door ho-ay baral pavay vich aa-ay--” GGS, p.554). The use of tobacco in any form is a taboo in Sikhism.

It is not irreligious to own wealth in Sikhism provided it is acquired through honest and fair means and is used not only to derive personal comfort for oneself or one's family but also to give comfort to society also. "For a religious man, it is not unholy to get wealth, provided he spends it in God's way and gives and lives in comfort" (Ibid, Sarang ki Var iv). "Daulat Guzar"- 'Wealth is a necessity of life' (Guru Hargobind-Gurbilas Patshahi chhevin). However, Sikhism is definitely against the exploitive collection of wealth. Guru Nanak says, “Hak praya Nanaka os sooar os ga-ay, Gur Peer hama taan bharay je murdar na kha-ay” i.e., “To rob another person of his / her due share is like eating pork for a Muslim and beef for a Hindu (GGS, p.141)”. It teaches morality. Guru Nanak says, “-Je ratt lagay kapray jama ho-ay paleet, jo ratt peevh mansa tin kio nirmal cheet” -"Cloth is reckoned impure if stained with blood, how may mind of such persons be deemed pure, who suck blood of men (GGS, p.140)?"

Sikhism preaches spirituality and inculcates love for God, truthful
living, universal brotherhood, compassion, peaceful coexistence, loyalty, gratitude for all the favours received, justice, impartiality, honesty, humility, forgiveness, charitableness, self-control, courage, contentment, tolerance and all other moral and domestic virtues known to any holiest man in this world.

Sikhism stands for promoting education (Parrhaee) among masses. It lays great emphasis on the attainment of knowledge (both, spiritual and temporal) as it dispels the darkness of ignorance. Guru Nanak says, "When sun rises; the moon is not seen, where knowledge appears ignorance is dispelled.- “Ugway soor na jaapay chand. Jeh gian pargaas agian mitant” (GGS, Suhi ML, p.791).

Sikhism is a religion of hope and optimism with traditions of ever-rising spirits (Chardi Kala-active optimism). Pessimism (Dhendi-Kala) has no place in Sikh thought. Sikh discipline is a conscious effort to live in harmony with nature and carry out the altruistic divine will. It aims at authentic religious life and demands deeper penetration of one's own religion in thought, devotion and action. It does not believe in religious conversion (Proselytisation) through bait or force, but any body, who likes its ideals, is welcome to embrace it. The glory of Sikhism is its universality which cannot brook sectarianism or narrow loyalties in any shape or form. It is thus a universal religion having an appeal for all and is most practical in its application. It aims to destroy barriers and to unite all mankind. In Sri Rag the Guru Says “The true Guru is one who unites all (GGS, p.72)".

The essence of Sikh faith then is harmony, universal love, truthful living, universal brotherhood, peaceful co-existence, tolerance, humility, honest labour, complete faith in one Almighty (God) and to resist and fight against social injustice, all kinds of oppression and exploitation. It is the zenith of eastern spirituality and it is the only indigenous revolutionary philosophy of Indian subcontinent, which
took birth in 'Punjab'. Thus Sikhism and Sikhs form a unique religion and a unique society, which and who can be clearly distinguished from other religions and political societies of the world.

The global spread of Sikhism has been mainly through migration of the Sikhs from ‘Punjab’ and not through mass conversions from other faiths. Recently because of its principles, Sikhism has been embraced by many white people and now white Sikhs and even black Sikhs can be found internationally especially in USA.

*Sikhi: Punjabi word meaning Sikhism.

NB:
GGS is an abbreviation for Guru Granth Sahib
SGPC stands for Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

**Emblem (Logo) of Sikhism**

“Deg Teg Fateh”

The Sikh national Emblem / Logo / Insignia / Symbol was created by the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC)

_____________________________
Glimpses of Sikhism (50)
after its constitution in the early twentieth century, when it depicted the Sikh doctrine “Deg Teg Fateh” in the Emblematic form. Since then it is seen inscribed on the Sikh national flag/letter heads and the stamps of various Sikh organizations. The doctrine is first found in written form in Persian, on the seal of Banda Singh Bahadur (1708-1716), stamped on his letters. The seal bore the inscription:

“Deg-O-Teg O Fateh-Nusrat-I -Bedrang Yafat -Az Nanak--Guru Gobind Singh” i.e, “The kettle/ Caldron (Deg)- (The Sikh symbol of economy, the means to feed all and sundry on an egalitarian base), sword (Teg)-(The Sikh symbol of power, to protect the weak and hapless and smite the oppressor), victory and unending patronage are obtained from Guru Nanak-- Gobind Singh”. After Banda Singh Bahadur this inscription was adopted by the Sikh Misals and then by Sikh rulers for their coins also. Now the official seal of Akal Takhat bears this inscription.

The circle in the emblem of Sikhism represents the Deg (caldron) used to prepare food, Guru Ka Langar initiated by the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak to remove caste barriers, teach people equality and humility before each other and to feed all and sundry on an egalitarian base so that nobody sleeps empty stomach.

The two swords on the outside represent the Miri--Piri (Bhagati and Shakti) doctrine of Sikhism, revealed by Guru Nanak and put into practice by his sixth successor, Guru Hargobind indicating the integration of spiritual and temporal powers together and not treating them as two separate and distinct entities.

In the center is the Khanda, the double-edged sword, used by the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh to prepare Amrit to initiate the Sikhs. Khanda has cutting edge on both sides indicative of two swords fused together representing Bhagati and Shakti (spiritual and
temporal powers), giving birth to “The Khalsa”, who is a saint-soldier (Sant-Sipahi), the saint meaning scholarly in knowledge of Gurbani and soldier meaning marshal in spirit.

To summarize, the Sikh national Emblem, reminds the Sikhs that they are warriors, they should take Pahul (Amrit), become ‘Khalsa’ i.e. The ultimate form of the Sikh, keep Guru Ka Langar going so that nobody sleeps hungry, keep themselves armed, protect the weak and hapless, fight injustice and oppression, wherever it takes place, the victory will be theirs:

Who are Sikhs?

The Sikhs, now found globally are natives of the Punjab, a region in the north-west of the Indian subcontinent forming major portion of the Indus valley. Punjab was an independent country ruled by the Sikhs, before its annexation by the British in 1849 A.D. Punjab, the country of the Sikhs, separated the Hindu and the Muslim worlds. The Sikhs were the most difficult and last power in Asia to fall to the British imperialism. The British killed the Sikhs politically by not returning their country back to them at the time of decolonization of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, which they had annexed from them under a written agreement. They partitioned it into two parts, the western part 62% was made over to the newly created Islamic State of Pakistan and the remaining 38% eastern part was attached to Hindu India. Since then they are a stateless nation. The Sikhs constitute a distinct ethnic group and they are a “religious community and a political nation” simultaneously and thus they are a unique society in the world. They are marked by a distinctive ideology / religion, distinctly clear Sikh ceremonies, Sikh civilization, Sikh culture including language and an intense devotion to their motherland-‘Punjab’. The initiated Sikhs are called ‘Khalsa’ (lit: sovereign), who now represent and spearhead
the tasks of Sikh religion. They are recognizable throughout the world as bearded and turbaned persons in Sikh dress. They are concerned with the creation of a just social order and are committed to the social equality and peaceful co-existence. Their history is in essence two kinds of freedom—spiritual and political. The first was achieved through teachings of their Gurus. The second was, won by the Sikhs themselves. Ethnically and culturally the Sikhs of the Punjab are a distinct people. According to Professor Bruce La Brack, who has written extensively on the Sikh community, “Sikhs have been recognized as an ethnicity in more than sixty countries world-wide”. Recent Genographic studies reveal that these people arrived in India from Central Asia by travelling through the rugged and mountainous Pamir Knot, some 30,000 years ago, who gradually developed into a great civilization, now known as, “Indus Valley Civilization”, which is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The natives here farmed the lands and are called “Jatt”, which is the oldest named tribe in India, whose name is found even in Mahabharta. After the region was named Punjab by Emperor Akbar in 1590, all natives of this land came to be known as Punjabis, irrespective of their religious affiliations. Majority of these people formally embraced Sikhism, when it was consecrated by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 at Anandpur Sahib. Physically and mentally the Sikhs of the Punjab are a virile and assertive race. A living spirit possesses the Sikh people. Their skin complexion, their body built, their features, their habits, their language, their literature, their ethics, their dress, their food, their customs and religious ceremonies etc are entirely different from rest of the people in the Indian subcontinent and they have a distinct identity. They are strong, tall and muscular with well-shaped limbs, erect carriage, agile and hardy, brown complexioned, sharp-featured along with strong hair growth especially the beard. From childhood they are used to hard toil in the fields. They were hardened by burning summers and freezing winters,
heavy rains and dust storms of the Punjab. During their struggle for sovereignty the teachings of the Guru lent them a dignified look and instilled in them the spirit of bravery and sacrifice. When the call came in the name of the Guru and the Panth, they emerged as fearless fighters. And, however severe their hardships, their mood was always cheerful and morale high. They earned praise even from their bitterest enemies. Qazi Noor Mohammad, a Muslim historian, who came along Ahmed Shah Abdali during his seventh invasion in 1764 A.D; and wrote his book Jangnama, which is a contemporary evidence of happenings, made the most contemptuous remarks about the Sikhs says, “After the Durranis no other troops can be compared with the Sikhs. This sect abounds in giant-sized and loin-limbed youth”. He usually called the Sikhs dogs. He further writes, “Do not call them “dogs”. In fact, they are lions in the times of battle and when in festivities they surpass Hatim (a legendary name in generosity). When they hold the Indian sword in hand, they gallop from Hind (Gangetic Doab) upto the country of Sindh. Besides their fighting, listen to one thing more in which they excel all other warriors. They never kill a coward and do not obstruct one who flees from the field. They do not rob a woman of her gold or ornaments, may she be a queen or a slave girl. Adultry also does not exist among the ‘dogs’. None of them is a thief”-------. The Sikhs of the Punjab are outspoken, industrious, frugal, resourceful, optimistic, intelligent and tenacious people. They are neither intolerant nor bigoted nor selfish. They have a forgiving nature and do not hold grudge for long. They are frank, honest, simple and courteous people. They are admirers of nature, art and architecture and are quick to adopt good qualities of others. They are quick at learning and grasping, always keen to acquire latest knowledge. They have a natural aptitude for practical trades. They are dependable people and stick to their promise. They have an adventurous nature and are always prepared to take risk, sometimes
even at the cost of their life. They are well known for their wanderlust and they have been foremost among the Hindustanis to seek out avenues of employment, agriculture and trade in foreign lands. They give warm reception to their guests. Hospitality and humane love is an organic trait of their culture. The warmth of ‘you are mine’ is inborn. They give a warm send off to their guests, not empty handed, but with a gift of whatever is available in the house. They love perfection and do not consider any time too long or labour too intense to secure perfection in the execution of a project. They have made name in all spheres of life, but are among the best soldiers, farmers and players in the world. Fighting spirit being the very substance of the Sikh psyche, they rely more on morale than on resources. Cracking jokes is their favourite past time. Initiated Sikhs (Amritdhari Sikhs) do not consume any intoxicants including alcohol. Tobacco is a taboo for all Sikhs. Who are Sikhs? Their religious faith and worldly aspirations are wholly different from other Indians. They believe in oneness of God, all humans are equal, and service and devotion, and morality lead to enlightenment. Honest work, sharing and remembrance of God in words, mind and actions are fundamentals of the Sikh faith. ‘Guru Granth Sahib’ is the holy book of the Sikhs and Gurdwara is their place of worship. The Sikhs donot worship Guru Granth Sahib as an idol or deity, instead they worship and rever the teachings of God revealed through sacred writings. Sikh worship has plain simplicity, a quite suspicion of aesthetic graces, Path, Ktha, Kirtan and Ardas. Public spirit and fellow feeling is the characteristic mark of the Sikhs. They donot worship idols, pictures, graves or tombs. They shun all ritualism and donot believe in the divisive Hindu caste system. Individualism is in Sikhism the cardinal sin without expiation, violation of obligation towards community means not just alienation from the holy but also social excommunication. To protect the weak and smite the oppressor are among the major traits of the Sikhs. In politics, they
are devoted to their motherland and have an ideal for Punjab. Democracy an important aspect of modern society is the guiding rule in Sikhism. The traditions of Sangat, Panj Piaray, Panches, Sarbat Khalsa and Gurmata are unparalleled institutions of the Sikhs in the history of religions and nations for taking collective decisions during the times of crisis facing the Sikh nation. Sikhs are not great communicators and are not very adept at striking deals. Political leaders of today show themselves up to be as corruptible as others of their ilk in rest of India, but Sikhs in general reject those who compromise and are quick to react if they realize betrayal of their interest. The Sikhs are highly conscious and committed to assert their identity through their dress and appearance. It stands for their willingness to be identified and held accountable so that their character and actions meet the standards set by the founders of their faith. Because of their smart turbans, unshorn hair with flowing or well-set or rolled beards Sikh men can be easily identified among large crowds. Their ceremonial dress consists of a long coatdress called achkin (.extension) and tight trousers (extension), along with turban in smart Sikh style. They have a fine sense of matching colours they wear. They are very fond of good eating, historical experience has made them survivors and hospitable, also generous and with a zest for life. Meat eating is not a prohibition among the Sikhs. According to Sikh religious code of conduct (Sikh Rehat Maryada), the Sikhs are permitted to eat only jhatka meat. Eating halal (kosher) meat is prohibited in Sikhism and the Sikhs follow it very strictly. Tobacco in any form is a taboo for the Sikhs. Of all the people of India, the Sikhs are perhaps the most travelled and best known in the west. Their handsome appearances, impressive beards and striking turbans, their valour and bravery as soldiers, tireless energy as workers and cheerful dispositions have combined to make them something of a legend. Presently, the Sikhs constitute roughly a little over two percent of the
According to rough estimates there are about twenty three million Sikhs in all, inhabiting the entire globe, out of which nearly 15 million live in the Punjab (Indian), where they constitute 62.2 percent of the total population, about 6 million live in rest of India outside Punjab and about two million are spread all over the world, out of which over half a million live in UK, another over half a million live in North America (Canada and USA) and the rest one million are spread all over the world. Big concentrations are located in Malasiya, Singapore, Africa, France, German, Australia and Newzealand etc. Wherever they have gone they have carried their unique philosophy with them. Every person in a new social, cultural or geographical environment faces many problems. Sikhs have had to face such problems more so because of their distinct appearance. However, they have adapted themselves to their new environment wherever they have settled. They have adopted new places as their homes and mixed well with the society.

**Who is a Sikh***?

The Sikh religious code of conduct (Sikh *Rehat Maryada*), defines a ‘Sikh’ as any person who believes in ‘One Immortal Being’(God), in the ten Gurus; in the Guru Granth Sahib and other writings of the Gurus and their teaching, the Khalsa initiation (*Amritpaan*) ceremony and who does not believe in the doctrinal system of any other religion.


---

Glimpses of Sikhism (57)
“Sikh” was patronized by the founders of the Sikh faith for the followers of the new religion i.e; Sikhism (Sikhi).

According to the Hindu belief progress on the spiritual path was not possible without formally adopting a worldly Guru. Sanatan Dharma / Brahmanism now popularly called Hinduism has a very strong Guru and chela tradition, but Sikhism forcefully denounces it. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was not Chela (disciple) of any worldly Guru. At the time of his enlightenment he was an employee of Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi working as manager of his food grain stores. When the Siddhas questioned him in this regard, he replied, “Shabad Guru Surat dhun chela” i.e. Shabad is Guru, consciousness and intention tuned towards it make one its disciple” (GGS M1, p.943). Describing ‘Sikh’ as ‘Shishya’ (Disciple) is invention of Brahmans / Hindus writers who have infiltrated into the Sikh institutions in the garb of Sikhs.

The Sikh, the Khalsa and the Singh refer to the same entity and there is no other category of Sikhs. There are no classification categories in Sikhism. Either one is a Sikh or not a Sikh.

The word *Sikh is purely Punjabi in origin and is derived from ‘Sikhna’ meaning to learn. It was patronized by the founders of the Sikh faith for the adherents of the Sikh religion (Sikhism-Sikhi-iski-iski isiKAw gur vIcwru-Sikhi sikhia gur veechar) i.e, “Sikhism is the philosophy of Guru Granth Sahib and the teachings of the Sikh Gurus” (GGS, M1, p.465).

When Guru Nanak embarked upon his mission for preaching his message he had with him a Muslim companion named, Mardana. When people asked him as to who was his companion. He always replied: Bhai Mardana. He never mentioned him as his Chela (Shish) as is being advocated by the Hindu theologians. Even after Guru

Glimpses of Sikhism (58)
Nanak during the period of all his successor Gurus, the word of Bhai was used as title of honour for the Sikhs, for instance: Bhai Buddha, Bhai Mansukh, Bhai Gurdas, Bhai Salo, Bhai Manjh, Bhai Joga Singh, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Tara Singh, Bhai Taru Singh and so on. Bhai in Punjabi means brother, meaning all Sikhs are brothers and this brother-hood is called Panth, “Nanak nirmal panth chalaio” (Bhai Gurdas). The sonorous titles of Sant and Baba and Sant Baba, Braham Giani etc being used by so called modern preachers of Sikhism were never used by the Sikhs till recently. They have mushroomed after the independence of India and are trying to Hinduism Sikhism with their preaching of ritualistic practices etc based on Vedantic philosophy among the ignorant Sikh masses.

*As in English and many other languages of the world some words have more than one meaning, similarly in Punjabi the word ‘Sikh’ has many meanings. It may mean learned, learner, teaching, sermon or a follower of Sikh religion (Sikhism-Sikhi) or Bodi / Choti on the shaved head. The word Sikh is purely Punjabi in origin and is derived from ‘Sikhna’ meaning to learn. It was patronized by the founders of the Sikh faith for the adherents of the Sikh religion (Sikhism-Sikhi-ਸਿੰਘੀ). It has nothing to do with the Sanskrit word Shishya which means disciple (Chela-ਸੀਖ).

**Signs of Sikh Identity**

All practicing Sikhs express their religious identity in leaving the hair on their body unshorn, in wearing articles of the Sikh faith (by initiated--baptized Sikhs), in adopting a common suffix ‘Singh’ for male and ‘Kaur’ for female names, in avoiding tobacco, Halal meat, in shunning idolatry, ritualism and in abjuring any connection with Hinduism, Islam, Christianity or any other religion. All Sikh men wear turban in Sikh style to cover the unshorn hair on their head. Turban is an essential and complimentary adjunct to unshorn hair. Sikh women
wears *dupatta* to cover their head. Because of their smart turbans, unshorn hair with flowing or well-set or rolled beards, practicing Sikh men can be easily identified among large crowds. They are highly conscious and committed to assert their identity through their dress and appearance and of course through their mother tongue, Punjabi. It stands for their willingness to be identified and held accountable so that their character and actions meet the standards set by the founders of the faith. Like all other religious communities of the world apostates and renegades are found in Sikhism too.

**Why identity is necessary or needed?**

It is enshrined in the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, “Daage hoay so run meh joojheh bin daage bhaag jaaee” i.e, The branded ones fight in the battle-field with zest, the unbranded turn away as renegades (GGS, p.970).

**Being a Sikh**

One may be Sikh:

1. *By birth: being born of Sikh parents or*
2. *By conversion: who has embraced Sikhism through conversion from some other religion.*

*Guru Arjan was the first born Sikh Guru, born of Sikh parents. After him all Sikh Gurus were born Sikhs.

**Sikh way of life**

The Sikh way of life known as ‘*Gurmat*’ was demonstrated by the Sikh Gurus. They supervised the theoretical and practical aspects of Sikhism and guided their followers. Guru Ram Dass prescribed the daily routine of the Sikhs (GGS, p.305), while Guru Gobind Singh

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (60)
completed the form. A religious committee constituted at Akal Takhat, finalized a draft of ‘The Sikh Rehat Maryada’—‘Sikh religious code of conduct’ based on the canon of the Sikh faith and released it for the Sikh nation, which was published in a booklet form by the Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in 1945, regulates individual and corporate Sikh life.

The Sikh way of life is the honest house-holder’s life and to live in the world in the normal way with the endeavour to attain the higher consciousness without entanglements in temporary alluring materialistic attractions and leading a worldly desire free life in the world. It is based on the doctrines and ideology of Sikhism.

**Sikh religious beliefs**

Belief in the existence of One God (Akal Purkh) is the fundamental theological concept of Sikhism. Belief in Akal Purkh through Shabad Bani to the strict exclusion of all other forms of worship, define the basic position of the Khalsa*. They believe in ten Gurus and after them, in Shabad Bani as the Guru, it is embodied essentially in the Guru Granth Sahib. To converse with Guru one could read his Shabad. To see the Guru one could go to a gathering of the Khalsa to see the Guru in the Khalsa—*ਸਤਮਾ ਅੰਵਾਰੁੱਲ ਹੈ ਤਿਆਰਾਂ ਹੈ* (Mukh vaak Patshahi 10). No living person is to be regarded as Guru.

**The Khalsa commandments:**

- **Pooja Akal Kee**—Worship only God
- **Paricha Shabad Ka**—Believe only in Gurbani
- **Deedaar Khalsay Ka**—Keep the company of the Khalsa.

*Khalsa is an Arabic / Persian word and means Sovereign, it should not be confused with the Punjabi word Khalis, which means pure.*

Glimpses of Sikhism (61)
Sikh Rehatmaryada (Sikh Dharm Achaar Shastar) OR Sikh Religious Code of Conduct

Like all other major world religions, Sikhism too has its own religious code of conduct, which is called ‘The Sikh Rehatmaryada’, which is based on commandments of Guru Granth Sahib and commandments of Guru Gobind Singh as recorded by Bhai Nand Lal and some other writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A religious committee constituted at Akal Takhat, finalized a draft of ‘The Sikh Rehat Maryada’ and released it for the Sikh nation, which was published in a booklet form by the Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in 1945 A.D, regulates individual and corporate Sikh life. The Sikh religious code of conduct consists of: Saroop (Bana-outer appearance) and Rehni (as per Bani / doctrines).

Saroop (appearance-Banaa):

A Sikh is a saint-soldier (Sant-Sipahi). Saint (Sant) means that he is scholarly in his knowledge of Gurbani (Bani) and leads his life according to the teachings of the Gurus as enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib, while soldier (Sipahi) denotes that he is a fearless warrior and maintains the Sikh uniform (Bana- the five K’s--Kes, Kangha, Kachhehra, Kara and Kirpan)- “Saabat soorat dastaar sira—
धर्म मुक्ति दानव निता” (GGS, p.1084) and follows all the instructions of Guru Gobind Singh issued at the time of Amritpaan sanskaar. Guru Gobind Singh has issued a very strict warning in this regard, “जब खालसा धर्म नव लिख उव सज डेम लोग तूटो—
जब खालसा नैरा तब तू प्रेम में नैरा” Jab lag Khalsa rahay naira tab lag tej deoon mein saara-- As long as Khalsa strictly maintains its separate identity, I will lend Him, my full support, जब भी गहेन बी प्रेम के रीत के वह मे नै दों नै भूताऊ Jab eh gahein bipran kee reet*, mein na karo on in kee parteet---When

* Glimpses of Sikhism (62)
he adopts the Brahminical ways, then I shall not believe Him”

(Mukhvaak, Patshahi Dasween).

Guru Gobind Singh further says:

* रिहरी राहय सोई सिख मेरा, आह सहिब में दो चरा“Rehni rahay soi Sikh mera, oh sahib mein os da chera” i.e., “Only the follower of rehat is my Sikh, he is my Sahib (master) and I am his disciple”.

* रिहरी पियरी मोही को सिख पियारी नहीं“Rehat piari mohi ko Sikh piara nahir” i.e., “I love Rehat and not the Sikh i.e. I love the law and not the follower of law”.

* बिना सांसते केश न देंते लोग, बुरे बुरे उन के बिने है निहायः“Bina sastra kesan naroo bhed jano, gahey kaan ta ko kitay lay sidhano”, - Without weapon (sword) a man with kesa (unshorn hair ) on the head is like a sheep, ready to be led by the ear into slaughter-house any time by whosoever may wish to do so.

* बिना सांसन करते विमंच न लोगे“Bina satsar kesan deo na deedaray” i.e., “Don’t show me your face without unshorn hair and sword”.

**Rehni-way of life:**

The Sikh way of life was demonstrated by the Sikh Gurus. They supervised theoretical and practical aspects of Sikhism and guided the 'Sikhs'. Guru Ram Dass prescribed the daily routine of the Sikh; Guru Gobind Singh completed the form of Sikhism by creation of the Khalsa Panth. He gave his Sikhs an outer uniform, “The five K’s” and an inner uniform of “courage, meditation and sacrifice”. Sikh way of life includes:

* The inner values of Sikhism as per Gurbani (contents of Aad Granth-Bani / Gurbani).

* Commandments of Guru Gobind Singh,
* Practices of Sikhism (dos and don'ts of Sikhism),
* Rites / social ceremonies, customs and traditions etc of Sikhism.

**Inner values of Sikhism**

As per Gurbani a Sikh should possess following qualities:

* अगुन सब मिता ये पर उपकर करने— "Augun sab mita-ay ke par upkar Karen” (GGS, p.218). A Sikh should be free from all vices and do good to others. He should look different from others due to his inner qualities (Bani) and not, because of his outer looks only (Bana).

* आत्म रस जी जान-हो सई देव प्रभु मह मो तास में रंचक नहीं नव—“Aatam ras jih jaan-he so hai-ay khalas dev prabhu mah mo taas meh ranchak nahin na bhev” (Sarb Loh Granth)

* आहर सहक राम तीर्थ निंद्रा दिया चहम तन प्रीत—“Alp ahar sulp see nindra daya chhama tan preet i.e; Eat little and sleep little, love the practice of compassion and forbearance

सील संतोक सदा निर्भाइथियो तस्य क्रिया अभ्यर्थित—"Seel santokh sada nirbahithio, havbho tregun ateet i.e ; Be calm and contended and thus you will gain freedom from the Three States (Rajas, Tamas, Satva)

काम, करोध, लोभ, हाथ, मोह तन में निर्गमन—"Kaam, karodh, lobb, hath, moh na mann sion liavay-Keep your mind away from lust, anger, pride, greed, obstinacy and worldly love.

उस ती आतं रुद वे समय धाम पुरख बन लेन—"Tab he atam tat ko darse parm purkh keh pavay”-Thus you will see the essence of your own soul and also realize the Supreme Lord. (Ram Kali Patshahi 10).

* नीति खली उन्नि पुरी भव खली ज्ञाने नये भव—"Jeh karni tahay poori
**Glimpses of Sikhism (65)**

mat, karni bajhon ghatay ghat” i.e “A Sikh should mean what he says, any person who does not possess this quality cannot be called a Sikh” (GGS, p.25)

*हिंदि़ जुलूस अथ हिंदू जीवन हर हर निर्माण था हे—“*Eo Gurmukh aap niwari-ay sab raj srishat ka lay” -- “God shall himself honour such a Gurmukh Sikh and he can rule the whole world” (Ibid, p.648).

**Gurbani further says:**

- Those who maintain only the outer appearance of a Sikh but do not posses inner values of Sikhism are not Sikhs. They are called Bhekhi (खेकी) Sikhs (Sikhs in disguise--hypocrites):

> जिन को अर्ध विश्व अर्ध अर्धम, भर तरी पूरी पूरी जीय अर्घ निमित्त ग्वर धीरे, जिन को राज न राज क चीरे—“Rehat avar kichh avar kamavat, man ran paret mukho gand laavat, jaanhaar prabhu parbu parbeen, bahir bhekh na kahoon bheen” i.e, “Man professes one thing and practices quite another, in his heart there is no love but in his speech he talks tall. The wise Lord who is inner-knower is not pleased with the outward uniform (Ibid, p.269).

- फिन बे रीवा अंडत, सैंस पूरू टैंस हुए तर—“*Jin kay bheetar antra, jaisay pasoo taisay uh nara*” i.e, “Those who donot mean what they say, they are as good as animals” (Ibid, p.1163).

*बकतूर पूरू की भरत अर्ध जीवन अर्हत निमित्त ग्वर रुद्र—“Kartoot pasoo kee maanas jaat lok pachara karay din raat” i.e, “They only look humans but by actions they are animals” (Ibid, p.267). and while commenting on them, Guru Nanak says:

*सल्तन मे सल्तन अर्ध से विन गुट गल बहन—“Nanak se nar asal khar, je bin gun garbh karan” (Ibid, p. 1246) i.e, “ Nanak, those persons who have not adopted good qualities, but are full

Glimpses of Sikhism (65)
of ego, they are in reality, donkeys and not human being (Ibid, p.1246)

The articles of Sikh faith

All initiated (Khalsa) Sikhs should support the articles of Sikh faith, commonly known as 5K's and these are:

- **Kes** --- the unshorn hair
- **Kangha** ---- small comb for the topknot (Joora)
- **Karha** --- a steel wrist bangle
- **Kirpan** --- steel sword
- **Kachhehra or Kachha**- (Punjabi name for breeches)

There are symbols of five letters Kaaf (Five K's) in Sikhism, which cannot be exempted. These are, “Karha, Kirpan, Kachha and Kangha”, but these are meaningless in the absence of Kes.

In addition:

They should wear turban (Dastaar) to cover the unshorn hair on their head. Every Sikh male name should have ‘Singh’ and Sikh female name ‘Kaur’ as compulsory ending of the name.

The five symbols of Sikh faith, give an identity to the organized
form of Sikhism. These are national uniform of the Sikhs. These symbolize the fact that the Sikh has been baptized.

Addressing the Khalsa after completing the Amrit Paan Sanskar—(Baptismal ceremony) at Anandpur Sahib Guru Gobind Singh said:

अम्रित पान इस्तीफ़ा के बाद, अम्रित पान इस्तीफ़ा के बाद—“Khalsa mero roop hae khas, Khalse mein hoop karoon niwas”

Meaning:

Khalsa is my ownself and I dwell within the Khalsa.

To maintain separate identity from Muslims and to prevent the extinction of the distinct Sikh way of life and relapse of Sikhism into Brahminism (Hinduism) Guru Gobind Singh warned the Khalsa, extorting:

जब लग खाल्सा रहे इस्तीफ़ा उध लगे उठे गिरणे मे मत—“Jab lag Khalsa rahay niara, tab lag tej dioon mein saara,

जब मैं जांचू भाग्य की वीड़ उध न बढ़े गिरने बी भूली—Jab eh gahen bipran kee reet, mein na karoon in kee parteet”.

Meaning:

* “As long as Khalsa strictly maintains its separate identity, I will lend him my full support, when He adopts the Brahmanical culture, I shall not believe Him”.

The rationale behind the articles of faith of Sikhism

Kes and Turban:

Before the birth of Sikhism, the Arabic and Turkish Muslim invaders took pride in supporting beard and turban. They did not like the slave Hindus to keep beard, long hair, support turban and look like them. Therefore the Muslim rulers after the occupation of Hindustan
Glimpses of Sikhism (68)

(now India) issued orders that the Hindus keep the beard and head shaved and wear a prescribed cap (*Topi*) instead of turban.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and thereafter all his nine successors maintained unshorn hair and supported turbans in defiance of the Muslim imperial order. The sanctity of hair on human body was practiced by all the Sikh Gurus who kept it unshorn, to obey the God’s Will. How can those be called Sikhs who disobey the Sikh dictum and defy the Sikh code of conduct? Guru Nanak in the very beginning of Japji Sahib at p.1 of GGS proclaimed: “हुकम राजा चाला नानक लिखा नाल” i.e. “To remain under the Will of God, is ordained from the very beginning”. No doubt is left at all in this respect that God’s Will has to prevail and everyone has to follow it. The hair on the body are in accordance with the Will of God and the appearance of the human body is to be kept intact if one is to live in the Will of God. The God’s Will is defied when we cut hair and refuse to keep it intact. How can so called Sikhs (clean shaven) call themselves to have faith in the teachings of Guru Nanak and the Sikhism?

At the time of formal consecration of Sikhism in 1699, Guru Gobind Singh made Kes-and turban as part of the Sikh dress. Both *Kes* and turban in Sikhism represent freedom, liberty, justice and peaceful co-existence. Sikhs keep unshorn hair and wear turban as a distinctive identifying marks. It symbolizes their commitment living the Sikh values of humanity, service and leadership in both public and private lives. It stands for their willingness to be identified and held accountable so that their character and actions meet the standards set by the founders of their faith. Sikhism regards both shave (*Hajamat-Bhaddan*-Tonsure) and cap (*Topi*) as signs of slavery.

**Kirpan:**

Every Sikh (Khalsa) is a saint-soldier and weapons are life and
soul of the soldier. *Kirpan* in Sikhism signifies two fundamental tenets of Sikhism namely that it is the basic responsibility of a Sikh to confront and resist injustice, and that asceticism, monasticism or escapeism of any kind is wrong. Thus *Kirpan*, on one hand is a constant reminder to the Sikh of his duty, and on the other hand, is a standing guard against reversion to pacifism and otherworldliness.

**Kachhehra or Kachha**

The Hindus wore either *Langoti* or *Dhoti* to cover their loin. *Langoti* kept the person half naked and a person wearing a *Dhoti* cannot discharge the duties of a soldier. Guru Gobind Singh discarded both and made *Kachhehra* a part of *Sikh Rehat*, which is a smart battle dress.

**Karha (ਕਾਰਾ):**

It is a sign of solemn pledge (*Rakhree*) for adhering to the tenets of Sikhism.

**Kangha:**

*Kangha* in the topknot (*Joora*) is meant for combing the hair. It signifies negation of filthy living of Sadhus with matted hair.

**Genesis of the Sikhs and Sikhism**

It is universally agreed upon now that man evolved in Africa and gradually spread over the entire globe. According to Dr. H.D Sankalia, the renowned anthropologist, “It is more or less established that at the end of First Glacial Period and into the beginning of the second Ice Age, Early Man entered the foothills of the Northwest Punjab, in the area traversed by Soan, Haro and other rivers within the Indus-Jhelum Doab. Early man spread into the area comprised by Rawalpindi and Attock districts of the Punjab, and the Jammu and
Kashmir States”.

Recent Genomic studies reveal that these people arrived in India from Central Asia (Kazakhstan area) by travelling south of the rugged and mountainous Pamir Knot, some 30,000 years ago. Early humans lived here as gatherers and hunters, who gradually developed into a great civilization—The Harappan civilization, now known as “The Indus Valley Civilization”, which is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The natives here farmed the lands and were called “Jatts—जैट”, which is the oldest named tribe in India whose name is found even in Mahabharata. After the region was named Punjab in 1590 A.D by Emperor Akbar, the natives of this land came to be called Punjabis. Scholars of history generally agree that Punjabi heritage is one of the oldest civilizations in the world and that its cradle was the soil of Punjab. Its main cities were Mohinjodaro and Harappa. It dates back to about 3300 BC and flowered between 2500 and 1700 BC.

It is a well-known fact that the earliest spiritual traditions started in the east in the Indus Valley. Those practicing spirituality were called Jogis / Siddhas. They believed in ‘One Supreme Eternal Reality, whom they called, ‘Brahma’ and they had a script called Brahmi / Siddhmatrica. The statues / seals of meditating Jogis have been found among the ruins of Harappa and Mohinjodaro towns in the Indus valley, so far no scriptures belonging to them have been found, although they had a script called Brahmi / Siddhmatrica.

The people of the Indus Valley had reached a very high level of civilization more than 4000 years ago, when in the eighteenth century B.C, people of a white nomadic tribe from Asia Minor (Seistan / Persia, modern Iran region) who rode horses, reared cattle, ate beef and spoke an early common ancestor of all Indo-European language and called themselves Aryans entered northern Punjab through the passes in the Hindu Kush mountains as herds-men and graziers of
cattle. They settled down here in the Kashmir region around Taxilla (now in Pakistan) and by the ninth century B.C, were spread across northern Punjab what is now Pakistan. All Aryans did not come at once but kept on pouring gradually over a period of centuries.

Gradually, after many centuries of their stay in the hills they descended down into the plains of the Punjab. They tried to dominate the Jatt of the Punjab through their priest, the Brahman, but the Jatt refused to submit to the Brahmanical dominance and pushed the Aryans. Khushwant Singh in his book, ‘A History of the Sikhs’ writes, “The jatt’s spirit of freedom and equality refused to submit to Brahmanical Hinduism and in turn drew the censure of the privileged Brahmans of the Gangetic plains who pronounced that, “No Aryan should stay in the Punjab for even two days, because the ‘Punjabis’ refused to obey the priests”. Hence forth the Aryan Brahman developed an extremely hostile attitude towards the jatts of the Punjab.

After their exist from the plains of the Punjab the Aryans settled down in Ganga Jamna divide called Malawa and named their first settlement as Dev Nagri (देव नगरी)-literally meaning the town of Gods, because Brahmans described themselves as Devatas i.e. Gods. Now it is called Ujjain. With the passage of time the Aryans followed the Chanakya policy and came to settle in the region between River Yamuna and Afghanistan in a servile position to the Jatts. The mercantile community among the Aryans called Khatris (Kashatriyas) lived mostly in urban areas and became engaged in trade, accountancy, managerial and administrative jobs etc. The Jatts lived in the country side and controlled the lands and agricultural production. The Brahmans in small numbers settled there as teachers, priests and astrologers. There was atleast one Khatri and one Brahman household in each village of the Punjab. The Jatts of the Punjab did
not profess any religion, they just worshiped nature only.

Punjab connects South Asia with Middle East and the Central Asia. Because of its geographical location it has been a perpetual battlefield serving as the gateway to India for the invaders from the Central Asia and the Middle-East. After the Aryans, foreign invasions of the Punjab started in the 5th century BC. A series of invaders trampled over this land for centuries. These early invaders included Iranians (Persians), the Greeks, the Parthians, the Sakas (Scythians), the Kushans, the Huns and the Bactrians. Persian king Darius was the first to invade this land in 5th century BC. He was followed by Greek conqueror, Alexander the great in 326 BC, after whom Punjab was annexed by Bactrian king Saleucus in 305 BC, and the Bactrians ruled over this land for about two hundred years. The Bactrians were defeated by Chander Gupta Mauriya and he made the Punjab part of the vast Mauryan Empire. Buddhism became the state religion during the rule of Mauryan King Ashoka (274—232 BC), who established university of Buddhist learning in Taxilla in the foot hills of the Punjab, but Buddhism could not influence the Jatts in the plains of the Punjab and Buddhism remained limited to the hilly areas bordering Afghanistan.

After the fall of Buddhist Mauryan Empire, Brahmanical revival took place in Hindustan in the 8th century AD; and Shankracharya, who had his head quarter at Dwarka in Gujarat, violently wiped out Buddhism from Hindustan (India), but Brahmanism could not influence the “Jatts” of the Punjab and did not dare to penetrate into them in a big way and extend its influence beyond Jamna River. Punjab remained politically isolated from the Gangetic Plains for about a thousand years after the fall of Mauryan Empire.

Islamic invasions of the Punjab started in the beginning of the 8th century and the Turks, Mughals and Afghans followed one after the
other. The brave people of the Punjab resisted for almost three centuries, but ultimately the Punjab fell to the invading Islamic forces coming in hordes in the beginning of the 11th century. Turks, Moghuls and Afghans, (Pathan) tribes occupied the areas of the Punjab bordering Afghanistan and settled there permanently. Some of the weak minded Punjabis in this area got converted into Islam, while others fled in front of the Muslim onslaughts and settled on the northern fringe of the Punjab in a narrow belt running along the foothills of the Himalayas, a region intersected by mountain streams and deep ravines, difficult for easy access. They started worshipping goddess Durga and came to be known as Durgas (worshippers of Durga), now simply called ‘Dogras’ and are found in the hills of the Punjab in large numbers.

The brave natives of the Punjab called ‘Jatts’ never left the plains of the Punjab. They kept resisting and fighting against the invaders, got concentrated on both sides of River Ravi in the Central Punjab called “Majha” around Lahore, between River Chenab and River Yamuna.

Guru Nanak founded Sikhism, in Punjab at the fag end of the 15th century. Although Sikh Gurus preached their message in the Punjab, Hindustan, and adjoining countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Arabia, Palestine, Turkey, Tibet, Parts of China, Russia and Sri Lanka etc. for a period spanning over more than two centuries, their teachings were accepted only by the Punjabis, and Sikhism was formally embraced en-mass by the people of the central Punjab called Majha, mostly Jatts, when it was formally consecrated by the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh on the Vaishki day in 1699 at Anandpur Sahib in the Punjab through Amritpaan ceremony. The Sikhs of the Punjab are therefore a distinct ethnic people.

Today Sikhism is fifth largests religion of the world and the Sikhs are an imoportant international community. Global spread of Sikhism
has been mainly through migration of the Sikhs from ‘Punjab’. Recently because of its principles Sikhism has been embraced by many white people and now many white Sikhs and even black Sikhs can be found internationally, particularly in USA.

References and notes

K.S. Duggal: The Sikh people yesterday and today.

Chapter 2

God in Sikhism

According to Sikhism God (Akal Purkh / Karta Purkh)--the 'Ultimate Spiritual Reality' is beyond human comprehension i.e., cannot be conceived or explained in empirical terms. "ਜਾਂ ਹੈ ਚੈ ਦੁਨ ਜਿੱਤੇ ਰ ਤੇਜੀ"—Jas oh hai tas lakhay na ko-ay (GGS, p,340), but can be apprehended and experienced, though he cannot be fully understood, for the ineffable can never be wholly realized or rendered. While time and space, force and change are the aspects of the becoming universe, God is Eternal, Self-existent. He is present throughout the universe. He is both Transcendent and Immanent. He exists in nirgun avastha (impersonal—Transcendental--abstract state) and manifests himself in Sargun avastha (personal-functional and creative -immanent state), both being the same,ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਧਿ ਸਾਰਗੁਣ ਕੀ ਈੰਤੀ—“Nirgun aap sargun bhee ohee” (GGS, Gauri Sukhmani, M5, p. 287). Guru Nanak has illustrated the attributes of God in his “first discourse”—Popularly called, “Mool Mantra” i.e; 'Basic postulate' in Sikhism. The Holy Sikh Scripture Guru Granth Sahib begins thus:

ਪ੍ਰ ਸਿਕਨਾਮ ਜੋ ਕਰਜ਼ਧ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਿੰਹਵਾਨੀ ਹੀਵੇਂ ਪਿਦਾਵਾਨੀ ਸਾਤਨੀ ਕੀਵੇ ਹੀ ਪੁਰਾਣਾਾਾ।

ਇੱਕੋ ਅੰਕਾਰੀ--------------------There is only One God, He is infinite

ਸਤਨਾਮ—He is Eternal Reality / Exists / His existence can not be denied.

ਬਲੁਤ ਪੁਰਖ—Karta Purkh----He does everything in this universe-(He is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer)
Glimpses of Sikhism (76)

**Glimpses of Sikhism**

Sikhism is a strictly monotheistic religion and oneness of God has been made crystal clear by Guru Nanak in the opening word of the opening verse (invocation) of the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib by writing, ‘Ikk Oankar’ or ‘Ekankar’.

In Punjabi language, “Ikk-Oora” means one and the alphabet ‘Oora’ with open end in Punjabi is pronounced as “Oh,” which means “He”--the Almighty (God). The open end of the alphabet ‘oor’ denotes His infiniteness (Beant), thereby literally meaning, “Oh ikk hai te beant hai” i.e, there is only One God and He is Infinite. The numerical 1 in ‘Ikk’ denotes His unity and uniqueness. He is one without any equal and He is infinite. Guru Nanak has not assigned any descriptive name to Almighty (God), because according to him, the Almighty is ineffable. There are no separate gods for different religions, but only He is addressed by different names by different religions. He is not sum total of so many forces bundled together as the Hindu theory of trinity portrays: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva addressed as Oam / Aum, on
the other hand, He is one who makes existence and manifestation of all forces possible. Gurbani says:

* **Sarbang saacha ek dooja nahin ko-ay**--In the whole world, there is but one True Lord and there is not any other (GGS, p.660).

* **Ekkaar avar nahi dooja Nanak ek samaae** i.e. There is One Lord there is not another. Nanak remains merged in One Lord (GGS, p.930).

* **Sahib mera ek hai, eko hai bhaae eko hai**. Rahao—There is one and only one God, hey brother (GGS, p.350).

* **Ekai re har ekai jaan,**
  **eka re gurmukh jaan**—O man, Know that there is one and only one God. By Guru’s guidance, know Him to be one (GGS, p.535).

* **Ek mein sarb, sarb meh ekaa,**
  **eh satgur dekh dikhaee** i.e, The true Guru has shown me the vision that the one is in everything and every thing is in the one (GGS, p.907).

* **Nanak vartay eko ikk toon**—Nanak says, “You one and only one, pervade everywhere” (GGS, p.966)

* **Poojoh ram ek he deva** i.e “Worship only the One Lord God (GGS, p.484).

* **Ikka Bani ikk Guru ikka sabad veechaar** i.e, “There is but One Divine sermon, One God and there is One Word to contemplate (GGS, p.646).
Difference between the Sikh and Islamic monotheism

According to Sikhism, ‘The Supreme Eternal Reality’ has no particular name, “Namastang Anamay” i.e I salute him Who has no name” (Guru Gobind Singh—Jaap Sahib, Bhujang Paryat Chhand Verse 4).

According to Semitic belief there are seven upper and seven lower regions (Chaudah Tabak) and God lives above in the seventh sky. There is total confusion about God in Hinduism.

* “अप्रीकृत अपूर्व अप्रिल अप्रिय धरणी रचित्र—Aapeenay aap sajio aapeenay rachia nao i.e, The Lord, of Himself created His ownself and Himself He assumed His Name” (GGS, p.463).
* “अपरे अपूर्व अप्रिल अप्रिय धरणी—Aapay aap upaa-ay niraala—The peerless God created Himself” (GGS, p.1036).

Residence of God

According to Sikh belief, God is Omnipresent. He is present in every place and at every time. Gurbani says:

* “सब धर उभ गहे हि तभ दिल ले ले हि भगवान संग्रह बीट दिल अभि पाँच रघु समान हे हि—Asthavar jangam keet patangam ghat ghat raam samaana ray—i.e; None else but the Lord speaks in all living beings, whether they trail on ground, walk on their legs or fly in the air.” (GGS, p.988).

* तद्वित भाग तेज तेज भाव नाम भव वय डव्युति दशिका—Thy light is pervasive in the creatures and the creatures are contained in Thy light. Though, O mighty inconceivable Lord art filling all (GGS, p.469).

* यह सत्संज्ञ शृंग अ लेख्य॥ सत्संज्ञ लेख्य सत् संज्ञ निश्चित दल निश्चित सत्संज्ञ नेप्तु॥—O, father donot consider the True Lord to be far away. The light of God, the life of the world is pervading everywhere and on every
head is the True Lord’s writ (GGS, p.992).

* टेख सात नेवा जै नीमा नूतन निकुंद केंद्र र बीआँ॥--There is same inner consciousness in all beings. Wihout the inner consciousness, He has not created any. (GGS, p.24).

* दिख दिख र आलोच मज्जन मै सच घनी॥ निमाघ्नी र कैवी ठकत मंद नव अमलके॥ मज्जन भर अकल चवसु दूल भराकर॥ ने ज्यह निमाघ्नी र गता अवरण॥--Ik fika na gala-ay sabhna mai sacha dhanee. Hiaao na kaihee thahan manak sabh amolvay. Sabhna man manak thahan mool machgava. Je to pireeaa dee sik hiaao na thahay kaheeda i.e, Do not be rude to any person, the same Divine Master dwells in heart of every human being. If you want to realize the Lord, do not hurt the feelings of any one, you will hurt him residing there in” (GGS, p.1384).

* विश्व मंद सब पुजारी जय दस वंदन॥ भुजन अवास धूल उन भषं॥--The Lord is pervasive in the mountains, the oceans, deserts, lands, forests, fruits, caves, the nether regions, the skies and all the hearts(GGS, p.1101).

* टेख माते निर्गाप पुजार सात रेखा उद में॥--The one sole Lord is in many manifestations, wherever I look, there is He pervading and filling all GGS, p.485).

* अौस लागु उठल निकोल लुँई पुजार भगवान॥ अौस लागु बैर निकोल लुँई पुजार उठल र बैर भगवान॥ यर बूढ़ कैमे बूढ़ र मरी। सैमे बुढ़े की मिथिकतिकी॥--Aisa naam rattan nirmolak pun padarath pa-i-a. Anik jatan kar hirdai rakhia rattan na chhapai chhapa-i-a. 1. Har gun kahtay kahan na jaee. Jaisay goongay kee mithiaaee. The Lord blessed me with the priceless jewel, the Divine Name. One can enjoy it, but like a dumb person cannot describe it. I observe him revealing Himself every where” (GGS, p.659).

* अभास माता दोन निर्गाप भगवान वे मद जंदे॥ देव दुः मद मद मद जंदिंगा

Glimpses of Sikhism (79)
The whole universe sprang up from one Divine Light. A person who attunes himself with Divine Law, finds him pervading every where throughout the whole universe” (GGS p.1349).

* Guru Nanak says, “Jeh jeh dekha teh teh so-eye”: “Wherever I see, I see Him (God) (GGS, p.1343).

* “He who is in the universe is that also abides in the body and whoever seeks , he finds Him there (GGS, p.695).

* He who is in the universe is that also abides in the body and whoever seeks , he finds Him there (GGS, p.695).

When at Mecca the Guru Nanak was scolded for his sleeping with his feet towards Kabba, it was pointed out by him that he saw God in every direction.

God is Transcendent

* “There was only the formless one Himself without any creation and He did what he desired and there was no other than him” (GGS, p.509).

God is Immanent

* “Ghat, Ghat
Antar Brahm Lukaia Ghat, Ghat Jot Sabaeedi;

God is hidden in every heart and every heart is illuminated by Him i.e; (GGS, p.597).

* ध्त दी अविषिक्त दूर छै दूर द्वितीयता- Ghat He Mahen Niranjan Tere Tae Khojat Udiana i.e; The immaculate Lord is within thy mind, but you search him in the wilderness (GGS, p.632).

* सत्कुल निरबिज्ञ निर्वैध मूर ममपी आधिप्ती अपना श्रेष्ठ लक्ष्य अपने दी- दिखिल साधिक- Sargun nirgun nirankaar sun samaadhee aap. Aapan keea Nanka aapay he fir jaap i.e; “The same God is Sargun and Nirgun, Nirankar and self absorbed. He has done everything and created the entire creation to meditate upon His Name (GGS, p.290).

* इह जग सचचय की क्यों मैं दी छै दूर छै क्यों का दूर छै- “Ih Jag Sachchay Kee Hai Kothari, Sachchay Ka Vich Vaas” i.e; “This world is the chamber of God where in the true one resides” (GGS, p.463).

**God is both Transcendent and Immanent**

* अविज्ञ सत्कुल निरबिज्ञ निर्जीव निर्वैध साधि- “Avigato nirmaail upjay nirgun tay sargun theeea i.e; “From formless, the Lord assumed the Pure Form and from unattributed, He became attributed” (GGS, p.940).

* सत्कुल निरबिज्ञ निर्वैध मूर ममपी आधिप्ती अपना श्रेष्ठ लक्ष्य अपने दी- दिखिल साधिक- Sargun nirgun nirankaar sun samaadhee aap. Aapan keea Nanaka aapay hee fir jaap i.e; “The same God is Sargun and Nirgun, Nirankar and self absorbed. He has done everything and created the entire creation to meditate upon His Name (GGS, p.290).

* लक्ष्य निरबिज्ञ अपने मैं दी छै दूर छै लक्ष्य निर्जीव दूर छै- Lord Himself is un-attributable and attributable. He, who realizes His essence is a
scholar (GGS, p.128).

* फिर्ता केदर अधि मण्डल है देवी || लक्ष सागर मनि मण्डल भेंड़ी || Lord, who by Himself is unattributed and attributed, by wielding His might has charmed the whole universe (GGS, p.287).

* अगम अगोचर रूप न देखिः॥ अगम अगोचर रूप न देखिः॥ Agam Agochar Roop Na Rekhia. Khojat, Khojat Ghat, Ghat Dekhia” i.e.; He is unreachable. He is beyond mind and senses. He is formless. He has neither any form nor outline yet I have seen him in each soul (GGS, p.838).

**God is ocean of Attributes, Values and Virtues**

In the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, God has been described as Father, Mother, Friend, Brother, Enlightener, Protector (GGS, p.103), Shelter of the shelterless, Loving, Beneficient, Helper of the poor and weak and Destroyer of the demonical or oppressor (GGS, p. 224), Destroyer of the evil doers (GGS, p.1208). He is always Benevolent. He relieves the suffering of the down trodden; He is the Succour of the succourless (GGS, p.263-64). God is eyes to the blind, riches to the poor, Nanak He is the Ocean of virtues (GGS, p.830).

**God is the Doer (Karta Purkh)--Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer**

The basic postulate of Sikhism as enshrined in the opening verse of the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth describes God as the Doer Person (Karta Purkh), who does every thing in this universe. God created the world of life, planted Naam (Immanent God) therein and made it the seat of righteousness, “तत्त्व नीव दिस्माति है लिख तहे यत्व दर्षनिं (GGS, p.463). He creates all, fills all, and is yet separate, “चंद दिस्माति विशिष्ट भावितनु अलम्बर अनपल्ल॥ There are many hymns
in Guru Granth Sahib which mention that God was there before He created the Universe, He being Transcendent. He Himself started the creation. He is the Sole Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer. There is no second one, “ਭੂ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਾ ਭੂਦ ਦੀਪ ਮੰਨ ਦੇਖੀ॥ ਸਭ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਅਮਲ ਦੇ ਵੇਉ॥” (GGS, p.11-12). God was by Himself and there was nothing else. During a discussion, the Yogis asked Guru Nanak, “When there was no form, nor sign, where was the Word (Sabad / Naam or Logos)? আদি বিষয় মহাত্মা বিষয় বিষয় অন্য মহাত্মা বিষয় মহাত্মা বিষয় (GGS, p.940). The Guru replied, “To think of the Transcendent Lord in that state is to enter the realm of wonder. Even at that time of Sumn (void), He permeated that void, “আদি বিষয় অন্য মহাত্মা বিষয় অন্য মহাত্মা বিষয় অন্য মহাত্মা (GGS, p.940). He is responsible for all happenings in the universe, “হেন মহাত্মা মহাত্মা মহাত্মা মহাত্মা মহাত্মা (GGS, Jap p.7). These quotations from Guru Granth Sahib give a clear idea of the creative activity of God and the cosmological aspect of His Creation which is distinct from Him.

**God is Omnipotent**

God is all powerful. According to Gurbani such is His power that He can cause lions, hawks, kestrels and falcons to eat grass, and those who eat grass, He can make them eat meat; He can make hills appear in place of rivers and bottomless oceans in place of sandy deserts; a worm-like creature may become a sovereign under His will and an army may be reduced to ashes. It will be no wonder if He makes animals live without breath, “ਸੰਤਕ ਜਗ ਅੱਠਨ ਅੱਠਨ ਅੱਠਨ ਅੱਠਨ ਅੱਠਨ (GGS, p.144)। * ਪੂਰੇ ਕਾਲ ਭੂਦ ਦੇ ਕਾਲ ਭੂਦ ਦੇ ਕਾਲ ਦੇ ਕਾਲ (Japu ji)-Hukmai andar sabh ko bahar hukam na koe—i.e, All are under His Will, none is exempt from it.

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (83)
God is Omniscient

God is the power to whom all hearts are open and from whom no secret is hid. Gurbani says, “पढ़े घड़ापूर्व परमेश्वर देवस्तुं बेहद धर्मवें लीजिए। रेखे बुझे मन खिंचे लाये अंतरिक्ष बनी तत्त्वज्ञान।”—Papai paatsaah parmesar wekhan kao parpanch keea. Dekhai boojhai sabh kichh jaanai antar baahar rav rahiaa—The Supreme Lord, our king, has made the world to behold. He sees, understands and knows everything. Within and without He is pervading” (GGS, p.433).

Outline, shape, colour, caste or lineage etc of God

Besides the belief that God is one, Guru Nanak taught that God had no garb, that is no form or attachments by which one could claim deity to be Hindu or Muslim. He freely used both Hindu and Muslim names during his utterances e.g. Hari, Ram, Gopal, Oankar, Allah, Khuda, Sahib etc. Gurbani says:

* रूप रंग रंभ रंभ रंग रंभ रं�...
bhekh kou keh na sakat keh - None can describe His form, complexion, outline and costume,

* अचल मूरत अन्भाव परकास अमित खजुर रैंज़े। Achal moorat anbhau parkaas amitoj kahijay - He is perpetual, self-illuminated, and measureless in power,

* ब्रह्म दिव्य दिव्यार्थ ग्यान ग्यान यज्ञ यज्ञ -Achal moorat anbhau parkaas amitoj kahijay - God is the king of kings and God of millions of Indras,

* आचल मोरत अन-भाव परकास अमित खजुर रैंज़े। Kot Inder Indran sahu sahaan ganijay - God is emperor of three worlds, demigods, men and demons and woods and dales proclaim him as indescribable,

* त्रिभुवन महीप सूर नार आसुर नेट नेट बन के त्रिभुवन -Tribhavan maheep sur nar asur, net, net ban trin kehat - God has no religion

God has no religion

* नामस्तंग अकर्मन्। Namstang akarm - I salute God who is above rituals and is not bound to any religion (Jaap Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh).

Who created God?

Gurbani says:

* "आपने अपने अपनी अपनी अपने रूप की रूप-"Aapeenay aap sajio aapeenay rachia nao i.e, The Lord, of Himself created His ownself and Himself He assumed His Name"
Why everybody can’t see God?

* (GGS, p.463).

* “आपे अप दर्शकों निराला—Aapay aap upaa-ay niraala—The peerless God created Himself” (GGS, p.1036). Just as the sun does not exist for the owl, God does not exist for those who haven’t got the vision to see Him. To see God one has to have mental vision and intuitive eyes. Gurbani says, “The eyes that see God are different from physical eyes, “राजा जी अपनी दिनी दिकाई भी दिखी” (GGS, p.1100). For the Sikhs God is visible everywhere, “राजा जी धार्मिक दिनी सनैदान—Nanak kaa paatshah disay zaahira (GGS, p.397)”. He is Immanent in the phenomenal world like the musician can be said to be present in his music. Our eyes can see the matter but they cannot see all its properties. For example they cannot detect radiation, radio impulses and magnetism etc. They cannot see the data on a floppy / compact disc or DVD. This does not mean that nothing exists on them. God is not material. He is the totality of cosmic consciousness.

God does not incarnate

In the theology of Sikhism, ‘Avtaar’ literally means birth: मानुक्या अवतार दुलभ—Maanukha avatar dulabh—Human birth is very difficult to obtain (GGS, p.486), but in Hinduism it means any person or animal serving as the embodiment of god or spirit. According to Hindu thought God descends to earth in the form of an incarnation to restore Dharama (righteousness) whenever there was rule of Adharma (unrighteousness) and therefore these incarnations are worshiped as God. It was also held in Hinduism that God took birth not only in human form, but also himself comes into the world in various anthropomorphic forms, such as the Hansa (Swan), Machh
or *Matsya* (Fish), *Kachh or Kurma* (Tortoise), Varaha (Boar), Nar-Simha (Partly human, partly tiger) and finally human forms. Twenty-four incarnations of God Vishnu were accepted. Rama the son of king Dashratha and Krishna son of Vasudeva were among them.

According to *Gurmat* (Philosophy of Sikhism) it is the duty of every Sikh to respect and pay regards / respects, to all the enlightened persons called prophets / *Massihas* / Gurus who came to this world from time to time and guided the humanity for its betterment, irrespective of their religious affiliations, but simultaneously it describes it as an unpardonable sin to consider them God and then worship them. According to *Gurmat*, God is *Ajooni* (beyond birth and death). The holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, emphatically discards the view of God taking birth in any form. Its conception of God is uncompromisingly monotheistic, with no room for the idea of incarnation: In the Mool Mantra God has been mentioned as one who never takes birth—‘*Aajoni’*. Gurbani says:

* नन्दे भवने नन्दे भवने नन्दे भवने—Nanak, God alone is the one who is not born of a woman (GGS, p.473).
* जन्म मृत्यु नहीं धांडा दहर—“Janam maran nahin dhanda dher”, “The Almighty is free from birth and death cycle nothing interferes” (GGS, p.931)
* जन्म मृत्यु रघु रघु रघु रघु—“Janam maran te rehat Narain”—“The Almighty is free from birth and death” (GGS, M5, p.1136).
* रघुराज विषमजी विषमजी विषमजी विषमजी—Nanak says, truly meditate on Him who is ever existent, the one who takes birth and dies is false (GGS, Var Asa M1. p.463).
* अकाल मूरत अकाल मूरत अकाल मूरत अकाल मूरत—Akaal moorat ajooni sanbhaa kal andhkaar deepaaee i.e., The one (whose allegoric body) is without any effect of time and space, is free from life and death cycle, is created by itself and gives light to disperse

Glimpses of Sikhism (87)
It is a well-established concept in the ancient philosophy of India (Hinduism) that God appears in the form of human again and again when cruelty on human beings is on the increase. When Guru Nanak appeared on the soil in the Indian subcontinent, according to ancient Hindu thought there were many Gods. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva formed the trinity as creator, preserver and destroyer. It was also held that God took birth not only in human form but also himself comes into the world in various forms, such as, The हंस- Hamsa (Swan), मच्छ- Machh or Matisya (Fish), कच्छ-Chakch or Kurma (Tortoise), वराह -Varaha (boar), नरासिंह- Nara-Simha (partly human, partly tiger) and darkness

Glimpses of Sikhism (88)
finally, in human forms. Twenty-four incarnations of God Vishnu were accepted. Rama the son of king Dashratha and Lord Krishna son of Vasudeva were among them. Countless male and female divinities were also regarded as Gods. The total gods came to 33 crores.

Contrary to this philosophy according to Sikhism, there is one and only one God and He does not descend on earth and does not assume human form as the Avtar-Vad (incarnation) theory in Hinduism portrays. Guru Nanak the founder of Sikhism says, “सरंग साचाई एक हई दूसरे नहीं कोई—Sarbang saachaa ek hai dooja nahin ko-ay” (GGS, p.660) i.e., “In the whole world there is one God second to none”. Sikhism neither believes in the Hindu trinity of God, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva nor the 24 incarnations nor 33 crore divinities. As per Sikh thought there is one God and He is supreme reality. There is no division of functions and no delegation of authority. According to Sikhism, “God does not descend on earth. He neither takes birth nor dies. He is uncreated. He does not assume human or anthropomorphic forms as the Avtarvaad (incarnation) theory of Hinduism portrays” This characteristic has been mentioned in Gurbani repeatedly.

Guru Granth Sahib rejects the worship of Gods and their incarnations, because they are all created beings and also prone to death. The Brahmins confused the created beings with the creator. Gurbani lays emphasis on the worship of the Transcendent Almighty (Nirguna), who is Immortal and Infinite. It says:

* जुग जुग के राज ने उनके नाम आवाह नवी अवतारी।—Jugah jugah ke rajay keey gaavah kar avttareey i.e; The kings created by Thee in different ages are sung of as Thine Avtars. (GGS, p.423).

* भगवान भगवान जी आवाह नवी अवतारी।—“The master who created air, water and fire also created Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh.” (GGS, p.504).

Glimpses of Sikhism (89)
The ten incarnations lived as kings and Yogi Shiva, all of them did not know Thy Limits, they were tired of applying ashes on their bodies. (Suhi M. 5, p.747).

By His order God created ten incarnations, innumerable gods and numberless devils. (GGS, p.1037).

Tetees karoree daas tumaaray ridh sidh praan adhaaree--“The thirty three crore of divinities are Thy slaves” (Ibid, Asa Ashtpadi, iii, p.423).

About the Lord Rama Gurbani says:

Nanak nirbhao nirankaar hor ketay ram ravaal i.e; “Nanak says, the Formless Lord alone is without fear and many others like Ram are dust before Him.”

If you maintain that the All-Pervading God is unborn and invincible, how could He as Rama be born of the womb of Kaushalya?” (Thirty three sawaiyas Guru Gobind Singh, swaiya 13).

O Pundit! I saw your Ramchand coming. He had a quarrel with Ravana and lost his wife” (GGS, Gaund Namdev, p.875)

Glimpses of Sikhism (90)
Raam jhooray dal melvai antar bal adhikaar. Bantar kee sainaa seveai man tan jujh apaar. Seeta lai gai-aa dah-siro Lachhman moo-o saraap. Nanak karta karanhaar kar wekhai thaap uthaap.--“Rama grieves in his mind, he gathers the army, he has within him the power and authority. The ten-headed Ravana has taken away Sita and because of a curse, Lakshmana was killed. Ramchand grieves in his mind for Sita and Lakshmana. the mistaken demon (Ravana) does not comprehend it.--. It was Lord-God, who did everything, who is carefree and whose writ cannot be effaced, with Nanak,”

(GGS, M.1, p.1412).

About Krishna Gurbani says:

* Gaavan gopeeaa gaavan kaan.Gaavan seeta raaje raam. Nirbhao nirankaar sach naam. Jaa keeaa sagal jahaan.--The milk-maids sing and sing the Krishnas sing Sitas and sing Ramas and kings. Fearless is the Formless Lord, whose name is truth false Gurus sing the Gopis and Krishna, Sita and Rama, but not the fearless, True, Transcendent Lord, who is the creator of whole world, whom only the servants through His grace adore. (GGS M.1, p.465).

* Juj mah jor chhalee chandraaval kaan krisan jaadam bha-i-aa. Paarjaat gopee lai aa-i-aa bindraaban mah rang keeaa i.e; “Krishna seduced Chandraval and stole wishfiling tree (parjaat) for a gopi and engaged in alliance in Brindaban (GGS, p.470).

* You call Him all goodness and without enmity. Why did then Krishna drive the chariot of Arjuna? (Guru Gobind Singh 33 swaiyas, swaiya 13)
Recognise only as your Master, whose mysteries none has been able to unravel or will be able to expound (Guru Gobind Singh 33 swaiye, Swaiya 13).

“How do you identify Krishna with the All Merciful? How is it that he was shot with the arrow of a hunter?”-When he is said to be saviour of other families, how come that he could not save his own family from destruction? You call him primeval and unborn, why did Krishna come into the womb of Devki? It is said he (God) hath no father or mother. Why then Vasudev be termed his Father? (Guru Gobind Singh, Thirty three sawaiyas, Swayya 14)

i.e, “Why call Shiva God and why speak Brahma as God? God is not Ram Chander or Krishna or Vishnu, whom ye suppose to be the Lords of the world; Sukhdev, Prasar and Vyas erred in abandoning the one God and worshipping many gods. All have set up false religions; I, in every way believe that there is but one God who manifests himself in many ways” (Thirty three sawayyas-xv).

i.e, “Some worship Brahma as God others point to Shiva as God; Some say Vishnu is the Lord of the world and that by worshipping Him all sins are erased; Think on this a thousand
times, O fool, at the last hour, all thy gods will forsake thee; Meditate in thy heart who was, is and shall ever be”. (Thirty three swayyas -xvi)

*  “Brahm, Mahesar, Bisan Sachipat ant fasay jam faas paren hain” i.e; “Brahma, Shiva and the husband of Sachi i.e; Indra will ultimately be entrapped in the noose of death” (Akal Ustat).

Thus all divinities are prone to death, therefore the Lord God is to be adorned, who is Ever-Existent, बिन कर्तार ना किर्तम भानो “Bin Kartar na kirtam mano” i.e; ‘Except the Creator do not worship any created beings’ (Patshahi 10, Shabad Hazare). This is very important tenet of Sikhism.

Gurmat lays emphasis on the worship of the Transcendent Almighty (Nirguna), who is immortal and infinite:

*  बिन कर्तार ना किर्तम भानो “Bin Kartar na kirtam mano, adi ajoni abinasi teh Parmesar jano-O man, except the creator do not worship anything other created being. Regard God, who was from the beginning Unborn, Invincible and Indestructible as the Supreme Being” (Mukh waak Patshahi 10, Shabad Hazare).

*  “पूजह रंभ एक ही देवा” i.e, Worship only the One Lord (GGS, p. 484).

* Nanak says true are they, who meditate the True One. They who die and are reborn, are unbaked and worthless, false (GGS, p.463).

Several names of these incarnations, which were prevalent among the masses for the Supreme Eternal Reality (God), have been used by the Sikh Gurus in their verses, because they were more clearly
understood by the devotees viz: Rama, Krishna, Gobind, Gopal, Banwari, Murari, Damodar etc.

**Name of the Eternal Reality**

“में तबि भलाई अलाई ते तबि भलाई अलाई। सिसु दुध ता त्रेव
पुरकु भलाई ते मसंवत तद्वा सर विकु दिवसेसे। निश्चय निश्चय तरि अलाई तिा त्वरि
हुठ गालीसे॥—So har purkh agam hai kaho kit bidh pae-ay, Tis
roop na rekh adrishat kaho jan kio dhiaiay, Nirankar niranjano
har agam kia keh gungai-ay” (GGS, Rag Sorath, M4 GGS, p.644)
i.e; “Unfathomable is the Lord, say, how is one to attain Him? He hath
neither form, nor lines (features) and is unseen, then how is he to be
dwelt upon? He is formless, pure and unknowable, then, which
attributes are to be sung?

It is in view of this difficulty that God has to be given a name. But
what name? All names are His, “जेहा कीटा तेहा रुप—Ieha keeta teha
nao (GGS, Japji, M1) i.e, What ever He hath created is His name”.
All that exists is His manifestation revealing His glory and, therefore,
is His Name. Yet He is above, all names. Guru, therefore, freely
employs all names that had come to be associated with ‘The Eternal
Reality’. All mean the same. It is only the heart that has to be in
communion and, therefore any name was good enough.

The ‘Infinite Supreme Eternal Reality’ has been given religious
and attributive (functional) names, yet He is without any name. Guru
calls Him “अनमाय-Anamay”-without any name, “नमस्ता अनमाय-Nama-
stan anamay” (Guru Gobind Singh, Jaap Sahib) i.e, “I salute
the Almighty who is without any name”.

In Sikhism He (God) has been simply addressed as, “Naam-
नाम। His religious names-God, Allah, Khuda, Jehova, Waheguru,
Parmatma, Oankar, Ishvar, Ram, Gopal, Hari, Shiva, Murari,
Banwari, Gorakhr etc; all mean the same. But although names have no inherent efficacy nor are they to be treated as charms they, get sanctified by tradition having been associated with the ecstatic experiences of the seekers who used them and then were inspired by them. But whatever the name, it is intended as an aid to work up and activise the mind for contact with higher regions where Soul and the Universal Soul (Eternal Reality) meet. As in geometry a line which is supposed to be without thickness and, therefore, undrawable, is yet drawn for the purpose of stimulating understanding, so also God is given a name as a symbol of His Personality in all diverse aspects. The name thus clothed with attributes that the personal God possesses, presents a person who could speak with us, lead us on path of Truth and Service, who is a dear father, whom we call our own and with whom we establish direct relations.

God is ‘Ethical Deity’ and embodiment of all attributes. All attributive names of God are suggestive of His nature, character and personality. His attributive names, which are continually in the process of evolving depending on the development of man himself, who is finite and limited, therefore understands things in a limited way. The only aspect one could bring about with certitude and definiteness is that He (God) is ‘SAT’ (।ਸਤੁ) i.e, "Eternal Reality", permanent and unchanging:

“ਕ੍ਰਿਤਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਕਥਾਵੇ ਕੇਵੇ ਨਾਮਕਾਹ। ਸਤਨਾਮ ਤਰਾ ਪਰਾ ਪੌਰਬਲਾ।”

(GGS, Maru M5, p.1083)-- “My tongue utters only thine attributive names. But thy Primordial Name is that “Thou art Eternal Reality i.e, Satnam”

He is above space, name and form. He is Abinashi (Indestructible), Achal (Permanent), Akal (Timeless) and Ajooni (Unborn).

As man grows in the upward direction, the character of God
changes from the Personal to the impersonal. Then he is beyond the three qualities, above pleasure and pain. All distinctions of Name, Form, Colour, disappear. Words were mere means to express Him but the object of this worship is beyond them. Paradoxical as it may seem, the Formless is realized through Names:

“बैद, कैटब, संसार हबाहू बहिरा, नानक का पत्षाह दिसाय जाहारा।” (GGS, p.397)--, “The Lord of Nanak who is beyond Vedas and Katebas (Hindu and Semitic scriptures) and beyond the visible world was clearly visible to him”.

The Simran or worship of the Personal leads to that of the Impersonal.

**Name used for the 'Supreme Eternal Reality' (God) in Sikhism**

(*Waheguru*)

As per Sikh thought God exists in abstract (Nirgun) form and manifests Himself in immanent (Sargun) form. In His Nirgun form He has no name and has been simply addressed as ‘Naam’ in Sikhism. He has limitless attribute, hence His attributive names are innumerable. Most common manifesting (attributive / functional) word / name used for God in Sikhism is: ‘Waheguru’.

*Waheguru waheguru waheguru wahe jeeo—Wondrous, wondrous and wondrous are you, O Guru / God (GGS, p.1402).*

*Sat sach sree nivaas aad purkh sadaa tuhee waheguru waheguru wahe jeeo.—My praise worthy Lord God, Master You are ever wondrous, wondrous, wondrous and
Glimpses of Sikhism (97)

Primal Being (GGS, p.1403).

* *Geeche khel badd badd aamnaa raajajuthu daee mat traan* “Keekh khal badh mel tamaasa Waheguru teree sab rachnaa” i.e; “This wonderful creation is a great play of yours, O Waheguru!” (GGS, Saviya, M4, p.1403)

* *Gur-Sikh nit sabh karhu Gur pooray Waahu Waahu bhaayay* “The Perfect Guru is pleased with Lord’s praise and you should recite it, always” (Ibid, p.515).

* *Waheguru Gur Mantar Hai jap Haumein Khoi* i.e, Waheguru is that incantation, perpetual recitation of which will destroy arrogance / ego”

(Bhai Gurdas Var 13:2).

Guru Gobind Singh finally put the seal of his approval on the use of this word for the remembrance of God by the Sikhs on the Vaisakhi day 1699 AD at Anandpur Sahib, when he formally consecrated (launched) Sikhism in its present day form through Sikh initiation ceremony (*Khanday Baatay dee pahul-Amrit Paan Sanskaar*) and gave Sikhism its articles of faith, laid down the rules for the Sikh code of conduct, including its customs, ceremonies and the Sikh greetings:

Waheguru Jee Ka Khalsa
Waheguru Jee Ke Fateh

Also in Tankhah-naamaa (a composition of Bhai Nand Lal) Bhai Nanad Lal tells us that it was Guru Gobind Singh who initiated the contemplation of the holy word ‘Waheguru’:

Waheguru Jee Ka Khalsa
Waheguru Jee Ke Fateh
The holy word ‘Waheguru’ is found written in Guru Granth Sahib on pages 1402-3. Literally translated it means, ‘Praise to the Guru’ but more usually the phrase ‘Wonderful Lord’ is used. Other names, which are specifically Sikh include, Akal Purkh, Karta Purkh and Parmeshar. Sikh Gurus freely used Hindu names such as Hari, Gopal, Muraree, Oankar, Rama, Brahma, Shiva etc as well as Allah, Khuda and Sahib etc, from Islam. They seldom employed them with Hindu or Muslim concepts in mind. They believed in oneness of God and oneness of man. They simply used them for convenience as synonyms for “God”-‘The Supreme Eternal Reality’.

**God and Satan**

Gurbani does not believe in the existence of any good or bad Gods. God is the prime-mover behind all that happens, whether it appears to be ‘good or bad’. We can discuss some facts of life to explain this. Darkness does not exist; it is only light which exists. Absence or deficiency of light is called darkness, but they have no physical existence. It is our perception only. Evil does not exist. It is absence or deficiency of goodness, which we call evil. Cause of evil is not ‘Satan’, but our ego, which arises from our failure to understand God’s Will.

**Realization of God**

Realization of God in Sikhism means linking or uniting with God. Enlightenment and not redemption is the goal of life in Sikhism. The Supreme Spirit is lodged within one’s self, though unperceived because of perplexities of joy and sorrow and attachment to worldly objects. Gurbani says, “पुहप मध जिझ श्रम धमं जै सपूर्व भग्व चैस पैम जसी।। औँसे न चि घैं सम निरहु अर नी सरत्च ैरही।।--Puhap madh jio baas bast hai, mukar mein jaisay chhai, taisay he har basay nirtar ghat he khojo bhai” i.e, “As fragrance dwells in a flower and
reflection in a mirror so doth He dwell inside everything. Seek him, therefore in thy soul” (GGS, Rag Dhanasari, M 9, p.684). Again, “Atam mien Ram, Ram mien Atam” i.e., “God resides in the Soul and Soul is contained in Him” (Ibid, Rag Bhairon, M1, p.1153). Gurbani says, “Sabh kichh ghar meh bahir nahin, Bahir tole so bharam bhulaahee” i.e, “Everything is within us and nothing is outside. He who seeks outside only wanders in illusion” (GGS, Rag Manjh M5, p.102). Thus He (God) resides in the Soul of every person and seach for Him must therefore proceed within, “Mann toon jot sarop hain apna mool pachhan i.e, Myself, thou art thee embodiment (image) of Divine Light, thou realize your origin” (GGS, Rag Asa, M3, p.441).

Realising God or linking / uniting with God means, in concrete terms, becoming like Him, “Jeha sevay teho hovay” i.e, “Man becomes like Him whom he serves”. (GGS, M3, Rag Bihagra, p.549). This in Sikhism means only a link or union with the Creative Immanence of God. In Sikhism, God oriented man is called ‘Gurmukh’ or ‘Sachiara’ and a self-centered - egoistic person is called ‘Manmukh’. Gurbani says, “O man, when you were in the womb, you didst meditate and fix your attention on the Lord, standing on your head. You did not have the pride of dignity of your perishable body and being completely rid of ignorance, you contemplated on one God, day and night” (GGS, p.93). “After leaving the womb, you entered this mortal world. You forgot God in your mind”. Man gets lost into Maya (wordly attachment / materialism), develops ego (Haumai), becomes self-centered (Manmukh) and forgets the creator (Eternal Reality), resulting in pain and suffering. It is the ego that keeps man
away from God, “उद्दै नाव राजी विदेश है लेने न रामानि दिख रान्ध- 
Haumai nawi enaal virodh hai, doe na vase ik tha-ay” i.e., “Ego and Naam (God) are opposed to each other and they cannot share same place” (GGS, Rag Wadhans M3, p.560).

Gurbani tells us the method for the realization of God, “िक नाम और जीव बराबर है, दो स्तर लगाते- Kiv sachiara howiay, Kiv kooray tootay paal” i.e., “How one can become God-oriented, how the wall of false-hood (ego/arrogance) that separates the man (सीव आत्मा- jivatma) and God (परमात्मा-Parmatma) can be broken? (Ibid, Japji)”. The answer provided in Gurbani is, “हुकम रज्जाई चलना नानक लिखा नाal- Hukam razai chalna Nanak lihia naal” i.e, Nanak says, “It is ordained that one should follow the Divine Will (Ibid, Japji, p.1)”. “जीव ने बूझे उ उद्दै बते न बैंट- Nanak Hukame je bujhay taa haumai kahay na koey” i.e., “When one comes to know the Divine Will, then there is no ego (GGS, Japji.1)”.

“उद्दै है चार जीव- Haumai kithe upje” (Ibid, Var Asa M1, p. 466) i.e., “Where does the ego come from”? Guru Nanak says, “उद्दै बूझे न चार धुरे धुरे लाख रामानि निमित्त धुरे पहड़ी-Haumai vich jag upje, purhka Naam visre dukh pa-ay” i.e. “After coming in this world man develops ego and forgetting Naam (God) becomes unhappy” (GGS, Ram Kali, M1, p.946).

It is stated in Guru Granth Sahib that Maya (materialism) and Ego (self-hood), prevent man’s union with God, “मया निःशुल्क निःशुल्क रामानि-Ih Maya jit har visaray” i.e, “It is Maya that causes God to be forgotten (Ibid, Ram Kali M3, Anand).” Gurbani says, “धन चाहे दान देने दी जीव बूझे धन बूझे दी पहड़ी--Dhan pir ka ik he sang vasa vich haumai bheet karari i.e, “The bride (Atma) and the bridegroom (Parmatma) live together with a powerful wall of ego separating them” (GGS, M 4, p.1263). It further says, “उद्दै अलया त नाव नविन दिख वसे उद्दै पहड़ी-Antar alakh na jai lakhia vich

Glimpses of Sikhism (100)
"parda haumai pai" i.e., “The unfathomable is within, not realized because of the veil of ego in between” (Ibid, Gauri, M5, p.205).

The evils of lust (Kam), anger (Karodh), greed (lobh), attachment (Moh) and pride (Hankar) constitute Haumai (ego) and make a man self-centered (Manmukh) and prevent his union with God. Guru Nanak says, “ज़्राब्वे घूरे ते घूरे मुरे—Haumai boojhay taa dar soojhay” i.e., “The gate way to Him opens when the fire of ego is extinguished” (GGS, Var Asa M1, p.466).

According to Sikhism enlightenment happens only through God’s grace and inspires humans to dedicate their lives to service (Sewa) of humanity and contemplation (Naam Simran), “Kirpa karay je apni taa Gur ka sabad kamahay, Nanak kahay sunuh jano it sanjam dukh ja-ay” (GGS, p.466) i.e., “Lord sends grace and man practices the Guru's word, then this leads to elimination of the evil (ego). The reward is the total peace in mystical union.

The Third eye

The fundamental Sikh belief is that God is a reality, which cannot be seen or proved through arguments. He can be experienced through the help of mystics rather than proven experimentally. For the Sikhs the existence of God requires no proof because “God” is visible everywhere —“हूँगरि निमुण घम मुझ मध्य दर दर लेवता॥ धुंध स्वामर पूर्ण उज भटा॥- Doongar jala thala thoom bana phal kandara. Paataal aakaas pooran habh ghataa. -The Lord is pervasive in the mountains, the oceans, deserts, lands, forests, fruits, caves, the nether regions, the skies and all hearts (GGS, p.1101). एक आंक पै- Ek anek biaapak poorak jat dekho tat soee (GGS, p.485). He is immanent in the phenomenal world like a musician can be said to be present in his music. Just as the sun does not exist for the owl, God does not exist
for those who haven’t got the vision and intuitive eyes.

The five senses (of seeing, smelling, touching, hearing and tasting—

that help us understand our surroundings have very limited capabilities. Our eyes can see the matter but they cannot see all its properties. For example they cannot detect radiation, radio impulses and magnetism etc. They cannot see the data on a floppy / compact disc or DVD. This does not mean that nothing exists on them. God is not material. He is the totality of cosmic consciousness:

* 

---They, who have realized their soul, they themselves become Supreme soul  

---Many millions searching for the Lord, find the Supreme One within their mind  

---By taking the Guru’s guidance swim across the world stream, by strokes of truth and within thy heart, contemplate God, the Enemy of pride. By contemplating God, Death’s noose is snaped and the un-lineal Pure Lord is obtained  

---By understanding the self, it becomes attached to the Formless Lord

The permanent un-perishable life principle—“The Eternal Reality” behind the visible world as also within the human soul is realizable through what may be called third eye or intuition or insight or
inspiration. Man experiences all knowledge of the external world through the sensory organs of our body and feelings through our mind, but the Guru says, “The eyes that see God are different from the physical eyes”---“Loin loi dith pias na buihe moo ghani, Nanak say akhrian beean jinni disando ma piri” (GGS, p.577) i.e;“I have seen the Soul of Souls (God/ Parmatma) with my eyes, yet my immense thirst for the sight is quenched not. Those eyes are different O, Nanak, with which my beloved Lord was seen” (GGS, p.577).

It has been proved with the development of clairvoyance and telepathy that knowledge of the external world can come through channels other than sense organs. Thought is transmitted from man to the other man even when the two are separated by thousands of miles. A man endowed with the gift of clairvoyance can detect hidden things at great distances and can perceive events in space and time--events that had already happened or were yet to happen. The few, who have true understanding turn their minds inwards and realize the self within.

Enlightenment does not come from extensive study or through intellect or by learned discussion. It comes of itself when one's-self yearns for realization but not unless the mind has turned away from evil (ego) and has learnt to control itself and to be at peace with the world. In this endeavour one needs guidance, which is provided by the ten Gurus, the epitome of which it contained in Guru Granth Sahib.
Chapter 3

**Our Universe / Cosmos (Brehmand)**

**according to Gurbani**

According to the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, the universe is God's creation. It is limited by time and space and cannot be eternal like God. Its origin was in God and its end is in God; and it operates in the God’s *Hukam* (God's order). Guru Nanak calls God “*Karta Purkh*” or “Creator Person”.

**Theory of Creation--Genesis / Cosmology according to Sikhism**

According to the Webster’s New World College Dictionary fourth edition cosmology is the scientific study of the universe. It also says, “Cosmology is the branch of metaphysics dealing with the origin and structure of the universe”.

**Precreation stage**

It is mentioned in the Holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib that there was a time when there was no universe. Guru Nanak says in Rag Maru:

अहंकर सेवन पूण्यकरणपि जर जी जी वर्तम आतम || न कितै वेति न संव तुल मुख सभागम लक्षातिहणाि अधिनति अन्तर अधिनति अन्तर अधिनति अधिनति ||

According to the holy Sikh Scripture, the universe is God's creation.
For million upon million countless years there was utter darkness. There was no earth and no sky but only the limitless Lord’s ordinance. There was neither day nor night, nor moon, nor sun but the Lord alone sat in profound trance. There was neither mines of creation, nor speech, nor air nor water. Neither creation, nor destruction, nor coming nor going. There were no continents, nor under worlds nor seven oceans nor rivers nor the flowing water. Then there was no heaven, no mortal world or the nether world. Neither there was hell, nor heaven, nor death, nor time (Kaal) that destroys. There was no hell, no heaven, no birth, no death nor did anyone come or go. There was no Brahma, nor Vishnu or Shiva. None else was seen but He, the One Lord----

**Genesis--Creation**

First of all, “The Lord, of Himself created His ownself, He assumed His Name”—“Aapeenay aap sajio aapeenay rahio nao”—“अपी अपु मानिंद्र अपी विश्व लिभि” (GGS, Asa M1, p 463). It also says, “अल्लाह अप्तु रुपारंछितु उष्मु देव न लेवी। भवा भूरुजिद अप्तु तथा लेवे तु है तु लेवी। उष्मु जानु मानी तबिलवपु लेवे और रिवि जाती। तिवुं तिवुं जाते जाते तिवुं तिवुं जात न केवी।”—“When the Lord created His ownself, then there was none else. He took counsel and advice with Himself and what he did came to pass. Then there was no sky, no nether region nor three worlds. Then was only the Formless Lord Himself and there was no creation. As it pleased Him, so did He act, without Him there was no other”(GGS, p 509). Time (kwī / smW), began running its course with the creation of day and night.

When there was no form, nor sign, where was the Word (Sabad / Naam or Logos/ God?)
During a discussion, the Yogis asked Guru Nanak, “आदि वट्टू ब्रह्म ब्रह्म ब्रह्मामें मूर्त वट्टू अथ ब्रह्म॥ (GGS, p. 940). The Guru replied, “To think of the Transcendent Lord in that state is to enter the realm of wonder. Even at that time of Sunn (void), He permeated that void, “आदि वट्टू ब्रह्मामें मूर्त नित्यिवित ब्रह्म लीला—Aad kau bismaad katheealay sunn nirantar vaas leeaa--”(GGS, p.940).

We learn from the hymns of Guru Granth Sahib that before the universe was created God (Parmatma) existed all alone in His abstract / Transcendent form (Nirgun avastha) and He was in a state of Sunn Samadh—perfect meditation-deep trance’. It is from this ‘Nirgun (abstract / Transcendent) state of ‘Sunn Smadh’ that He willed and created the world, “स निःसृ ब्रह्म द निरंतर व्रह्मात्मा—Jaa tis bhana taan jagat upaiaa” (GGS, p.1036). After creating Himself, the second thing God did was that He created nature (Kudrat-Cosmos / Universe / Brehmand), “दुये कुद्रत साजीव कर आसन दिथो चाहो”—Duyee kudrat saajeeai kar aasan ditho chaao- i.e, Secondly, He made the expanse of nature and seated Himself into it and watches with joy” (GGS, p.463). Guru Nanak says, बलहरी कुद्रत वैदिक—Balharee kudrat wassiaa i.e, Sacrifice am I unto Thee, who abides in His creation” (GGS, p.469). After creation He (God) became Karta Purkh (The Creator Person) and made Himself manifest in the entire creation. Thus the whole creation reflects his immanent aspect—‘Sargun Swaroop’.

The fundamental principle of Sikhism is that, “God was in existence before time began running its course; He has been in existence for ever and shall be in existence for ever, “आदि मनु सुगंधि मनु॥ तै की मनु राधे तै ती मनु॥ (GGS, p.1).

Guru Nanak has very clearly mentioned that He (God) started the process of evolution of the world’s vast expanse with one word / sound / bang and Lakhs of streams of life began to flow, “क्रोध
From the absolute Lord emanated three functions: one of creation, another of sustenance and third of annihilation. Nature is one but it has been mysteriously endowed with three properties (of ‘becoming’, ‘enduring’, and ‘disintegration’). He causes the Nature to perform these functions as He desires, “By His command, the creation, came into being, the command is indescribable (GGS, Jap ji p.1).

Birth day of the universe!

When was the universe created?-“When was the universe created?—The Hindu scholars do not know otherwise we could read in their Purans. The Muslim scholars donot know otherwise we could read in the Quran. The Yogis knew not the date, season and the month of creation. Only the Lord alone, who created the universe knows the answer (GGS, p.4).-Gurbani says, “How can the son claim to witness the birth of His father?” (GGS, p.248). Bhai Gurdas says,”–God did not leave any record of time, day or month when He manifested His creation (Bhai Gurdas var 18.7).
Vastness of the universe

According to the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, the universe is very vast. It is considered as a harmonious and orderly system. There are innumerable worlds in it. There are a number of suns and moons to give it light and energy. It has been explicitly stated many times by the Sikh Gurus more than five hundred years ago. Gurbani says:

* “यहूदी धेर भे धेर धेर—Dhartee hor paray hor hor—There are earths, beyond earths (GGS, p.3).
* “पाटलथ पाटल लक्ष अगस्ता अगस्ता—Pataala pataal lakh agasaa aagaas. Orak orak bhaal thake ved kehan ikk waat—There are skies above skies and earths below earths. Human mind gets tired of search. All knowledge simply points to the same one fact that there is no end of the vastness” (GGS, Jap Ji Pauri 22, p.5).
* “वल्लू वल्लू तरी तरी माह—Karte ke karne naahee sumaar—There is no end to the creation of the Lord” (GGS, p.3).
* “लेवें ह्यं ह्यं मूल लेवें ह्यं केवल रौम—Ketay ind chand soor ketay ketay mandal des—There are numerous suns, moons and other galxies” (GGS, p.7).
* “ननक करते का अंक त धर्म—Nanak kartay kaa ant naa pavhay—O Nanak, the limits of the creator are incomprehensible” (GGS, p.274).
* “इहू अंक त सहँ बोर हूँ अंक व.editor अंक वेरो—Ihu ant naa janay ko-ay. Bahutaa kahee-ay bahutaa ho-ay—The extent of his
creation is known to none. The more we state the more remains to be stated (GGS, p.5).

**Origin of life according to Gurbani**

Guru Nanak in Sri Rag explains that from the ‘Supreme power’, air (gases) came into existence and the gases formed water and from water there was origin of life, “मने दे पहला वायु, पहले दे सपा वायु, नमे दे दुनियह सनिश्च अट पह नीच समींगी—Saachay tay pavna bhaia, pavna tay jal hoay, jal tay tribhavan sajia ghat ghat jot samoay —From the Supreme Eternal reality came the air, from the air (gases) formed the water. From the water God created the three worlds and in every heart, He infused His light” (GGS, p.19).

**Source of Life**

According to Gurbani water is the primal source of life, “पहिला पानी जीवो है जिस हरिय सम्ह कोई—Pehla pani jeeo hai jit haria sabh koay (GGS, p.472). It assists growth of human beings, animals and plants (both flora and fauna). Every thing is alive because of water. No life is possible on planets, which do not have water on them.

**Evolution of life & creation of mankind according to Gurbani**

Guru Nanak has explained the evolution of man right from flora, fauna life to reptiles, creatures like snakes, birds, spinal animals etc. This process continued for many ages in the same life cycle and ultimately man came into existence after evolutionary process for unknown period. Man reborn in all the stages many times and only then got its present anthropological position. Gurbani says:

*“वे तुम विज्ञ प्रभ तुम भीते वे तुम भूम दिन्हरे—वे तुम भरा वलो भीत आ ते वे तुम पंख उद रे—Kaytay rukh birakh hum cheenay kaytay pasoo upa-ay. Kaytay naag kulee meh aa-ay kaytay pankh uda-ay.-i.e;**

Glimpses of Sikhism (109)
We were incarnated in the forms of numerous trees and plants and many a time we were born as animals. Many times we entered the family of serpents and many times we were flown as birds,” (GGS, p.156).

* “वर्षी जनम बने बीट पतंगा। वर्षी जनम गाज बीफ बुवंगा। वर्षी जनम घेयी सर्प तेजिया। वर्षी जनम वैसें दुध सीलिया। भिन्न वसातीम भिन्न दी बहामा। विवेकस्वस रॉिग रॉिग संधीवाला।--Kaee janam bha-ay keet patanga. Kaee janam, gaj meen kuranga. Kaee janam pankhee sarp hoio. Kaee janam haivar brikh joio. Mil Jagdees milan kee bareea. Chirankaal ih deh sanjareeaAi; For several births you were a mere worm, for several births, a moth. For several births an elephant, a fish and a deer. For several births thou became a bird and a snake. For several births were yoked as a horse and an ox. Meet the Lord of the universe. This is the time to meet Him, after ages this human body is created ( GGS, p.176).

* दि़ख दिरांग बहुते तुमा तमिरिर भला रे भली। Phirat phirat bahutay jug haario maanas deh lahee.---After passing through myriads of species, one is blest with human form” (GGS, p.631). This is also the modern scientific theory of evolution.

**The process of human development according to Gurbani (Sikhism)**

Gurbani says that offsprings can not be produced without mother and father, “भला विला विल वस्त्र र विली।” (GGS, p.872). Guru Nanak has explained the process of human development. He says the parents conjugate, the semen of father mingle the ovum (egg) from the mother, conception takes place. The union of the semen and ovum flourishes and prepares residence (tan-उि- i.e body) for the soul (Jeev-atma-मील आका):
“ Antar garbh urdh liv laagee so prabh saaray daat karay—The mortal comes into being from the conjugation of the mother and father. By the union of the father’s sperm and mother’s ovum, the body is made. In the mother’s womb, he is suspended upside down, attached to the Lord’s love. The Lord sustains him there and blesses him with the gift of safety.” (GGS, p.1013).

“Rakat bindu mil pind sariya. Paon paanee agnee mil jeeaa. i.e; From the union of father’s sperm and mother’s ovum, God has created the body. Uniting the air, water and fire, the life is made.” (Ibid, p.1026).

Creating man, the lord installs the creation in the mother’s womb (GGS, p.706).

“In ten months it was made a human being O merchant friend! and was given a fixed period to do virtuous deeds (GGS, p.77).

“Har jeeo gupha ander rakh ke waaja pawan wajaaia-i.e;” i.e; Parmatma (pRnwqw-God) put the Jiv-atma (soul-Jiwa) into the body-cave and the inspirited air (Pran-pRnx) into it and made it to speak (GGS, p.922).

As for providing sustenance and protection in the womb, the Guru says, “The Lord provided protection to you in the womb—Maat garbh mai haath de rakhiaa” (GGS, p.805). According to Sikhism God created the universe and he looks after everything, “Jin upaee medanee soee karda saar-i.e.-He who has created

Glimpses of Sikhism (111)
the world, takes care of it” (GGS, p.724).

Components of living beings

The Sikh gurus have stated at many places in the Holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahibh that living organisms are composed of five elements:

* *Panch tat mil dehi ka aakara. Ghat wadh ko kray bechara--By joining together the five elements (Earth, air, fire, water and Akash(space), the form of body is made. No one can say that any element is less in one and more in another (GGS, p.1128).

* *Panch tat mil ih tan keea. Aatam raam pa-ay sukh theea.--By uniting the five elements this body is made. By obtaining the All pervading Lord, peace is procured (GGS, p.1039).

* *Panch tat mil kaaiia keeni. Tis meh raam rattan lai cheeni.--By uniting the five elements the body is created. Within that the Lord’s jewel is realized (GGS, p.1030).

* *Panch tatu kar tudh srishat sabh saajee. Koe chhewan kario je kichh keeta howay--Of the five elements, thou hast created the whole world. Let any one make the sixth, if he can.-- (GGS, p.736).

* *Paune paanee agnee kaa mail. Chanchal chapel budh ka khel.--The air, the water and the fire unite to create all animate objects. But it is the restless intellect that dominates the game (GGS, p.152)

It should be understood that the tat (ਤਤ) in Gurbani does not
have the same meaning as element in science.

**Joonis (Varieties of living organisms)**

Oriental religions state that there were 84 lakh living types of creatures. Fourth Nanak, Guru Ram Dass referred to this commonly held belief when he wrote, “All the supposed 84,00,000 species of life are offered sustenance by the Great Provider,"—Chavrasee lakh jon upaæee rijak deea sabh hook au tad kaa—(GGS, p.1403). The Sikh Gurus however, did not put any limit on the number of living species. Guru Nanak says, “The species their families, colours and names are all recorded by His moving pen. If one tries to enumerate them, there will be no end to his calculations,'--Jee jaat ranga ke naav sabhna likhiaa wuree kalaam. Ih lekhaa likh janay koay lekha likhiaa ketaa hoay (GGS, p.3). The belief, that there are only 84,00,000 varieties of organisms rests on the fact that the number of varieties of life remains constant. This is not correct. We know that since life first appeared on our planet, more than 2 billion species have vanished. Some scientists estimate that the number of species now living on our earth is 30 million. More and more species unknown before are being discovered.

**Modes of reproduction**

In the times of the Sikh Gurus it was deeply held view that there were four modes of reproduction (संवृद्धि)---- Egg born (अंडन), placeta born (पिता), Sweat born (पैदा), Growth from earth (उद्भूत)—

The Sikh Gurus disagreed with that concept and said:

* केतींकहा केतीं बानी केतीं बांटीं खाद बनवि—Keteea khanee keteea baanee ketay paat narind --There are innumerable sources of production, innumerable languages, and innumerable dynasties
of kings (GGS, p.7).

* Asexual organisms like Amoebae and star fish produce identical replicas of themselves through dividing their bodies.

Wonders / Mysteries of life

Dr G.S. Sidhu in his book titled, “Sikh religion and Science” says, “Most of the animals do not fall into the generally stated four categories of reproduction as stated in the ancient Oriental sources. It was these mysteries and varieties that prompted Guru Nanak to exclaim with wonder:

* विस्माद धर्ती विस्माद खण्डी--Vismaad dhartee vismaad khaneek- -Wondrous is the earth and wondrous are the modes of reproduction (GGS, p.464).
* विस्माद लीला विस्माद ब्युध印度--Vismaad Jee vismaad bhed- -Wondrous are the living creatures and wonderful are their variety of forms (GGS, p.13).

Asexual organisms like Amoebae and star fish produce identical replicas of themselves through dividing their bodies.

Marine scientists have discovered living plants in underwater volcanic cracks, where the rift water has a temperature of 399°C and manufacture their food through chemosynthesis (converting chemicals into food) rather than on photosynthesis, by which all plants live”. That life can exist in such high temperatures is mentioned by the Sikh Gurus in the Holy Guru Granth Sahib:

* “देह अहार अहारित अहैं खरे शेख रक्षा हमारा।”--De ahaar agan mein raakhay aisa khasam hamara--Such is our Lord that He provides sustenance even to those that exist in fire (GGS, p.488)”.

* मानहु विस्माद लीलाधर शरीर मे अहारित अहैं अहार भगवान भक्ति--Manhu
kio wisaareeyay ewad daataa je agan meh aahaar puhchavay--Why should we forsake from our mind such a great Bestower Lord, who procures us sustenance in the midst of fire (GGS, p.920).

* नेतें सीधा सीधी पै तासा सीधे द जन हामे॥ ज्ञान निम्नु निम्नु साहे उप हिंदी हिंदी दिहि दिहि देहि दिलिला॥--Jetay jee jeeveh lai saha jeevalay ta ke asaaha. Nanak jio joi sachay bhavay tio tion de girah.--All beings and creatures live by breathing, but He could keep us alive, even without breath. O Nanak, as it pleases the True Lord, He gives us sustenance (GGS, p.144).

* There are viruses, which remain alive for centuries. It is about life of this type that Sikh Gurus said, "पुछ उच्च सित लग ते उच्छ॥--Prabh bhavay bin saas te raakhay (GGS, p.277).

Life in plants

Gurbani says:

* नेतें रस्ते अंध बे सीधा माणु न बेशि—Jetay daanay ann ke jeea baajh na koay--All food grains have life in them (GGS, p.472).

God provides sustenance to all everywhere!

Myriads of insects creep and crawl in rocks and stones, was mentioned by Sikh Gurus more than five hundred years ago. They wrote:

* "मैस पर्मथ भवि संधु दुरुपण्य तं विशिष्टम् अन्नी बाबु वक्तिनम् --Sail pathar meh jant upa-ay ta kaa rijak aagay kar dharia--In rocks and stones, He has created living creatures and their sustenance He has put before them (GGS, p.10).

* पाक्ष बीट बुखत वेरेट मुर्त तं ते बहसु तखी—Pakhaan keet gupat hoay rehta ta cho maarag nahi--The worm lives hidden in a stone without passage for exist (GGS, p.488).
Nature (Kudrat) and Divine Discipline / Cosmic Law (Hukam / Will) according to Sikhism

After creating Himself, God created Nature / Universe / Nebulae Nebula? Glaxies / Solar System / Earth Biosphere / Human beings etc; under a specified Divine Discipline: “अपनी अपना नामक आपस्त्र वचनि लिखित तथा। तुझी वचनिं मानी वरि आपस्त्र किंते सम्प्ल हो। तथा वचनि आपस्त्र जुटे तुम तुम में वेकिं वचनि धारिय। तुझी साधिती मनों ने देख किंते सिंह वचनि। वरि आपस्त्र किंते सम्प्ल।”--He Himself created Himself assumed His name, then he designed nature or creation; and seated within this creation, He beholds it with delight. The Sikh Gurus gave a generic term, Hukam to innumerable universal laws of nature. And said:

* “The whole creation is the product of Hukam, which is indescribable, “तुमनी वचनिं अपस्त्र वचनि न विदिया नामी॥ Hukamee hovan akaar, Hukam na kahia jae“(GGS, Japji, p.1).

* तुमनी मनं गिममटि वचनि॥--By His ordinance, the Lord has effortlessly created the world(GGS, p.1043).

* तुमनी मंगल लटे अवस्था॥--The Commander has created the entire creation (GGS, p.150).

* तुमनी मंगल लटे अवस्था॥--By Lord’s order all are created and by His order they do businesses (GGS, p.55).

Being the “Infinite Self-consiousness of God”, Hukam is supremely one with Him. It is as infinite as God. In another sense Hukam is the supreme command. The universe moves, according to it.”तुमनी अंतरिं मंगल लटे अवस्थार वचनि न वेदि॥ Hukmein ander sabh ko bahir hukam na ko-ay-i.e; -Every body and everything is controlled by His command, which none can escape (Japji)”. “It is His command that makes men do high and low deeds. His command works in a myriad ways-तुमनी अंतरिं मंगल अंतरिं अवस्था hukme anik rang parakaar” (GGS, p.277). “तुमनी मंगल अंतरिं मंगल अंतरिं अवस्थावरू हकबिह समकालीन सी।”--
**Hukme jug mah aa-i-aa chalan hukam sanjog jeeo** i.e.; One comes into this world and goes out of it at His command” (GGS, p.760). Sikhism lays great emphasis on the necessity of knowing and realizing Hukam. According to Guru Nanak, the only possible way of achieving truth is to tread on the path of Hukam, “हुकम रज़ा सालना नानक लिखित नाल” (GGS, Japji, p.1).

In Punjabi **Hukam** literally means order, whereas in Sikh theology, Hukam as Supreme or Infinite Will (Divine Discipline--Cosmic Law) is mentioned at many places in Guru Granth Sahib (GGS). It existed before the creation when there was complete nothingness. Right from the beginning, when the Universe was created, the most important place for human beings is the Earth, and most important objects in nature are Sun and the Earth. The Sun gives light and energy, creates winds, and causes changes in the climate on earth. Placement of earth with respect to Sun is unique in as much as it is not as near the Sun as Mercury or Venus, nor far enough as Mars and Jupiter are, so that it gets as much heat and light which are optimum and necessary both for plant and animal life.

The divine discipline has created movements of rotation and revolution in stars and planets, which are responsible for dynamic equilibrium in the universe. Winds from cooler areas traverse to hot areas. This air circulation in the atmosphere causes changes in the weather conditions.

The rotation of the earth is responsible for creation of days and nights. The northern hemisphere experiences effect of continentality, i.e, expanse of vastness of land (Asia, Europe and America). This effect of continentality results in extreme climates. If the Divine arrangement was not such and the northern hemisphere was not placed at the farthest point during June-July, life in the northern
hemisphere could not have survived due to very high degree of temperature. Likewise, during December-January, the northern hemisphere is nearest to the sun so that animals and the plant life could get proper heat and light and therefore survive and just not perish due to extreme cold.

By Divine Discipline there is approximately 79% ocean and other water bodies, and 21% of land area. The nature has allocated land and water on earth in such a way that northern hemisphere is having maximum land area and the southern hemisphere ocean and water bodies. The change in temperature has greater and sudden effect on land than on water. Water warms up slowly and also cools down slowly as compared to land mass. This rather lopsided distribution of land and water between the two hemispheres is so well-laid down divine arrangement as to help mankind, as also other fauna and flora, not to face the extreme hot and extreme cold weather conditions.

Similarly ocean water from equatorial zone moves to polar regions, and cold water from higher latitudes comes to the equatorial oceanic areas to harmonise and moderate the temperature in the ocean water. Had there been no air and water circulation, as ordained by divine discipline, it was not possible for the biosphere to exist. Likewise, there exists hydrographic cycle, which carries water from land to oceans through the rivers, and conversely water from ocean by evaporation and condensation comes back to land in the form of precipitation, i.e, rain, snow, etc. Gurbani says:

Glimpses of Sikhism (118)
—By His Divine arrangement we see, and by His arrangement do we hear; By His Divine arrangement we have fear, and the essence of happiness. By His Divine arrangement the nether worlds and the Celestial bodies exist, and by His Divine arrangement does the entire creation sustain. By Divine arrangement the Vedas and the Puranas exist, and the Holy scriptures of the Jewish, Christians and Islamic religions, and by His Divine arrangement all deliberations exist. By Divine arrangement do we eat, drink, and dress; and by Divine Ordinance does all love exist. By Divine discipline virtues exist, and so do the vices. By Divine Discipline come honour and dishonour. By Divine Discipline earth wind, water and fire exist; By Divine Discipline earth and dust exist. Every thing is under Your Discipline, Lord; You are the all Creator. Your Name is the holiest of the Holy. O Nanak, through the Command of His Will, He beholds and pervades the creation; He is absolutely unravelled (GGS, Asa M1: p.464).

—You Yourself created the world, and you fostered emotional attachment to Maya. You Yourself created the three qualities, and fostered emotional attachment to Maya (Sorath M3, p.643).

—When the God magician beat his tambourine; The universe came into existence by His Order. Then the Divine Magician winds up his show (GGS, p.655).

—You Yourself created the world in your Pleasure, and You Yourself shall destroy it in the end (GGS, p.654).
As per Your Pleasure, the account is settled, and doubt dispelled. The Guru dispels doubt, and makes us speak the Unspoken; the true ones are absorbed into Truth. By His Will, He Himself creates, and He Himself destroys; I accept the divine constitution (GGS, Dhanasri M:1, p.688).

By Divine discipline, You created the creation, the world with its many species of beings. I do not know how vast and complex is Your Discipline, O Unseen and Infinite True Lord (GGS, p.786).

He Himself established His throne, celestial bodies and the other nether worlds. By Divine Discipline, He created the earth, the true home of Dharma. He Himself creates and destroys; He is the True Lord, merciful to the meek. You provide sustenance to all; how wonderful and unique is Your Discipline. As per your Will, You Yourself are permeating and pervading; You Yourself are the Cherisher (GGS, p.785).

The entire creation is Yours; all are subject to Your Discipline (GGS, p.809).

By Divine Discipline we come, and go; by His Command, we merge in absorption (GGS, p.940).

By Divine Discipline He created the world, and has set His play into motion. He planned and placed the soul in the body of air, water and fire. Water,
fire, air, earth and Akash—In that house of five elements, they dwell (GGS, p.1031).

(Content continues and is not shown)

Glimpses of Sikhism (121)
damage, natural repair and replenishment takes place automatically, by transforming ozone from the areas uninhabited by man, such as Antarctic region. This is one reason that the south pole ozone hole is widening year after year. The penguins are also dying in increasing numbers and the unguarded human beings near and around this region are getting skin cancer.

It is being projected in the media, particularly the electronic media that life on earth will come to an end during the next couple of years due to sun spots and the solar disasters. They are unnecessarily creating horror and fear psyche, knowing not that the Lord who has created the universe, the solar system, the earth, and life on it, has designed the whole thing in such a way that it is not possible at all to happen at least a million years, provided of course man does not interfere in the divine organization and overexploit the natural resources. Guru Arjan Dev rightly says, “The Lord Who has created the earth sustains it well” (Tilang M5, p.724).

The More deeply we go into the teachings of, and try to understand, Gurbani and laws of nature, the more we can understand the Divine Discipline.

Notes and references:
Divine Discipline in Sri Guru Granth Sahib
Dr Gurbachan Singh Bachan
Honoray Professor, Guru Gobind Singh Chair, Department of History, University of Mumbai

Death of life

Gurbani states very clearly in this regard:

* Having recorded the time of death, one did come into the world but cannot stay any longer. (GGS,
p.153).

* Whosoever has come, he shall depart and all shall take their turn (GGS, p.474).

* All that is created, all that shall perish. Nothing is allowed to stay here (GGS, p.1231).

* They, who come, they all shall certainly depart (GGS, p.1047).

* Whosoever is born, he must perish, may be today or tomorrow (GGS, p.1429).

* On the day, woman enters into the body, the time of her wedding is writ (GGS, p.1377).

**Death of the Universe**

According to Gurbani the universe emerged from void and will end up in void. “The continents, nether regions, islands and all worlds; the Lord Himself has made them subject to death. (GGS, p.1076). The holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib further says:

“Man’s beauty constantly declines, decline the islands, decline the sun, the moon, the stars and the sky, decline the earth, mountains, trees and the three worlds. Perishable are wife, sons, brothers and friends. Perishable are the beautiful gold, jewels and wealth. Imperishable is only the Immovable Lord. Nanak says, immutable are the Lord’s holy men (GGS, p.1354)

* The, sky, the nether region, the moon and the sun shall pass away (GGS, p.1100).
Regarding expansions and contractions of the universe the Gurus say that expansions and contractions of the universe have occurred many times. The Guru says, “He (God) has unfolded the universe in many ways, He has expanded it umpteen times. Only the Lord Himself is Immortal, “वही तुम्हारे अन्तर्गत निरंतर धार्मिक संबंध। वही अब धर्मिक संबंध। मत में निरंतर शेष देखें।” (GGS, p.276).

* ज्ञान ध्वनि सेंध में नमाज बनाते हम अपना पूजन कीया। -The continents,, nether regions, islands and all the worlds; the Lord Himself has made them subject to death (GGS, p.1076).

* नैने सल दे सुरक्षान उत्साह सिंह बना बना। ज्ञान उत्साह तो मे ज्ञान ध्वनि सेंध में नमाज बनाते हम। -As the bubble ever appears and disappears on water. Nanak says, listen my friend, such indeed is the creation of the world (GGS, p.1427).

**Sikh concept of life**

Sikhism does not accept the postulate of earlier religions that life was sinful in origon or that it was evil and source of suffering in itself or Maya (Illusion). On the contrary it believes, “God is true (reality) and so is his creation”--“আপনি সত্য এবং তার সত্য মন্ত্র। Aaap satt keea sab satt” (GGS, p, 294). Sikhism propagates that life is ephemeral--“निरंतर चमत्कार दिक्षित शक्ति जग तथा।-Damanee chamataar tio wartaara jag khay-Brief like a spark of lightening is our sojourn in the world” (GGS, p.319). नैने नैने अन्य मध्ये नैने नैने नैने जग तथा।
Glimpses of Sikhism (125)

Various stages of human life and Sikhism

Gurbani considers various stages of life but very differently from the four Ashrams (stages of life) of Hinduism / Sanatanism / Brahmanism, recognized as spiritual way of life. In Hinduism out of these four Ashrams (Brahmchari, Grahastha, Vanprastha and Sanyasa) two, namely, the vanprastha and Sanyasa house holder’s duties were not believed to be conducive to higher spiritual attainments. Vanprastha and Sanyasa Ashrams distinctly enjoin another worldly approach to life. That is why, in order to make any progress in the spiritual field, one had to renounce worldly activities and take to life of the hermit and Sanyasin. Bhai Gurdas, in his very first Vaar, has distinguished the stages of life as per Hindu and Sikh Religions.

In Sikhism the three stages of life, which are generally mentioned
in Gurbani are that of childhood, youth and old age. In all three stages, a person has to remain a householder, but attached with God. During the first stage, the acquiring of education and knowledge includes the knowledge of Divine i.e. path of remembrance of God. In the other two stages the physical symptoms may differ, but the person continues to observe the duties of *Grahasth* (household) and also keep himself detached from it like a lotus flower. One can have any type of enjoyment, comfort and luxury, but with such a restraint that the man does not get engrossed in it. In short, in Sikh religion, every stage is a stage for *Naam Simran*. Gurbani emphasizes that any person who spends any part of his life without remembering God, just wastes it, “सर सुभाष तरु विभिन्न विख्यात सब भी भरत।।

बााल जूआनी आर बृद्ध फुन तीन अवस्था जान।।

—O man know, that there are three stages of life: Childhood, youth and then old age.

*Kauh Nanak har bhajan bin birtha sabh hee maan—O Nanak! Believe, that without God’s meditation, all are in vain* (Ibid, p.1428).

Guru Arjan Dev in Sukhmani Sahib, recounts various stages of human life, right from conception to old age and reminds the person to attune oneself to God at all times:

* **रामणीय** वे धूल चेति भगवान।।

बकर धूल वे बकर रित्मंत्री।।

—Ramaeaa kay gun chet paranee kavan mool te kavan drishtanee—O creature of God, contemplate the attributes of Lord. From what origins, what visitable form he has given you.

* **जिन तूं माति मंत्रि माहात्मिक।।

जाकर अराचूं भरूं नितिरि धूरिनिक।।

Jin toon saaj swaar seegaria. Garbh agan meh jineh ubaaria—

Contemplate Him who created you, gave this beautiful form. He protected you in the fire of womb.

* **बृद्ध विख्यात उद्भिन विख्याते रूप।।

डॉते मैत्र हृद मृतु।।

—Baar bivastha tujheh piaaray doodh. Bhar joban bhojan sukh sood—In
infancy he fed you on milk. In your youth He conferred on you
delectable food and awareness of various pleasures.

* 

*In your old age for your care he appointed your relatives and near ones.
Who without your effort feed you eatables (GGS, p.267).

**Behaviour of man during various stages of its life**

During the development of human body in the mother’s womb
*Atma* remains attached with its source (*Parmatma*) and is free from
ego (*Gurmukh—God oriented*),

> Re nar garbh kundal jab aachhat urdh dhian liv laaga” (GGS, p.93)—O man, when you were in the mother’s womb,
you didst meditate and fix your attention on the Lord, standing on your
head. After coming out of mother's womb and entering into the mortal
world, he forgets the creator (*Parmatma*) and develops ego and
becomes *manmukh* (self-centred),

> Garbh chchod mrit mandal aai-ya tao narhar manhu bisaaria. After leaving the womb thou enterd the
mortual world and then thou forgot God in the mind (GGS,p.93).

Guru Sahib has discussed the actions and activities of man in
different stages of life in Guru Granth Sahib in Rag Majh on pages 137
and 138.

1. 

> Pahilai piaar lagaa than dudh, Doojay maa-ay baap kee

Glimpses of Sikhism (127)
sudh, Teeje bhayaa bhaabhee bayb, Chauthai piaar upannee khayd, Panjvai khan peen kee dhaat, Chhivai kaam na puchhai jaat, Satvai sanj keea ghar vaas, Athvai krodh jooa tan naas, Navai dhaulay ubhay saah, Dasvai dadhaa hoaa suah Gaay sigheet pukaaree dhaah, Udhi--aa hans dasaa-ay raah, Aaia gaiiaa muiaa naao, Pichhai patal sadihu kaav, Nanak Manmukh andh piaar. Baaj guroo dubaa sansar”.

2. M 1.—At first man cherishes affection for breast’s milk. Secondly he acquires understanding of his mother and father. Thirdly he comes to recognize his bother, brother’s wife and his sister. In the fourth stage the love of play arises in him. Fifthly he runs after food and drink. In the sixth stage of lust, he inquires not women’s caste. Seventhly he amasses wealth and acquires an abode in his own home. In the eighth stage his body is wasted in wrath. In the ninth he grows grey and his breathing becomes difficult. In the tenth stage he is burnt and turns into ashes. His comrades accompany him to the pyre and give vent to loud lamentations. The swan (soul) flies away making inquiries where to go. He came departed and even his name is dead. After him leaf plates are laid and crows attracted. Nanak says, the worldly-minded love, the spiritual darkness. Thus without the Guru the world is drowned (GGS, p.137)

Das baaltan bees ravan teesa ka sundar kahaavay, Chaleesee pur hoay pachaasee pag khisai sathee kay bodhaypaa aavai, Satar ka maathee aseehaan kaa viuhaar na paavai, Navai kaa sihjaasnee mool na jaanai aap bal, Dhandholim dhoodhim dith mai Nanak jag dhooay kaa dhavalhar”.

Glimpses of Sikhism (128)
3.—Upto the age of ten one is called a child, at twenty in full bloom of youth and at thirty he is called handsome. At forty he is full with manhood, at fifty his steps begin to falter and at sixty comes old age. At seventy he loses his intellect and at eighty he cannot perform his duties. At ninety his seat is on the cot and being weak he absolutely understands not what strength is. Searching and seeking I have seen, says Nanak that the world is a house of smoke.-- (GGS, p.138)

In Sri Rag Guru Nanak sees life in the form of four parts of the day. The old age has been explained as the fourth part of the day in the following words:

* अकी भंध न चीमी टुण्टपाया भिन्न, भली मुंते न चैदा।—Akhee andh na dees-ee vanjariaa mitra kannee sunai na vain—O my merchant friend! In old age, man’s eyes go blind and he sees not. He becomes deaf and can’t hear.

* अकी भंध नीड वम रुपी, वदेध घटवह्रु उठे।—Akhee andh jeebh ras naahee rahe praakau taana—With blind eyes, palate goes tasteless, becomes weak and lives on others prop (GGS, p.76).

It may be mentioned here that the above noted stage comes in the life of a Manmukh (self-oriented person) and not that of a Gurmukh (God oriented person). A person who has spent the earlier stages of his life in remembrance of God, never feels troubled even in the last stage. It is for such a Gur-Sikh that Gurbani describes:

* गुरुबिंध भुंडे भली तरिपी भंध आंदरिव तुड़िव विभाग।—Gurmukh budhay kaday nahee jina antar surat gian—In Gurmukhs is lodged God consciousness and realization.

* ओय धो अनंद विभेद तरिपी दुर्भिष विभेद भर्गार।—O-ay sadaa anand bibek rahay dukh sukh ek samaan—They ever abide blissful wisdom and to them joy and sorrow are the same (Ibid, p.1418).
The goal / Purpose of Human life according to Sikhism (Gurmat)

According to Gurbani after passing through myriads of species, one is blest with human form, Nanak says, this is the occasion to meet the Lord. Why don’t you contemplate on the Lord O man? “‘ਦੀਵਾਂ ਦੀਵਾਂ ਬਾਣਿਜ ਇੱਕ ਰੁਗਿਆਂ ਼ੀ ਸੁਰੁਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਾਣੀ ’” (GGS, p.631). The goal of life in Sikhism is not personal salvation or heavenly abode called paradise but to achieve union / link with the ‘Supreme Eternal Reality’ (God) in order to be the creative instrument of God and His Will. The holy book of Sikhism, Guru Granth Sahib declares, “I aspire for neither worldly pleasures nor do I crave for salvation. I crave for the love of the Lord’s feet i.e, Guru’s teaching—ਰੱਖਿ ਨ ਸਚੁਕਾ ਬੱਠਿਤੀ ਨ ਸਚੁਕਾ ਬੱਠਿਤੀ ਬੱਠਿਤੀ ਬੱਠਿਤੀ ਬੱਠਿਤੀ (GGS, p.534).

According to the holy Sikh Scripture Guru Granth Sahib, the human soul is part of ‘Supreme Soul’—Waheguru. And because we have bodies, we look different from Him Who is formless. And because of the unacceptable deeds that we do with our bodies, we stay separated from Him. However, we are part of Him just as a bubble on the surface of water is a part of the body of water even though it looks different. Gurbani Says:

* ਪੁਹਿ ਭਾ ਨਿਲੀ ਵਾਰੁ ਵਾਰੁ ਤੇ ਭਾਵ ਭਿਨੀ ਸੈਨੇ ਵਰਦੀ। ਸੈਨੇ ਦੀ ਵਾਰੁ ਥੋ ਨਿਲੀਂ ਪੁਹਿ ਨਿਲੀਂ ਵਰਦੀ੦।--As fragrance abides in the flower and reflection in the mirror so does God dwell within thee, so search Him in within thy heart, O brother (GGS, p.684).

* ਪੁਂਤ ਪੁਂਤ ਅੰਤਰੀ ਮੁੱਲ ਮੁੱਲਾਂ ਪੁਂਤਾ

Within every heart is hid the Lord and in all the hearts and bodies is His light (GGS, p.597).

* ਅਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਸੈਂਡ ਮਕਾਦ ਤੇ ਅਲਖਾ ਭਲ ਭਲਾਂ। ਅਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਤਲਾਦੀ ਤੇ ਭਾਵਦੀ ਮੁੱਤ।

Glimpses of Sikhism (130)
Myself, thou art thee embodiment (image) of Divine Light, thou realize thy origin. O myself, the reverend God is within thee. By Guru’s teaching enjoy His love (GGS, p.441).

From these hymns it is very clear that Waheguru resides in every human heart. In fact, Waheguru resides in every living being, but it is only in human form that we can realize Waheguru. Once we recognize that we are a part of Waheguru, the objective of human life becomes very clear. Waheguru has given us human bodies as an opportunity for us to unite / link our souls with Him. As humans, we have the intelligence to recognize the existence of Waheguru, and can use our bodies to do noble deeds, and to worship Him. No other life form is capable of understanding the concept of Waheguru, and is therefore unable to realize Him. Gurbani says:

* दुबं ज्ञान पुनः द्वितीय विलियम नाने अखिलेश्वर अमर धन दिन विद्वंत विद्वंत विद्वंत--You were given the invaluable human form by Waheguru for some good deeds on your part, oh man! But you are now wasting it by not worshiping Waheguru. Even if you had a palace as big as god Inder’s and all other luxuries enjoyed by him, they are all useless if you do not worship Waheguru. Because only worshiping (remembering) Waheguru will connect you with Him. (GGS, Sorath Ravidas ji, p.658).

Gurbani informs us that human life obtained after such a long time is in fact an opportunity to remember God and get united with the Divine soul. There is no other life in which the awareness of remembering God is there. It is only the human life which is purposeful in this regard as made clear in Gurbani:

* ब्हाई भमाति भक्ति लेखा निविल्त विलियम विररि इवेली देवी--Bhaee prapat manukh dehuria, Gobind milan kee ih teri baria--- “Man, thou art blest with human birth, this is thy only opportunity, to meet Gobind (God) (GGS, Asa, M5, p.378)”. According to
the theosophy of Sikhism this is only possible by controlling ego through Sewa, by observing the principles of truth, love in their true spirit and *Naam Simran*.

* Remember दुख देख पाहीं खड़वाइए। लभ न सचिन देख आऊँ धरती। अंत न सादी मिर दिखाए। लभ दिखाय नीति बदल लाभ।* --You got the invaluable human life because of your good fortune. O man! A person who does not Waheguru, is a murderer of his soul. Without remembering Waheguru, life is purposeless. (Ibid, p.188).

* जब में हैं जो जग्याँ जगहीं। जब हिंद मलम देखीं धरतीं। जिम हेती बदल मिलवाए। जब हेती बदल जिम में हैं।* --Through service to the Guru, you were successful in your efforts to please Waheguru to the extent that you have been given this human body, O man! Even gods cherish human bodies so that they could realize Waheguru. Now that you have been given human body, do not forget to remember Waheguru because this is the only opportunity for you to realize Waheguru O man! (GGS, Bhairon Kabir Ji, p.1159).

* “The most foolish of the foolish is he, who believes not in ‘Naam—God’” (GGS, p.1015).

Gurbani doesn’t place any restriction on enjoyment of life as long as it is moral, and as long as you do not become a slave to a habit. Also your enjoyment should not hurt anybody else, or should not enroach upon the rights of others. Within these parameters you can enjoy life. Gurbani says:

* लभ विचार जेटीमें दूधी देखी सूक्ष्म। गुरुगुरिया विषिमया धरतीया धरतीया रिवे देखी सूक्ष्म।* If we have a perfect Guru to guide us, we can lead our lives successfully, and find
How long could be our life span?

Gurbani says:

* “ਹੱਥ ਅਕਸਰੀ ਦਾ ਘਿਰ ਲਾਈ ਮੇਰੀ ਮੇਲਾਧਿ ਮੁਖ਼ ਇੱਕ ਸਰਗਰਮ—We are men of but one breath and do not know the appointed time and moment of our departure (GGS, p.660)

* ਉਦੀ ਸਰਹਿਣਾ ਫਿਕਦ ਫਿਲ ਦੁਆਨੀ, ਮੇਰੀ ਸਿੰਧੂਕੀ ਮੁਖ਼ ਫਿਲ ਸਿਰੇ ਮੁਖ ਆਈ ਫ਼ਿਲ ਆਈ, ਜੰਮੀ—Donot make a moment’s delay, O myself in contemplating over God, who knows, mortal may draw another breath or not” (GGS, p.540)

* ਉਦੀ ਪੀਤ ਬਰੀਸੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਮੁਖ ਤੋਂ ਫਿਲ ਵਾਰੀ ਵੇ ਉਦੀ ਪੀਤਕਲਾ—O myself, love God do not take pride as all are but guests of a single night (GGS, p.455).

* ਵਰਤੀ ਜੋਤੀ ਵਰੇ ਹੱਥ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਅਕਸਰ ਸਾਰਪੀ ਕਚੂ ਜੀ ਵਧੀ ਬੰਦ ਵਰ ਤੋਂ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਸਕ ਜਾਂ ਦੁਈ ਗਤਿ ਕਚੂ—Kabir says, we are puppets of clay and bear the name of men. Though guests here for four days, much space we attempt to garb (GGS, p.1367).

* ਇਸਨੇ ਸੀਖਾਏ ਨਾਮ ਅਕਸਰ ਸੋਧਿਆ ਸੋਧੀ। ਲਫਜ਼ ਅਕਸਰੀ ਦੀ ਜੀੰ ਦੋੜੀ। ਨੀ ਰਹੀ ਪਹੀ ਲਾਈ ਲਚੀ।—He alone truly lives whose mind that Lord is lodged. Nanak says, none else is really alive. If someone leads a life of dishonour. All that he eats is illegitimate (GGS, p.142).

* ਅਕਸਰ ਸਾਰਪੀ ਸਾਰਪੀ ਜੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਚਾ ਸੋਧਿਆਭਾਸ—Do not consider the world to be living, when caught in duality. It is dead (GGS, p.643).

* ਫਿਲ ਜੀ ਜੁਗਾ ਤੀ ਮੂਆ ਜੀ ਫਿਲ ਜੀਂਦੀ। ਅਕਸਰੀ ਸੀਖਾਈ ਅਕਸਰ ਸਾਰਪੀ ਸੋਧੀ—Without the name, everyone is dead. The egocentric dies losing his life (GGS, p.1418)

* ਲਫਜ਼ ਮੇਰੀ ਸੀਖਾਈ ਸਿੰਧ ਫਿਲ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ।—Nanak says, he alone lives, who realizes the One Lord (GGS, p.319).

Glimpses of Sikhism (133)
What is death? / Death of life

According to Gurmat human death is of two types: Physical death and moral death (Moral degradation / Aatmak maut / Zameer dee maut).

Physical death

The separation of the body from the soul is called death. Physical death is the fate of all living beings as it is subject to “Hukam” i.e Divine Discipline / Cosmic Law and is unavoidable. Gurbani says all creatures and the universe are born in time and are therefore subject to certain death:

* Kaa-i-aa hans sanjog mel milaa-i-aa. Tin hee keea vijog jin upaa-i-aa. The Lord has brought the union of the soul with the body he is also responsible for separation (GGS, p.139)

* Sadray aa-ay tinaa jaaneaa hukam sachay kartaaro. Naaree purkh jaaneaa hukam sachay kartaaro. Naaree purkh wichhun-niaa wichhuriaa melanhaaro.—By the True Creator’s command, the beloved receives the call. The self spouse is separated from the body bride. Of the separated ones, the Lord is the uniter.When the True Lord so wills, He
gives command to the soul and it is separated from the body, and the separated ones then He unites again” (GGS, p.580).

* आगिया आवै आगिया जया-–Aagia aavai aagia ja-ay. According to His Will alone we come and go” (GGS, p.294).

In order to reduce the shock of death for men, they have been again and again reminded of its inevitability:

* ने कृप्या में व्यस्त संभागिया—jo upjai so kaal sanghaariaa—All that are created, by death must be destroyed” (GGS, p.227).

* जीव कीमी विश्व मध्यें जया Jeevat deese tis sar par marna. i.e; All that comes in view as alive inevitably must die” (GGS, p.374).

* ने आगिया में सर्वश्रेष्ठ में बुध ववहु।–Who-so-ever has come, shall go. Only the sublime Guru and the Creator are Eternal (GGS, p.63).

**Moral death / Aatmak maut/Zamer dee maut**

“Moral / Aatmak death” is avoidable. And that is the point that is emphasized in Guru Granth Sahib again and again. Gurbani says:

* “सब भक्त भक्ति सीमें अंग दी उर दिखर भक्ति र रेखी॥--By killing one’s own thought and leading the life according to Sabad (Guru’s teachings) one lives eternally and then afterwards does not die again (GGS, p.604).

* जीवित में मर जा श्रेष्ठ, जिखिए मर ने दूसरी रुचि समाहे दी दुश्मनी विनिमय समें सब श्री विश्वासु॥--He who dies with the Divine Word gets immune from (spiritual / moral) death and does not die second time. From Guru’s Word, love for God’s Name is obtained and Lord is attained thereby (GGS, p.58).
Death is predetermined

This world is mortal and whoever is born must die even though we don’t know when. Even non-living things must come to an end eventually. According to Gurbani:

* Whosoever has come, he shall depart and all shall take their turn (GGS, p.474).
* Whoever is born, he must perish, may be today or tomorrow (GGS, p.1429).
* With death recorded in his destiny, man comes into the world (GGS, p.686).
* On the day woman enters into the body, the time of her wedding is writ.----This life is bride, death her bridegroom. He will marry her and take away (GGS, p.1377).

All this happens under Waheguru’s Hukam--

Death of the Universe

According to Gurbani the universe emerged from void and will end up in void. The holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib further says:

* The, sky, the nether region, the moon and the sun shall pass away (GGS, p.1100).
* Whatever is seen, that shall perish. All shall disintegrate and disappear (GGS, p.1100).
* O my friend, know this that totally false is the structure of the world. Nanak says, it does not remain permanent like the

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (136)
Man’s beauty constantly declines, decline the islands, decline the sun, the moon, the stars and the sky, decline the earth, mountains, trees and the three worlds. Perishable are wife, sons, brothers and friends. Perishable are the beautiful gold, jewels and wealth. Imperishable is only the Immovable Lord. Nanak says, immutable are the Lord’s holy men (GGS, p.1354).

Regarding expansions and contractions of the universe the Gurus say that expansions and contractions of the universe have occurred many times. The Guru says, “He (God) has unfolded the universe in many ways, He has expanded it umpteen times. Only the Lord Himself is immortal, “चतुर्दशीं दर्शन टोल की निमंत्रणां। कालीय स्वभावानि विचलनं।” (GGS, p.276).

The continents, nether regions, islands and all the worlds; the Lord Himself has made them subject to death (GGS, p.1076).

As the bubble ever appears and disappears on water. Nanak says, listen my friend, such indeed is the creation of the world (GGS, p.1427).

Today the scientists are guessing that ultimately this universe will perish one day and will return to its previous state and then again its creation will start afresh. This has already been mentioned in the holy Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib, “कक्षी तामिलिनि धार्मिकं।”--Many times has the universal expanse occurred. (GGS, p.276).

NB: GGS is an abbreviation for Guru Granth Sahib

Glimpses of Sikhism (137)
The World and worldly life according to Sikhism

All ancient Indian religious systems believed that this world is not a reality, but a mere illusion (Maya). Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism does not subscribe to anything like the unreality of the physical world. Sikhism believes that this world is real, because it has been created by God. God is a Reality (exists) and so is His creation, “मह अप सच सच दरबार, “Sachcha aap sacheh darbar” (GGS, Japji Pauri 33). According to the philosophy of Sikhism this world and everything this world is real but ephemeral, “सचची चमत्कार निहूँ वडनाग सत्ता के”- Damanee chamatkaar tio wartaara jag khay-
-Brief like a spark of lightening is our sojourn in the world” (GGS, p.319).

Secondly, all ancient religious systems believed that this world was a snare or at the best a mere delusion, a house of sin, a place of pain and suffering and hence an evil and release could come through complete dissociation with it and hence the practice of renunciation and asceticism in them. Sikhism regards this world as house of God and he resides in it, “इह जग सच्चे की है कोटरी सचाहू का विच वास” (GGS, M2, p.463). This emphatic assertion of the Sikh Gurus about the authenticity of the world is a clear departure from the Indian religious tradition.

In the Varn Ashram Dharma / Sanatan Dharma i.e; Hinduism, the house-holder’s duties were not believed to be conducive to higher spiritual attainments. That is why, in order to make any progress in the
spiritual field, one had to renounce worldly activities and take to the life of renunciation and asceticism. In India the ideal of four Ashrams has been a scripturally recognised spiritual way of life. Out of these four Ashrams, two, namely, the Vanprastha and the Sanyasa Ashrams distinctly enjoin an-other-worldy approach to life. The house-holder’s duties were not believed to be conducive to higher spiritual attainments. That is why inorder to make any progress in the spiritual field, one had to renounce worldly activities and take to the ascetic way of life. As against it the three stages of life, which are mentioned in Gurbani are that of childhood, youth and old age. In all the three stages, a person has to remain a house-holder, but attached with God. During the first stage, the aquiring of education and knowledge includes the knowledge of Divine i.e, path of rememberance of God. In other two stages the physical symptoms may differ, but the person continues to observe the duties of Grahasth (house-hold) and keep himself detached from it like a lotus flower. One can have any type of enjoyment, comfort and luxury, but with such a restraint that the man does not get engrossed in it. In short, in Sikh religion, every stage of life is a stage for Naam Simran. Gurbani emphasizes that any person who spends any part of his life without remembering God, wastes it, “नानं स्मरण न च तिमि सदा खून मन्त न ज्ञाना न करर।--O man know, that there are three stages of life: Childhood, youth and then old age. O Nanak! Believe, that without God’s meditation, all are in vain (GGS, p. 1428). Seen in the context of Indian tradition, the ideals and institutions of Sikhism are entirely different.
Chapter 4

Basic Postulate (Mool Mantra) of Sikhism

The basic postulate of Sikhism is popularly called ‘Mool Mantra’. It reads: "Ikk Oankar, Sat Naam, Karta Purkh, Nirbhao, Nirvair, Akaal Moorat, Ajooni, Saibhang, Gur Parsaad."

Literal meaning:

- Ikk Oankar — There is only one God, He is infinite
- Satnam — He is Eternal Reality / Exists / His existence can not be denied.
- Karta Purkh — He does everything in this universe-(He is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer)
- Nirbhao — He is Fearless
- Nirvair — He is Inimical to none
- Akaal Moorat — He is Immortal
- Ajooni — He neither takes birth nor dies
- Saibhang — He is Self-existent (Created by itself)
- Gur — He is *Enlightener
- Parsaad — He is Gracious.

* Agiaan andhera katiaa, gur gian ghat baliaa -- The Guru removes their darkness of ignorance and Divine knowledge is illuminated in their heart (GGS. p.78, 450, 845)
The darkness of my ignorance is removed. The Guru has blazed a very bright light of Divine knowledge in me (GGS, p.78).

My darkness of ignorance is dispelled and the Divine Light is manifested unto me (GGS, p.845).

The lamp of Guru-given Divine knowledge, ever remains burning within my mind (GGS, p.173).

**NB:**

* As Kalma is to Muslims in Islam, ‘Mool Mantra’ in Sikhism is to the Sikhs.

**Invocation (Mangal-मंगल) of Sikhism**

* Invocation in Punjabi language is called ‘Mangal’. ਨਿੰਮੂਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਤੁ ਪੁਰਤ੍ਵ ਫਿਰਦੌਰੀ ਫਿਰਦੌਰੀ ਆਕਾਰ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਅਦਾਤੀ ਨੈਂ ਸਤ ਯੂਨਾਤੀ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਵਿਦ—which forms the basic postulate of Sikhism and is the opening verse in the holy Scripture of Sikhism Guru Granth Sahib, is used as invocation (ਮ੍ਹਲ) in Sikhism.

* Its recitation is called Manglacharn in Punjabi, the religious language of the Sikhs.

The commencing verse of Gurbani in Guru Granth Sahib popularly called *Mool Mantra* has been represented by Guru Arjan many times throughout the Guru Granth Sahib as invocation before the beginning of every Raag, every section and every subsection of GGS as such without abridgement or in an abridged form as follows:

1. **Complete form:** ਨਿੰਮੂਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਤੁ ਪੁਰਤ੍ਵ ਫਿਰਦੌਰੀ ਫਿਰਦੌਰੀ ਆਕਾਰ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਅਦਾਤੀ ਨੈਂ ਸਤ ਯੂਨਾਤੀ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਵਿਦ..
(2) Abridged forms:

Ikk Oankar Satgur Parsad

**Literal meaning:**

There is one God. He is infinite. He is eternal reality. He is enlightener and gracious.

**Implication:**

I / We begin by the grace of God who is infinite (Beant), eternal reality, enlightener and gracious.

**NB:** In Sikhism invocation is only to the “One Supreme Eternal Reality (God)” and the sign used as invocation is: मंगल and none else.
Chapter 5

Scriptures of Sikhism

Guru Granth Sahib
(The Holy Sikh Scripture)

Guru Granth Sahib is the Holy Scripture of the Sikh faith. Guru Arjan Dev the 5th Sikh Guru, compiled it as the revealed and final doctrinal authority of Sikhism in the beginning of the seventeenth century. He started the compilation in 1601 and completed it in 1604 A.D. He called it ‘Pothi Sahib’/‘Granth’. It was, recensed by Guru Gobind Singh in 1706 AD, when he entered the Gurbani of the 9th Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur, at Talwandi Sabo, now called Damdama Sahib. It was installed as Guru Eternal on October 5, 1708 by Guru Gobind Singh and since then it is called ‘Guru Granth Sahib’.

The Sikhs believe Guru Granth Sahib as the ‘living’ embodiment of ten Gurus and it is the only focus of Sikh faith. Guru Granth Sahib is treated with the same respect as the human Gurus received. In addition to the hymns of the Sikh Gurus it contains the writings and hymns of saints and preachers with different religious backgrounds, whose philosophy conformed to the spirit of Sikhism. Many verses composed by Gurus are either a contradiction or clarification of a similar verse of a Bhagat or an answer to the questions raised by Bhagats in their compositions. From Sheikh Farid (born 1173) to Guru Teg Bahadur (died 1675), the galaxy of writers covers full five centuries of India's spiritual thought.
Glimpses of Sikhism (144)

Guru Granth Sahib is a literary classic and a spiritual treasure. It throws light on the path leading to the highest goal of spirituality. It contains the eternal truth, proclaims God, and shows the way of His realization. It lays down moral and ethical rules for the development of the soul and religious commandments for the progress of morality and attainment of salvation. In it philosophy is propounded through the songs of love and devotion. The message of love, truth, contentment, humility, fatherhood of God, brotherhood of man, restraint of passions, mercy on living beings, purity of mind and body, search for the self and Higher Soul, equality of man and woman, service to others, liberalism in the matter of food and clothing, and references to the political, economic and social life of the people of Hindustan during the fifteenth century and sixteenth century constitute the main contents of Guru Granth Sahib. It is a guide to Sikh way of life. Its goal is of the ideal man, who attains perfection by linking himself with God. References to Vedas (Hindu) and Katebas (Semitic) scriptures are also found in it. Guru Granth Sahib rejects all types of Karam Kanda (ritualism: Fasting, pilgrimage, penance and ritual sacrifice) and all formalism for spiritual attainment. It lays stress on selfless action performed in the best interest of the society. It condemns asceticism, which has the effect of negativism. It lays stress on the dynamic attitude towards life. It supports normal family life (Grahasti jiwan) and social commitment. It recommends leading of a pure life whilst fighting temptations and imperfection of this world. It is the only scripture where each and every conceivable aspect of human life has been addressed, discussed and analysed. Mythological references are only illustrative and donot indicate any Guru’s belief in mythological personages or their actions. In Guru Granth Sahib no status or sanctity has been given to any gods (Devta), goddesses (Devi) or Avtaars (incarnations).

In its present lithographed diction, Guru Granth Sahib contains
about 5894 Hymns and Verses mainly in Punjabi, Hindi, Braj, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Sindhi, Lehndi, Dhaki, Bengali and Marathi, in Gurmukhi script on 1430 pages, composed and arranged in well-known 31 Ragas i.e; tunes / musical settings (Gurmat Sangeet), except for the initial seven and last seventy seven pages. It is a treasure of Indian languages and musical Ragas. Ragmala at the end mentions the families of eighty four Ragas and Raginies.

Guru Granth Sahib is the only scripture in the world, which mentions with respect Ram, Gobind, Hari, Allah, Rahim, Karim etc, (names for God) used by different religions and which includes writings of holy people born in other religions (Hinduism, Islam) in addition to the Sikh Gurus. It is the only source of Sikh philosophy that has been written and authenticated by the Gurus themselves and whose authenticity has never been questioned. It is the only scripture, which traveled through the generations without the change of a single letter. It is final and unalterable scripture.

The author of Guru Granth Sahib is God Himself. He revealed the religious truth to the Sikh Gurus and ordained them to spread it to mankind all over the globe. Guru Nanak did not claim divinity, only that he was a messenger of God, 'Jaisay mein aavay khasam kee bani, Taisra kari gian vay Lalo' i.e. "As the word of the 'Master' comes to me so I make known to thee" (GGS, Tilang Ml, p.72). Guru Nanak bestowed the Guruship to the Shabad (Divine Word) in his Bani, Shabad Guru Surat Dun Chela" ie, “Shabad is Guru, conscience and intention towards it make one its disciple” (Ibid, Ml, p.943). Thereafter, all the Gurus of the House of Nanak taught the same principle, i.e Shabad (Bani i.e, The Divine Word) is the Guru. Guru Amar Dass said, “Waho waho bani nirankaar hai tis jevad avar na koay i.e;
Praise be to the Bani of the Formless, Whom none can equal” (Ibid, p.515). Guru Ram Dass says, “बनी है बनी विच बनी अमृत स्रोत”-“Bani Guru, Guru Hai Bani Vich Bani Amrit Spray, Gurbani Kahay Sewak Jan Maanay Partakh Guru Nistaray” ie, “Bani is the Guru and Guru is the Bani and it contains the elixer of life. If the devotee obeys what Bani teaches us, the Guru confers His grace on him” (Ibid, M4, p.982). Guru Arjan says, "दुर की बनी आए तिन सागरी चिंत मिटाए"-“Dhur kee bani aae tin saglee chint mitaee i.e; Bani has come from God, it effaces all worries and anxieties” (Ibid, M5, p.628). He further adds, “पौथी परमेश्वर लाई घर-”“Pothi Parmesher Ka Than” i.e., The Book is the Abode of God” (Ibid, M5, p.1226).

It is believed that he, who attentively reads, sings, listens and acts upon the hymns of Guru Granth Sahib, attains bliss and is brought into direct personal contact with the Guru-'God',

“बंडतर बंडत गुरुवारी लास॥ गाहु राहु बंधदर सिंहसन-“Bhagat Bhandaar gurbani lal, gavat sunat kamavat nihal (Ibid, p.376). Therefore, Guru Granth Sahib is treated to be the presence of the Guru himself in the Sangat. It is the presiding deity in every Gurdwara or Sikh place of worship and every visitor there bows before it in reverence before assuming his / her seat. When moved, it is accompanied by five initiated Sikhs.

NB:

* Sikhs have the original scripture and it is not subject to textual analysis by anyone. It is the eternal Guru of the Khalsa (Sikhs).

(SGPC Amritsar, Jan 5, 1996)

* In Sikh scriptures, the word `Guru' has been used to denote at least three different senses. First, it has been used for God Himself, secondly, the word has been referred to as teacher-

Glimpses of Sikhism (146)
Glimpses of Sikhism (147)

Guru and finally it is used for the Holy Sikh scripture, "Guru Granth Sahib".

* Translation of Guru Granth Sahib cannot be installed in a Gurdwara.

* Guru Granth Sahib is not like the idol in a Hindu temple nor the statue of the virgin in a Catholic Cathedral. It is the means and not the object of worship.

* The instalment of Guru Granth Sahib is mandatory at a Sikh service.

**Gurdwara - The Sikh place of worship**

Gurdwara is the Sikh place of worship, prayer and piety. It is the center of Sikh life. It is indestructible symbol of Sikh faith. Gurdwara emerged as the new edifice on the Indian subcontinent's religious landscape in the seventeenth century, when in 1604 AD, Guru Arjan, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, in Amritsar, placed with reverence the first volume of Aad Granth in the building, which had been completed by him three years earlier. Till then Sikh place of worship was popularly called Dharamsal. First Dharamsal was established by Guru Nanak at Kartarpur (now in Pakistan).

The term Gurdwara is a combination of two Punjabi words; Guru and Dwara, literally meaning, Guru’s door, but in Sikh theology it means, the Guru's house i.e, the house of the divine. It is the Sikh center of spiritual, social and educational activities. The term Gurdwara is purely Sikh in origin and it was coined by Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith and is found written in the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib on pages 351, 554, 730, 922, 933, 937, 1015, 1075 and 1234. Usually there are four parts of the complex: The main hall for worship, Langar (The Community kitchen), Serai also called Saran (inn i.e, residential area) and the

Glimpses of Sikhism (147)
school. All major Gurdwaras have all these facilities, but, in small Gurdwaras, one or more of these facilities may not be available. Every Gurdwara, besides religious worship, is expected to provide food and lodging to visitors/travelers, free of cost. Hence, a Serai/Saran (Inn i.e, Hostel), is usually attached to most of the Gurdwaras. A school to teach Punjabi language, Gurmukhi script, Sikh history, philosophy along with modern science and other languages is part of major/big Gurdwaras. Every Gurdwara has a Jora Ghar- ਜੋਰਾ ਘਰ (shoe house) outside the main complex for depositing the shoes, as shoes are not allowed inside the main Gurdwara complex and the visitor has to go bare foot after washing his/her hands and feet.

The main structure in the Gurdwara is a big hall, where Guru Granth Sahib wrapped in fine Rumalas is seated over a small bed (Manji Sahib/also called Peerah Sahib) with nice bedding on a raised platform (Takhat Sahib) in a Palki (palanquin) with Chandoa/Chanani, hanging from the ceiling of the hall. The place where Guru Granth Sahib rests is the most decorated part of the Gurdwara. Except when it is being read, it is kept covered. The Granthi waves Chaur (made of yalk hair) over Guru Granth Sahib. Chanani and Chaur are symbols of royalty and their presence is not functional Guru is Sachcha Patshah (True king/King of Spiritual Realm).

In a Gurdwara there are no images, altar or pulpit, the object of Sikh reverence is the scripture (Guru Granth Sahib) itself, and the Sikhs bow before it, walk around it and if they wish, find a space in the hall, sit cross legged on the floor in a position facing Guru Granth Sahib to listen the Ragis (religious musicians) proclaim verses from its sacred pages. A Sikh is supposed to join Sangat (congregation) in the Gurdwara as frequently as possible.
Chapter 6

Sikhs are not Hindus

It is universally agreed upon now that man evolved in Africa and gradually spread over the entire globe. According to Dr. H.D Sankalia, the renowned anthropologist, “It is more or less established that at the end of First Glacial Period and into the beginning of the second Ice Age, Early Man entered the foothills of the Northwest Punjab, in the area traversed by Soan, Haro and other rivers within the Indus-Jhelum Doab. Early man spread into the area comprised by Rawalpindi and Attock districts of the Punjab, and the Jammu and Kashmir States”.

Recent Genomic studies reveal that these people arrived in India from Central Asia (Kazakhstan area) by travelling south of the rugged and mountainous Pamir Knot, some 30,000 years ago. Early humans lived here as gatherers and hunters, who gradually developed into a great civilization—The Harappan civilization, now known as “The Indus Valley Civilization”, which is one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The natives here farmed the lands and were called “Jatts—ਜਤਾ”, which is the oldest named tribe in India whose name is found even in Mahabharata. After the region was named Punjab in 1590 A.D by Emperor Akbar, the natives of this land came to be called Punjabis. Scholars of history generally agree that Punjabi heritage is one of the oldest civilizations in the world and that its cradle was the soil of Punjab. Its main cities were Mohinjodaro and Harappa. It dates back to about 3300 BC and flowered between 2500 and 1700 BC.

______________________________
Glimpses of Sikhism (149)
Because of its geographical location Punjab has been a perpetual battlefield serving as the gateway to India for the invaders from the Central Asia and the Middle-East. After the Aryans, foreign invasions of the Punjab started in the 5th century BC. A series of invaders trampled over this land for centuries. These early invaders included Iranians (Persians), the Greeks, the Parthians, the Sakas (Scythians), the Kushans, the Huns and the Bactrians. Persian king Darius was the first to invade this land in 5th century BC. He was followed by Greek conquerer, Alexander the great in 326 BC, after whom Punjab was annexed by Bactrian king Saleucus in 305 BC, and the Bactrians rule over this land for about two hundred years. The Bactrians were defeated by Chander Gupta Mauriya and he made the Punjab part of the vast Mauryan Empire.

Buddhism became the state religion during the rule of Mauryan King Ashoka (274-232 B.C), who established University of Buddhist learning in Taxilla, located in the foot hills of the Punjab, but Buddhism could not influence the Jatts in the plains of the Punjab and remained limited to the mountainous regions only.

After the fall of Buddhist Mauryan Empire, Brahmanical revival took place in the Hindustan. From 320 CE to 550 CE, during the rule of the Gupta dynasty Brahmanism / Sanatan Dharma (Hinduism) made remarkable progress. The Aryan Brahmans converted the local farming tribes of the Ganges Valley into Brahmanism (now Hinduism) and named them “Rajputs” and showered upon them various titles viz, Surya Vanshi, Chander Vanshi, Agni Vanshi and so on and created their long genealogies. There is no mention of Rajputs in Mahabharata and hence they are a later creation of the Aryan Brahmans. A further resurgence in Brahmanism took place during the 8th century. The Brahmans under the leadership of Shankra Acharya (788-820 AD), violently wiped out Buddhism from Hindustan, but the Brahmanism
could not influence the “Jatts of the Punjab” and did not dare to penetrate into them in a big way and extend its influence beyond Yamuna River. Punjab remained politically isolated from the Gangetic Plains for about one thousand years after the fall of Mauryan Empire.

Islamic invasions of the Punjab started in the beginning of the 8th century and the Turks, Moghul and Afghans followed one after the other. The brave people of the Punjab resisted for almost three centuries, but ultimately the Punjab fell to the invading Islamic forces in the beginning of the 11th century. Turks, Moghuls and Afghan (Pathan) tribes occupied the areas of the Punjab bordering Afghanistan and settled there permanently. Some of the weak minded Punjabis in this area got converted into Islam, while others fled in front of the Muslim onslights and settled on the northern fringe of the Punjab in a narrow belt running along the foothills of the Himalayas, a region intersected by mountain streams and deep ravines, difficult for easy access. They started worshipping goddess Durga and came to be known as ‘Durgas’ (worshippers of Durga), now simply called ‘Dogras’ and are found in the hills of the Punjab in large numbers.

The brave natives of the plains of the Punjab called ‘Jatts’ never left the Punjab. They kept resisting and fighting against the invaders, got concentrated in the Central Punjab around Lahore on both sides of the river Ravi. Guru Nanak founded Sikhism, in Punjab at the fag end of the 15th century. Although Sikh Gurus preached their message in the Punjab, Hindustan, and adjoining countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Arabia, Palestine, Turkey, Tibet, Parts of China, Russia and Sri Lanka etc for a period spanning over more than two centuries, their teachings were accepted enmass only by the Punjabis. Guru Arjan Dev clearly declared the independent position of Sikhism by writing in the Aad Granth (Guru Granth Sahib), in Rag Bhairon, on page 1136 that:

Glimpses of Sikhism (151)
“I do not keep the Hindu fast (vrat) or observe the Muslim Ramzan,
I serve only the One Supreme Being who alone is my refuge,
I serve the One Master who ministers justice to both Hindus and Muslims,
I have broken with the Hindus and Muslims,
I neither worship with the Hindu nor like the Muslim go to Mecca,
I serve Him alone and no other,
I do not pray to idols nor say the Muslim prayer

Taking the formless One in my mind I make obeisance there to the Supreme Being, for we are neither Hindus nor Mussalman”.

Sikhism was formally embraced en-mass by the people of the central Punjab, popularly called Majha, when it was formally consecrated by the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh on the Vaisakhi day in 1699 at Anandpur Sahib in the Punjab through Amritpaan ceremony. The Sikhs of the Punjab are therefore a distinct ethnic people.

Qazi Noor Mohammad, who came with Abdali, during his seventh invasion of India in the eighteenth century, wrote that Sikhs were not Hindus and that the new religion which was distinct from Hinduism had been created by Guru Nanak (Qazi Noor Mohammad, Jang Namah, Ed by Ganda Singh, Amritsar, 1939, (English translation) PP58-59). Further there are orders of Moghal Emperors and Governors in the eighteenth century, which state that ‘Nanak Panthis’ should be eliminated and that rewards would be given for their destruction. Within two years and a quarter of the death of Guru Gobind Singh in October 1708, the infuriated emperor issued on December 10, 1710, an edict for a wholesale massacre of the Sikhs.
wherever found, “Nanak prastan ra har ga kih bayaband ba qatal rasanand” (Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla). This shows that there was only one entity, namely the ‘Nanak Panthis’ i.e., Sikhs, whom the rulers of the day considered to be the opponents worth liquidation. Nowhere the order is confined to Amritdharis, Singhs, or Khalsas. In fact, these terms are not mentioned in related official records. This clearly shows that making distinction of ideology or faith as between Nanak Panthis, on the one hand, and Sikhs, Khalsa, Amritdharis, Singhs on the other, is a recent contrivance, unknown to the insiders, outsiders or the adversaries of the Sikhs, before the nineteenth century. The confusion has arisen, because in the nineteenth century during the rule of Ranjit Singh when Sikh star was ascendant, many fair-weather friends entered the Sikh fold. The same thing was repeated after the suppression of the mutiny in 1857 by the British and the Sikhs became their favourites. Again these fair-weather friends embraced Sikhism in large numbers during the Singh Sabha period in order to enjoy the benefits available to the Sikhs under the British rule. During all these periods, becoming a Sikh only meant gaining prestige and benefits without any risk of liquidation as in the earlier century, and it is they who reverted to Hinduism after annexation of Punjab and then after the independence of India. Some of these neo-converts have been holding the ship of Sikhism with their hands but kept their feet firmly stuck in the boat of Hinduism i.e., they believe in Guru Granth Sahib, but continue to observe Brahmanical practices, caste, rituals, rites, ceremonies etc. Instead of following the Sikh ‘Rehat maryada’ they try to Hinduism Sikhism by introducing Bipran kee reet (Brahmanical practices like mentioning caste with their names, observe rituals and rites etc) into Sikhism.

In 1905 A.D., an international decision came in favour of the Sikhs when King Abdur Rehman of Afghanistan dismissed an appeal by Hindus for keeping idols in Gurdwara Guru Har Rai in Kabul. He
made clear distinction between idol worshipper Hindus and the Sikhs: “Followers of Baba Nanak who was one of the greatest Unitarians and was opposed to idol worship”. Recent anthropological and Genomic studies have revealed that the Sikhs of the Punjab are a distinct ethnic people.

Today Sikhism is a world religion. Global spread of Sikhism has been mainly through migration of the Sikhs from ‘Punjab’. Recently because of its principles Sikhism has been embraced by many white people and now many white Sikhs and even black Sikhs can be found internationally, particularly in USA.

NB: All manual workers in ancient Punjab were called Jatts and regarded as Shudras by the Brahmans.

References

K.S. Duggal: The Sikh people yesterday and today.
Romila Thapar: The Penguin History of Early India from origins to AD1300.

Sikh identity and the Hindu Muslim hostility towards Sikhs and Sikhism

It is very well known that Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was born in a Hindu Khatri family, but he refused to accept the sacraments / marks of Hinduism and Hindu way of worshiping the idols, and practice Hindu caste system which forms the bed rock of Hinduism. He denounced all this in strongest terms. He emphatically
declared, “There is neither any Hindu nor any Muslim, we all are all children of the same one father (God)” and being children of the same father we are all brothers and sisters. First four Sikh Gurus were born in Hindu Khatri families, but the fifth Guru, Arjan was a born Sikh of Sikh parents and he declared the separate existence of Sikhism by writing it in the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, in Rag Bhairon, on page 1136:

“I do not keep the Hindu fast (Vart) or observe the Muslim Ramzan,
I serve only the One Supreme Being who alone is my refuge,
Serve the One Master who minister justice to both Hindus and Muslims,
I have broken with the Hindus and the Muslims,
I neither worship with the Hindu nor like the Muslim go to Mecca,
I serve Him alone and no other,
I do not pray to idols nor say the Muslim prayer,

Taking the formless One in my mind I make obeisance there to the Supreme Being, for we are neither Hindus nor Musalman”.

Guru Arjan created the holy Sikh Scripture (Aad Granth, now Guru Granth Sahib), the world seat of Sikhism (Gurdwara Darbar Sahib / Golden Temple) in 1604 A.D and installed it in the building which he had already completed in the midst of Sarovar at Amritsar; there by establishing separate religious identity of Sikhism. Till then the spread of Sikhism had been carried out through the word of mouth by the Sikh Gurus and it had no separate religious existence distinct from Hinduism and Islam.

Because of its principles, Sikhism was acceptable to both
Hindus and Muslims. The erosion of their faiths surprised the religious leaders of both Hinduism (Brahmans / Pandits) and those of Islam (Mullas / Qazis). They regarded Sikhism as threat to their respective faiths. The Muslim administration, in addition, perceived it threat to its political power. The tensions that followed between the Sikhs, Hindus and the Muslim government resulted in the execution of Guru Arjan at Lahore on June 05, 1606 A.D.

Guru Hargobind son of Guru Arjan succeeded him as the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. His career marks a turning point in the Sikh history. Seeing how peaceful resistance to oppression had proved abortive, he took the seat of his father with two swords girded round his waist one symbolizing spiritual power and the other temporal authority. At that time the Hindus were forbidden to wear a turban, ride a horse, to sit on a raised platform or seat and to keep weapons. In an open defiance of the imperial policy Guru Hargobind wore turban with a crown and made it compulsory part of the Sikh dress. He asked his followers to present him with young men, good horses and weapons. He encouraged martial activity among his followers, exhorting them to learn horsemanship and the use of arms. As a part of his new policy he founded Akal Takhat the Supreme Sikh seat of temporal authority of Sikhism, opposite Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), Amritsar, as counterpart to the imperial Delhi Throne. He held his court there, received envoys, settled disputes and administered justice. He built a fort in Amritsar and named it ‘Lohgarh’.

The Governor of Lahore sent reports to Emperor Jahangir, in Delhi, regarding his activities. Guru Hargobind was summoned to Agra by the emperor. He presented himself in the imperial court, where he was taken into custody and sent to Gwalior fort as a prisoner, where political prisoners were kept. During the detention period of Guru Hargobind, Jahangir became a bit mentally disturbed.
and used to have very frightening dreams. Noor Jahan (who was a follower of Hazrat Sain Mian Mir) prevailed upon her husband to release Guru Hargobind, which might help him cure his mental sickness. Guru Hargobind refused to leave the fort till fifty two Hindu political king prisoners detained there were also released along with him. Guru Hargobind successfully secured their release along with him. Guru Hargobind left the Gwalior fort on October 26, 1619. Guru Hargobind reached Agra, Jahangir and Guru Hargobind befriended each other, but the provincial government at Lahore continued to maintain hostile attitude towards him.

The Exodus

The *Mina Khatri* (Pirithi Chand elder brother of Guru Arjan and his progeny, the rival claimants to Guruship), caste Hindus i.e Brahmins and the provincial Muslim officials of Lahore government, forged an alliance to liquidate Guru Hargobind. The provincial Muslim forces under the governor at Lahore attacked Guru Hargobind and made four armed attempts at various places in the Punjab to capture or kill him, but were defeated by the Sikhs in all the encounters. After the fourth battle in 1635 A.D, at Kartarpur in Bist Doab, Guru Hargobind shifted his headquarter from Amritsar to Kiratpur in the Shivalik foot hills. This area lay outside the jurisdiction of the province of Lahore and was under the direct control of the emperor of Delhi, who at that time had cordial relations with Guru Hargobind.

Infiltration of Brahmancial forces into Sikhism

After the expulsion of Guru Hargobind from Amritsar, Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) and Akal Takhat came under the control of *Mina Khatri*—(Pirithi Chand and his progeny, who were Sikh in appearance, but Hindu at heart and antagonistic to Sikh thought) and remained under their control for about six decades till

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (157)
1699 A.D. During this period of occupation they in collaboration with the caste Hindus i.e, Brahmans introduced not only un-Sikh, but even anti-Sikh practices in Gurdwara Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat Amritsar. They created havoc with Sikh ideology and made several interpolations in the theology, philosophy and history of Sikhism and the Sikhs. They also created their own Granth and placed it in Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in place of Aad Granth of Guru Arjan, which was carried away by Dhirmal, grand son of Guru Hargobind Sahib to Kartarpur in Bist Doab, which is still in the possession of the family of Sodhis there. They also created Janam Sakhi-biography (Meharban Janam Sakhi) of Guru Nanak and in the process reducing him to an avatar with in the pantheonism of Hinduism.

Sikhism developed, matured and became established to work its way in the world at the end of two centuries under the guidance of its ten Gurus. It was formally consecrated by its tenth Guru Gobind Singh on the Vaisakhi day 1699 A.D; at Anandpur Sahib in the Shivalik foothills in the Punjab, through his Sikh initiation ceremony--Amritpaan by administering Khanday Baatay dee Pahul (Amrit). On this day he prescribed the religious code of conduct for the Sikhs.

The Minas at Amritsar, because of their Sikh connection were persecuted by the provincial Muslim Government at Lahore, who did not need them any more. They left Amritsar crossed River Satluj and settled in the sandy desert area of the Punjab in the Malwa region and founded a new town there, which they named, Guru Har Sahai. In the middle of June 1699 Guru Gobind Singh sent Bhai Mani Singh along with a Jatha of the Sikhs, who took possession of the shrine, Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar and resumed the daily Maryada (Sikh religious service) there.

Guru Gobind Singh left this mortal world in 1708 A.D. Before departing from this mortal world shortly after midnight between
October 7&8, 1708, Guru Gobind Singh told the Sikhs that, the community in its organized form of Panth was to guide itself by the teachings of the Gurus as enshrined in the Holy Granth and also the collective sense of the community—Sikh Panth / Khalsa Panth. In this way he passed the spiritual authority of the Sikhs to Aad Granth and called it “Guru Granth”. He vested the temporal authority of the Sikhs with the Khalsa and called it “Guru Khalsa Panth”, who could neither be killed nor eliminated.

The Sikhs declared the war of independence of the Sikh nation in 1709 A.D; under the leadership of Banda Singh Bahadur (1708-1715) and occupied vast areas of the Punjab between Delhi and Lahore, destroyed Sarhind, killed its governor Wazid Khan, who was resposible for slaughtering Guru Gobind Singh’s younger sons, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, established Sikh rule in the Punjab and appointed Sardar Baj Singh as governor at Sarhind. Banda Singh was captured alive and executed in Delhi on June 9, 1716 A.D.

After the death of Banda Singh, the Muslim government of Hindustan vowed to exterminate the Sikh nation from the face of the earth. The Sikhs left their homes and hearths, took refuge in the jungles and the mountain caves of the Punjab and the desert area of the Punjab adjoining Rajputana. Moghul rulers and their Hindu collaborators perpetrated atrocities on the Sikhs and their families. For many years just being a Sikh was a crime punishable with death, but the Sikhs refused to submit and continued their struggle for survival and independence.

During the days of the persecution of the Khalsa (Sikhs) in the first and second quarters of the 18th century, when the Khalsa had escaped into jungles, deserts and caves etc, the Sikh shrines (Gurdwaras) came under the control of the dissident Nirmala Brahmans and Udasi Khatri Sadhus followers of Sri Chand son of
Glimpses of Sikhism (160)

Guru Nanak. Because of their being clean shaven and having Hindu looks they were not targeted by the Muslim rulers. They introduced not only un-Sikh but even anti-Sikh practices into Gurdwaras and tried their best to Hinduism Sikhism.

After a hard gruesome and determined struggle of about fifty years, the Sikhs over came all oppression, destroyed the Muslim rule and domination in their homeland by 1765; and earned a place under the sun as sovereigns of Punjab. They established small confederacies in the form of Misals throughout the length and breadth of the Punjab between Afghanistan in the west and Jamna (Yamuna) river (upto Delhi) in the east, Korakoram mountain range in the north and plains of Sindh in the south. The Sikh Misals on the western side of the river Satluj consolidated themselves under the leadership of Ranjit Singh and formally established “Sikh State” in 1799, which became most powerful State in Asia. The Sikh State was based on Sikh traditions, values and principles under the patronage of Guru Granth Sahib and supremacy of Akaal Takhat Amritsar. The Sikh government was called “Sarkare Khalsa”. The Sikhs of the Malwa region led by Ala Singh dissociated themselves from the main stream Sikhism. They refused to accept the supremacy of Akaal Takhat and follow the Khalsa traditions including Sarbat Khalsa.

People were given employment in the Sikh State on merit irrespective of the religion. The opportunists among the Hindus embraced Sikhism, rose to high positions (Prime Minister—Teju Brahman as Tej Singh & Lalu Brahman as Lal Singh--Commander-in-Chief) and treacherously aligned with the British and brought down the Sikh government in 1848 A.D. The Udasis and Nirmalas during the period of Sikh rule grew hair and became Sikh in appearance, but remained Hindu at heart. They designated themselves as Mahants. During the Sikh rule in the Punjab huge properties were given in grant.

Glimpses of Sikhism (160)
to the historical Sikh shrines. The Sikhs lost their rule in 1849 after many bloody wars not because of lack of bravery on the part of the Sikh but due to the treachery committed by the civil government dominated by the Hindus, when their kingdom was annexed by the British. The Mahants were patronized by the British rulers of the Punjab for political reasons.

The rulers of the Cis Satluj Sikh states i.e Malwa region of the Punjab went under the British protection in 1809 A.D: the learned Brahmans from Banaras crossed Jamna River in the garb of Nirmala Sikhs and settled in the Malwa region of the Punjab. They were patronized there by the rulers of the princely Sikh states there. These learned Brahmans in the garb of Nirmala / Udasi Sikhs, called themselves, ‘Sant Babas’ built their own Gurdwaras, which were called ‘Sant Deras’. They interpreted the Sikh Scriptures according to the Vedantic philosophy and preached and propagated Hindu practices in the Sikh places of worship in order to Hinduism Sikhism. They also produced a large amount of literature in this regard, which is presently being used to damage Sikhism.

Because of their Hindu background both the Udasi and Nirmala sadhus introduced Hindu practices and rituals in Gurdwaras, which were not only un-Sikh, but even anti-Sikh. They also made several interpolations in the Sikh literature. They misused the names of several Sikh personages to corroborate these myths and gave it credence. They demonstrated that these ritualistic practices had been initiated at the behest of Guru Gobind Singh and issued these in the form of instructions called Rehatnamas (Code of conduct). Before this phase of issuing Rehatnamas, this sort of theological crisis had crept up during the time of Guru Arjan Dev when attempts were made to induct fictitious verses (Bani) in the verses of the Sikh Gurus. But Guru Arjan Dev resolved the crisis by compiling the text of Guru Granth Sahib.
The *Rehatnamas* are replete with anti-Gurmat views. All of these seem to have been composed towards the end of eighteenth century. The writers of these commandments have cleverly omitted their own name and replaced these by names of scholars and great Sikh-personalities who have been contemporaries of the tenth Guru. Thus falsification was done by certain cunning people who tried to support their views by attributing them to the Gurus.

The Sikh Gurus had disapproved and condemned both Brahmanism and its ritualistic practices. Their crusade was not against Brahmans but against the ideology of Brahmanism. They never visualized that a new breed of Sikh Brahmanical priests should replace an existing class of Hindu Brahmanical priests.

The decay of Sikhism and the Sikh Empire had, in fact, started during the rise of Dogra-Khatris (Dhian Singh, Gulab Singh, Suchet Singh and Hira Singh) and Brahmans (Khushal Singh, Tej Singh and Lal Singh) at the Sikh court in the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. They were all saboteurs, opportunist, neoconverts into Sikhism. They came to control the whole civil government. With them once again, came the worship of stones, idols and tombs. Towards the close of the 19th century, the Sikhism had actually become much Hinduized. Brahmans had actually pushed idols into the holy precincts of a number of Sikh shrines, where, in apparent contradictions to the spirit of Sikhism, idol worship was being practiced. There sprang a number of persons from the descendents of the Gurus who posed themselves as Gurus, and arrogated to themselves the position and privileges to which they laid claims as self-appointed successors of Guru Nanak—Guru Gobind Singh. They also reintroduced various Brahmanical rituals and ceremonials, like worship of idols and relics, rites connected with birth, marriage and death, and pilgrimages to Hardawar and other Hindu places etc; from all of which the Guru had weaned or liberated
the Sikhs. A relapse of into Hinduism was thus in progress. The Sikh Kingdom was annexed by the British in 1849 / 1954, after many bloody battles. The Sikhs lost due to the treachery of the civil government dominated by neoconvert Hindus into Sikhism and not due to any lack of bravery on the part of the Sikh army.

**Birth of Singh Sabha & Social separation of the Sikhs and Hindus**

After the annexation of the Sikh Kingdom of the Punjab by the British in 1849, the relationship between the Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs underwent complete change. With Muslim threat gone, the external factors that kept Hindus and Sikhs together disappeared. They had to redefine their relationships. After its annexation the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab was dismantled, reorganized and merged with rest of the British India. The Hindus of the Punjab came into contact with well educated members of their respective communities from rest of the Hindustan (India), which had been already under the British rule for almost over more than one hundred years and were more enlightened with modern education and knowledge, whereas the Sikhs of the British Punjab had none to fall back upon. The ownership of the Gurdwaras had fallen into the hands of the cleanshaven *Udasi Khatri and Nirmala Sadhus*, during the days of the persecution of the Sikhs by the Moghul Muslim Government, who were at first patronized by Sarkare Khalsa and then by the British. The Sikhs during their rule in the Punjab remained busy with expanding and securing the boundaries of their nascent kingdom and did not take any steps to assert their religious identity through the ‘*Sikh Rehat*’ (Sikh religious code of conduct) distinct from Hindu practices.

The Christian missionaries were firmly entrenched in Ludhiana. They established their centers in the Sikh heart-land Majha at Amritsar, Lahore, Batala, Dhariwal and the hills of the Punjab at
Shimla and Dalhousie etc and were seeking conversion into Christianity.

Another thing that shook the Sikhs at that time was a series of carping lectures on the Sikh faith and the narration of Guru Nanak Dev’s life in deliberately garbled detail by one Brahman named, Sharda Ram Phillauri. In these lectures delivered by him at Guru Ka Bagh in Amritsar he made vulgar attacks on Sikh Gurus and Sikh scriptures, and ridiculed the Sikh community.

After the loss of Sikh power in the Punjab, the Brahmans from Banaras crossed river Jamna (Yamuna) in the garb of Nirmala and Udasi sadhus / saints, in Sikh appearance and settled in the Malwa region of the Punjab. They were patronized by the Phoolkia Malwaee rulers in this region at the behest of the British, with whom they had entered into a treaty for protection against the Sikh State (Khalsa Raj) of the Punjab during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809. These Nirmala and Udasi Sadhus were in Sikh garb but Hindu at heart and antagonistic to Sikh thought and doctrines. They produced Sikh literature inorder to Hinduize Sikhism and made several interpolations in the Sikh theology, philosophy and history and are presently using that literature to misguide the Sikhs and others in India and internationally.

Naturally enough, such inroads and attacks aroused strong feelings among the Sikhs. Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhawalia an uncle of the deposed Maharja Dalip Singh took the initiative and called a meeting of prominent Sikh leaders of the Punjab in Guru Ka Bagh Amritsar to consider this matter. The meeting resulted in the formation of the Sikh society, which was named, ‘Singh Sabha’ in 1873, with Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhawalia as president. That marked the birth of Singh Sabha movement. Unfortunately the Sikh society came to be dominated by persons who called themselves, Sanatan Sikhs
Glimpses of Sikhism (165)

(literally: ancient Sikhs). They were mostly of urban origin and belonged to the trading community of Khatri Hindus with Sikh appearance. These Sanatan Sikhs although believed in Guru Granth Sahib, but observed caste, personal Guruship, idol worship and other Hindu rites, rituals and practices. They were led by Baba Khem Singh Bedi, who was a direct descendant of Guru Nanak. He was resident of Rawalpindi and held a camp office in Amritsar. In the programme they devised, particular emphasis was laid on the promotion of periodicals and other literature on Sikhism, but failed to address the question of crystallizing a distinct Sikh Rehat and establish a separate identity distinct from Hindus, which concerned the major portion of the Sikh Panth in Punjab.

In 1877 a Gujarati Brahman, named Dayanand who called himself Swami came to Punjab and opened a branch of his newly founded Hindu sect called Arya Samaj in Lahore. He cleverly contended that the Sikhs are a sect of Hinduism and Sikhism was not a separate religion. He attacked the Sikh Scriptures vehemently, ridiculed the Sikh Gurus and the Punjabi language.

The Khalsa Sikhs disagreed with the actions of Amritsar Singh Sabha led by Baba Khem Singh Bedi of Rawalpindi, therefore, they dissociated themselves from the parent body in 1879 and formed a parallel Singh Sabha in Lahore, under the leadership of Professor Gurmukh Singh, Harsa Singh, Jawahar Singh and Giani Ditt Singh and it was patronized by persons like Kanwar Bikram Singh Kapurthala and Sardar Attar Singh Bhadaur. The Singh Sabha Lahore proved to be more aggressive. As it was a revivalist movement and sought only to revive Sikhism of Guru period without making any deviations, it instantly caught the imagination of the Sikhs in general and attracted the attention of Sikh aristocrats, intellectuals and scholars in particular. Among them the names of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha (author of encyclopaedia of Sikh literature, doctrine and history), Bhai Vir Singh
and Vaid Mohan Singh Tarn Taran are worth mentioning.

The movement grew rapidly and within a short span of time Singh Sabhas sprang up in all cities, towns and most of the villages of the Punjab, setting up a network of schools with a common appellation ‘Khalsa’ throughout the length and breadth of the Punjab where study of Guru Granth Sahib and Gurmukhi were compulsory. It did not indulge into politics, but instead sought co-operation and involved the Punjab government in its educational activities. It started first Punjabi press in Gurmukhi script in Lahore and published first Punjabi paper ‘Khalsa Akhbar’ whose editor was Giani Ditt Singh. It got Punjabi in Gurmukhi script recognized as a subject for teaching in schools, colleges and university. It established the Premier Sikh Institution Khalsa College Amritsar for higher education in 1892. It also opened a number of Khalsa Schools throughout the length and breadth of the Punjab. Singh Sabha not only checked the relapse of the Sikhs into Hinduism but retaliated by carrying proselytizing activities into the Hindu camp. Large numbers of Hindus of Northern and North Western Punjab became Sikhs especially in urban areas. This however, brought Professor Gurmukh Singh incharge of the movement in conflict with the Mahants (Pujaris–Priests) of Gurdwaras led by Baba Khem Singh Bedi. As the Gurdwaras were in possession of the Mahants who believed in Hindu practices, they stopped allowing the revivalist Sikhs to perform religious services there. The Singh Sabhas constructed their own Gurdwaras, with Granthis, Ragis and Updeshaks and became centers of Sikh revivalism.

Singh Sabha movement taught the Sikhs three things: Firstly, they were not Hindus, secondly, the Khalsa membership should be the objective of all Sikhs and thirdly obedience to the Sikh religious code of conduct (Sikh Rahat Maryada).

Glimpses of Sikhism (166)
Achievements of Singh Sabha:

(a) It brought religious awakening among the Sikhs and laid the foundation of social separation of the Sikhs from Hindus, which was completed by them under Chief Khalsa Diwan, Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and The Sharomani Akali Dal. The Sikhs crystallized their distinct Rehat Maryada (Sikh religious code of conduct based on the canon of Sikh faith), which was published in a booklet form by SGPC in 1945.

(b) It started first Punjabi press in Lahore and published first Punjabi paper in Gurmukhi—Khalsa Akhbar, whose editor was Giani Ditt Singh.

(c) It got Punjabi in Gurmukhi script recognized as a subject for teaching in schools, colleges and university.

(d) It established Khalsa College Amritsar in 1892. It also opened a number of Khalsa Schools throughout the length and breadth of the Punjab.

(e) In 1905, it forced Auroor Singh, manager of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar to remove the statues of Hindu deities from Prikarma under legal orders.

(f) It propagated Anand Marriage among the Sikhs.

Singh Sabha movement brought about socio-religious awakening among the Sikhs by raising Khalsa educational institutions, publishing news papers, books and journals on Sikhism and Sikh history and promoting the Punjabi language in Gurmukhi script, which was considered to be a vehicle of progress for the community and the country. The news papers, journals and books, were published in Punjabi, Urdu and English on weekly, fortnightly, on monthly basis, and as bulletins or supplements. The Sikh journalism of the first two decades of the twentieth century brought about political resurgence.
and collective consciousness of Panth. It also brought about awareness among the Sikhs to maintain their religious symbols and manage their own socio-religious institutions. Singh Sabha was totally committed to educational and religious matters of the Sikhs and Sikhism and paid no heed to politics.

It is a well known fact that the Hindus are highly intolerant of the non-confirming faiths, there have been persistent attempts on their part to over turn the Sikh history, theology and philosophy after the Sikhs lost their rule. Before the decolonization of the Indian subcontinent (Hindustan) in 1947 AD; and the division, destruction and denial of their state back to the Sikhs by the British, they (Sikhs) for the first time in history came under the tulelage of a reviving Hinduism. Immediately after gaining independence the Government of India dominated by radical Hindus undertook the task of distorting of the Sikh history, theology and undermining of Sikhism and even declaring Sikhism a sect of Hinduism. The Brahmans / Sanatani Hindus in the garb of Sikhs called Sant Babas who had been patronized firstly by the Phoolkia rulers in the Malwa region and then encouraged by the British officials spread all over the country and even abroad. They have now been patronized by the Indian government dominted by radical Hindus. They have established their own Gurdwaras called Sant Deras, both in India and abroad, independent of main stream followers.

In 1905 Auroor Singh the manager of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar was forced by the revivalist Sikhs through court orders to remove of Sikhism. These Sant Babas in Sikh garb are preaching, propagating and practicing Hindu rituals and ceremonies etc against the tenets of Sikhism (Gurmat), among the ignorant Sikhs and trying their utmost to Hinduize Sikhism.
Legal separation of the Sikhs and Hindus

The Sikhs finally adopted recourse for their legal separation from the Hindus. In 1905, Singh Sabha forced Aroor Singh, manager of Gurdawara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar to remove the statues of Hindu deities from Parikarma under legal orders. All Hindu idols from the Parkarma of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), which the Hindus had installed there and used to worship them after bath at the Amritsar, were removed and placed on the road side in front of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), thereby putting an end to the performance of Hindu rituals in that area. The Hindus in Amritsar did not possess any common land in Amritsar except for the cremation ground, therefore they took away the idols and installed them over a platform inside a small room in the cremation ground and named it Seetla Mandir, which was subsequently expanded and is now known as Durgiana mandir.

* In 1905 A.D, an international decision came in favour of the Sikhs, when King Abdur Rehman Khan of Afghanistan dismissed an appeal by Hindus for keeping idols in Gurdwara Guru Har Rai in Kabul. He made clear distinction between idol worshipper Hindus and the Sikhs,— “Followers of Baba Nanak who was one of the greatest Unitarians and was opposed to idol worship”.

* **Sikh educational conference was established in 1908 A.D**, which was instrumental in opening numerous Khalsa (Sikh) schools in towns and villages of the Punjab and even outside Punjab. It did a lot for the growth of literacy in the community.

* **Enactment of Sikh marriage Act in 1909 A.D:**

To establish the validity of distinct Sikh ceremonies and remove the legal objections raised by judicial officials in civil courts, Prince Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, on behalf of the Sikhs prepared the draft
of Anand marriage Act, which was presented by Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia before the Punjab Legislative Concil, and was passed after discussion. It became an Act on October 22, 1909 A.D inspite opposition of the Arya Samaji Hindus, Santani Sikhs, Mahants and Pujaris.

* Getting of Kirpan (Sword) legal

As a result of assertions of the Sikhs, the Punjab Government exempted Kirpan from within the perview of the Arms Act in 1914. Wearing of Kirpan was allowed to cover other parts of British India in 1917 and the Sikh soldiers in 1920.

* Getting Jhatka meat (Sikh way of slaughtering animals for meat) legalized:

The religious boundry marking involved fixing the proper method of animal slaughter. Muslims upto late 19th century were major puveyors of meat in Punjab. They slaughtered animals by Halal (Kosher) method, which requires that the throat be slit and blood drained while the animal is still alive. According to meat eating Singh’s (Sikhs), the proper method was Jhatka slaughter, in which the animal’s head is chopped by a single sword stroke. Under the revivalist Singh’s this tradition emerged as an important definition of identity. The British officials recognized this as a potential issue for Muslim Sikh conflict in Punjab and started granting licences for Jhatka meat shops in Sikh dominated areas.

* Separate Sikh electrolate:

The Montague-Chelmsford committee on Indian Constitutional reforms in July 1918 accepted the Sikh demand for separate representation in the process giving an effective recognition to their independent political identity. The franchise committee conceded, ‘a
separate electrolate and separate constituencies for Sikhs’. This established an independent political entity of the Sikhs. Provincial autonomy was introduced by the British in Punjab in 1935 under which elections were held in 1937 after Montague-Chelmsford reforms. The total 175 seats of Punjab legislative assembly were communally divided among the Muslims, Hindus and the Sikhs.

* By establishing Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC):

The Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925 placed the entire control and management of all historical Sikh shrines under the elected body of the Sikhs, SGPC. The Act accentuated a legalized “separate entity of the Sikh and Hindu shrines”. The intervention of the Hindus through Mahants and Pujaris in the Gurdwars was legally put to an end. The bill defined a Sikh who made declaration, “I solemnly affirm that I am a Sikh, that I believe in Guru Granth Sahib, the ten Gurus and I have no other religion” Hence in the process the Sikhs clarified and delimited their own religious and distinct cultural identity. The parameters of distinct cultural identity of the Sikhs were laid down by way of defining Sikhism as distinct religion, which did not have philosophical and historical links with Hinduism. “Sikh Rehat Maryada” (Sikh religious code of conduct) was evolved on the basis of monotheism and Khalsa traditions.

To summarize in early twentieth century, the Sikhs could legally and legitimately claim to have their distinct religion, language, history, historical shrines, a large number of educational institutions and press. Guru Granth Sahib and Khalsa traditions occupied the central position on the pattern of ceremonies, customs and Rehat. Thus in the process the Sikhs clarified, refined and delimited their own religious identity.

The SGPC became a sort of Parliament of the Sikhs. The
income from Gurdwaras gave it financial sustenance. Disbursement of income in the management of shrines, patronage in the appointment of hundreds of Granthis, sewadars (shrine servant), teachers for schools and colleges which were built, arrangements for training of Granthis for the missionary activity outside Punjab, all made SGPC a government within the government.

After its constitution the SGPC constituted a religious committee at Akal Takhat Amritsar, which finalized the draft of “The Sikh Rahat Maryada” (The Sikh religious code of conduct), which was published in a booklet form in 1945 A.D, by the Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Amritsar for compliance by the Sikh nation.

* **By adopting separate Sikh Calendar:** On the eve of 300th year anniversary of the birthday of the Khalsa in 1999 A.D, the SGPC discarded the Lunar Hindu Bikrami Calendar and adopted its own Nanak Shahi Calendar based on the length of tropical (solar) year.
Chapter 7

Religion and character in Sikhism

Ethics of Sikhism

Maintenance of ethical (moral) standards and conduct is an integral part of Sikhism. The holy book of Sikhism, Guru Granth Sahib says:

* "Sachh oray sabh ko oper sach aachar i.e., Although truth is highest virtue, but higher still is truthful living (GGS, p.62).

The rules of conduct in Sikhism are very simple and salutary, which leave the followers work out their social consciousness themselves:

* "Gur satgur ka jo Sikh akhaa-ay so bhal-kay uth har Naam dhia-vay, Udam kar-ay bhal-kay parbhaati isnaan ka-ray Amritsar naha-vay, Updes Guru har har japu japay sab kilvikh paap dokh leh javay, Phir charay divas gurbani gavay behndiaan uthdiaan har naam dhiavay. Jo saas giraas dhia-ay mera har har so Gur-Sikh Gur mane bha-
vay. Jis no dyal hovey mera sooami tis Gur-Sikh Gur updes
sunavay, Jan Nanak dhoor mangey tis Gur-Sikh kee jo aap
japay avroh naam japaaavai—He who calls himself, Sikh of
the Guru should rise early and meditate on God’s Name. He
should make efforts, take bath early in the morning and have
ablution in the tank of Nectar (Gurbani). By contemplating
Lord’s Name under Guru’s guidance, all his sins, misdeeds and
accusations are wiped off. Afterwards, at sunrise, he sings
Guru’s hymns and whilst sitting or standing, he meditates on
God’s Name. A Gur-Sikh, who with every breath and morsel
contemplates over my Lord God, he becomes pleasing to Guru’s
mind. He unto whom my Master becomes merciful, to that Gur-
Sikh, the Guru imparts His teaching. Servant Nanak asks for the
dust of the feet of that Gur-Sikh, who himself contemplates on
God’s Name and makes others contemplate thereon (GGS,
p.305-6).

* “हिंदू तुर्क काउँ रफीजी इमाम सफी मनस की जात सबह की पहचान
को।” —Treat all mankind alike irrespective of their
being Hindus or Muslims or others (Akal Ustat—Guru Gobind
Singh).

* “ेकाल नैन एकॉ रान, एकॉ देह एकॉ बान, क्खाक बाय, आताश अू बाब बै लूकयूँ
चै। अल्लज, अभेक मेहां पुराण अू वुलत कुंकै। एकाल नैन एकॉ रान जी तस्कूँ धै।” —
Ekay nain ekay kaan, ekay deh ekay baan, khaak baad, aatash au aab ko rlaoo hai, Allah abhekh soee, Puraaan au
Quaraan soee Ek hee saroop sabhay ek hee bnaoo haiy” (Guru
Gobind Singh). i.e, all men have same eyes, ears, body and
figure made out of the mixture of earth, air, fire and water. The
Abhekh (of the Hindus) and the Allah (of the Muslims) are one
and the same, the Quran and the Purans are His (Praise). They
are allof the same pattern; the one Lord has made them (Akal
Glimpses of Sikhism (175)

* देख धर्म देखने के तर परिज्ञात होइं भें भें भानुवाली—Ek pita ekas kay ham barik toon mera gurhaee—We are all children of the One God and He is our common father. (GGS, p.611)

* “अल भार दिय शिख मधुबन लेगिए। राहम रघु भाद्रचार निर्दिष्ट।—Ghaal kha-ay kichh hathon de, Nanak rah pachhanay se-e—He who eats what he earns by his earnest labour and from his hand gives something in charity, Nanak says, he alone knows the true way of life” (Ibid, p.1245).

* The Guru says that the food, clothes and transportation which cause pain to body and bring evil thought to mind should be avoided. There is no taboo regarding eatables, clothes and means of transportation according to Guru Nanak (Ibid, Sri Rag, p.16-17):

  बाबार दुई भानी भ्रषण। निहु धैर्य उन धोनीन्य भर भरि सरलिन विलिय।—Baabaa hor khaanaa khusee khuaa, Jit khaaday tan peerheeyai mann meh chaleh vikaar. 1. rahaao.----,

  बाबार दुई पैंतो भानी भ्रषण। निहु धैर्य उन धोनीन्य भर भरि सरलिन विलिय।—Baaba hor painan khusee khar, Jit paidhay tan peerheeyai mann meh chaleh vikaar. 1., rahaao.

  बाबार दुई चरंना भानी भ्रषण। निहु धैर्य उन धोनीन्य भर भरि सरलिन विलिय।—Baabaa hor charhnaa khusee khuaar, Jit charchiay tan peerheeyai mann meh chaleh vikaar .1. ---- (Ibid, p.16,17)

* निहु धैर्य भरि सरलिन विलिय दुई लिचिय आपि। अििय चहलिया न पराटी धामना पश्चि आपि। --जूठा भरि भूलि न पौशिया से बा पहूँ देंगिया।—Jit peetay mat door ho-ay barl pavey vich aa-ay----- Jhootha madh mool na peechee jey ka paar vasa-ay—By drinking which intellect departs, madness enters the brain, man does not distinguish between mine and thine and is pushed away by the Master----Do not thou drink at all such false wine as far as you
Glimpses of Sikhism (176)

* Alp Ahaar Sulp See Nindra daya chhima tan pareet-Eat little, sleep little; practice mercy and forgiveness (Shabad Hazare, Guru Gobind Singh).

* Adhik Suvad Rog Adhikai, Bin Gur Sehaj Na Paia—The more men enjoy, more maladies come. Without Guru’s guidance peace is not obtained. (GGS M1, p.1255).

* Phit ihaiva jeeviya jit kha-ay vadhaia pait. —Accursed is such a life, wherein man swells his belly by eating.” (Ibid, p.790).

* Aap gavaa-ay sewa kar-ay taan kichh paa-ay maan—If one effaces one’s self-conceit and performs service, he, then obtains some honour. ” (ibid, p.474).

* Jaalo aisee reet jit mein piara veesray, Nanak sai bhali pareet jit sahib seti pat rahay. Put away the custom that makes you forget the Loved One. (GGS, Ml, p.590).

* Saach kahon sun leho sabay jin prem kio tin he prabh paio- Everybody listen carefully, I say nothing but truth, only those who practice love attain union with the eternal Lord (Guru Gobind Singh).

* Jit seviay sukh pait so sahib sada samaliay, Jit keeta paiay aapna saa ghaal buri kio ghaaliay i.e.; ” Ever meditate on that Lord by serving whom peace is obtained. Why doest thou do such evil deeds by which thou shalt have to suffer? (GGS, Asa M1, p.474)

* Daltoo siri koi hoi agr lond de kambey deetha siri Mhur sahivbhia bhahri siri de
Farida jinni kameen nahin gun tay kamray veesar. Mat sharminda cheevahhee sain day darbar—Farid, the deeds which do not bring you any merit, leave those deeds lest you be put to shame at the Lord’s Court. (Ibid, p.1381).

* अथर तत्त्व अपने अथर अथर अपने अथर—Aapan hathe aapnaa aapay he kaaj savareeai—We should manage our affairs with our own hands (GGS, p.474).

* मेंग बरद तैसे तिमाही तिम बेंद बापुह सुवाही—Sewa kart ho-ay nihkaami tis ko hot praapat swami”—He who serves without desire for compensation attains the Lord. (GGS, p.286)

* सच वर्त, सन्तोक तीरथ, गिया, ध्यान भक्ति, दया देवता, क्षिति जपमाली, ते मानस पर्द्वान—They who make truth, their fasting, contentment their pilgrimage, enlightenment and meditation their ablution, compassion their deity and forgiveness their rosary, the most sublime are those persons” (Ibid, Var Sarang, M1, p.1245).

* देव न बापु देव बापु अथर अथर अथर—Ros na kahoo sang karo aapan aap beechaar. Ho-ay nimana jag roho, Nanak nadrin paar—Do not harbour grievance against any one, contemplate on thy own-self. Abide with humility in the world. Thus Nanak says, through the God, thou shall be delivered. (Ibid, Gauri M5, p.259).

* मितह नीव ज्योत ज्योत ज्योत ज्योत—Mithat neeve Nanaka gun changiaeea tat. —Nanak says, sweetness and humility is the essence of merits and virtues. (Ibid, p.470).
Je lory changa apna, kar punho neech sadaaiay—If thou desirest thy good, O man perform virtuous deeds and be humble.” (Ibid, Var Asa, p.465).

Nanak so prabh simree-ay tis dehi ko paal—Nanak says, ‘cherish thou body so that it contemplates over the Lord” (Ibid, Rag Bihagra, M5, p.554).

Mann apnay to buraa mitanaa pekh-ay sagal sarishat saajna—He who effaces malice from his heart, sees the whole world as his friend (Ibid, p.266).

Udam karaindian jeeo toon kamawndian sukh bhunch, Dhiaindian toon Prabhu mil Nanak, utri chint—O myself, by making an effort for the Name, thou shalt live and by practicing it, thou shalt enjoy peace. By meditating on the Name, Nanak says, thou shalt meet the Lord and thy anxiety shall vanish. (Ibid, p.522).

Mithat neevee Nanaka gun changiaiyan tatu—Nanak says, sweetness and humility is the essence of merits and virtues (Ibid, p.470).

If a thing is weighed in a balance, the side which descends, that is heavier. (Ibid, p.470).


Where one is bound to loose by utterance, it is good to keep mum there. (GGS, p.149).
* मंदा बनेगा तुम अपने पार अक्षु केवल टेके सुरक्षित। मूर्ख होकर न दूर जाओ—Mandaa kisai na aakhiai par akhar eho bujheai. Moorakh naall na lujheai.—Do not call any one bad, realize this by reading these words. Do not enter into arguments with a fool. (GG, p.473).

* भ्रम भयं भये रेषी मित्र अभिज्ञ प्रेमकीसे—Aisa kam mool na keechay jit ant pachhotai-ay—Do not ever do such a deed for which thou may have to repent in the end. (Ibid, p.918).

* तुम तुम तुम तुम तुम तुम—Par ka bura na rakho cheet tum ko dukh nahin bhai meet—O brother and friend, have no evil, for another, in your mind, then no trouble shall befall thee. (Ibid Assa, M5, p.386).

* बाद बिबाद कहने कमाल राम राम सीतार विशं—Baad bibad kahon sion na keejay, rasna Ram rasain peeray—Enter not into discussion and argument with anyone, with thy tongue quaff thou the Lord’s elixer. (Ibid, Bhairon Namdev, p.1164).

* साजी क्रेज़ गुनेह केरी चोड़ अवगुन चाली—Saajh kreejay guneh keri chhod avgun chali-ay—Let us form partnership with merits, abandon demerits and walk the Lord’s way (Ibid, p.766).

* फरीदा जिनी कम्यून नाहिं गुंट ते सबी हामिंदे भक्ति ए एकात्मी—Farida Jinni kammien nahin gun tay kamray visaar. Mat sharminda theeve-ee sain day darbar—Farid the deeds which do not bring you any merit, leave those deeds lest you be put to shame at the Lord’s Court (Ibid, p.1381).

* नानां धर्मसमय समय समय समय समय लामि—Hakk praiya Nanaka os, soor os gai. Gur Peer hama taa bhahe je murdar na kha-ay—Nanak says, to grab what is another’s is like a swine for him (Musalian) and cow for him (Hindu). Guru and prophet shall stand surety only then, if man does not eat carrion. (Ibid, p.141).
Is jar kaaran ghani vigutti in jar ghani khaiae, papaa baijohin hovay nahn mooin saath na jae—For wealth many are ruined and it has disgraced many. Without misdeeds it is not amassed and it does not go with the dead. (Ibid p.417).

Bin santokh nahi ko-ou rajay—Without contentment no one is sated (Ibid, p.279).

Je ratt laggay kapray jama hoay paleet, jo ratt peevah maansa tin kio nirmal cheet—If clothes stained with blood, the garment gets polluted then those, who suck the blood of human beings, how can their mind be pure? (Ibid, p.140)

The scholar, who habours greed, avarice and pride, is to be called a fool (Ibid, p.140).

Why call her bad, from whom are born the kings? (Ibid, p.473).

The Lord does not ask the mortals caste and birth so you find out the Lord’s True Home. That alone is man’s caste and that his glory, as are the deeds which he does (Ibid, p.1330).

Know that Divine Light is within all, do not inquire the caste. There is no caste in the next world. (Ibid, Asa M1, p.349).
Sexual morality and Sikhism

Morality and ethics are the foundation of Sikhism. Sikhism expects ideal moral and social behaviour. Adultery is a bajjar Kurehat (major prohibition) in Sikh religious code of conduct (Sikh rehat maryada / Sikh dharm achaar shastar). An initiated (Amritdhari Sikh) found guilty of having extra-marital relationship looses his / her membership among the Khalsa and he has to submit himself before the Sangat, confess his / her guilt, accept tankhah (religious punishment) and get re-initiated. Gurbani gives very clear instructions in this regard:

* धन धन धन धन धन सिंह धन, सिंह धन-Par dhan, par dara, par ninda in sion pareet nivar—Other’s wealth, other’s woman, other’s slander, thou discard thy craving for these.” (Ibid, Asa M5, p.379).
* Jaisay sang bisier sio-Nanak naam chardi kola teray bhanay sarbat da bhala.
hai ray, taisay he ih par greh—As is the companionship of a venomous serpent so is ravishing of another’s wife. (Ibid, p.403)

* लेख अचानक छैलेज़ में आते दैले पीढ़ी सादा—Dekh praian changian maawan dhian bhena jaan. Seeing beautiful women of others, a Gursikh should treat and behave towards them as mothers, sisters and daughters. (Bhai Gurdas Var, 29/11)

* भज यह भज लाग भज जली—Par dhan par daaraa par haree taa kai nikat bas-ay narharee—The Lord abides close to the person who does not covet another person’s wealth and woman. (GGS, p.1163)

* देख प्राइन खंगियां मावन धियां भेनी—Par dhan par naaree rut nindaa bikh khaaee dukh paaeeiaa. Being attached to another person’s woman or riches and slandering others are like poison, where by one suffers pain. (GGS, p.1255).

* बन्ता च्होड़ बन्द नाड़ मार लागी—Bantaa chhod bad nadar par naaree. Ves na paaeeai maha dukhiaaree.—If one abandones one’s own wife (by becoming mendicant) and then casts evil eyes upon another person’s wife, one cannot attain Lord by merely religious garb and becomes very miserable. (GGS, p.1348).

* रे तह बनाह भज बिजु लंगी—Ray nur kaa-ay par grihee jaa-ay. Kuchal kathor kaam gardhab tum nahe sunio dharma rai—O man! Why do you go to another person’s home (to entice his wife)? O filthy heartless and lustful donkey! Have you not heard of justice of God? (GGS, p.1001).

* भज डिग्री बच्चा लंगी मेठी उं लागी—Par treea raavan jaahe sayee taa laajeeah.—They who entice another person’s woman have to suffer shame. (GGS, p.1362).

Glimpses of Sikhism (182)
You ravish another person’s woman behind closed doors and many curtains (thinking that no one would see you). However when God’s agents (who see all your actions) call for your accounts, then who will hide your sins.

(GGS, p.616).

Don’t covet other person’s wife (behold with bad intentions). Only then you are a good husband.

Nanak the wife who loves another man (and not her husband) wails herself to death

(GGS, p.1280).

An (unchaste) widow gives her body to a stranger; she allows her mind to be controlled by others for lust or money, but without her husband, she is never satisfied.

(GGS, p.226)

A person should be faithful to one woman (His wife) and treat other women as his daughters or sisters.

(Bhai Gurdas, Var 6, Pauri 8).

I am sacrifice unto him who does not near other woman with evil intentions.

(Bhai Gurdas, Var12, Pauri 4).

Glimpses of Sikhism (183)
If a thief praises one, his mind is not pleased. If a thief reviles him then even an iota of his honour is not detracted. No one takes the responsibility of a thief. What a thief does, how can that be good? (GGS, p.662).

O brother and friend, have no evil, for another, in your mind, then no trouble shall befall thee. (GGS, p.386).

Farid do thou good in return for evil and harbour no wrath in your mind. Your body shall not be infested with with maladies and you shall obtain everything (GGS, p.1382).

Those, who taking bribe, give false evidence, the noose of foul-thinking is put around their neck. (GGS, p.1032).

Of filthy mind are they, within whom is avarice. They attach filth to others as well. By doing dirty deeds, one suffers pain. By doing dirty deeds, one suffers pain. The false ones deal in nothing but falsehood. By telling lies thy come to grief. (GGS, p.1062).

Gurmat teaches and preaches the practice of morality and honesty in one’s life and this distinguishes it from the practitioners of ritualism only.
Chapter 8

The Hindu caste system and its rejection in Sikhism

The term Jatee (caste) is Indian in origin and its mention in the Indian literature for the first time is found in the Aryan scripture Rig Veda. It came into practice after the arrival of Aryans in India and the creation of ‘Vedas’. It describes the origin of the four Varnas, or the caste groups, through the symbolic sacrifice of Purusha, the Primeval Man, from whose head rose the Brahmans, from arms the Kashatriyas, from thighs the Vaishyas and from his feet the Shudras.

The Brahmanical religion /Sanatan Dharma now popularly called Hinduism is also known as Varn Ashram Dharma. Varn in Sanskrit (Brahmanical language) means colour which form the basis of Jatee or the caste system in the Brahmanical religion. The Aryans divided the society on the basis of the colour of the skin. A passage in Mahabharta reads, “Brahmans are fair, Kashatryas are reddish, Vaishyas are yellowish and Shudras are black”. The Brahms (having knowledge of Brahma / God) became scholars and priests, Kashatriyas were designated as warriors, the Vaishyas as the traders and the non-Aryans were called Shudras and designated as workers, artisans, tillers of soil and people who raised cattle. To begin with the term was applied to professional groups but gradually it became hereditary.

Presently in India the term jatee is applied to social groups, which rank in a hierarchic order within which there is a minimal of
social mobility. It refers to the division of Indian society. Its use in the Indian society became extensively prevalent during the time of Manu, the Hindu law-giver, when he wrote his Manu Simriti around 600-200 B.C. Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism says, “बेद की पुत्री सिम्री बहाई संकल जेरी लेई है आये”—Bed kee putree simriti bhai sankal jevree lai hai aae i.e; “Simriti is the daughter of the Vedas, she has brought chain and rope for men” (GGS, p 329). The caste system has been rightly described as Brahmanical Hinduism, for it was the Brahmans who moulded this pattern of social order to suit their own ends.

The caste system forms the bedrock of the Brahmanical religion i.e, Sanatan Dharma / Varn Ashram Dharma, now called Hinduism. Varn means caste (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishiya and Shudra) and Ashram means stages of life-- (Brahm charya ashram, Grahist ashram, Sanyas ashram and Vaanprast ashram). The people who were engaged in the professions of scavenging, cremations and allied professions were kept out of the pale of the caste system and were called Chandaal / Ashoot (untouchables). Brahmans, the interpreters of the tradition are to be found in all locations literally every village, certainly at every point of dispensation of power. They exercise their dominance through rules, rituals and rigmarole. They propagated their own doctrine, which says, “ब्राह्मण यह है जिसका रूप गुण न हो ताही जाने ना मूल्य रहेंगे” i.e, The Brahman should be worshipped even if he is devoid of any knowledge or merits / virtues. A Shudra should be shunned even if he is full of knowledge and merits / virtues”. The Shudras were neither entitled to education nor could become rich, because a Shudra who makes money is distressing to the Brahman.

The caste system prevented development of a society based on values of human freedom and equality for common class interests. Guru Nanak (1469-1539) founded Sikhism at the fag end of the 15th
century. He stepped beyond the frontier in defiance of the 3000 years old caste rules of Hinduism. He attacked directly on caste system, “चतुर नाती चतुर नाती॥ ममल लीिा रित्य बखली॥--Phakar jaatee phakar naao. Sabhna jeeaa ika chhaao i.e. False is the distinction of caste and status. Everybody has equal protection of God” (GGS, p.83). He rejected distinction between men on the basis of birth and caste. He emphasized the idea of brother-hood and equality of man. He further clarified that individual could achieve a higher status by practicing righteous behaviour. It did not matter which caste or economic status he came from. He stressed upon the achievement of status by a person on the basis of his deeds, “सति सति सति यु यु यु सति यु सति यु सति। ना सति मा भैद तै लेते लाते कभारी॥ Jaat janam nah poochheaoi sach ghar leho bata-ay. Sa jaat sa pat hai jehay karam kama-ay. i.e; The Lord does not ask the mortals caste and birth in His True Home, only actions performed are taken into consideration (GGS, p.1330). He declared, “Oneness of God and one-ness of man—眼iverse धिप्र धिप्र वे दम यकिंड्र। He associated himself with the weaker sections of the society, “सीिा अंगि लीिा सीिा लीिा सीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा लीिा।--Neechaan under neech jaat neechaan hoon at neech. Nanak tin ke sang saath wadiaan sio kia rees i.e, “Nanak seeks the company of those, who are low caste among the low, infact, the lowest of the low and has no desire to compete with the high” (GGS, p.15). His mission was carried forwards by his nine successors. Sikh Gurus powerfully attacked the Hindu caste system and successfully disengaged their followers from it. Sikhism became established at the end of about two centuries to work its way in the world, when it was formally consecrated by the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh through Sikh baptismal ceremony- Khanday batay Dee Pahul, on the Vaisakhi day, 1699AD; at Anandpur Sahib in the Punjab. On this day he declared caste a taboo in the order of the Khalsa (Initiated--Baptized) Sikhs / Sikhism. The
theory of separate duties for different castes was replaced by the same ethical and religious duties for all. Therefore, the fundamental equality of all men was ensured by free and voluntary admission into the order of the Khalsa / Sikhism.

Sikhism believes in universal brotherhood, egalitarian society and anti-casteism is one of its basic distinguishing features. The Holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib is opposed to any discrimination in human society. It strongly condemns the age old caste system, the social classification in Hindu society, and the disdain for the poor who were called Shudras and ashoots. Guru Nanak found faults with that ideology saying:

* "कव बलती बैंती अधि रुप पुरुं वीरुं / देव देह कैंदा है है देह देह शक्ति मुक्तअरुण। देव अरुण नाटी नित्मी देवभ कुड़े मंगलुं। -Katha kahanee Bedi aane paap pun beechaar. De de laina lai lai deena narak surag avatar. Utam madham jaatee jinsee bharm bhavai sansaar i.e, “The Vedas have brought forth legends and tales and they expound sin and virtue. What one gives gratis, he receives and what he receives gratis, he gives. According to their deeds they are born in hell or heaven. The world caught in delusion strays in doubt of high and low, castes and classes”. The Vedas make a wrong distinction of caste (GGS, p.1243).

* बहत नाटी बहत नाटी। सरकर तीर्थ फिर बनिए।--Phakar jaatee phakar naao. Sabhna jeeaa ika chhaao i.e False is the distinction of caste and status. Everybody has equal protection of God. (GGS, p.83).

* नाटी ता किसुं न वलीअत्त बैंती। ब्रह्म बिंदे में ब्रह्मबंद बैंती।--Jaat ka garb na kareeh koee. Braham binday so Brahman hooe i.e; No one should be proud of his caste. He alone is Brahman who knows his God. (GGS, p.1127).

* “हेम धिका हेमम दें तम शक्ति न हेम हुं तम उल्लुं।-Ek pita ekas ke ham

Glimpses of Sikhism (188)
Glimpses of Sikhism (189)

**barik toon mera gurhaee** i.e; The One Lord is the father of all and we are children of the One Lord. Thou O Lord, art our Guru—care taker” (GGS, p.611).

* साधय तन्द्र मे पुरुष तन्त्र आधी तन्द्र मे है—i.e, “Janoh joti, na poochhoh jaati, aagay jati na haiy”—i.e, “Know that Divine Light is within all, do not inquire the caste. There is no caste in the next world.” (Ibid, Asa Ml, p.349).

* आधी मांद बुध त नाड़ी—Aagay, jaati roop na ja-ay. Teha hovay, jehay karam kama-ay—i.e, ‘Hereafter caste and beauty does not go with man. As are the deeds done by a person, so shall he be judged there (Ibid, Asa M3, p.363).

Guru Nanak dissociated caste from birth and said that the caste of a person should be associated with the person’s deeds and not his birth:

* मा मांदिः मा धार तै तेठे समह कार्याती—Sa Jaat sa pat hai jehay karam kamai—“One’s deeds proclaim one's caste and respect” (Ibid, p.1330).

Sikh Gurus openly declare that God is not in the grip of the Brahmans:

* नाम धीरी, कथीर सुधरण पुरूष ते नाँद धर्मी। Naamaa chheebaa Kabir jolahaan pooran gur tay gat paaee i.e, “Namdev the caloco-printer and Kabir the weaver, obtained salvation from the perfect Guru” (GGS, p.67).

* नांदिं जा जात्य त जय भूलक जात्य। जा धीर जा ते सत्य जय सिता रिक्त्य।-Jaat ka garbh na kar moorakh gawara is garb te chalab bahut vikaraan” (Ibid, p.1128)-“O, stupid fool do not take pride in grand caste, it leads to great conflicts”

* छाहे छाहे आधे मल्ल वेची। तुम्ह लिंग ते मल्ल दिभु तेची।-Chaaray varan aakhay sabh koe. Brahm bind tay sabh opat hoee.

Glimpses of Sikhism (189)
i.e., “Everyone says, there are four castes. But they all are created from the Lord’s seed’s, essence”.

Kabir during his discussion with Brahmins inquires from them, “जानकर हरम भि वज्र जय नजी। बुध विलेष वे भर हेघर शंक। 1। ब्रह्म बिज वेद तरुण अड़थ एहँ। 1। ब्रह्मी ने लैं ज्यूहवाट ज्यूहवाट निहिताण। उत्ति नार वाट लाये ननी आशिवाण। 2। ब्रह्म वट शुगाद जय वट शुग। 1। ब्रह्म वेद जो हुआ वट शुग। 3। ब्रह्म वेद तम ज्यूह रीवाण। ने ज्यूहवाट ज्यूहवाट ने ज्यूहवाण। 4।—Garbh vaas meh, kul nahin jaati, brahm bind tay sabh utpaatee I III. II Kaho ray Pandit, Baman kab kay hoay, Baman keh keh janam mat khoay / III.II Rahao / Jao toon Brahmin Brahmani jaaiya, tao aan baat, kahay nahin aiya, Tum kat Brahmin, ham kat sood, ham kat lahoo, tum kat doodh i.e., “Dwelling in the womb, the mortal has no lineage and caste. From the seed of the Lord, all have sprung. 1. Say, O Pundit, since when hast thou been a Brahmin? Waste not thy life by repeatedly calling thyself a Brahmin. 1. Pause. If thou art a Brahmin, born of a Brahmani mother, then, why hast thou not come by some other way? 2. How art thou a Brahman and how am I of low caste? How am I of blood and how thou art of milk? 3. Kabir says, only he, who contemplates over the Lord, is said to be a Brahmin among us”. 4. (GGS, p.324).

Taking the image of the potter’s wheel Guru has compared the different kinds of people to vessels of many types and patterns, but all made of same clay:

* माती देख माती चाँद बाँध माती निपाकलाँ देव।—Maati ek anek bhaant kar saaji sirjanhaarai” i.e, Clay is the same but the Creator has shaped it in innumerable forms (Ibid, p.1350).

* माती देख माती संसारप। बाँध चाँद बाँध माती दुमन।—Maatee ek sagal sansaaraa. Bahu bidh bhaande gharai kumaraa i.e; “The
whole world is made out of one clay. But the Potter has fashioned it into vessels of numerous forms” (GGS, p.1128).

* अबल अल्लाह नूर उपाई कुद्रट कय सब्ब बन्दय, एक नूर तय सब्ब ज़ाग उपजिया कयन बहलय कयन मनदय i.e, “God first created Light, and then by His omnipotence, made all the mortals. From one Light has arisen entire universe. Then who is good and who is bad?” GGS, p. 1349-50).

Finally it is held by the Guru that the caste is no consideration in the spiritual realization that human beings of lower caste need not wait to be born in the next higher class for the attainment of deliverance:

* ब्रह्मन खात्री सूड वैस चार वर्ण चार अश्रम हाईह जो हर धिखवाई सो पर्द्हाअन i.e, “There are four castes Brahmin, Khatri, Shudra and Vaishya and four stages of life. Out of these, whoever meditates on the Lord is superior”. (GGS, p.861).

* सब्ब मह जोत जोत हय सोई, बिस्मिल्लाह रब्ब राफ्त चार अश्रम हाईह i.e; Anyone, of caste or no caste, who contemplates on God, becomes a blessed devotee of God. (GGS, p.1178).

* सब्ब मह जोत जोत हय सोई, बिस्मिल्लाह रब्ब राफ्त चार अश्रम हाईह i.e; There is light in every heart and that is Thy light which illuminates every one (GGS, p.13).

* जात जात कोई प्रभ धिखावई साब्ब पोरे मानास तिन्छहाइ i.e; Anyone, of caste or no caste, who contemplates on God, becomes a blessed devotee of God. (GGS, p.1178).
sambhao naa tis bhao na bharmaa i.e; “His caste is castelessness. He is incarnated not, He is Self-illuminated and without fear and doubt” (GGS, p.597)

The teachings of the Gurus, the Sikhism, verily destroy the superstitions (doubt) of caste, race and lineage:

* लाड़ लाड़ वृह वर्ण धृप दच्चा चूराड़ मवारिंद तीलमधी।—Jaat barn kul seh sa chooka gurmat sabad beecharee i.e, “By contemplating the Name through Guru’s teaching, one is rid of caste, race, lineage and doubt” (GGS, p.1198).
* अंधी बृहार्ष मुख धृप सुप्तड़ मचः बक्का मारिंद।जात धृप वृह वर्ण धृप जात धृप जात।—Khatri Brahmin Sood Vais updes chauh varna kao sanjha. Gurmukh Naam japai udhrai so kal meh ghat ghat Nanak maajha.—“For the four castes of warriors, priests, farmers and menials, there is one common spiritual message. He who under Guru’s guidance utters the Name of God, who abides in all hearts, Nanak says, is saved in the Dark-age” (GGS, p.747-48).
* लाड़ अलाड़ सब लाड़ वृह वृह वृह जात वृह वृह।Jaat ajaat japai jan koe, jo jaapai tis kee gat ho-ay. i.e; “Any of high, low or no caste may contemplate God, whoever meditates on Him, he is emancipated” (GGS, p.1150).
* मैं सांस्कृतिक संसारिणे जिसे र जिसरण वर्ण तीर्थी।—Sabhai saajheewal sadain too kisay na disahay bahra jeeo i.e. “All are partakers of your grace. You are not alien to anyone” (GGS, p.97).
* लाड़ लाड़ वृह वृह वृह वृह वृह वृह। लाड़ लाड़ लाड़ लाड़ लाड़ लाड़। Jaat janam nah poothheewi sach ghar leho bta-ay. Sa jaat sa pat hai jehay karam kama-ay. i.e; The Lord does not ask the mortals caste and birth in His True Home, only actions performed are taken into consideration (GGS, p. 1330).
The Guru thus refuses to accredit the caste institution in social ethics and further denies God having favoured a few by bringing them out from the higher parts of the body and the Shudras from the feet of the Primeval man.

This was a distinct blow to the social ideology of Varn Ashram Dharma (Hinduism), which gave scriptural sanction for the hierarchical caste system.

Sikhism not only gave every one right to be a warrior, but it also gave everyone right to be priest. Under the caste hierarchy, the workers were looked upon with disrespect and those whom they served were considered honourable. The elimination of caste system by Guru Nanak established the equality of man and dignity of labour.
Sikhism took practical steps to eradicate the caste system:

* Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism chose Bhai Mardana, a Muslim as his first lifelong companion. He founded the basic institutions of Sikhism based on equality:
  
  Sangat-Praying as equals.
  Pangat-Sitting in a row as equals.
  Langar-Eating cooked food as equals.

* 2nd Nanak, Guru Angad Dev created equality in learning. He named the script for Punjabi language introduced by Guru Nanak, as Gurmukhi. After giving it form and finish he produced booklets of alphabets (Baal updesh-बाल उपदेश) of the Punjabi language and made copies of the hymns of Guru Nanak and distributed them among the Sikh centers for teaching to the common mass of the people in the Punjab to increase the number of the literates there. Thus he broke the monopoly of the Brahmin over learning, who boasted of having the knowledge of Sanskrit, which was neither spoken nor understood by the common mass of the people in the Punjab.

* 3rd Nanak, Guru Amar Dass got Baoli dug at Goindwal, where people had to go down the steps to reach water and fill their buckets as equals. Before this the Shudras were not allowed to draw water from the community wells.

* 4th Nanak, Guru Ram Dass got Amrit-sarovar (Amrit-sar) dug for bathing in the same water as equals.

* 5th Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev built--Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) with four doors denoting that it was open to all the four castes-Brahmins, Kashatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, to all four religions in India-Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and
Sikhism, and to all the people of the world from all directions- 
North, South, East and west. He edited Aad Granth (Guru 
Granth Sahib) the holy Sikh scripture, which is in itself an 
example of casteless-ness. In addition to the hymns of the Sikh 
Gurus contains hymns of holy men of other religions and different 
castes including the Shudras.

* **9th Nanak**, Guru Teg Bahadur himself strictly monotheist 
sacrificed his life to defend the faith of Idolatrous Hindus.

* **10th Nanak**, Guru Gobind Singh, gave Sikhism, the Naas 
doctrine: Kul Naas, (deliverance from shams of caste system by 
birth), Dharam Naas (deliverence from previous religious 
practices), Karam Naas (deliverence from ritualism); Bharam 
Naas (deliverence from all the superstitions), Kirt Naas 
(deliverence from previous occupation) to signify a casteless 
society. The Panj Piaras, who received Pahul (Sikh Baptism) 
from Guru Gobind Singh were:

  Bhai Daya Ram a Khatri from Lahore
  Bhai Dharam Dass, a Jat of Delhi
  Bhai Mohkam Chand, a washer man from Dwarka
  Bhai Sahib Chand, a barber from Bidar
  Bhai Himmat Chand, a water-carrier of Jagan Nath.

Pahul (Sikh baptism) symbolizes a rebirth, by which the initiated 
are considered as having freed themselves of their previous family 
origon-caste or lineage (Kulnash) to become the family of Gobind 
Singh; of having of having renounced their earlier creeds-communal 
outlook (Dharamnash) for the creed of Khalsa; of having renounced 
their previous occupations or professions (Kirtnash) for that of 
soldering; of having given up superstition (Bharamnash); of having 
given up all rituals (Karamnash) and develop catholicity and

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (195)
universality of outlook; “Maanas kee jaat sabhay ekay pechanbo-Treat all mankind alike” (Guru Gobind Singh).

* In order to establish equality Guru Gobind Singh at the formal consecration of Sikhism on the Vaisakhi day 1699; instructed the followers of Sikhism to drop their last names, which in India indicate one's caste and take the last common name 'Singh' for males and ‘Kaur’ for females to show their acceptance of equality of all people.

Sikhism does not believe in classification of its followers on the basis of caste, class, clan or profession etc. The division of the Sikhs on such a basis was the creation of early writers of Sikhism who were mostly literate Hindus especially Brahmans, some of whom perhaps had embraced Sikhism with the ulterior motive of Hinduising it through their writings as they did not wish to do away with the divisive caste system, which forms the bedrock of the Brahminism / Snatan Dharma / Varan Ashram Dharma now called Hinduism. Mentioning of caste, class, clan or profession etc, along with Sikh name in Sikhism is a social defect and does not concern Sikh religion. Anybody who mentions caste with his name therefore is not a true Sikh, but a hypocrite.
Chapter 9

Rejection of various concepts and practices of Hinduism by Sikhism

Rejection of the Hindu concept of trinity of God and its symbol Oam (ॐ) in Sikhism

Sikhism is a strictly monotheistic religion, whereas Hinduism is polytheistic and believes in the Trinity of God. The syllable ॐ is the symbol of God in Hinduism representing its Divine Trinity (Tripunda) consisting of Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the sustainer) and Shiva (the destroyer). It is used as manifesting word for God in Hinduism and is written as sign of invocation in Hindu literature both sacred and temporal and is pronounced as Om/Oam/Aum (ॐ).

Guru Nanak did not assign any particular name to the ‘Supreme Eternal Reality’ because according to him the Almighty is ineffable. He simply called the ‘Supreme Eternal Reality’, ‘Oh’ meaning, ‘He’ (God), written in Punjabi (Gurmukhi) as ્. In order to convey his stern monotheism Guru Nanak put mathematical digit one-੧ (ikk) before the open end Punjabi (Gurmukhi) alphabet oora ્, there by creating the new syllable ਓਹ. The open end of the alphabet ્ denotes infiniteness of God. Guru Nanak says, “ਓਹੀ ਉੱਅਹੀ (Oankar-i.e; God) ਔਹੀ ਸੈ ਸੀਂ ਉੱਅਹੀ-Oh ikk hai tay Beant hai”, meaning: “There is one Supreme Eternal Reality and He is infinite”, thereby rejecting the Hindu concept of Trinity of God represented by the syllable ॐ.
Gurmat holds that God is the sole Creator, Sustainer, Destroyer, Doer and indivisible. There was no partner or agent to God in the sweep of universal Infinity. Guru Nanak pronounced ਐਕ ਅੰਕਾਰ (GGS, p. 30,296, 831) and Ek Oankar also.

ਐਕ ਅੰਕਾਰ is not found written as such alone in the holy Sikh Scripture published by the supreme Sikh religious body, Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). It only forms a part of the Basic postulate, popularly, called Mool mantra of Sikhism, which defines the attributes of the ‘Supreme Eternal Reality’ i.e God. It stands for the attributes and not the name of the Almighty (God). The shortest form of Mool Mantra written as invocation in Guru Granth Sahib is: ਐਕ ਅੰਕਾਰ meaning, “There is ‘One Supreme Eternal Reality’, the infinite, enlightener and gracious”. ਐਕ ਅੰਕਾਰ is a new word i.e, ‘One’+’Oora’ with an open end and that is extended, coined by Guru Nanak to explain the ‘oneness’ and ‘Infiniteness of ‘Oh’, the Almighty, to whom no descriptive or specific name can be assigned. Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of Sikhism says:

* ਹਾਰ ਜੀੋ ਸਾਦਾ ਦਿਹਾਈ ਦੂਰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਐਕ ਅੰਕਾਰ --Har jeeo sadaa dhiaae too gurmukh ekankaar—You always remember the venerable God, through the Guru as the One and only One Lord (GGS, p.30).

* ਜਲ ਤਹਲ ਮਾਹੀਲ ਪੌਰੀਆ ਸੂਆਮੀ ਸੀਰਜ਼ਨੀਅਰ --Jal thal maaheal pooriaa suaamee sirjanhaar: Anik bhaant ho-ay pasriaa Nanak ekankaar—Lord the creator is pervasive in water, the land and the troposphere. Nanak says, in innumerable forms, the One Lord has manifested Himself. (GGS, p.296).

* ਉਨੀਆਲੂਤੂ ਤੁਲਮੂਤੂ ਉਨੀਆਲੂਤੂ ਬੈਅੰਕਰ ਲੀਂਗ ਨਿਵਾਟਿ ਬੈਅੰਕਰ --Oankaar brahma
Brahma was created through the One Lord. That Brahma cherished the One Lord in his mind. It is from the One Lord, that mountains and ages have emanated. It is the Lord who created Vedas. It is through the One Lord that world is saved. It is through the Lord that the God-conscious beings are emancipated. Listen thou the account of the Imperishable Lord, worthy of obeisance. The eternal Lord is the essence of the three worlds.

* Listen O, Pandit what rigmarole writest thou?

Practice of renunciation and Asceticism in Hinduism and its rejection in Sikhism

In religious life renunciation (Tiag—Tiag) means dissociation from worldly life (Grahistijiwan). All ancient Indian religious systems (Hinduism, Budhism and Jainism) regarded renunciation as a precondition for achieving salvation (Mukti). Sikhism denounces this concept in strong terms. It is a whole life religion and does not accept dichotomy in life, whether it is ‘spiritual and material’, ‘faith and reason’, or any other such differentiation. It involves an integral combination between spiritual and empirical life of man. It accepts
householder's life (Grahisti jiwan) as the forum of spiritual activities and growth. It does not believe the version of earlier religions that this world was a snare or at the best a mere delusion, a house of sin, a place of pain and suffering and hence an evil and release could come through complete dissociation with it. Sikhism regards this world as, “The house of God and He resides in it” i.e., “Ieh jag sachchay kee hai kothari sachchay ka vich vaas (GGS, M2, p.463). Also, “Ieh vis sansar tum dekhdhay, ih har ka roop hai, har roop nadri aiya” i.e., “This world you see is his manifestation. It is the God that you see every where” (Ibid, Ram Kali, M3, Anand). Sikhism believes in shouldering full social responsibility and rejects a life of escapeism. It denounces asceticism (sanyasa / Bhikshuhood) for achieving salvation as propagated by Hinduism, radical saints, Buddhism and Jainism. It propagates the life of a householder. Guru Nanak deprecates the Yogi who gives up the world and then is not ashamed of begging at the door of the householder. He says, “Makhatto ho-ay kai kan paraa-ay. Fakar karay hor jaat gavaa-ay. Gur peer sadaa-ay mangan jaa-ay. Taa kai mool na lgee-ay paa-ay. i.e. The person incapable of earning his living gets his ears split (turns a Nath Yogi) and becomes a mendicant. He calls himself a guru or a saint. Do not look upto him nor touch his feet (GGS, p.1245). He knows the way, who earns his living and shares his earnings with others, “Nanak satgur bhetiay poori hovay jugat, hasandia, khelandia, penandia, khavandia vichay” (Ibid, p.1245). According to Sikh thought, salvation is not incompatible with laughing, playing, dressing well and eating i.e; “Nanak Satgur bhettay poori hovay jugat, hasandia, khelandia, penandia, khavandia vichay”
hovay mukat (Ibid, p.522). Sikhism believes that one can lead a thoroughly religious life, as a part of the household, “ग्रेह बन समसार शहज सुभाष ये स्वप्नसिद्ध। ग्रेह बन समसार शहज सुभाष ये स्वप्नसिद्ध। Greh ban samsar sehaj subhaa-ay i.e. The house and the forest are alike for one who lives in poise (Ibid, p.351)”.

According to Gurbani, “इस बेहाली ग्रेह बनें शहज ग्रेह बनें। इस बेहाली ग्रेह बनें। Is bhekhay thaavah girho bhalaa jithah ko warsaa-ay i.e. “Family life is superior to the ascetic life because it is from householders that ascetics meet their needs (i.e. by begging) (Ibid, p.587), God is there in the world that we see and we have to find Him there and yet remain detached, “निष्ठा तुरंत भाव आशीर्वाद वद्वेद विकाल विहरे निष्ठा ग्रेह लेनसू। Jio jal mein kamla alipato vartey, tio vichay girhey udas i.e. As lotus remains unaffected in water, so he (householder) remains detached in his household.” (Ibid, p.949). Guru Nanak says, “सल्लाम जिवे वैश्वानर सत्तु भिली ते सीभवं आसम बनें। Nanak ghar he baithian sahu milay je neeat raas karay i.e If you put your mind on the right path then, even while seated at home, you shall Nanak says, meet with your Groom (God)” (Ibid, p.1383).

According to Sikh thought true renunciation is renunciation of evil / ego / lust, anger, greed, attachment, and pride. Only renunciation of worldy life (Grahasti jiwan) cannot lead to bliss (realization of God / salvation). The evil thought remains in mind:

* ग्रेह तज बनं जात जातिं जय भरूण जातीं ज्यं। अनजुं विकार इ देहाटीं भरूण भंज। Greh taj ban jait ay chun khai ay kanda, Ajhu bikaar na chhodaee paapi man manda i.e; Abandoning home, one may go to the forest region and pick up tubers to eat, even then the sinful and evil mind forsakes not misdeeds. (Ibid, p.855).

* बिन हाउ ताइं विभावं दवं बेहीं विघावं। Bin hau tiag kaha ko oo tiagi; without casting off egoism, how can one be a renouncer?” (Ibid, p.1140)
Of all the renunciations, the excellent renunciation is the renunciation of lust, wrath and avarice (Ibid, p.1018).

Sikhism propagates living in equipoise (Sehaj), while leading a householder’s life without falling prey to worldly temptations. “काय-ये पतला पतली धरकह विकहरित परिवर्तित। तत्त्व धर दी वैचित्र्य नन्द मिलै ने लीलावती लगि क्लिनित।” “Ka-aye patola paartee kambarre pehray, Nanak ghar hee baithian soh milai je neeat raas karay” i.e, “Why do you tear your rich garment and wear a blanket. O Nanak! While leading a family life, you will find the Lord, if you keep your heart pure” (Ibid, p.1383).

**Practice of Brahmacharya i.e Celibacy in Hinduism and its rejection in Sikhism**

*Brahm-acharya* literally means student of God, whereas in Hindu theosophy it means an un-married person under a vow not to marry as a means to achieve bliss.

**Sikh view**

According to Gurbani, “जिंदे जानि ने उठीती जानि। धरती कितनी हं जानि जानि।” “Bind rakh jo tariay bhai Khusaray kio na parm gat pae e i.e, “If one were to be saved by celibacy, then why didn't the eunuchs attain highest bliss? (GGS, p. 324)”. Guru Gobind Singh says, “जिंदे जी जानि उपि जीन की खड़िया रेड़े। “Bind ke sadhyya taahe heej kee badayya det” meaning “A celebate can be surnamed as an Eunuch” (Dasam Granth). “जानि मरपत जानि अधर नट अधर बनि अधर माँच।” “jatee sadaavah jugat na jaanah chhad bahah ghar baar.”- Those who call themselves celibates do not know the way and so they leave their homes in search of God (GGS, p.469). Logically
monasticism and celibacy go together and Guru Nanak categorically rejected both of them. Celibacy before marriage is a part of Sikh but it ethics, is mandatory for a Sikh to get married.

**Practice of vegetarianism in Hinduism and its rejection by Sikhism**

Before the birth of Sikhism various sects of Hinduism and the radical saints prohibited eating meat. Bhagat Kabir’s views in this regard have been included in the holy Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib who says,”

```

Guru Granth Sahib who says,” (GGS, p.1350).

**Sikh View:**

Guru Nanak told them:

* In nature living beings feed on living beings, “जीवों का जीवों पर भोजन” (GGS, p.955). Hence there is nothing unnatural or ungodly in eating flesh. Gurbani tells us that the claim of vegetarians to be superior or holier than non vegetarians does not stand the test of logic:

```

Ekay daanay ann kay jeean baajh na koay, pehla pane jeeu hai jit haria sabh koay” (Ibid, Asa M1, p.472)-

Every food grain has life, water is the source of all life. It assists the growth of human beings, animals and vegetables. There is life in vegetables. Every thing is alive because of water.

* भूमि में भूमि पर भूमि की फसल फसल की जीवन तीर्थी है। जीवों का जीवों पर भोजन सही है। "Maas, maas kar moorakh jhagre gian dhian nahe nahe gaan. Kaun maas kaun saag kahavay kis meh paap samaanay--" i.e; “Only fools argue whether to eat meat or not. Who can define what is meat and what is not
meat, who knows where the sin lies, being a vegetarian or non-vegetarian (GGS, p.1289).

* Masshu nimmay maashu jammay ham maas kay bhaanday i.e. “We are conceived from meat and born from meat and we are vessels made up of meat (Ibid, p.1290).

* Masshu nimmay maashu jammay ham maas kay bhaanday i.e. “We are conceived from meat and born from meat and we are vessels made up of meat (Ibid, p.1290).

* Pehlaa masoh nimmian maasay under vaas, Jeeo paa-ay tan sajia maas mohay miliaa hadd chamman maas i.e, Man is first conceived in flesh and then abides in flesh. When life comes, he obtains the mouth of flesh, his bones, skin and body, all of flesh (GGS, p.1289)

* Maasah baahar kadhia maa-maa maas giraaas- i.e. Once out of mother’s womb of flesh he again suckles meat through mother’s nipples (GGS, p.1289).

* Muh maas kaa jeebh maas kee maas andar saas. i.e; The mouth is of flesh, tongue is of flesh and breath comes out of flesh.

* Vadda hoaa veeaahiaa ghar lai aya maas-i.e; When he grows up, he is married and brings the wife of flesh into his home.

* Maasahu hee maas upjai maasahu sabho saak. i.e Flesh is produced from flesh and all the relatives of man are made of flesh (Ibid, p.1289)

According to Sikhism to deprive some one of his / her right or rob of his / her share or charging interest rates in excess than the prevailing rates or not paying for one's hard labour is just like drinking the human blood and that is an unpardonable sin—जे रात जे रात जे रात —“Je ratt

Glimpses of Sikhism (204)
In Sikhism there is no prohibition on eating any kind of meat provided it comes from healthy animal and has been prepared by, ‘Jhatka’ method. According to Sikh Rehat Maryada (Sikh religious code of conduct), published by SGPC, Amritsar, a Sikh is not allowed to eat ‘Halaal’ (Kosher) meat (prepared according to Muslim rites). A Sikh should eat only, ‘Jhatka’ meat. The food offered in Guru Ka Langar is always vegetarian as it is meant for the persons of all faiths.

Rejection of incarnation theory of Hinduism by Sikhism

Avtaar Pooja (Worship of Incarnations) and its rejection in Sikhism

In the theology of Sikhism, ‘Avtaar’ literally means birth: mwnuKw Avqwr dulB—Maanukha avatar dulabh i.e; “Human birth is difficult to obtain” (GGS, p.486), but In Hinduism Avtaar means any person or animal serving as the embodiment of God or spirit. According to Hindu thought God descends to earth in the form of an incarnation to restore Dharma (righteousness) whenever there was rule of Adharma (un-righteousness) and therefore these incarnations are worshiped as God. When Guru Nanak appeared on the soil in the Indian subcontinent, according to ancient Hindu thought there were many Gods. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva formed the Trinity as creator, preserver and destroyer. It was held in Hinduism that God took birth not only in human form, but also himself comes into the world in various anthropomorphic forms, such as, The Hansa (Swan), Machh or Matsya (Fish), Kachh or Kurma (Tortoise), Varaha (Boar), Nar-Simha (Partly human, partly tiger) and finally in human forms. Twenty-four incarnations of God Vishnu were accepted. Rama the son of king Dashratha and Krishna son of Vasudeva were among
them. Countless male and female divinities were also regarded as Gods. The total came to 33 crores.

**Sikh view:**

According to Sikhism, there is one and only one God and he does not descend on earth and does not assume human form as the *Avtaarvaad* (Incarnation) theory in Hinduism portrays. Guru Nanak the founder of Sikhism says, “सर्वं सच्चे एक हैं दो सच्चे नहीं कोई - Sarbang saachaa ek hai dooja nahee ko-ay” i.e., “In this whole world there is one God second to none” (GGS, p.660). Sikhism neither believes in the Hindu Trinity of God-Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva nor 24 incarnations nor 33 crore divinities. As per Sikh thought there is One God and He is Supreme Eternal Reality. There is no division of functions and no delegation of authority. According to Sikhism, “God does not descend on earth. He neither takes birth nor dies. He is uncreated. He does not assume human or anthropomorphic form as the Avtaarvaad (incarnation) theory of Hinduism portrays”. This characteristic has been mentioned in Gurbani repeatedly. Guru Granth Sahib rejects the worship of Gods and their incarnations, because they are all created beings and also prone to death. The Brahmans confused the created beings with the creator. Gurbani lays emphasis on the worship of the Transcendent Almighty (Nirguna), who is Immortal and Infinite. It describes God as ‘*Ajooni*’ (beyond birth and death). Its conception of God is uncompromisingly monotheistic, with no room for the idea of incarnation. Therefore worship should be of One Formless God. It says:

* ईकमं एवंकारं नीरालं, अमर अजोनीं जातं न जलं, अगम अगोचरं, रूपं न रेखिया, क्षोजतं क्षोजतं गातं गातं देखिया—The Unique Lord is Peerless, Immortal, Unborn, and without caste and involvement. He is
Inaccessible, unknowable and has no form or outline. By searching and searching I have seen Him in all hearts.” (GGS, M1, p.838).

* अकल मूरत आजूनी संभाव कल अंक्वर दीपावै—“Akal moorat ajooni sanbhao kal andhkar deepai”, i.e; “The one (whose allegoric body) is without any effect of time and space, is free from life and death cycle, is created by itself and gives light to disperse darkness (of ignorance)” (Ibid, M5 p.916).

* सत्स भव रत्रि पूंज पैलित—“Janam maran nahin dhanda dher”, i.e; “The Almighty is free from birth and death cycle” (Ibid, p.936).

* सत्स भव दे विजु रखित—“Janam maran tay rehat Narain” i.e; “The Almighty is free from birth and death” (Ibid, M5, p.1136)

* तृ धर्मनागम ठमेमत नीति ह आजती—Toon parbrahm parmesar jooji na avahi” i.e; “You are the greatest and do not come into life and death cycle” (Ibid, M5, p.1095).

* अमोघ दरसन आजूनी संभूदै—“Amogh darsan ajooni sanbhoo, Akal moorat jis kaday na khao”, i.e; “The inexhaustible Bounteous is without life-death cycle and is created by itself. There is no effect of time and space (on its allegoric body) and is never destroyed” (Ibid, M5, p.1082).

According to Gurbani the so called Avtars (of Hindus) were human beings and not God in human form, therefore it rejects their worship, because they are all created beings and also prone to death:

* “जुगह जुगह के रजू देखे सावधी बरवि अवतार विल वीं अंकु हैं परिपय का वा पिन प्रवाल वर वी विद्या वत अधा शीखवै—Jugah jugah ke raaje kee-ay gaavah kar avtaaree.tin bheer ant na paa-i-a ta ka kiaa kar aakh weecheaaree-i.e-The kings created by Thee in different ages are sung as Thine Avtaars (incarnations). Even they have not found Thy limits. (Ibid, p.423).
Parmeshar paarbraham beant i.e. The incarnations know not His extent. The Lord is supreme, transcendent and limitless (GGS, p. 894)

Hukame upaae das aotaaraa. Dev daanav aagant apaaraa. Maanai hukam su dargah paijhai saach molaae samaaiaa i.e. By His order God created ten incarnations, innumerable gods and numberless devils. Whoever obeys Lord’s command is robed in honour at the Divine Portal. By uniting him with the True Name, the Lord merges him in Himself (GGS, p. 1037)

dung he gave in charity. Such is the punishment, meted out at the God’s Portal. Rama wept when he was exiled and Sita and Lachhman were separated from him. The ten headed Ranana, who took away Sita by beating a hand drum, wept when he lost Ceylon. The Pandvas, whose Master lived with them, became servants and wailed. Janmeja wailed as he was gone astray. A single lapse turned him sinner. The Seikhs, seers and spiritual guides weep, lest they suffer agony at the last moment. The kings weep, having their ears torn and they go begging from house to house. The miser weeps when his hoarded wealth parts company with him. The Pandits wail when their learning fails. The young woman weeps for she has no husband. Nanak says, all the world is involved in suffering. He who believes in the Name, becomes victorious. No other ritual or deed is of any account (GGS, p.953).

Regarding Ram Chandar, the Hindu incarnation of God, Guru Nanak Dev proclaimed that if Ram had been God, he would not have lost his wife Sita and he would have healed his brother Lachhman, instead calling on Hanuman to do so. It was God the Almighty who did every thing not Ram:

* रम भुईं रुम में लेस्ली अंतरि वहु अभिवच। दसरों वी मैं रुम में लेस्ली भिति उंचि नहु अधितु॥ मीता तै जरिज स्वानिये लक्ष्मणु भूषि अज्ञितु॥ तलव तलव तलवगुरु वरिय देवे घर दुःख। Ram jhurai dal melvai antar bal adhikaaar. Bantar kee saina seveevai man tan jujh apaar. Seeta lai gaiaa dah-siro Lachhman moo-o saraap. Nanak karta karnhaar kar wekhai thaap uthaap.--Rama grieves in his mind, he gathers the army, he has within him the power and authority. The ten-headed Ravana has taken away Sita and because of a curse, Lakshmana was killed. Ram Chand grieves in his mind for Sita and Lakshmana. The misguided demon
(Ravana) does not comprehend it. It was Lord God, who did everything, who is carefree and whose writ cannot be effaced, saith Nanak (Ibid, M1, p.1412).

* “पांडव तुम रामचंद्र ने जी आदि देवीशाखा घर। लड़ाई में हार गयी अंत वी हारही थी।” —* Paanday tumra ramchand so bhee aavat dekhia tha. Ravan setee sarbar hooe ghar kee jo-ay gavaaee thee--O Pundit! I saw your Ram Chand coming. He had a quarrel with Ravana and lost his wife” (Ibid, Gaund Namdev, p.875).

* जाना जैसा जानीचं जानीचं करा। जानीचं बीज जलने गए। फिलहाल फिलहाल मुझ गया। सा जैसा वासल सतू। नेहं नेहं बहुधर उपरे॥॥ —* People sing the Gopis and Krishna, Sita and Rama, but not the fearless, true transcendent Lord, who is the creator of the whole world, whom only the servants through His grace adore (Ibid, MI, p.465).

* नानक निरभाऊ निराक जराव। जराव कहा जराव कहा के। नेविज जी जवाही जवाही जवाही॥॥ —* Nanak nirbhao nirankar hor ketay Ram raval. Ketia Kaan kahanian ketay Bed bichar i.e; Nanak God is Fearless and Formless, there are many Ramas lying in dust. There are many stories about Krishna. There may be many thought-provoking Vedas (GGS, p.464).

Regarding Shri Krishna another incarnation of God in Hinduism, Gurbani says:

* तुम जो कहत हाँ नंद के नंदन के हाँ नंदन के हाँ। धर्म आकाश दोनों किन लाल। उसे हिला हो नंदन के। मंगला हाँ भी में तेंदुल आते हम नितंत्रक सा बाने बाने॥॥ —* Tum jo kahat hau nand ko nandan nand so nandan ka ko ray. Dharn akas daso dis nahn tab ih nand kaha tho ray. Pause. Sankat nahi parai jon nai avai naam Niranjan ja ko ray i.e; You call God as Nand’s son, how is he God when there was neither earth nor sky in all directions where was this Nand?
God is beyond troubles nor is he born. He is called immanent (GGS, p. 338).

Guru Gobind Singh says:

* "If you consider Ram, the Lord as unborn, then how did he take birth from the womb of Kaushlya?"

* "He, who is said to be the destroyer of death, then why did he become subjugated himself before death?"

* "If you call Him (Krisha) all goodness and without enmity, why did then He become the charitor of Arjuna?"

* "O mind! You only consider him the Lord God, whose Mystery could not be known to anyone" 

* "How do you identify Krishna, with All —merciful? Why did the hunter shot him with an arrow?"

* "Why did he, who saves the families of others, had his own clan destroyed?"

* "If he (Krisha) is said to be primeval and unborn, then how did he come into the womb of Devki?"

* "He, who is considered without any father or mother, why then Vasudev be termed his father?"

Glimpses of Sikhism (211)
i.e., “Why call Shiva God and why speak Brahma as God? God is not Ram Chander or Krishna or Vishnu, whom ye suppose to be the Lords of the world; Sukhdev, Prasar and Vyas erred in abandoning the one God and worshipping many gods. All have set up false religions; I, in every way believe that there is but one God who manifests himself in many ways” (Thirty three swayyas-xv)

* ब्रह्म, महेश और बिसन साचिपत जब समय लगे तब दम लगे तब॥ “Brahm, Mahesar, Bisan Sachipat ant fasay jam faas paren gay” i.e; “Brahma, Shiva and the husband of Sachi i.e; Indra will ultimately be entrapped in the noose of death” (Akal Ustat).

Thus all divinities are prone to death, therefore the Lord God is to be adorned, who is Ever-Existent, विश्व विद्वान न विद्वान भरे जो विश्व भरे जो॥ “Bin Kartar na kirtam mano” i.e; ‘Except the Creator do not worship anything other

Gurbani lays emphasis on the worship of the Transcendent Almighty (Nirguna), who is Immortal and Infinite:

* विश्व विद्वान न विद्वान भरे जो विश्व भरे जो॥ “Bin Kartar na kirtam mano, adi ajoni abnasi teh Parmesar jano- O man, except the Creator do not worship anything other
created being. Regard God, who was from the beginning Unborn, Invincible and Indestructible as the Supreme Being” (Mukh waak Patshahi 10, Shabad Hazare). This is very important tenet of Sikhism.

* “ਪ੍ਰੁਸਤੁ ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤੇਕ ਦੀ ਟੇਕਨੁ“—“Poojoh ram ek he deva” i.e, Worship only the One Lord (GGS, p.484).

* ਰਾਲਾ ਮਾਂ ਵਿਗਿਆਣਿਤਕ ਮਾਂ || ਨੀ ਭਵੀ ਸੰਪੋ ਸੁ ਵਾਂ ਵਿਚਨਿਆ ||-- Nanak says true are they, who meditate the True One. They who die and are reborn, are unbaked and worthless, false (GGS, p.463).

Several names of these incarnations, which were prevalent among the masses for the Supreme Eternal Reality (God), have been used by the Sikh Gurus in their verses, because they were more clearly understood by the devotees viz: Rama, Krishna, Gobind, Gopal, Banwari, Murari, Damodar etc.

**Rejection of gender inequality in Hinduism & Status of woman in Sikhism**

Before the birth of Sikhism the plight of woman in the Indian subcontinent was highly deplorable. She had most inferior position in the society. In Hinduism she was treated at par with animals. Tulsi Dass in his ‘Ram Charit Manas’ says. “Dhor ghanwar, shudar, pashu, nari, yeh sab tarin ke adhikari” meaning: “The stupid person, the shudra, animals and women all deserve reprimand”. Manu the Hindu law-giver has attributed all that is good and great to males and on the contrary, assigned that is bad and obnoxious to females. Even Bhagat Kabir did not speak very high of woman and he has described her as a source of lust and passions and refuse of the world. In Buddhism a male Bhikshu is not supposed to touch and rescue a drowning woman even if she was his mother. Dighambra Jains believe that a woman cannot reach Kavalya and has to achieve first male
The position in Sikhism is totally different. One of the most notable social improvements introduced by Sikhism is the emancipation of women. The Sikh Gurus laid down norms of ethical equality of woman with man and granted her an exalted status. Sikhism does not consider woman inferior to man rather her position has been eulogized in Guru Granth Sahib (The holy Sikh scripture):

* From the woman is our birth; in woman’s womb are we shaped. To woman are we engaged; to woman are we wedded. The woman is our friend and from woman is the family. If one woman dies, we seek another, through the woman are the bonds of the world. Why call the woman evil who gives birth to kings? So kion manda akhie jit jamein rajaan. From the woman is the man, without woman there is none GGS, Var Asa M1, p.473).

* Man is born of woman and woman of man, realize this O divine-“**Purkh meh naar, naar meh pukha, bhoojho brahm gian**” (GGS, p.879).

* From temporal as well as spiritual point of view, woman is man’s other half and assists him to salvation. She brings him salvation. She assuredly brings happiness to the virtuous—Var 5. Bhai Gurdas.

* Guru Hargobind during the course of his conversation with sant Samrath Ram Dass, the mentor of Shiva jee Marhatta called woman, “**Aurat eemaan”**—Woman is the conscious of man. This shows unequivocally the high esteem in which a woman is required to be held in Sikhism.

**Sikhism took practical steps for the socio-religious equality of man and woman:**

* In Sikhism there is no ban or prohibition on women to attend a
Glimpses of Sikhism (215)

Gurdwara and pay obeisance. Women are equally entitled to get Sikh initiation (Baptism) like men and wear articles of Sikh faith. Initiated women can perform all Sikh religious ceremonies, which initiated Sikh men can perform.

* Sikhism condemns female infanticide and a Sikh found guilty in this regard is excommunicated from the Sikh Panth. Sikhs are forbidden to have any relationship with ‘Kuri maar’ (One who kills his daughter).

* Sikhism strictly forbids ‘Sati’. the burning of widow on the pyre of her diseased husband

* A widow or a divorced woman is allowed to remarry and lead a householder’s life if she so desired.

* Sikhism advocates education of women and encourages them to adopt various professions including armed forces and politics. Sikhism strictly forbids veiling of women.

Glimpses of Sikhism (215)
Chapter 10

Rejection of Authority of Scriptures of Hinduism by Gurmat / Sikhism

Supermacy of Vedas is not accepted in Sikh religion / Sikhi / Sikhism:

* Guru Nanak in Var Sarang says, the Vedas is a trader, whereas Gurbani is only praise. The Vedas declare that one will receive heaven proportionate to the amount of donation and hell proportionate to the evil committed by a person: वेद पूजन्य धूप धारी स्तव्य रुप्य व धारी

The Vedas is a trader, whereas Gurbani is only praise. The Vedas declare that one will receive heaven proportionate to the amount of donation and hell proportionate to the evil committed by a person:

सूरज जिय देहती देह देह देह देह देहती

Guru Nanak in Var Sarang says, the Vedas is a trader, whereas Gurbani is only praise. The Vedas declare that one will receive heaven proportionate to the amount of donation and hell proportionate to the evil committed by a person:

Vedas proclaim that virtue and sin are the seed of heaven and hell. Whatever man sows, that sprouts and the self realizes it and eats the fruit of his deeds. Deeming Divine knowledge great, whoever praises it, he becomes truthful by uttering the True Name. By sowing truthfulness, truthfulness grows in man and he finds a place at the Lord’s Portal. The Veda is a merchant, enlightenment the capital, which is attained by the Lord’s grace. Nanak says, without such capital none has ever departed laden with profit of the Lord’s Name (GGS, p.1243).

* Simrit shastar pun paap beecharday tattay saar na jande --Simrit shastar pun paap beecharday tattay saar na jande. The Simritis and Shastras discriminate between good and evil but donot know the
essence of the Real Thing. (GGS, p.920).

* वेद पढ़ने से हर रस नहीं आता, वाद वाचन के लिए मोह मैया - Ved paday har ras nahin aaiaya, vaad wakhanay mohay maya i.e., Reading of Vedas does not lead to spiritual peace. Readers get entangled in mammon (materialism) and argue unnecessarily (GGS, p.128).

* महिमा न जाननी ब्रह्म - Mahimaa na jaanah bed. Brahme nahee jaanah bhed i.e; “The Vedas, know not the Lord’s glory. Brahma cannot realize His mystery” (GGS, p. 894).

* ब्रह्म भहे राम; अंतर भमु अभ न धकॉँ - (GGS, p.331)

* काल वेद की, रामु; श्रीरं तलं लम्बा काम वधमण दिशे लजिडी - (GGS, p.397)

Gurbani gives priority to Gian-knowledge (Spiritual). Gurmat regards God as Supreme power and does not believe in the heaven / hell, Inderpuri, Brahmpuri etc. The Vedic trade is based upon Karm-Kanda, fasting, charity / donations and Yag / Arati whereas Gurbani believes in the elixir of the Naam (Naam-Ras).

Gurmat does not insist on Mantras and mechanical meditation, but chiefly on moral living and the service of humanity.

The teaching of the Vedas has given birth to mythology, which is evident in the teachings of the Purans. It created divisions in the social life. Gurbani propagates egalitarianism. The Vedic teaching because of its trader nature gives birth to ego, which promotes selfishness and individual rise, whereas Gurbani tells the entire game as play of Hukam, cosmic administration /

The Sikhs are commanded to follow the preachings of Gurus only to meditate on the name of Waheguru:

Glimpses of Sikhism (217)
* पूजा की घड़ी अष्ठि अंतर संह तित भिक्षु॥ (GGS, p.628)
* घड़ी जुँ जुँ जुँ जै घड़ी॥ बिंच घड़ी अंतर हुए॥ घड़ी अंतर संह भरे पूजा जुँ जुँ गिरितिहै॥ (GGS, p.982)
* सतिसबुध घड़ी जेव घड़ी॥
* जब जब जब जब जब जेव दीमे दिन सम सजाही सुई॥ (GGS, p.747)
Chapter 11

Rejection of Sacraments of Hinduism by Sikhism

The sacraments of Hinduism are:

1. Sanskrit, the religious language of the Hindus / Hinduism
2. Janeu
3. Dhoti
4. Tikka
5. Rosary

Rejection of Sanskrit / Religious language of Hindus / Hinduism by Sikhism

Punjabi with Gurmukhi script is the religious and national language of the Sikhs and Sanskrit with Devnagri script is the religious language of the Hindus, who describe themselves as Aryans and who entered Punjab, the Sikh homeland from Asia Minor through the passes in the Hindu Kush Mountains more than four thousand years (around 2000 BC) ago as herd’s men and graziers of cattle and settled in the north Punjab in Kashmir region around Taxilla (now in Pakistan). They spoke an Indo-European language that had originated on the steppes of Eurasia. The Aryans were smart people and very soon realized the value of learning i.e. education. They interacted with the learned Punjabi Jogi here, who lived in mountains.
caves away from human habitations and practiced spirituality. They learnt spirituality from the Punjabi Jogis who believed in One Supreme Eternal Reality, whom they called ‘Brahma’. The Aryan scholars having knowledge of (Brahma—Supreme Eternal Reality / God) designated themselves as ‘Brahmans’. They developed a slang form of the local Punjabi dialect, ‘Sehaskriti’ for their worship purposes and cleverly called it ‘Brahm Bhasha’ (Lit: The language of God), which was subsequently named ‘Sanskrit’ and that became the religious language of the Aryans. ‘Sanskrit’ therefore, is a dialect of Punjabi language spoken in ancient times in the mountaneous areas of the north Punjab around Taxilla.

Around 1000 BC; the Aryans produced scriptures in Brahmi Bhasha (Sanskrit). The Scriptures were named, ‘Vedas’ literally meaning books of knowledge. They remembered them orally and continued to transmit them from generation to generation verbally for centuries, therefore the vedas during this period were also called “Shruti”—Suni sunaee--सुनी सुनाई। Romila Thapar in her book titled, “The Penguin History of Early India” writes that Rishi Panini laid the rules for Sanskrit grammar in Taxilla (located in the foot hills of the Punjab) around 500 BC and wrote Sanskrit grammer, the Ashtadhyai. The Aryans recorded their Sanskrit scriptures in Brahmi / Siddhmarica script of the Punjabi Jogis as Sanskrit had no script of its own. They renamed Siddhmatrica as Sharda. The Brahmans made Sanskrit as the language of their scriptures, which could only be interpreted by them, because it was neither spoken nor understood by the common mass of the native people. The first center of Aryan culture in the Indian subcontinent developed in the hills of the Punjab in the Kashmir region around Taxilla. After centuries of their stay, development and proliferation in the hills of the Punjab the Aryans descended into the plains of the Punjab. They tried to dominate the natives of the plains of the Punjab, called ‘Jatts’ through the Brahman. The Jatt spirit of
freedom and equality refused to submit to the Brahmanical dominance and pushed the Aryans out of the limits of the Punjab and in its turns drew the censure of the learned Brahmans who pronounced that “No Aryan should stay in the Punjab for even two days because the Punjabis refused to obey the priests”*. Henceforth the Aryan Brahman developed an extremely hostile attitude towards the Jatts of the Punjab.

After their exist from the Punjab by the ‘Jatts’, the Aryans settled in the Ganga Yamuna divide in the Malwa region of India, built their religio-cultural center there and named it ‘Ujjain’, which they affectionately called, ‘Dev Nagri’ (देव नगरी), a town inhabited by Brahmans, who are gods (Dev-tāṇḍa) in human form. Here they called their language as Dev Bhasha (language of gods). They used here the local form of Sidhmatrica script for writing their Sanskrit literature but named it ‘Dev Naagri’ (देव नगरी). After sometime they shifted their center of activity in the easternly direction into the fertile and mineral rich area and built here their religio-cultural center on the banks of Ganges and named it Kashi (Varanasi-Banaras). Here they named their language, ‘Brahmbhasha’ as, “Sanskrit” wrote religious books in it and named them, ‘Shastras’ in the 11th century. Because of the shastras the dialect (language) spoken in and around Kashi (Varanasi-Benaras) came to be popularly called ‘Shastri’. It was only in 1900 AD, that the British administration acceded to the popular demand of the Indian State of United provinces now called Uttar Pardesh, naming Shastri written in Dev Nagri script as ‘Hindi’ and making it official language of this State.

The Aryans gradually gained religious and cultural control of the Ganges valley through the priest (Brahman) by blending their culture with that of the natives. Later when the Aryans gained full control of the Gangetic plain and established their rule, they made Sanskrit as the

*The text contains a note with a reference that is not visible in the image.
court language. Sanskrit texts were given priority even where there were variants of the same narrative in other languages. Despite all these efforts by the Aryans, the common mass of people continued to converse in their native language. The use of Sanskrit remained limited to court and the elite, mostly Brahmans. Sanskrit never became language of the common people anywhere in the world. The Aryan scholars enriched the Sanskrit language by creating and adding new terms and words as per needs.

It is worth mentioning here that Sanskrit till today does not have any distinct script of its own. It is only a spoken dialect used by Brahman priests for religious worship only. Like other languages of the world including Punjabi, Sanskrit is not a spoken language of the common people in any part of the world. Maximally Sanskrit became the court language in the areas of Brahmanical dominance in the Indian subcontinent and there too its dominance in the royal courts came to an end with the loss of Brahmanical control over the Royalty. The Hindus now have adopted Hindi as their spoken language and limited the use of Sanskrit for chanting Vedic Mantras by Hindu Priests (Brahmans) for worship purposes and religious ceremonies.

**Origin of Sanskrit**

It is a well known fact that the earliest spiritual traditions started in the east in the Indus Valley. Those practicing spirituality were called Jogis / Siddhas. They believed in ‘One Supreme Eternal Reality, whom they called, ‘Brahma’ and they had a script called Brahmi / Siddhmatrica. The people of the Indus Valley had reached a very high level of civilization more than 4000 years ago, when people of a white tribe from Asia Minor who called themselves Aryans entered Punjab through the pass in the Hindu Kush mountains as herds-men and graziers of cattle and settled in the Kashmir region of the Punjab. They spoke an Indo-European language that had originated on the
steppes of Eurasia. Thus first center of Aryan culture developed in the Kashmir hills of the Punjab. All Aryans did not come at once but kept on pouring gradually over a period of centuries. The Aryans were smart people and realized the impotance of education. Some of them learnt spirituality / Jog from the Punjabi Jogis. It was in the hills of the Punjab that the Aryans evolved their Vedic culture. It was here that they developed a slang dialect of the Punjabi language for their worship purposes and to begin they called it *Brahm Bhasha*, literally meaning the language of God, but subsequently they named Sanskrit.

Around 1000 BC, the Aryans produced scriptures in *Brahm Bhasha* and named them Vedas, literally meaning the books of knowledge, which were memorized verbally and passed on from generation to generation orally. Brahma is said to be the creator of the Vedas. The Vedas gave birth to Vedic Culture, which gave birth to caste system in India.

Around 500 BC Rishi Panini wrote Sanskrit grammar, *Ashtadhiay* in Taxilla in the foot hills of the Punjab (The Penguin History of Early India from origins to AD 1300, Romila Thapar, p,163). Rishi Ved Viyas is said to have recorded the Vedas in writing and the script used was Siddhmatrica of the Punjabi Jogis, but they renamed it as Sharda and then they used local version of Siddhmatrica after settling in Ujjain in the Malwa region and called it Dev Naagri. It may be added here that Sanskrit till today does not have its own script. The Aryans used the local script wherever they settled.

**Rejection of Janeu-Tag (Yagyopavit) by Sikhism**

The sacred thread worn across chest by male members of the Hindu religion is called Janeu or Yagyopavit or Tag, which tells the *Varn* of the wearer. The Brahman had made its wearing compulsory for the followers of the *Varn* Ashram Dharna (Brahmanism /Sanatan Dharna / Hinduism). The society was divided on the simple question

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (223)
of wearing a janeu. It is mentioned in Manusimriti that a Brahman should wear a Janeu made of cotton, the Kashatriya made of jute (मट) and a vaish made of wool (हुन)—(Manu Simriti adhia-ay 2, Salok 44). Women and shudras were forbidden from wearing a Janeu at all.

According to Gurmat it (Janeu) cannot put any check on evil intentions of man. The praise of the Lord is the real check because that produces a change in character and not mere outer acts of show: Useless for life hereafter, according to Guru Nanak, the sacred thread of the Brahman cannot have any influence on the morals and spirituality of the wearer. It is perishable and does no good to the wearer. At the time of the formal consecration of Guru Nanak into Brahmanical religion called Varn Ashram Dharma (Hinduism) arranged by his parents as per Varn Ashram Brahmanical (Hindu) rites he refused to wear such a Janeu and there by his initiation into the Varn Dharma saying:

* दिविता कपाह संतोक चन्द्र बरह जीली सुब रटः। देय चन्द्र नीर वर जीली उ धरे भाटः॥ र पिव जूटे र भाट जीली र पिव नसे र नान्दी॥ यस्ते र मानस रामस र बाज़ रूँ रहूँ॥— Da-i-aa kapaah santokh soot jat gandhe sar wat. Eh janeoo jeea kaa haee ta paaday ghat. Naa eh tutai na mal lagai nna eh jalai na jaa-ay. Dhan su maanas Nanka jo gal chalay paay-ay.-i.e- Guru Nanak tells the Brahman that the sacred thread he wears and puts on others has no spiritual or moral efficacy. The only sacred thread that does not get soiled and does not snap is the one prepared with mercy as cotton, contentment as the thread, self-control as the knot, and truthful living as the twist. ‘If you have such a janeu O Pande then put it on me’. Such a yagopavit never breaks, never gets polluted, can never be burnt by fire, and once worn is an everlasting asset of the human mind. Sayeth Nanak such persons who wear this sacred thread are the worthiest of the worthy, and whole universe says all hail to them” (GGS, MI, p.471).
* Chaokar mul anaa-iaa bah chaokay pa-i-a. Sikha kannn chraeea guru Brahman thiag. Oh mooa oh jhar pa-i-a wetaga ga-i-a i.e; Thou buyest and bringest a thread for four shells and seated inside the cooking space, puttest it on. The Brahman becomes the preceptor and wispers some instuctions into the ears of the wearer. When the wearer dies, the thread falls and he departs without the thread. (GGS, p.471).

* Tag kapah kateeay baman watay a-ay. Koh bakra rinn khaia sabh ko aakhay pa-ay. Ho-ay purana suteeay bhee phir pa-ee-ay hor. Nanak tag na tutaee je tag hovay jor i.e; “The thread is spun from cotton, the Brahman twists it. A he goat is killed, cooked and eaten then every one says, “put on the thread”. When it wears off, it is thrown away, then another is put on again. Nanak says, the thread would not break, if it had any strength”. (GGS, p.471)

* By believing in the Name, honour arises and Lord’s praise is the true sacrificial thread. Such a sacred thread is worn at the Lord’s Portal and it breaks not (GGS, p.471).

* There is no sacred thread for sexual passions and no thread for lust of woman. Because of this, man’s beard is daily and ever spat upon. There is no thread for the feet and no thread for the hands. No thread is for tongue and no thread for eyes.
Without the thread the Brahman himself wanders about. Twisting the threads, he puts on others. He takes remuneration for performing marriages. Pulling out the Calendar he shows the way. Listen and see, ye people, to this strange thing. The Pandit, mentally blind, is called wise. (GGS, p.471)

Hindu comes to the house of Hindu. By chanting a sermon, he puts on the sacred thread made of cotton around his neck. Putting on the thread, he still commits evil. His ablutions and washings are not approved by God. (GGS, p.951)

Gurbani says:

They who make truth, their fasting, contentment their pilgrimage, enlightenment and meditation their ablution, compassion their deity and forgiveness their rosary; the most sublime are those persons. They who make right way of living, their loin-cloth, absorption in God their sacred kitchen enclosure, good deeds their forhead paste mark and the Lord’s love their food; few, very few are such men, says Nanak” (Ibid, MI, p.1245).

Nanak says, without the True Naam (God), of what avail is the frontal mark and the sacred thread? (GGS, p.467)
Rejection of Tilak / Tikka / Bindī, Dhoti, Mala in Sikhism

Tilak is a mark made with saffron (kesar) etc., on the forehead and in some sects on other parts of the body in various sects of Brahmanism (Hinduism) as part of worship (Pooja). Supporting Tilak and other marks of Brahmanism are strictly forbidden in Sikhism, because these outward acts of mere show drive the mind away from God. Guru Nanak says if the Pandit had known about God, then he should have considered all the rituals as false:

* क्षितिज माला दोहे टिका बांधे पेड़ी धोती बधाई—Gal mala, tilak lilatan, do-ay dhoti, bastar kapaatang, Je jaanas braham karmang, sabh fokat nischio karmang—Around their neck is the rosary, on their forehead the sacred mark and on their head is a towel and they have two lion-clothes. If they know the real nature of the Lord, then they will find that all these beliefs and rites are in vain.” (Ibid, M1, p.470).

* भक्ति विठ्ठन धनय वर्ग जल, लेना गुरु कितने बांधते—“Mathay tilak hath maala baanaa, logan Ram khilauna jaana—People put on the paste mark on their fore-head, carry rosary in hand and wear sectarian dresses. People look upon God as a play thing” (Ibid, p.1158).

* उपायें विन्दु र जैनी पव्वम दे रहिष्ठा लिहि—Through hypocrisy Lord's devotion is performed not, nor is Transcendent Lord obtained (Ibid, p.849).

* नानाक सचाई नाम रिता नाका निता रिता उल्लव—Nanak sachay Naam bin kiaa tikaa kiaa tag.—Nanak says, without the True Naam i.e remembrance of God, of what avail is the frontal mark and the sacred thread? (GGS, p.467)
Various sects of Brahmanism (Hinduism) have numerous differences among themselves and there is a lot of difference in their tilaks. For instance the Shaivas put Tripunda tilak and the Vaishnavs put undhpundar. Also there are differences of thought among various sects of Brahmanism (Hinduism). In Padam Puran it is written that a Vaishnav should support twelve tilak marks on his various parts of the body after reciting the names of twelve deities. The rejection of Brahmanical (Hindu) thought is found written in the cannon of the Sikh faith:

* ကBBCStackTrace:

Obliterating the consecration marks of twelve sects of Jogis (who dominated the religious scene at that time and formed a part of the Khat Darsan of Hinduism) the Guru-oriented Sikhs donned one mark (of piety of character and conduct in their lives)— (Bhai Gurdas).

* ကBBCStackTrace:

Instead of the ritual mark on the forehead, the Sikhs make teachings of the Guru as their consecration mark, which destroy unfounded beliefs and ritualism (Bhai Gurdas).

Rejection of counting beads / Rosery (Mala / Japni / Japmali) in Sikhism

Followers of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity believe in turning the beads for spiritual enlightenment

Sikh view:

Gurbani says:

* ကBBCStackTrace:

“Kabir Japnee kaath kee kia dikhaleh lo-ay, Hirday Ram na chetahee, ih japnee kia ho-ay—Kabir, how the wooden rosary can bring you enlightenment? In your mind
you do not remember the Lord, of what avail is this rosary to you?" (Ibid Salok Kabir Ji, p.1368)

* जिसके सभी समझुइ गुढ़डा देव, उसके अन्न अन्नहर अवधीप अनन्य जिन सिलों लिंग पिकाहेड़ उपि देशें रामं रामं।—“Hidayat japni, japo gun taasa, Har agam agochar, aprampar soami, Jan pag lag dhiavo, ho-ay dasan dasaa”—Within heart I tell the beads of rosary of the Treasure of merits. God is inaccessible, unknowable and illimitable. By repairing to the saint’s feet and becoming the slave of the Lord’s slaves, I meditate on Him” (Ibid, p.841).

* सुकृत कर्नी सार जपमाली। हिरदय पहर, चालेर तूल नैल। 1। Har har naam, japoh banwali, Kar kirpa meloh satsangat, toot gai jam jali—Doing good deeds, is the essence of telling the rosary. In thy heart turn the rosary, then it shall go with thee.

1. Meditate on the Name of the Lord, forest-wanderer. O Lord, take pity on me and unite me with the holy company so that my noose of the fatal mammon, be snapped” (Ibid M4, p.1134).

* कथं रमनीया रम रम नाम रवम ऄ चेय घरम घरवी। नीख धर्मिजन धर्म भरववे सैत लेखी।—“Kanth ramneeya ram ram maala, hast ooch prem dharnee. Jeeth bhanijo utam slok, udharnang, nain nandnee”—i.e; To utter the Lord’s Name, is the rosary around my neck and to love the Lord is my secretly telling of it. By uttering with my tongue, the sublime word of the Guru, I have been saved and joy is in my eyes (Ibid, M5, p.1356).

It is very clearly stated in Guru Granth Sahib that hypocrisy has no place in Gurmat instead truthful living is only acceptable. Guru Nanak says:

* सुख चिन्दु मंदिर मंदिर विकालु विकालु विकालु। शिखर शेखर विकालु सम्पाती। ते मंदिर पंजाब के। सुगार ऊंची मुरविंच चुम्बक विजस्त वरची। हरपु तेमन

Glimpses of Sikhism (229)
Sach vart, santokh tirath, gian dhian isnaan, Daya devta, khima japmali, tay maanas pardhaan. Jugat dhoti, surat chauka, tilak karni ho-ay, Bhao bhojan Nanaka, virla taan koi ko-ay.—They who make truth, their fasting, contentment their pilgrimage, enlightenment and meditation their ablution, compassion their deity and forgiveness their rosary; the most sublime are those persons. They who make right way of living, their lion-cloth, absorption in God their sacred kitchen enclosure, good deeds their forehead paste mark and the Lord’s love their food; few, very few are such men, says Nanak” (Ibid, Ml, p.1245).

* While answering an anonymous Brahman who asked Guru Nanak that apparently he looked like a Sadhu but had neither the Saligram nor the rosary of Tulsi beads, the Guru replied and said, “Saaligraam bip pooj manaavah sukrit tulsee maala. Raam naam jap beraa baandah da-i-aa karaah da-i-aala. Kaake kalraa kalraa sinchah janam gavaavah. Kaacchee dhahage divaal kaahe gach laavah. “O Brahman you worship and propitiate the stone-god and wear the rosary of myrobalam beads (sweet basil) symbolizing as good actions. Better equip your ship of repetition of the Name Divine and pray to the gracious Lord for grace. Why water the alkaline soil and waste your life? The mud wall shall crumble, why plaster it with lime?” (GGS, p.1171)

* Gaau ibrwhmx kau kr lwvhu gobir qrxu n jweI —Thou (The Khatris) tax the cows and Brahmans but the cow-dung will not save thee. Thou wearest a loin cloth, puttest a frontal mark, carriest a rosary and eatest, the
provisions supplied by the unclean. O, brother, within, thou performest worship, outside thou readest Muslim books, adoptest their way of life. Lay aside the hypocrisy. By taking God’s Name, thou shalt swim across (GGS, p.471).

* बलां श्रेष्ठं महीं सिहूँय॥ रिति निपिन लेधि र उतियि मीठ॥--Thou churns the rosary yet begs for wealth. O friend, in this way, none, has been saved (GGS, p.888).

* हिन्दु श्रेष्ठं उमरां भरल॥ बल वीर्यं हिन्दुस्त वजन॥ विधे बुढ़ बीड़ तुम्हार॥वे हेंड वीर्यं अर्यन॥--By becoming Qazi, a judge, he sits to administer justice. He tells the rosary and mutters god’s Name. Taking bribe he does injustice. If someone questions him, then he quotes and reads out some citation (GGS, p.951).

* भविषा जागभाव उमरां भरल॥ उस सि पदार्थ वसल॥ विधे बुढ़ बीड़ कुमार॥वे हेंड वीर्यं अर्यन॥--Thou sittest on the deer skin and tallest the rosary of sweet basil. Thou puttest bright sacred mark on thy forehead. While within thy heart is falsehood, around thy neck thou wearest the rosary of eleocarpus. O evil one, thou uttrest not the Lord’s Name (GGS, p.1351).

* कवित घामे तुम्हं उ विस्म बिदिबं भरल मेरी वारि॥ कवित लेखक धरण ब्रजेवरि ब्रजि एंगरा॥--Kabir says what does it avail a man to become the follower of Vishnu and wear four rosaries. Externally he is gold twelve times purified within he is stuffed with dust (GGS, p.1372).

* जन संधि तै धै वंदीमं विधायं वारिधि उदा॥ वारि मिन्न सम महोरि मे देवी वारिधि विधि उदा॥--They, who wear loin-cloth three and a half yard long and three-fold sacred threads, they have rosaries around their necks and shining jugs in their hands, they are not called the saints of God but cheats of Banaras (GGS, p.475-476)
According to Gurmat, the real mala for salvation is:

* गीत गीत भवत हुट स्त्रोटविख्यते भवतः समुद्र समुद्र दशे सीता देशिकालं॥ कथनु भेतनी माँटिकृत भद्रती॥ जिकद दिखला सत्यतु महर्षी मेलुः ठेपु अन्ते गीत तदनीं दुःखं॥ जित भवत हुट मंसिकृत पशुसी॥ सत्यतु भवत अ सुभ तिखले॥ तिखले माहै मृद गीत धुसः ठेपु॥ मे सहु रिदु ठुट परदी न ठेपु॥ कय तरल से करी लप्त॥ गीत भवत उ वै मंजिल नारी॥—These two words God, God, I repeat on the rosary. While these I repeat, to me, the humble one, the Lord has shown grace. I make supplication unto my True Guru. Mercifully keep me under Thy protection and give me the rosary of God’s Name. He who wears the rosary of God’s Name in his heart, is freed from pain of birth and death. He who contemplates the Lord God in his mind and utters His Name with his mouth, never wavers here and hereafter. Nanak says, he, who is absorbed in the Name, with him goes the Lord’s rosary into the next world (GGS, p.388).

* रेलटु प्रमलैली बलरामी॥ राम जितेस समभासी॥—Meditate thou on the Omnipresent Lord, wearing the garland of forest vegetation. To enshrine the Lord within the mind is true telling the rosary (GGS, p.503).

सत देव क्रृष्ण दीक्षु िशिष्यु िशिष्यु िशिष्यरूस। सोभा देवख्त िशिष्य समभासी। ए भवत भवयत॥—they who make truth, their fasting, contentment their pilgrimage, enlightenment and meditation their ablution, compassion their deity and forgiveness their rosary, the most sublime are those persons (GGS, p.1245).

* ओग सर समलैली सत्यतु मुहावरो ब्राह्मण तिखली॥—May I repeat such a rosary of God, that rising above weal and woe, I practise, the wondrous service of the Lord (GGS, p.1342).

* नबीत भेली मिर्नाली बमतु इठति जम। आपि नाराय जगत ज वे गुह घमले।—Kabir says my rosary is my tongue, on which is the Lord’s Name. From the very beginning, all the devotees dwell in

Glimpses of Sikhism (232)
peace through it (GGS, p.1364).

* रु मृदि मेंमित हुल्ली भला॥ तोही चतु ते गाड़ि जल्ला॥ उंदू मेंद अयव्मंड रे बेठी रा

वे रीं तनाणिं।।- There was no purification or self restraint or rosary of sweet basil. There was no milk maid or Krishna or cow or herdsman. There were no incantations and spells, no hypocrisy nor did anyone play on the flute (GGS, p.1035).
Chapter 12

Rejection of Yoga (Yogic philosophy) of Hinduism by Sikhism

Jogism (Jog) is the oldest spiritual / religious philosophy in the world, which took birth in Punjab in the Indus valley in the Indian subcontinent. It originated here much before the arrival of the Aryans in the Indus valley. The Aryans learnt yoga (Jog) from the Punjabi (Harappan) Jogis. The Harappan Jogis worshipped only “One Supreme Eternal Reality”, whom they called ‘Brahma’. Jog in Punjabi language literally means to unite together—yoke (a pair of animals harnessed together—a yoke of oxen). Theosophically it means to unite with the Supreme Eternal Reality i.e; God. The Aryans who came to Punjab around 2000 BC, pronounced the Punjabi word ‘Jog’ as ‘yoga’. They developed six systems of thought (Philosophy) which came to be known as ‘Khat Darshan’ and yoga forms a part of Khat Darshan. The Punjabi Jog was corrupted by the Aryans. They introduced tortuous physical practices, which had nothing to do with spirituality. The Aryans propagated the theory of ‘Trinity of God’ and started the worship of deities: Vishnu and Shiva in addition to Brahma represented byॐ (Om / Oam / Aum). At the time of the birth of Sikhism in the 15th century, the Jogis / Naths and Siddhas dominated the religious landscape in Punjab. They practiced asceticism, renunciation, celibacy and tortuous practices for seeking salvation.

Glimpses of Sikhism (234)
Sikh view:

Guru Nanak preached Oneness of God and oneness of man, house-holder’s life and denounced the escapist life and other practices of the Jogis, who had reduced the spiritual heights of yoga to mainly a healthy body building exercise. Guru Nanak visited all prominent centers of the Jogis and debated with them (GGS, p.223, 420, 504,642, 662, 730, 886, 903). Sidh Gosati has been recited just to change the style of Nath, Yogis, Sidh sects and Hindus, who believed in ascetic way of life. Guru Nanak advised the Jogis to accept the householder’s life and inspired them to accept the path of dwelling upon the name of God or Naam Simran. Sikhism strongly denounces the escapist life of Jogis and their tortuous practices. It preaches householder’s life as the forum of all activities. Gurbani deprecates the Jogi who gives up the world and then is not ashamed of begging at the door of the householder (GGS, p.886). It says:

* जाती सदवाय जुगत ना जान चढ़ बहाय घर बार—“Jati sadavay jugat na janay chhad bahay ghar baar”—They call themselves celibates, leave their homes and hearth but know not the right way of life” (GGS, Var Asa M1, p.469)
* ननक सत्गुर पूरा भैति-aurus भूल देखे भगवान—Nanak satgur poora bhai-ay pooree hovay jugat. Hasandia, khelandia, penandia, khawandia vichay hovay mukat- “O Nanak, when one meets the true Guru one learns the proper discipline to realize Gid / Truth. One is liberated while enjoying worldly pleasures and comforts (laughing, playing, eating good food and wearing good clothes) (GGS, p.522). The Yogis (ascetics) looked down upon the house-holders. Guru Nanak admonished them saying:
* “हाल भाई से लड़े नाखु तेंदु लें राज लिये पहली नैटे” Ghaal kha-ay kichh hathoh dey Nanak raah pachhanay say—“He knows
the way who earns his living and shares his earnings with others”
(Ibid, p.1245).

* Me sejre me suraj da phera. Guh bhumli teke lare.---So jogi jo jagat pachhanay gur parsaadee eko jaanay. A Jogi, i.e. one who recognizes the right way (Truth) and recognizes the right way (Truth) and understands the One / God through enlightenment
(Ibid, p.662).

According to Gurbani man should renounce evil and selfish motives and not the worldly life:

* Tiag tiagan neeka kam karodh lobbh tiagan—Of all the renunciations, the excellent renunciation is the renunciation of lust, wrath and avarice
(Ibid, p.1018).

* Bin hau tiaag kahan ko tiagai—Without renunciation of ego, how can man be detached (Ibid, p.1140).

God is there in the world we see and we have to find Him there and yet remain detached:

* Kahay ray ban khojan jaee, sarb nivasee sadaa alepa tohee sang samaee—“O man why thou goest in the forest, to search for God”? God though ever invisible, dwells everywhere and abides even with thee (Ibid, M9. p.684).

* Jaisay jal mah kamal niralam murgae naisanay. Surt sabad bhav sagar taree-ay. Nanak Naam vakhaanai
(Ibid, p.938).

* Anjan mahe niranjan rahiay jog jugat tao pai-ay—When one remains
detached amongst worldly attachments then he attains the way of yoga (Ibid, p.730).

The Sikh Gurus have clearly disapproved of and rejected yogic practices of Kundalani Yoga and Hath Yoga:

* फिलहली करभ भुखमान ब्रह्मी, देतिख भूखमान ब्रह्मी लिख करभ भुखमान कुस्ता मीठी। लिख निष्क्रिय नाम के द्वारा खाने करभ भुखमान कुस्ता मीठी।—He who practices the only-washings and makes a furnace of the spinal cord, He who achieves Poise through inhalation, exhalation and holding of breath. He awakens not this consciousness without the Divine Guru’s guidance. Strayed away by doubts, he drowns in the ocean’s existence (GGS, p.1343).

* अमन केंद्र व्यस्त अमन नीति व्यस्त अमन नीति व्यस्त अमन नीति व्यस्त अमन नीति।—Aasan kot karay ashtang dharay bahu nias karay much karay, deen dyal Akal bhajay bin ko ant kay dham sudharay—Those who practice millions of postures according to ashtaag yoga and make offerings of limbs and blacken their faces. Without remembering the name of the compassionate and Immortal God, all of them will have to proceed to the place of the God of death (Tawparsad Swayye Patshahi10).

* अक्षे पी मीटेह नाख पक्रेह ताश वटी मंथन।।वर्ती।। अंगः में जा पक्रेह भवमय मुड़े विसेह लेख।। मनुष्य भक्ति बल्ले सूखे देक्य पाश्च अस्वेद।।—Akhee ta meeteh naak pakreh thagan kao sansaar.1. Rahao. Aant setee naak pakreh soojhtay tin lao. Magar paachhay kachh na soojhay ih padam aloa.—A Yogi closes his eyes and holds his nose to deceive the world. Holding his nose with thumb and two fingers, he proclaims, “I seeing the three worlds”. But he does not see anything that is behind him. Strange is the lotus posture (Ibid, p.662-63).

* अंग डिला डिला डिला डिला वेदी।। अंगः वेदी अंगः वेदी अंगः वेदी।।—A Yogi closes his eyes and holds his nose to deceive the world. Holding his nose with thumb and two fingers, he proclaims, “I seeing the three worlds”. But he does not see anything that is behind him. Strange is the lotus posture (Ibid, p.662-63).
The myopic washes his dark spots, again and over again. Defiled does he remain forever from inside. Without the Lord’s Name, as futile are all other deeds, As the tricks of a trickster who dupes with illusions (Ibid p.1343).

Sikhism does not approve of spiritual enlightenment and union with the Divine through the process of Kundlini activation:

* "Naam bina fokat sabh karma joi bazigar bharam bhoolay—Without the Name, vain are all deeds like those of a juggler, who deceives audience through illusion (Ibid, p.1343)."

Gurbani has compared these yogic practices with actions of Bazigar (acrobat) in the absence of remembering of Naam (God):

* "Naam bina fokat sabh karma joi bazigar bharam bhoolay—Without the Name, vain are all deeds like those of a juggler, who deceives audience through illusion (Ibid, p.1343)."

According to Gurbani, the human body is the shrine of God, **“Manun mandir tan ves kalandar”** i.e; “The mind in the body is the temple and the soul is the priest therein” (Ibid, Rag Bilawal, M1, p.795). If it is so, it is sin against Him (God) to torture the body or to deny its rightful place. The search of the Lord will necessitate the care of the body, which needs to be fed inorder that it may live, function properly and serve its master, the soul, so that it was enabled to realize its goal, “ननक में भूष रिहाई भूम पेटी लिखि धारी”—“Nanak so prabh simree-ay tis dehi ko paal”—The Lord should be meditated on by serving the body first” (Rag Bihagra, M5, p.554).
Gurbani defines the true yogi as follows:

`Par ninda ustat nahi ja kay kanchan loh smano,  
harkh sog tay rahey ateeta jogi tahey bakhano—He who  
slanders or praises not others and to whom gold and iron are  
alike and who is also free from joy and sorrow, call him, a true  
Jogi”  

(Ibid Dhanasari, M9, p.685).

The Aryans entered into the Indus Valley about four thousand years ago. They were smart people. Some of them learnt Jog (spirituality) from the Punjabi Jogi. They wrote Vedas and developed six systems of spiritual thought (Philosophy), which is called ‘Khat Darshan’ and Jog (Yoga) is one of them, which was founded by Rishi Patanjali.

Although the philosophical terminology of the ancient systems like Sankhya, Vedanta and Yoga had been used by the Sikh Gurus, yet they completely rejected the Yoga System as enunciated by Patanjali and his commentator Vyasa. They deliberately used those terms and redefined them in the light of their own philosophy and Sikh mystical experience.
Chapter 13

Rejection of Hindu Mythology by Sikhism

Mythology is the science or study of myths (मनान चट्टी मान्यताएं/telling tales or legends). Brahman scholars in ancient Hinduism were expert in writing mythological tales, which are found in plenty in the ancient Hindu scriptures called Purans. Unlike Hinduism, Sikhism is rooted in history and not in mythology, rather it frowns at mythology. In Guru Granth Sahib mythological references on certain pages are only illustrative and do not indicate any Guru's belief in mythological personages or their actions. The Gurus made a use of these references as the same were very common among the people for explaining to them certain principles and it was easier to make them understand the same through such mythological figures and events. For example, in case the Gurus wanted to emphasise that the whole creation was the work of only one God and not the trio as believed in Hindu mythology, they referred to three deities i.e. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh (Shiva) and showed them as the creation of the same One God. The Gurus had a knock of explaining the things in such a manner that the same did not offend the believers in those myths. It was never said that Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh were not there, but explaining that all the three were themselves a part of the creation of the God, it was indicated that those three did not do the works generally attributed to them. It was Will of God that prevailed and everything including the said deities were working under that Will (Hukam). Another example can be given from Vaar Malhaar. In one of the verses, the Guru says

______________________
Glimpses of Sikhism (240)
that when Indra was commanded by God to cause rain, it rained heavily. This verse clearly shows that those who worshiped Indra as the deity concerned with rain should realize the truth that Indra has no independent existence but has to obey the command of God. So it is God alone who is to be worshipped. The same is the position with Raja Ram. When Gurbani says that he destroyed the demons and obeyed the command of God:

* Inderai no phurmaiaa vutha chhehbar la-ay i.e. The God orders Indra (the cloud-god) and the rain falls in torrents (GGS, p.1279).

* Das avtaree ram raja aaiaa. Daintan maray dha-ay hukam sabaia i.e. The God created ten incarnations of whom one was king Rama. In God’s will they hastened to kill all the demons (GGS, p.1279).

In conclusion, it can be said that whatever mythological incidents or figures have found mention in Gurbani, the mention is exclusively meant for explaining the Gurmat principles and not because of any belief in the same.

Guru has discarded the myth and has asked the masses to leave all this and try to mingle with the Supreme Lord. There have been efforts at the interpolations by the crafty Brahmans inorder to pollute the heritage of the pure religion (*Nirmal Panth*) created by Guru Nanak.

After the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, the combination of *Minas* (Pirthi Chand, the eldest brother of Guru Arjan Dev and his progeny, the rival claimants to Guruship, hostile to Sikhism, the caste Hindus and the provincial Muslim officials at Lahore forged an alliance against Guru Hargobind and attacked him repeatedly inorder to kill or
capture him alive, but in all the battles, the provincial forces of Lahore government were defeated by the Guru. After the fourth battle at Kartarpur Guru Hargobind left the plains of the Punjab and relocated himself at Kiratpur in the Shivalik foot hills to avoid repeated conflicts. Thus forces hostile to Sikhism gained control of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) and Akal Takhat Amritsar. During this period of control they played havoc with Sikh ideology. They in collaboration with the upper-caste Hindus (Brahmans) brought in a lot of Puranic mythology in various compositions on Sikhism including Guru Nanak's Janam Sakhi (biography), in the process reducing him to an Avtaar within the framework of Hindu pantheonism.

Again after the death of Banda Singh Bahadur the Sikhs in Punjab suffered worst persecution under the later Moghuls and they had to leave their homes and hearths and take shelter in the jungles, mountain caves and the deserts to avoid arrest and thereby death. During this period Gurdwara Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), Akal Takhat at Amritsar and other historic Gurdwaras throughout the length and breadth of the Punjab came under the occupation of sects organized by Sri Chand son of Guru Nanak and Pirthi Chand eldest brother of Guru Arjan Dev. The followers of these sects were clean shaven and were known as Udasi Mahants. They were not persecuted because of their Hindu looks. These Mahants in collaboration with the Brahmans during this period created a lot of literature in which they wrote not only un-Sikh but even anti-Sikh material. They also introduced not only un-Sikh but even anti-Sikh practices in Gurdwaras and tried their best to Hinduise Sikhism. Also during this period the learned Brahmans from Banaras and Paryag came to the Punjab and settled in the Malwa region (Nabha, Patiala, Jind and Faridkot states) of the Punjab, labeled themselves as Nirmala Sikhs and became favourites of the rulers of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Faridkot states and created Sikh literature as per Vedanta philosophy.
against Gurmat and made several interpolations.

During the Sikh rule in the Punjab, the clean shaven Mahants became Sikh in appearance by keeping unshorn hair, but continued to make interpolations in Sikh religious literature. The Sikhs remained busy in securing and expanding the borders of their young kingdom and made no efforts to purge the interpolations from the Sikh literature. With the passage of time the control became hereditary. Even during the first fifty years of the British rule in Punjab, both major shrines (Gurdwara Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat) and most of other historic Sikh shrines remained in the occupation of these Mahants, who continued to make interpolations in Sikh literature during this period. The British gave them protection against the upsurge of the Sikh masses. The erratic thoughts expressed in the works created by these forces hostile to Sikhism emboldened the antagonistic forces in their onslaught against Sikhism in the modern period. Several works of Sikh philosophy, religion, history etc need through checking. They should be rewritten dropping all the erratic and spurious material, which does not fit with the Sikh thought content of the Holy Sikh Scripture, ‘Guru Granth Sahib’.
Chapter 14

Un-Sikh and anti-Sikh practices of Hinduism and their rejection in Sikhism

Sikh traditions are being targeted by Brahmanic forces. These traditions are inseparable from Sikh life. They need careful guarding. The person with desire to offer services to propagate Guru's cause must learn it well by self education. Sikhism is based on Gurmat, any tradition, which fails to conform to the philosophy of Sikhism, must be discarded without reservation. Gurbani says, “Aklee Sahib saveeay, aklee payeeay maan—With thoughtful logic should one worship God, with same logic should one seek honour” (GGS, p.1245).

The status of Guru Granth Sahib in Sikhism and among the Sikhs is synonymous with the Sikh Gurus. Therefore, all doubts, controversies regarding Sikh religion must be settled in the light of Gurbani of this supreme scripture and the Guru. The ideas and views which conform to the Gurbani should alone be accepted as valid and authentic. All other versions should be discarded. Prevalent Brahmanical practices and rituals should be tested on touchstone of Gurmat principles. All those practices which violate the spirit of Gurmat and which create contradictions between belief and conduct must be done away with. Following acts of Brahmanism are against the Sikh ideology and are strictly prohibited in Sikhism:

The commencing verse of Guru Granth Sahib popularly known as Mool Mantar (Basic Postulate of Sikhism) is used as
**Invocation (Mangal-अंग) in Sikhism.** It has been represented by Guru Arjan Dev many times throughout the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib before the beginning of every Raag, every section and every subsection of Guru Granth Sahib as such without abridgement or in an abridged form as follows:

**Complete form:**

\[\text{Mool Mantar}\]

**Abridged forms:**

\[\text{Mool Mantar}\]
\[\text{Mool Mantar}\]
\[\text{Mool Mantar}\]
\[\text{Mool Mantar}\]

Hence the shortest abridged form of Mool Mantar most commonly used as invocation in Guru Granth Sahib is: \[\text{Mool Mantar}\]

Writing \[\text{Mool Mantar}\] alone or \[\text{Mool Mantar}\] instead of writing \[\text{Mool Mantar}\] as sign of invocation (Mangal-अंग) is against the ideology of Sikhism. \[\text{Mool Mantar}\] alone is not found written alone in the holy scripture of Sikhism, ‘Guru Granth Sahib’ published by Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Similarly \[\text{Mool Mantar}\] is also not found written together as such in Guru Granth Sahib published by Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. These are recent innovations of the so called Sanatani (radical) Hindus, who have infiltrated into the main stream Sikhism in the garb of Sikhs and are popularly called Sant Babas, are trying to Hinduize Sikhism through various ways. For instance they equate \[\text{Mool Mantar}\] with \[\text{Mool Mantar}\], the sign used as invocation in Hinduism, which according to the theology of Hinduism represents the divine Trinity of Hinduism constituted by Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh also called Shiva, is totally against the monotheism of Sikhism and therefore stands rejected.

---

Glimpses of Sikhism (245)
Belief in a living Guru after Guru Gobind Singh, idolatry, grave, tomb, and picture worship are against the teachings of Sikhism / Gurmat. Putting charn-dhoor (dust from under the footmats at the entry door of the Gurdwara) on the forehead is a farce and does not really signify the humility of the Sikh. This has to appear from the conduct of the Sikh. Treating Guru Granth Sahib as deity and offering garlands, flowers, sprinkling scented sprays, pressing, kissing pillars or legs of Peerha (पीर) of the Guru, burning dhoop, breaking Naryal (coconut) and keeping a vessel (Kumbh) full of water during recitation of Gurbani or in the presence of Guru Granth sahib, keeping fan running or providing airconditioner in the room for Guru Granth Sahib in summer, warm blankets and heaters during winter are all acts akin to idol worship and therefore prohibited in Sikhism. Lighting lamps with Ghio / Ghee (with a view of holiness of lamps)-Jot jagaoni is against the teachings of Gurmat, the use of lamps for necessary light is permitted. Ringing of bells, clapping and dancing in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, displaying of pictures of Sikh Gurus along with Guru Granth Sahib in a Gurdwara or any other place, performance of Aarti with lamps in a platter in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib is against the ideology of Sikhism. Washing Gurdwara floors with Kachi Lassi is nothing but a blind orthodoxy, which finds no approval of Gurmat. Observing Chalihas (walking bare footed to a religious place for forty days for a desire to be fulfilled, Sukhna-Sukhni, Shagun, upshagun (good or bad omens), nazar utaarni (evil eye), removing bhoot-paret-atma (foul-spirits) by jhar-phook (Beating with broom and chimta) and holding breath to enter dasam-dwar (Tenth door) are all against teachings of Gurmat. Reading of five Shabads of Dukh Bhanjni or Sankat mochan for getting relief from ailments is only a myth by superstitious people is also against Gurmat. Observing caste system or even mentioning caste with one’s name and observing gender inequality are against the teachings of Gurmat. Taking part in

Glimpses of Sikhism (246)
Devi jagratas, Raas Leela, Ram leela are against the teachings of Gurmat. Observance of fast, observance of Shradhs, belief in magical and occult powers, tying of muticoloured thread called ‘mauli’ on the wrist, wearing of rosary (Mala) or counting of beads for worship purposes, putting up bindi on the forehead and sandhoor (vermillion) in the head by Sikh women and Tilak by men, veiling of women, Sati and child marriage is against the teachings of Gurmat. Celebration of Hindu festivals—Rakhri, Lohri and Holi is against the teachings of Gurmat.

Sikhism versus Hinduism

* Sikhism is the youngest whereas Hinduism is one of the oldest religions of the world.

* Sikhism is a prophetic religion based on a definitive revelation like Semitic religions of the west, whereas Hinduism, has an anonymous mysticism as its source of validity.

* Sikhism believes in the oneness God and is strictly monotheistic faith, whereas Hinduism believes in Trinity of God and is polytheistic.

* Sikhism believes in universal brotherhood and equality of all human beings. It strongly denounces the divisive Hindu caste system. Guru Nanak says, “Eyek pita ekas kay ham barik toon mera gurhai” i.e; “We are all children of the same God who takes care of us all” (GGS, p.611). Guru Gobind Singh says, “Manans kee jaat sabay ekay pechannb” “Treat all mankind alike”. All other Indian religions, except Buddhism
observe caste system and ‘Varan Ashram Dharma’ forms the bedrock of Hinduism. Buddhism did away with ceremonies of Hindus set aside the Brahmanical priesthood, abolished sacrifices and dethroned the Gods of the Hindus. Buddhism and Jainism stand for ‘Moksha’ or ‘Nirvan’ through penance. Jainism on one hand condemns sacrifices, denies divine origin of the Vedas, rejects the Hindu doctrine of immunity from punishment through alms-giving and invocation of Gods and attaches no importance to the spirits of the dead. On the other hand, it recognizes the priestly institutions of the Brahmans, adheres rigidly to the Hindu caste system and has rules connected with purification, weddings, death, inheritance, the worship of Gods closely analogous to those of Hindus. The Jains rever cow and consider killing of any living creature an unpardonable sin.

Sikhism believes in reality (existence) of the God and reality of the world, “Sachcha aap sachcha Darbar”-(GGS, Ml, Japji, Pauri 34, p.7). Hinduism believes in God, but regards the world as Maya (illusion). There is total confusion about God in Hinduism. Sikhism is strictly monotheistic. It does not believe in Polytheism or henotheism. It does not in the Hindu Trinity of God, Brahma (The Creator), Vishnu (The Sustainer) and Shiva (The Destroyer).

Sikhism does not believe in the incarnations (Avtaars) of God, Gods (Devtas) and Goddesses (Devis). Hinduism believes in incarnations of God (Avtaars), Gods (Devtas) and Goddesses (Devis).

Sikhism is based on ethics, morality and knowledge (Gyan). It strongly denounces all ritualism. Hinduism strongly believes in ritualism. Hinduism is based on Chanakiya neeti of Saam, Daam and Dand Bhed in which morality and ethics have no place.
Sikhism believes in equality of all human beings irrespective of gender, colour or any other such denomination. Whereas the divisive caste system forms the very bedrock of Hinduism and it is also known as Varn Ashram Dharma.

Sikhism strongly denounces all ritualism. Hinduism strongly believes in ritualism.

Hinduism believes in *Karma* and *bhog* (Cause and Effect), transmigration, the concept of Heaven and Hell. Buddhism and Jainism do not believe in the existence of God, but accept the concepts of transmigration of soul and that of *Karma* and *bhog* and they regard the world as misery or a suffering.

Sikhism believes in now and here and does not believe in the concept of after life and thereby rejects the existence of *Narak-Surag* of Hinduism (Hell and heaven). As per Sikh thought, heaven and hell are not places for living here-after, they are part of spiritual topography of man and do not exist otherwise. They refer to good and evil stages of life respectively and can be lived here in our earthly existence. According to Gurbani: “Truthful living in the noble fear of God is heaven. Having no faith in God and leading an unethical life is hell” (GGS, p.24).

Sikhism does not subscribe to the mythological Hindu theory of creation. Guru Granth Sahib, the holy Sikh scripture gives a very definite theory of creation.

Sikhism does not believe in miracles, whereas Hinduism believes in miracles.

Sikhism strictly forbids Idol, picture, grave, tomb and Baba worship. Hinduism believes in Idolatry, samadh and Baba worship.

Sikhism is a whole life system because it does not accept any dichotomy in life, whether it is ‘personal and social’, ‘spiritual
and material, ‘faith and reason,’ or any other such differentiation. It involves an integral combination between spiritual and empirical life of man. This constitutes the foundation of *Miri-Piri* (*Bhagti* and *Shakti*) doctrine of Sikhism. Other Indian religions: Vedanta (*Hinduism*), Radical saints, Buddhism, Jainism etc; consider spiritual path and empirical (worldly) paths, separate and distinct and there is a clear dichotomy between the empirical and spiritual life of man, hence they are dichotomous systems. They address devotion (*Bhagti*) and force (*Shakti*) as separate entities.

* Sikhism unlike Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism takes a more positive view of the human body. Man, the acme of God's creation is not merely a handful of dust, but repository and medium of the message of the Lord. The body is not an unclean vessel, a seat of worms, but ‘Temple of God’ worthy of adoration and reverence. Anything unnatural or tortuous has no excuse for acceptance. Standing on one leg, living on roots, practicing contemplation in different postures, undergoing self suppression in a hard way and doing penances were too weak to avail man in the path of realization, but they are considered necessary in other eastern religious systems for the purification of the body and attainment of enlightenment. Buddhism and Jainism stand for *Moksha / Nirvana* through penance. Gurbani denounces any such practices, “राज में पूरी किसी नहीं देंगी देंगी देंगी देंगी देंगी देंगी देंगी देंगी-Nanak so prabh simri-ay tis dehi ko paal” i.e. The Lord should be meditated on by serving the body first. (GGS, p.554).

- Sikhism believes in *Ahimsa (Ahinsa)*, but according to its own philosophy. It does not believe in Ahimsa that stood as a bar against the religious man or a religious society trying to confront socio-political aggression. A society that has to accept the social responsibility of confronting injustice cannot remain wedded to
the hurdle of Ahimsa. According to Sikhism it is righteous to use sword, when all other peaceful means fail, “Choon Kar Az Haman Heelte Dar Guzashat. Halal Ast Burdan Ba Shamsheer Dast” (Zafarnama, Guru Gobind Singh). In Vedanta (Hinduism including radical saints) and other eastern religions (Jainism, Buddhism) Ahimsa is deemed to be a cardinal virtue and meat eating is a prohibition. Guru Nanak says, “mws mws kr mUrK JgVy igAwn iDAwn nwhI jwxY kOx swg kOx mws khwvY iks mih pwp smwxY - Only fools argue whether to eat meat or not. Who can define what is meat and what is not meat or who knows where the sin lies, being a vegetarian or non-vegetarian?” (GGS, p.1289). And that “jyqy dwxy AMn ky jIAw N bwJ n koie - every food grain that we eat has life in it,” (GGS, p.472). He further adds, “Jeeaa kaa aahaar jee khana eh karay i.e; Living beings feed on living beings”(GGS p.955), hence there is nothing unnatural or ungodly in eating flesh.

* Among all ancient Indian religious systems salvation (Mukti / Moksha /Nirvana) means deliverance from the cycle of life and re-birth (Samsara) and individual salvation is their ideal. Sikhism denounces this concept. Enlightenement not redemption is the Sikh concept of salvation. For Sikhs ‘Mukti’ is replacement of ignorance by spiritual enlightenment, now and here and not after death. Gurbani says, “Moo-ay ho-ay ko mukat deo gay, mukat na janay koela” i.e, "O, God who will see that salvation, which you will grant me after death" (GGS, p.1292).
According to Gurmat:

(1) "Awpu hYsc mnu inrmlY jIvn mukiq hir pwvY soie—By realizing the self, the mind becomes purified. Such one is emancipated in life and obtains the Lord (GGS, p.161).

(2) pRB kI AwigAw Awqm ihqwvY jIvn mukiq soaU khwvY—He, who in his heart loves Lord’s command, is said to be the man, having salvation while alive (GGS, p.275).

(3) jIvn mukiq so AwKIAY mir jIvY mirAw—He, who effaces his own self (ego) and is dead in life, is said to have been emancipated while alive” (GGS, p.449).

(4) “jIvn muktY so AwKIAY ijsu ivchu haumY jwie—He alone is said to be emancipated in life, who has eliminated ego from within him” (GGS, p.1010).

In Sikhism there is nothing like private or personal salvation. It is universal religion catering for the spiritual well-being of society as a whole, “Awp mukiq mukiq kry sMswr nwnk iqs jn kv sada nmskwr—Aap mukat mukat karay sansar Nanak tis jan kv sada namskar” (Ibid, p.293). Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufism, Christianity seek personal salvation catering to the needs of individuals. They are not concerned about evils of society and barbarities of rulers of time.

* Sikhism believes in shouldering full social responsibility and rejects a life of escapeism. It denounces asceticism and renunciation (Sanyasa / Bhikshuhood) for achieving salvation as propagated and practiced by Hinduism, radical saints, Buddhism and Jainism. Sikhism propagates the life of a householder, “Nanak satgur poora bhetiay, poori hovay jugat, hasandia, khelandia, penandia, khavandia vichay hovay muktY—Nanak satgur poora bhetiay, poori hovay jugat, hasandia, khelandia, penandia, khavandia vichay hovay muktY” (GGS, p.522). Guru Nanak says, “He knows the way who earns his living and shares his earning with others” i.e “Awpu

Glimpses of Sikhism (252)
Sikhism does not believe in celibacy (Brahmacharya) as a means to achieve bliss, but condemns it in strongest terms. According to Gurbani, "Bind raakh jau tareeay bhai khusray kion naa parm gat paee.- i.e; If one was to be saved by celibacy, then the eunuchs should attain the highest bliss" (GGS, p.469). Celibacy before marriage is a part of Sikh ethics, but it is mandatory for a Sikh to get married. In Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Christianity, celibacy (Brahmacharya) is the rule for achieving bliss.

Sikhism believes in ethical equality of woman with man. Before the birth of Sikhism the plight of woman in the Indian subcontinent was highly deplorable. She had most inferior position in the society. In Hinduism Manu the Hindu law-giver has attributed all that is good and great to males and on the contrary, assigned all that is bad and obnoxious to females. Tulsi Dass in his Ram Chrit Manas says, "Dhor ganvar, shudar, pashu, nari, yeh sab tarin kay adhikari". In Buddhism a male Bhikshu is not supposed to touch and rescue a drowning woman even if she was his mother. Dighambra Jains believe that a woman cannot reach Kavalya and has to achieve first male incarnation. In Sikhism the position of woman has been raised to an exalted status and she is regarded as principle of eternal creation, "From woman is our birth; in woman's womb are we shaped. To woman are we engaged; to woman are we wedded. The woman is our friend and form woman is the family. If one woman dies, we seek another, through the woman are the bonds of the world. Why call the woman evil who gives birth to Kings?"
rajaan. From woman is the man, without the woman there is none” (GGS, Var Asa M1, p.473).

* Sikhism does not believe in the mon-varat (fast of speech) of Hinduism. It believes in constructive dialogue during our stay in this world, “जब लगे दुनिया रहे तो हर बिंदुं बदले हर बिंदु मुटी बने॥ Jab lag dunia rahi-ay Nanak kuchh kahi-ay kuchh suni-ay (GGS, p.611).

* There is no priestly class in Sikhism any initiated Sikh, male or female, can perform the Sikh religious service. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam all have priestly class.

* Sikhism differes as regards the authenticity of its dogmas from most other theological systems. Many of the great teachers of the world has known, have not left a line of their own compositions and we know only what they taught through tradition or second-hand information. But the compositions of Sikh Gurus are preserved and we know at first hand what they taught.
Chapter 15

**Sikhism versus other Religious Systems**

* Sikhism is a prophetic religion based on a definitive revelation like Semitic religions of the west, where as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism have an anonymous mysticism as their source of validity.

* Sikhism believes in reality (existence) of the God and reality of the world, “Sachcha aap sachcha Darbar”-(GGS, Ml, Japji, pauri 34, p.7). Hinduism believes in God, but regards the world as Maya (illusion). Christianity considers God as transcendent only, whereas for Sikhism God is both Transcendent and Immanent. There is total confusion about God in Hinduism. Sikhism is strictly monotheistic. It does not believe in Polytheism or henotheism. It neither believes in the Hindu Trinity of God, Brahma (The Creator), Vishnu (The Sustainer) and Shiva (The Destroyer) nor in the Christian theory of Trinity of God. Buddhism and Jainism donot believe in God at all. Semitic religions accept God as the doer, but simultaneously propagate the existence of Satan, who is projected as equally powerful if not more powerful than God and has a hobby to lead good pious men astray. Sikhism does not believe in the incarnations (Avtaars) of God, Gods (Devtas) and Goddesses (Devis). Hinduism believes in incarnations of God (Avtaars), Gods (Devtas) and Goddesses (Devis).

* In Islam, the Almighty has been named, ‘Allah’ and it says, “La ilah ill Allah Mohamad Ur Rasul Allah”:“There is no God but
Allah and Mohammad is prophet”. According to Sikhism Almighty has no particular name. Guru Nanak has simply has called Him “Naam”. Guru Gobind Singh says, “I salute Him who has no name i.e, “नमस्तो अल्मे-Namastang anamay” (Jaap Sahib). Sikh Gurus freely used Hindu names such as Hari, Oankar, Beethal, Shiva, Gopal and Rama etc as well as Allah, Khuda and Sahib from Islam. They simply used them for convenience as synonyms for 'God' as Sikhism believes in oneness of God and oneness of man. There is no place for music in Islam, whereas the entire holy scripture of Sikhism, Guru Granth Sahib, except for a few pages in the beginning and a few pages towards the end is structured on Gurmat Sangeet.

* Hinduism’believes in Karma and bhog (Cause and Effect), transmigration, the concept of Heaven and Hell. Buddhism and Jainism donot believe in the existence of God, but accept the concepts of transmigration of soul and that of Karma and bhog and they regard the world as misery or a suffering. The ultimate goal of Nirvana can be attained by following certain principles including non-violence. In Jainism non-violence is considered as Parm Dharam. Jainism also prescribes severe austerities and hard practices for attaining salvation. Sikhism does not subscribe to those views.

* Islam firmly adheres to Judaic concept of God, with theory of creation, Adam, the sin, Heaven and Hell. In Islam the belief is to enjoy life in heaven. According to this concept, there will be a day of judgement, when man will be judged according to his deeds and then sent to heaven or hell. In heaven, there is everything for one’s enjoyment, which a Muslim is directed to abjure in this life; and a garden laden with fruits. Sikhism believes in now and here and does not believe in the concept of after life and thereby rejects the existence of heaven and hell.
(Christianity), Dozakh and Bahishat (Islam) and Narak-Surag (Hinduism). As per Sikh thought, heaven and hell are not places for living here-after, they are part of spiritual topography of man and do not exist otherwise. They refer to good and evil stages of life respectively and can be lived here in our earthly existence. According to Gurbani: “Truthful living in the noble fear of God is heaven. Having no faith in God and leading an unethical life is hell” (GGS, p.24).

* Sikhism does not subscribe to the Semitic religious belief that the world was created in seven days only. Guru Granth Sahib, the holy Sikh scripture gives a very definite theory of creation.

* Sikhism does not believe in miracles, whereas there are miracles associated with Jesus. Hinduism also believes in miracles.

* Sikhism strictly forbids Idol, picture, grave, tomb and Baba worship. Hinduism believes in Idolatry, samadh and Baba worship.

* Sikhism strongly denounces ritualism whereas Hinduism believes in ritualism.

* Sikhism is a whole life system because it does not accept any dichotomy in life, whether it is ‘personal and social’, ‘spiritual and material,’ ‘faith and reason,’ or any other such differentiation. It involves an integral combination between spiritual and empirical life of man. This constitutes the foundation of Miri-Piri (Bhagti and Shakti) doctrine of Sikhism. Other Indian religions: Vedanta (Hinduism), Radical saints, Buddhism, Jainism etc; consider spiritual path and empirical (worldly) paths, separate and distinct and there is a clear dichotomy between the empirical and spiritual life of man. Hence they are dichotomous systems. They address devotion (Bhagti) and force (Shakti) as separate entities.
Sikhism unlike Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism takes a more positive view of the human body. Man, the acme of God's creation is not merely a handful of dust, but repository and medium of the message of the Lord. The body is not an unclean vessel, a seat of worms, but 'Temple of God' worthy of adoration and reverence. Anything unnatural or tortuous has no excuse for acceptance. Standing on one leg, living on roots, practicing contemplation in different postures, undergoing self suppression in a hard way and doing penances were too weak to avail man in the path of realization, but they are considered necessary in other eastern religious systems for the purification of the body and attainment of enlightenment. Buddhism and Jainism stand for Moksha /Nirvana through penance. Gurbani denounces any such practices, “रसम मे पुष्य गिनसे दिम रति वै पहन॥-Nanak so prabh simri-ay tis dehi ko paal” i.e “The Lord should be meditated on by serving the body first” (GGS, p.554).

Sikhism believes in Ahimsa (Ahinsa), but according to its own philosophy. It does not believe in Ahimsa that stood as a bar against the religious man or a religious society trying to confront socio-political aggression. A society that has to accept the social responsibility of confronting injustice cannot remain wedded to the hurdle of Ahimsa. According to Sikhism it is righteous to use sword, when all other peaceful means fail, “चौं कर अजन जन्म जीसु ले चव सुकाम।। चौं जन तू मर खूल वा मां दीवा दिसु॥-Choorn Kar Az Haman Heelte Dar Guzashat, Halal Ast Burdan Ba Shamsheer Dast” (Zafarnama, Guru Gobind Singh). In Vedanta (Hinduism including radical saints) and other eastern religions (Jainism, Buddhism) Ahimsa is deemed to be a cardinal virtue and meat eating is a prohibition. Guru Nanak says, “महम भग बह मभुत ज्ञाने दिमहर दिवस्य तथ्य सती॥ बेठ मह बेठ भग बहरे विम भें वध मह सती॥-Only fools argue whether to eat meat or not. Who can
define what is meat and what is not meat or who knows where
the sin lies, being a vegetarian or non-vegetarian?” (GGS,
p.1289). And that “नेहे संत भजन वे तीर्थं ज्ञन ते वैज्ञ-every food
grain that we eat has life in it,” (GGS, p.472). He further adds,
“पानी तपस्या निवृत्ते तै निल विभाग मध बंधन-Water is the source of all
life, which assists the growth of all living beings human beings”
(GGS, Var Asa, MI, p.472). Also,“सीमा ल आजूहं नींहं ज्ञन झटपट जरेरि-Jeeaa kaa aahaar jee nhana eh karay i.e; Living beings
feed on living beings”(GGS p.955), hence there is nothing
unnatural or ungodly in eating flesh.

* Among all ancient Indian religious systems salvation (Mukti /
Moksha /Nirvana) means deliverance from the cycle of life and
re-birth (Samsara) and individual salvation is their ideal. Sikhism
denounces this concept. Enlightenment not redemption is the Sikh
concept of salvation. For Sikhs ‘Mukti’ is replacement of
ignorance by spiritual enlightenment, now and here and not after
death. Gurbani says, “भूषे तपस्ये वे भविन्दा भविन्दा ते नहे बंधनभिन्दा-Moo-ay ho-ay ko mukat deo gay, mukat na janay koela” i.e,
"O, God who will see that salvation, which you will grant me after
death” (GGS, p.1292).

According to Gurmat:

1. “अपू-धर्ते भव तिनभुज वैज्ञं नींहं भविन्द-By realizing
the self, the mind becomes purified Such one is emancipated in
life and obtains the Lord (GGS, p.161).

2. पुष्प वी आजितं आजम रिद्वाथे नींहं भविन्दं नेउर्-He, who in his
heart loves Lord’s command, is said to be the man, having
salvation while alive (GGS, p.275).

3. नींहं भविन्दं मे आपि भवि नेउर-He, who effaces his own self
and is dead in life, is said to have been emancipated while alive”
(GGS, p.449).

Glimpses of Sikhism (259)
4. “सीकर भक्ति में अपनी रजिम विचित्र उद्धेरित् हारिः”–He alone is said to be emancipated in life, who has eliminated ego from within him” (GGS, p.1010).

In Sikhism there is nothing like private or personal salvation. It is universal religion catering for the spiritual well-being of society as a whole, “अप मुकता मुकता करे संमाज। रात्रि दिन तहे मन समाजद।- Aap mukat mukat karay sansar Nanak tis jan kv sada namskar” (Ibid, p293). Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufism, Christianity seek personal salvation catering to the needs of individuals. They are not concerned about evils of society and barbarities of rulers of time.

* Sikhism believes in shouldering full social responsibility and rejects a life of escapeism. It denounces asceticism and renunciation (Sanyasa / Bhikshuhood) for achieving salvation as propagated and practiced by Hinduism, radical saints, Buddhism and Jainism. Sikhism propagates the life of a householder, “रात्रि मीठी मूं ढेटीं थुपी ढेटीं तहाँ तहाँ समीचित धर्मीं धर्मीं धर्मीं धर्मीं धर्मीं धर्मीं-Nanak satgur poora bhetiay, poori hovay jugat, hasandia, khelandia, penandia, khavandia vichay hovay mukat” (GGS, p.522). Guru Nanak says, “He knows the way who earns his living and shares his earning with others” i.e “ज्ञान लर्धं बिध रहे रे॥ रात्रि दिन भाग्य लोक॥-Ghal kha-ay kichh hathon day Nanak rah pachhanay say” (GGS, p.1245).

* Sikhism does not believe in celibacy (Brahmacharya) as a means to achieve bliss, but condemns it in strongest terms. According to Gurbani, “बिध गर्भ से उदाेरे दर्शी पाले विधि ते धर्म लावौ धर्म॥-Bind raakh jau tareey bhai khusray kion na parm gat paee.- i.e; If one was to be saved by celibacy, then the eunuchs should attain the highest bliss” (GGS, p.469). Celibacy before marriage is a part of Sikh ethics, but it is mandatory for a Sikh to get married. In Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Christianity,
celibacy (Brahmacharya) is the rule for achieving bliss.

- Sikhism believes in ethical equality of woman with man. Before the birth of Sikhism the plight of woman in the Indian subcontinent was highly deplorable. She had the most inferior position in the society. In Hinduism Manu the Hindu law-giver has attributed all that is good and great to males and on the contrary, assigned all that is bad and obnoxious to females. Tulsi Dass in his Ram Chrit Manas says, "चेत कोपल मुर्गा भूनी रत्नी। जिन मन उन्न बे भविष्यवाणी।-Dhor gamvar, shudar, pasu, nari, yeh sab tarin kay adhikari". In Buddhism a male Bhikshu is not supposed to touch and rescue a drowning woman even if she was his mother. Dighambra Jains believe that a woman cannot reach Kavalya and has to achieve first male incarnation. In Catholic Christianity, a woman is not ordained as a priest. In Islam also woman is denied ethical equality with man. In Sikhism the position of woman has been raised to an exalted status and she is regarded as principle of eternal creation, "From woman is our birth; in woman's womb are we shaped. To woman are we engaged; to woman are we wedded. The woman is our friend and form woman is the family. If one woman dies, we seek another, through the woman are the bonds of the world. Why call the woman evil who gives birth to Kings?" so ikau mMdw AwKIAY ijq jMmY rwjwn। So kion manda akhi-ay jit jamein rajaan. From woman is the man, without the woman there is none"(GGS, Var Asa M1, p.473).

- Sikhism believes in universal brotherhood and equality of all human beings. It strongly denounces the divisive Hindu caste system. Guru Nanak says, "Ek pita ekas kay ham batik toon mera gurhai" i.e; "We are all children of the same God who takes care of us all"(GGS, p.611). Guru Gobind Singh says, “मन मे तले तले तले तले”.

Glimpses of Sikhism (261)
All other Indian religions, except Buddhism observe caste system and ‘Varn Ashram Dharma’ forms the bedrock of Hinduism. Buddhism did away with ceremonies of Hindus set aside the Brahmanical priesthood, abolished sacrifices and dethroned the Gods of the Hindus. Buddhism and Jainism stand for ‘Moksha’ or ‘Nirvan’ through penance. Jainism on one hand condemns sacrifices, denies divine origin of the Vedas, rejects the Hindu doctrine of immunity from punishment through alms-giving and invocation of Gods and attaches no importance to the spirits of the dead. On the other hand, it recognizes the priestly institutions of the Brahmins, adheres rigidly to the Hindu caste system and has rules connected with purification, weddings, death, inheritance, the worship of Gods closely analogous to those of Hindus. The Jains reverence cow and consider killing of any living creature an unpardonable sin.

* Sikhism does not believe in the mon-varat (fast of speech) of Hinduism. It believes in constructive dialogue during our stay in this world, “जब लग दुनिया रही-य नन्द कुछ कही-य कुछ सुनी-य”- Jab lag dunia rahi-ay Nanak kuchh kahi-ay kuchh suni-ay (GGS, p.611).

* There is no priestly class in Sikhism any initiated Sikh, male or female, can perform the Sikh religious service. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam all have priestly class.

* Sikhism differs as regards the authenticity of its dogmas from most other theological systems. Many of the great teachers of the world has known, have not left a line of their own compositions and we know only what they taught through tradition or second-hand information. But the compositions of Sikh Gurus are preserved and we know at first hand what they taught.
GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED TERMS IN SIKHISM

Aad: First: Original
Ant: The end
Akal Purkh: The Being beyond time; God
Akali: Worshipper of Akal (God).
Akhand Path: Continuous, uninterrupted reading of Guru Granth Sahib, by a relay of readers
Akiratghan: Ungrateful
Amrit: Elixir used for formal initiation into Sikhism. Literally: Mrit means dead and A-mrit is immortal.
Ades: Epithet used as greetings by Jogis
Asikh: Non-Sikh. Literally means not learned.
Avidya: Lack of education
Amritdhari: One who has been initiated according to Sikh rites.
Ardas: Sikh prayer—A humble and sincere request to Akaal Purkh i.e; God.
Asur: Demon
Atman: Soul / Spirit / Self
Avtar: Incarnation of God
Bani: Contents of all the Holy Scriptures forming canon of Sikh faith.
Bhai: Literally, brother; an epipheth of respect used for a Sikh connected with religious affairs.

Bhagauti: (ब्रजगुण) — another name for God—Akal Purkh
Bhagauti (ब्रजगुण) means Kirpan/sword
Bhagauti (ब्रजगुण) means devotee (Bhagat)

Bhog: Concluding ceremony of Sikh service

Baoli: A well with stairs down to water level

Baba: Title given to a respected man (often elderly)

Brahm-Giani: God-illuminated human being, a perfect saint

Banda (बंदा): Man

Buddhi: Woman

Baanda (बंदा): Slave

Baandi: Slave woman

Bhataar (बतार): Husband

Bharam (ब्रार्म): Unfounded belief

Birdh (बिंद्र): Old person

Bird (बिंद): Follower (भिंद)

Bird kee Paij (बिंद की पैज): Follower's honour

Bungay: Places of residence

Buddh: Wisdom

Bip, Biper, Brahmin: Purist Hindu Varna entitled to become priest and teacher.

Bipran kee reet: Brahmical culture

Bhugat-gian: Spiritual knowledge

Choohra: Member of serf class outside the pale of Hindu caste system i.e, Ashoot.
Chaunkian: Guard posts

Chaur: A fan of Yak hair or peacock feathers, waved over Sri Guru Granth Sahib as a sign of respect, a symbol of authority.

Chanani: Canopy over Guru Granth Sahib

Charhdi-Kala: Active optimism

Darbar Sahib: Sikh name for Golden Temple

Divan: Sikh act of congregational worship

Darsan: Literally, glimpse, whereas in Indian theosophy means Philosophy

Dera: Settlement of a spiritual teacher, where his followers get together to listen his sermons.

Daswandh: literally meaning one tenth, but practically it is voluntary contribution by the Sikhs to Gurdwara for the welfare of society and propagation of their religion i.e, Sikhism.

Deg: Cauldron

Dahri: Beard

Fakir: Muslim divine who lives on alms.

Guru: In Sikh scriptures, the word ‘Guru’ has been used to denote at least three different senses. Firstly, it has been used for God Himself, secondly, the word has been referred to as teacher-Guru and finally it is used for the Holy Sikh Scripture, “Guru Granth Sahib”.

Gurdwara: Sikh place of prayer and piety.

Guru Granth Sahib: The holy Sikh scripture.

Granthi: Reader of Sikh scriptures during service.

Giani: A person learned in Sikh teachings.

Gola: Slave

Gurmat: Philosophy of Sikhism.

Gurmatta: Collective decision taken by the Sikhs in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib.

Gurmukh: God-oriented.

Grahisti: Householder

Gurpurb: Anniversary of a Guru's birth, death or succession.

Gaddi: Seat of authority

Gola: Servant

Hukam: Literally order, theologically divine command

Jaat: Caste

Jatha: A band or group of the Sikhs

Jathedar: Leader of the Jatha

Joora: Top knot

Jog: One of the six systems of Hindu philosophy.

Kartar: God

Karm: Action, ritual, measuring stick

Kirtam: Created beings

Kaal: Time, death, black, tomorrow

Khalis: Punjabi word meaning pure.

Khalsa: Arabic / Persian word meaning sovereign.

Kes: Unshorn hair on the head.

Kachhehra: Breaches extending upto knees worn by initiated Sikhs.

Kanga: Special comb used by the Sikhs.

Kara: Iron wristlet.

Kirpan: Sword
**Kafir:** Non-believer

**Kookas:** A break away sect of the Sikhs, who believe in Guru Granth Sahib but along with it also believe in the continuity of a living Guru after Guru Gobind Singh. The sect was founded by Baba Balak Singh / Ram Singh. They have lost relevance in mainstream Sikhism because of their belief in the continuity of a living Guru.

**Kala Pani:** Literally means black water, but in Hinduism it refers to sea water, which Hindus consider as ritually polluting to cross.

**Kirar (किरर):** Opportunistic. The term is also used for merchantile community of Punjabi Hindu Khatris.

**Landa:** A script used by shopkeepers in the Punjab, before the creation of Punjabi speaking Punjab (Punjabi Suba)

**Lawan:** Literally separation, Hymn read at the time of somenization of marriage in Sikhism.

**Lala (लाल):** Slave (गुलम)

**Madh:** Middle

**Malechh:** Unclean

**Man-mukh:** Self-centered person

**Mat (मत):** Intellect / Wisdom

**Man (मन):** Mind / Soul

**Masands:** Order of the Sikh missionaries established by Guru Arjan and abolished by Guru Gobind Singh in Sikhism.

**Math:** A monastery

**Maya:** Deceptive power of material world

**Meena (मीना):** Scoundrel

**Moorti:** Representation of deity used for worship in Hindu temples and homes.
Misar: Another name for Brahmin

Mullah: Muslim religious teacher.

Mundavani: Stamp

Nidhaan: Treasure

Nishan Sahib: Sikh national flag

Nitinm: Daily devotional routine of the Sikhs

Nirmalas: Literally sinless. They believe in Guru Granth Sahib, instead of Sanatan image worship and caste observance, but because of their being deeply rooted in vedic philosophy have lost their relevance in Sikhism.

Paat (ਪੰਤ): Dynasty

Pathi: Reciter of Sikh scriptures.

Panth: The entire Sikh community

Panj kakaar: Five symbols of Sikh faith, worn by initiated Sikhs.

Parchar: Preaching.

Parvurti: Ceremony / rite of others (ਅਨਾਮਿ

Pasaar: Propagation.

Patka: Piece of cloth used by Sikh children as head covering.

Pandit: Learned i.e, teacher Brahmin

Pandiya /Panda: Tirath Brahmin.

Pir: Muslim divine

Pujari: Priest of a temple

Qazi / Qadi: Muslim legal authority.

Raj : Sovereignty

Ridh (ਰਿਧ): Wealth.

Ridaa (ਰਿਧ): Heart.

____________________

Glimpses of Sikhism (268)
Raagee: Sikh religious musician
Ramraiya: Sikh follower of Ram Rai, Rival claimants to Guru Gaddi
Sikhi: Sikhism
Sikh: Follower of Sikhism i.e. Sikh faith. Literally meaning, learned.
Sangat: Congregation
Sant: Holy person, comes from the word Shaant meaning who has controlled his desires.
Sehaj: Equipoise
Sej: (सेज) conjugal bed
Siddh: A hermit possessing mystic powers.
Sidh: (सिद्ध) Supernatural i.e., miraculous power.
Sidharan Path / Sehaj Path: Recitation of Guru Granth Sahib not over a specified period of time.
Surat: (सूरत) inner consciousness.
Tirath: Place of pilgrimage
Tikh: Thirst
Udasis: Udasi sect in Sikhism was founded by Sri Chand s/o Guru Nanak. Its followers are called Udasi Sikhs, who believe in Guru Granth Sahib, but donot grow long hair and believe in renunciation, asceticism and celibacy. They have also lost their relevance in Sikhism, because of their Hindu practices.
Vaak: A random reading from Guru Granth Sahib
Ved / Vedas: Literally mean knowledge / Books of knowledge, but religiously mean Scriptures of Aryans / Brahminism / Hinduism
Var: Ode, ballad, a composition about the deeds of a hero.
Vidhya: Education
Vismad: wonder

Glimpses of Sikhism (269)
Bibliography

Aad Granth / ‘Guru Granth Sahib’

Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha: Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature-Mahan Kosh (in Punjabi)

Bhai Gurdas: Varan

Dasam Granth

Dr. Tarlochan Singh, Anurag Singh: Sikhism and Six Hindu Systems, Bhai Chatar Singh Jiwan Singh, Amritsar (PB) India

Dr. Man Singh Nirankari: Sikhism-A Perspective, Unistar, Chandigarh

Dr. Ajit Singh Aulakh: Tuk tatkra, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, (Punjabi), Bhai Chatar Singh Jiwan Singh, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar


K.S. Duggal: The Sikh people yesterday and today, UBSPD Publishers, Distributors Ltd. 5, Ansari Road, New Delhi 1994.


Narain Singh: Our Heritage, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar

Professor Ujagar Singh Bawa: Biography and writings of Bhai Sahib Bhai Nand Lal ji (English translation). The Washington Sikh

Glimpses of Sikhism (270)
Center/The Sikh youth forum P.O Box7061, 7500 Warfield Road Gaitherburg, MD20898 USA

Romila Thapar: The Penguin History of Early India from origins to AD1300 Volume 1

Secretary Dharam Parchar Committee (SGPC): Sikh Rehat maryada, Amritsar.


Sikh Missionary College: Sikh Dharam Philosophy. Ludhiana.