



August 28, 2001



## Hospital and School Dedicated

On April 3, His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh was the chief guest at the dedication ceremony for the Sardar Gurdeep Singh Memorial Hospital and the Mata Iqbal Kaur Memorial Senior Secondary School. for Girls. The hospital and residential school are being built in Babaji's parents' names in his childhood village, Sarawan Bodla in Punjab.

Baba Ji on Baisakhi with Five Beloved Before an audience of many thousands of people, Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal said, "Today is a great historic, sacred, golden day for this area, for Saint Baba Virsa Singh has come to his village. When he himself has come, everything will come, as in the footsteps of an elephant."

Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandak Committee President Mr. Jagdev Singh Talwandi was also present. Babaji exhorted him to bring the Sikh community back to the discipline and teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, helping the downtrodden without any regard for caste. Mr. Talwandi pledged that he would regard Babaji's word as his orders.

In his address, His Holiness Babaji said, Please understand that I do not want to start a new sect or become a guru. I am a farmer and a worker. The teachings of Guru Nanak comes forth in my mind again and again: "Earn your living by honest means and share with others. Only such a person will recognize the path to God.

"He taught that everyone should work, everyone should recite Nam [God's Holy Name], and everyone should follow dharam [righteousness, moral order]. The person who recites Nam or scripture but does not work is incomplete. The Gurus speak against a person who does not work, who accepts offerings, and asks others to bow before him.

It is very difficult to become a guru. What must one do? Guru Gobind Singh has shown us. He was always praying. He was always a sevadar [servant]. He sacrificed his whole family. We must therefore be grateful to him, and repay our debt to him. But in Punjab many people have violated his commandments. They have cut their hair and become addicted to drugs.

Today we have become weak. We have strayed far from righteousness. We must act upon Maharaj's commandments. Then our farms will prosper, our houses will be blessed, and our minds will become tranquil. Maharaj says that if a person forsakes the code of conduct of his religion and forsakes God's programme, he lives in fear as a slave of his habits.

I very respectfully request all of you that the great debt to our Guru that we carry upon our heads must be repaid. We do not obey even the small points. To keep long hair as the Guru ordered is not a big thing. The holy people all kept their hair long-Lord Ram, Lord Krishna, all the great prophets and sages. Then Guru Gobind Singh said that everyone should retain their natural long hair. Now we do not obey the masters' commandments and have forsaken our religion due to our petty self-interests.

Today we are sitting upon that land where Forty Emancipated Ones were sacrificed, where Guru Gobind Singh's horse moved over every inch. I consider myself very fortunate that I have come to this land, which is very prosperous today.

However, the wealthiest person is the one with the wealth of Nam, for he is joined with God. Let us all become connected with that Power before which we are bowing our heads.

Dharam will not grow by mere talk, it will increase only by action. Let us act now. Our history repeatedly shows that none Of our people forsook their religion, none forsook their mission. Our predecessors' characters and goals were very strong. Although we have stopped following our religion, it is still in our hearts. I appeal to you that we all should return to our dharam, our love.

## Intoxication of Nam

Babaji's spiritual talks are increasingly being broadcast by television channels within India and abroad. Among the topics he addressed recently was the problem of drug addiction among the youth. Babaji said, A person's mind is not steady, it is always in motion. To stabilize the mind we take the help of dharam. Dharam feeds the hunger of the mind.

Why are children addicted to drugs today? Why have they lost their way? I feel the most important reason is that their role models have lost their way. In the old days, people used to follow dharam. Their minds were steady. They were of very high character, their thoughts were strong, and their hearts were very pure. Justice prevailed in their offices and in their courts. People were attracted toward dharam.

It is written in the Guru Granth Sahib, "The food of the mind is the Name of God, cherish it in your heart," Meditation is essential. As Guru Nanak said, "In the ambrosial early morning, chant the true Name of God and contemplate His greatness."

We think that perhaps by obtaining high positions and big houses our mind will attain peace. To the contrary, they are not required for peace, and they usher in pride. The food that the mind needs is Nam. Our thoughts are scattered. Nam is necessary to collect our wandering thoughts and correct them. With Nam, steadiness, cheerfulness, and bliss will develop in the mind. The Guru observes, "When that taste comes, other tastes lose their appeal."

Today everyone should recite Nam and thus receive the aid of Nam. With the help of Nam, the mind will become steady and filled with the intoxication of enlightenment. Nothing else can make any impression on this state of mind. That Light is so powerful that it inevitably consumes ignorance. This was the intoxicant that Kabir felt, When he was thrown before an elephant, he felt no fear or danger. "My mind is not wavering," he said firmly. "How can you frighten my body?" As it is written in the Guru Granth Sahib, "By reciting the Name of the Fearless One, all fears are ended. The Fearless One abides with you; wherefrom has fear come?"

Today there is no evidence of this state of mind even in our religious places. Priests have been installed in every religion. In Sikh tradition, the priests are called granthis. Granthis existed even in the time of Guru Gobind Singh, but there is a great difference between those granthis and today's granthis. The granthis of old opened the scripture and read passages in the same manner as is done today. But no transformation comes simply from reading the scripture. Transformation occurs only when you obey the orders. If you do not follow the guidance, it makes no difference whether you bow your head before the scripture or not. As the Guru says, "One gains approval by obeying the commandments, and then attains God's palace."

We may ask a priest to pray for us, but not everyone's prayer is answered. As it is written in the Guru Granth Sahib, "The prayer of a true believer is never unfruitful." Only the prayers of wise and noble persons are answered. Baba Deep Singh was a granthi who led an army of villagers to re-establish the sacredness of the Golden Temple when it had been desecrated. He prayed to God that his head should not fall until he reached the Golden Temple. However, his head fell as they fought their way toward the Temple. Baba Deep Singh picked up his head with one hand and kept fighting with his sword in the other hand. He had so much faith that when he fell short of the Temple, he threw his head and it landed in the inner precincts. Such was the life of a granthi in those days whose prayer was answered. He is considered the highest among the martyrs, for he was the bravest of donors: He gave his head.

The Guru Granth Sahib says that a person with faith in dharam attains three positions: He is a giver, a devotee, and a brave person. Baba Deep Singh took all three seats. He was a real granthi, a true follower.

Nowadays we take guidance from the scripture per our own choice, and interpret it according to our own needs and desires. Thus people have lost their way.

How to find the way? As Guru Nanak says, "May I feel the ecstasy of Nam day and night." When you become intoxicated by Nam, you will become brave. You will not be affected by worldly intoxicants. Nam will take you to such a level that if your body is being cut into pieces, Nam will still go on and the effect of that intoxication will not be diminished. As Bhai Mati Dass's body was being sawn into two, one half was repeating the final lines of Guru Nanak's Jap Ji, "Those who meditate on the Name of God have earned the reward of their rigorous efforts when they departed," and the other half was completing the phrase, "Oh

Nanak, their faces glow with Light, and many more are liberated along with them." The sawblade became tired, but the sound of Gurbani continued. What was that intoxication? The intoxication of full concentration on Nam.

Today's youth are looking for some shelter, and running after intoxication. Worldly intoxicants are ruining their bodies, whereas intoxication with Nam makes people courageous. Light streams from their faces and they are enthusiastically greeted in heaven. Thus, they become immortal. Nam brings the light of enlightenment, and fear departs. The person will become brave, and love and faith will develop. He will feel that his Guru is always by his side to protect him, that He is nearer than his own hands and feet, and visible with every breath.

People are forsaking religion, for the religious leaders are not following religious principles. If they were to do so, people would follow. If all of us start following the principles, there will be a flood of good people everywhere. People will be encouraged to rejoin that stream. Now when we urge the youth to follow the leaders, they begin criticizing them. We must remind our youth of those people of old who were true Granthis and [Kirtan](#) singers. The day when our youth are satisfied, addiction to drugs will be eradicated not only in Punjab but in the whole world.

Today we listen to scriptural recitation, but we do not practise its teachings. Once when Guru Gobind Singh was giving audience, one Sikh was reciting the passage from Jap Ji, "Indescribable is the state of the true believer. Whosoever attempts to speak of it will ultimately regret his folly. Pen and paper can never capture it, even though many may sit and contemplate it. Such is the greatness of God's Holy Name, but only those who truly believe it in their heart can realize it." A wise person was listening and continually questioning the reciter, "What does it matter to you?" The reader complained to the Guru that the other man was disturbing his recitation. When the other man was questioned, he replied, "Maharaj, when he was reading he was not paying attention. I just said to him, 'You are not practicing what you are reading, so what does it matter to you? Why are you wasting your time?'" Maharaj Guru Gobind Singh said, "You are correct. If you are not practicing, there is no use in reciting scripture."

If you practice what is written, your life changes, your character is elevated. The true follower who practices meditation cannot be described, for as it is written in the Guru Granth Sahib, "The follower of God is like God."

A person may be chanting, "Rain, Ram," but his attention may be somewhere else. If one's attention and the Name are joined, then as Bhagat Kabir said, "My mind has become pure as the water of the Ganges, and Ram is following me, saying 'Kabir, Kabir,'" Kabir says, "I am reciting the same 'Rain' that other people recite, but He can be seen in my deeds. People are cured, whereas nothing happens when others chant 'Ram.'" People apply a sacred mark on their forehead and worship with flowers, but they are simply carrying out rituals. As it is written in the Guru Granth Sahib, "People look upon God as a plaything and just copy each other; they cannot attain God." They do not understand the purpose of their actions.

A person who passes the test of God becomes like Kabir, Nam Dev, Trilochan, Dhanna [great saints whose hymns are enshrined in the Guru Granth Sahib]. To become intoxicated like them, you must take God's shelter, you must take God's blessings. The cure of addiction to drugs lies not with doctors but with God alone. As it is written, "From the day that God casts His merciful glance upon you, you will be filled with happiness." Within it will come Light, enlightenment, love, attraction to God. The Fifth Guru says, "The love of God can neither be torn nor severed, so strong is its pull."

By contrast, we are always complaining. We always criticize God saying, "I have been waiting so long, but my wish has not been fulfilled." What happened in those places where historic gurdwaras have been built? At Sis Ganj [where the Ninth Guru gave his head to preserve Hindus' right to religious freedom], many were martyred, to ensure our happiness and comfort. So many heads were sacrificed there that the place is called "Sis Ganj" [the place where heads were cut off]. When we read our prayers, we say, "If you recite the name of the Ninth Guru, prosperity will come in your home." Do not expect this prosperity first you too must give your head. All kinds of happiness will definitely come, but first you must sacrifice your head.

Anandpur Sahib [Guru Gobind Singh's citadel] is the site of great struggles, hard times, and sacrifices. But Guru Gobind Singh always felt "anand"-bliss. When he sacrificed his children, he enjoyed the state of bliss. When he gave his mother and father, he still felt blissful. When his clothing was torn and he had no shoes, he still felt blissful. We go to Anandpur Sahib and raise loud praises, but how was it built?

Today we go there and ask the attendant to give us [prasada](#)-blessed food. He can give us only the food, not blessings. We could prepare the food at home. God's blessings come from following the

commandments. Guru Gobind Singh always used to say "Tav prasad"- "God, it is Your blessing." When receiving water, when receiving food, before putting on shoes, before mounting a horse, he always thanked God.

We, too, must practice religion in our own lives. Then righteousness will spread throughout the world. If instead we go to religious gatherings, gossip, bow our head and go home, how will dharam spread? The Guru has said, "What good is merely bowing the head when the heart is impure? Evil-doers also stoop low, as do deer hunters." A hunter may lie low for hours, but he has no concern for God. Your personality will not change simply by bowing your head as a hunter does.

Today's youth look at the religious leaders and are not satisfied with them, for they do not follow dharam. They watch today's religious leaders and do not see a Baba Deep Singh. They see the lives of today's granthis and singers. Youth will leave intoxicants only when they see good examples.

We must take the intoxication of dharam. Other intoxicants will bring only destruction. Corruption and lying will spread. We will commit injustice and be of low character, because our mind will waver under the effect of worldly intoxicants. If we become intoxicated with Nam, dharam will prevail.

Guru Gobind Singh gave the Khalsa the mask of a lion and told them to practice spiritual principles: to renounce anger, criticism, and lust, and to be attached to Nam. But he warned that they should never allow their character to weaken. Maharaj says that once you take off the mask of a lion, your value will end. Your spiritual power will vanish, and people will see that you are no longer a lion. Today we can all see that this mask has been removed and that nobody is following the commandments. This is the reason why addiction is so widespread and why everyone has become weak.

Now we must practice dharam, must follow the Masters' commandments. With this, worldly intoxication and corruption will end, and wellbeing will return.

## Charge to Akal Takht Jathedar

On June 25, a delegation led by Akal Takht Jathedar Joginder Singh Vedanti came to meet with His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh at Gobind Sadan. The Jathedar of Akal Takht at the Golden Temple is usually considered the highest religious authority in the Sikh community. Jathedar Vedanti and His Holiness greeted each other warmly and then His Holiness spoke to the delegation about abuses that have crept into Sikhism. In part, Babaji said, There are several things that the Guru emphatically forbade us to do: taking offerings for oneself, accepting money for singing sacred hymns, and taking money for preaching. There are very harsh words used in the scripture for these abuses: "Worthless are the lives of those who are selling the Name of God." "His birth is useless who sold his knowledge." At present, all these things are happening.

A person who does not work has no right to speak about religion. By our Guru's definition, he himself is not religious. After breaking the code of ethics of Guru Nanak, how can he speak on his behalf? Only that person can speak for Guru Nanak who works hard, meditates, and shares with those in need. Guru Nanak himself worked very hard, and afterwards served [Langar](#) [free food] to the people. We must establish Guru Nanak's code in the Takhts [seats of Sikh authority], and then the managements of all gurdwaras must re-establish the code.

There is another major issue: When a person is truly singing God's praises [kirtan], he is joined with God. How can he announce, "This person has given such and such"? If the singer is attached to God, how can he even see another person? These may seem like minor points, but we must be very strict.

Guru Gobind Singh's religion is such that everyone wants to be his follower. Even the trees, the earth, the animals want to follow him. But we have kept his religion within our boundaries and never allowed anyone to come inside. Guru Gobind Singh said, "The God of the Hindus is the same as the God of the Muslims, the prayers offered by the Hindus are to the same One to whom the Muslims pray. My God is everywhere." Guru Gobind Singh spoke thus, but today we have bound him within a fortress. There is no religion there.

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