



April 28, 1998

In the Garden

Hundreds of butterflies are fluttering around Jesus's Place, dozens of male peacocks are dancing in the fodder fields amidst the clover and cornflowers, thousands of bees are swarming in the fragrant flower clusters of the jamun trees, and the myriad trees and plants in the hillside garden radiate coolness and beauty after their morning bath. Many evenings His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh sits in the garden under the stars, speaking quietly as sprinklers and waterfall cool the air. At the [havan](#) (sacred fire) in the back of the garden, devotees from all social levels softly maintain perpetual reading of Jaap Sahib, Guru Gobind Singh's great nonsectarian hymn praising the One who has no form, no caste, no particular religion. An atmosphere of intense spiritual concentration pervades the large havan area in the central courtyard as devotees collectively read Jaap Sahib 125,000 times, per Babaji's vision. Visitors to Gobind Sadan feel that they have entered a different world, an extraordinary paradise.



Baba Virsa Singh blesses Russian delegates

Nature also revels in God's grace at Shiv Sadan, Gobind Sadan's largest farm, on the banks of the sacred Ganges River. Another good wheat harvest is underway, and this year's rice harvest at Shiv Sadan yielded up to 42 quintals per acre, despite floods which were disastrous elsewhere.

Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has joined Indian agricultural universities in its interest in Shiv Sadan. Cornell is hoping to send specialists to study there and then share the information with scientists in other countries because, as Professor K. V. Raman writes, "Shiv Sadan represents one of the few cases of success in a developing country context." Cornell has taken permission to copy and share extracts from *Everyday Miracles in the House of God: Stories from Gobind Sadan* with its students and scientists. The book [available by mail from Dr. Satinder Mullick, 6 Cedarwood Lane, Painted Post, New York 14870, USA] clearly points to spiritual as well as worldly reasons for the flourishing crops. His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh is quoted therein as saying, "We must all work together as a team to eliminate the weaknesses that are causing poverty. God will help us only when we start moving."

Russian Cultural Delegation Impressed

Gobind Sadan's combination of hard work, worship, and sharing is a practical example of the spiritual message of Guru Nanak, the First Sikh Guru. He said, "Work hard to support yourself, share with others from your earnings, and thus you will find the way to God." It is a message which had great appeal to 33 members of the International Association for Peace through Culture who recently spent two weeks in India under the guidance of His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh. They had come from Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus to meet His Holiness and study practical ways in which Indian spirituality could help to uplift their countries, which are struggling economically and socially after 70 years of atheistic communist rule and then a rapid shift to capitalism.

The group's leaders had first been introduced to His Holiness in 1993 by the late Father Paulos Mar Gregorios, former President of the World Council of Churches. As the group met with Babaji in his hillside garden, they were addressed by His Excellency Dr. Georgiy Khodorovskiy, Ambassador of Ukraine to India. Dr. Khodorovskiy told the group, "We have learned from early childhood that we must have, that we must be provided for by our parents, by our governments, by someone else, by God.

But we have not learned how to give, how to share. That is, I may say, the most important thing. His Holiness Babaji teaches us that to give is the primary virtue in humans, in communities, in the character of countries. There is no other way to approach each other. Only through love can we understand each other."

His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh explained to the artists, writers, musicians, and academicians in the

delegation, "There is a great disease in the world because humans' minds are sick and weak. This disease is not limited only to the countries of the former Soviet Union. It is also our disease in India. The Chinese, the Americans, people everywhere in the world have this disease, because our minds are not under our control. We all stress that we should love and serve each other. But why then do our minds instantly become angry?"

There is a great race toward material progress in the world. We are running after it night and day, building great houses, seeking fine food. But once the houses have been built and the rich food consumed, our inner peace is lost. Perhaps these things bring a bit of bodily comfort, but they do not bring comfort to the mind. The only food for the mind is love for God. Taking love from Him, we can then love our neighbors, and then love society, and then spread love within our countries."

His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh cited examples from the lives of Jesus, the Prophet Muhammad, Guru Gobind Singh, and Moses. "They all came into the world to teach us to share whatever we have, to share food, to share our houses, to share our land, to share good ideas. But within our minds there is a great storehouse of crime, hatred, anger, jealousy. Only when we clean these away can the light enter our hearts. To remove them, meditation is essential. There have been many big seminars and many people visit religious places. But their state of mind remains the same as those who have not gone to the seminars and religious places. However, when you will get up early in the morning, turn within, and clear away the debris, a great ocean of love will come forth which you can give to your neighbors and which will spread through your country. When the sicknesses of the mind will be cleared away, as Sikh scripture says, 'There will be no enmity within us, and no one will be a stranger. We will all be one.'"

True Communism

At Babaji's invitation, the delegation visited Shiv Sadan, where they were deeply impressed by the productivity resulting from application of spiritual principles! They said, "We did not know cows could give so much milk!"

At Shiv Sadan they were also told of the recent free eye camp for the poor, in which 200 patients were screened and 40 cataract operations, all of them successful were performed by visiting doctors. The delegates praised the love which they saw in Babaji's communities, uniting people of all religions and social classes as a happy family.

Then Babaji sent the group to Punjab, where they were received by Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, the state's Chief Minister. He was described to them by a Gobind Sadan representative as "a prime example of what can be done by a public servant who has faith in God and works tirelessly to meet the needs of the people." They told Mr. Badal how impressed they were by Sikh teachings and productivity as a hopeful model for rebuilding their own countries. They invited him to come to Moscow in autumn along with His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh, of whom he is an admirer. They were also warmly received by historic Sikh gurdwaras and by Punjabi University in Patiala, where they were introduced to the interfaith work of the Guru Gobind Singh Department of Religious Studies.

Interviewed by the press, the group said that they saw in Guru Nanak's model a corrective for the "distortions" of the atheistic and coercive model of communism. They explained to the Indian Express, "Marx was not against religion but against the use of religion as a tool for vested interests."

The leader of the delegation, Professor Valentin Sidorov, said, "We derived great practical results from our visit to Gobind Sadan. Here we witnessed with our own eyes the uniting of spirituality with the earthly plane of life. We come from countries where communism lost in the form in which it existed. Here we see the true 'communism' which will succeed."

His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh told the group, "The very same thing that Guru Nanak taught us was taught in your countries: If you have something, share with those who are weak. If you have extra clothes, give some of them to others. Share your earnings with others and invite them to eat with you. The very same principle was taught in your country, but it failed there because one thing was missing: Guru Nanak said, 'There is one God. God has given you the energy to work, God has given you the energy to share with others, God has given you everything. Keep thanking Him and keep sharing what good things you have.'

In our model, God is present, and God supports us. God, not man, has the number one position. In Gobind Sadan's programme, all the people became loving, but under His command.

They began praying and worshipping. As they worshipped, love in their hearts increased. Even today, we don't think we are working for ourselves. Whether people live here or come here only once a year, we feel that we are to share what we have with each other. "

An example of the loving sharing during the delegation's visit occurred when a bhangra dance troupe from Punjab performed for them. Finding the rhythm irresistible, the guests from Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus jumped up to dance with them. By the end of the evening, all were singing together in Punjabi, "Sab Gobind hai! [Everything is Gobind (God)]!"

Seeing Troubles as Gifts of God

Dr. Udit Panconcelli from Prague, a founding member of the Peace College in Berlin, wrote to His Holiness Babaji that she had been run over by a large truck. Her leg was badly injured, but she miraculously survived. She wrote, "I know this was the work of my guardian angel. Lying under the wheels of the truck, I had the greatest spiritual experience of my existence. It is nearly impossible to speak about it, but in a very special sense, this was a present from God."

Babaji wrote to her in reply, Whatever difficulty, or love, or suffering attracts you toward God, we can understand that this is God's way of giving you a Gift. When God put into your mind the idea that during your accident your guardian angel came to save you, that moment and that idea were filled with good fortune which will benefit you for your entire life.

As it is written in the Sikh scripture, "Dukh daroo, sukh rog bhaya_ Suffering is the remedy, pleasure is the malady." That time of trouble worked upon you like a curative medicine. Your faith is very strong. It will triumph and you will start walking again. Your love was great, for it was not shaken during that difficult time.

True love is only proven when a person is passing through a period of struggling. Jesus always had great love overflowing in him. But after his crucifixion the whole world came to know that he had no enemy. He was a friend to foes as well as to his friends. The message spread throughout the world that Jesus forever befriended and blessed those who nailed him to the cross and taunted him.

During your suffering, that binding chain of love remained intact within you. These are the ways of God, God's ways of teaching and training us. Undoubtedly, the intense trials which the world is now undergoing may bring a good result. Perhaps God has chosen this way to send His love into the world.

Sometimes a person might think, "If I had a good car, I would not be worried." "If I had a good house, I might not be worried." "If I had good food to eat, I would not be worried." "If I had a good job or a powerful position, I might attain joy." God gave good food, good home, good livelihood, and physical strength, yet the person's mind was not happy. So God has thoughtfully chosen a good way to show him, "You never ask for that Joy which brings joy, that Peace which brings peace."

Perhaps now all are hungry, all want happiness. Perhaps when one is in need and then receives what he needs, he appreciates it. Now we long for God to give us love, joy, peace, and His contentment. Perhaps now we will be thankful to Him for the riches He has given to us, and we will respect Him. There is nothing beyond God's control. It is my faith that when He wants, everything will be transformed into love, faith, and service.

This period will not remain as pressure-filled as it is now. Even our worldly father, on seeing our difficulties, will try to ward them off from his child with whatever strength and love he has. But our loving and merciful spiritual Father will take us above all difficulties, because we are all His family, His children. Whether we are worthy or not, He knows, "They are Mine." He will surely clasp His children to His breast.

Religion Means Tolerance

Dr. Abdul Rashid from Karachi University, Pakistan, asked His Holiness Baba Virsa Singh to support his efforts to spread the message of religious tolerance in his society. His Holiness replied, The second meaning of the word "religion" is tolerance. The Master has said, "What is religion? The will of God. What is

the will of God? Tolerance."

Umar went to the Prophet Muhammad with the intention of killing him. But when Umar came before him, the Prophet demonstrated that there is no enmity in religion. Instead of regarding Umar as an opponent, the Prophet made him his fourth Friend.

Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed his own sons in the continued attacks against him by the Emperor Aurangzeb in his attempts to suppress the Guru's mission. But how did the Guru express his lack of enmity? He helped Aurangzeb's son gain the throne. He said, "My programme is dharam [the essence of religion]. Your programme is rulership.

There may be feelings of enmity in a ruler, but there is no feeling of enmity in dharam." Tolerance is a great virtue, and it is essential everywhere.

There was a woman who used to throw dirty linen in the face of the Prophet Muhammad every day as he passed by her window. Every day he washed and returned the dirty things. One day she did not appear at her window when he passed by. The Prophet Muhammad therefore went to her house. He asked her, "I was waiting for you_why didn't you come? It is your mission to throw dirty linen in my face, and it is my mission to wash it and return it to you. Why have you abandoned your mission?" She replied, "I am suffering from fever." She began kissing his hand, saying, "You are truly a Prophet."

Read the stories of the prophets, dervishes, and saints everywhere you will find tolerance. Consider the battles of the Prophet in detail. When people were troubling him, he stopped his followers from retaliating, saying, "These people are good. Why are you killing them?" Instead, he helped his attackers. Guru Gobind Singh did the same. Even when Jesus was being crucified, he tolerated those who were crucifying him. As they were nailing him to the cross, he said, "Oh my Father, are You disappointed with me?" God said, "No, I am happy with you. " Jesus replied, "If You are happy with me, please pardon these people who are crucifying me. It is not their fault. You are not stopping them from doing this, and You are telling me, 'Let them strike the nails.' For the thieves who were taunting him, he asked, "May these people reach Your kingdom before I do. " He was far above feelings of enmity and opposition.

Therefore, religion means being above enmity and opposition. No ordinary person can reach this high level of tolerance. The most important thing is yourself. You yourself should be higher than enmity and opposition, even though your subject is such that perhaps you will have to face great opposition.

One day Muhammad was instructed in vision to go to the villages and speak the message of Allah. People threw stones at him. He was bleeding so profusely that his shoe filled with blood. The blood froze in his shoe, and it could be removed only with great difficulty. When Muhammad went back for a second time, he said to the people, "You stoned me so much that I bled. But I have brought flowers for you whose fragrance will give you peace and blessing. Don't be frightened. Live in your homes in peace. I have not brought stones like those which were used to drive me out; I have brought flowers of peace. You are all members of my family." Allah will confer upon a person fearlessness and total lack of enmity.

The Prophet Muhammad had no feeling of revenge, and took no action against anyone. He made them all smile, he shook hands with them, he invited them to sit with him, and he loved them all.

Look at Guru Gobind Singh's response to Bhim Chand, the raja who so often expressed his enmity for the Guru. Despite Bhim Chand's repeated attacks, whenever he came, the Guru always loved him and invited him to sit and visit. He said, "It is the habit of the Guru to embrace whomever comes to him. Whoever comes to him is no longer his enemy. He committed mistakes, but God keeps pardoning mistakes."

This quality is one of the Names of Allah. He is called Bakhshanhara, Forgiver, because He forgives, because He is above enmity and opposition. Anyone who has feelings of enmity has no connection with Islam.

Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed that the Khalsa, his pure Sikhs, are those who have renounced anger. "Anyone who feels enmity can never be my Sikh," he said. Similarly, one who feels anger and desire for revenge cannot be called a Muslim who follows the Prophet Muhammad.

It must be repeated again and again: You must love. Whenever anyone has made this statement, he has been stoned. Do not be surprised by this response. First worship, take the blessings of Allah, and after

taking His blessings, raise your voice. Those who thus raise their voice have no feelings of enmity.

Mansur repeatedly proclaimed, "An al Haqq! Within everyone there is one God." His head was severed; his arms were cut off. He had only said, "Allah is prevailing in everyone." In others, Allah was hidden, but in him, Allah was manifest. He therefore said, "I am the Truth!" Similarly, the Guru is never afraid of evil. He is always transforming evil into goodness, always pardoning.

Anyone who has raised his voice to say, "Forsake conflicts, remain in peace," has been opposed by the people, but he was told not to be disturbed.

We can give you this help only: Recite five Namaz daily and have faith in Allah. Allah is not confined to any one place or any one thing. Allah is prevailing everywhere. Believe in Almighty Allah. But first you should remove anger and feelings of enmity from your own heart. Some strength is required to remove anger and enmity, but they must first be removed. Don't run away."

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