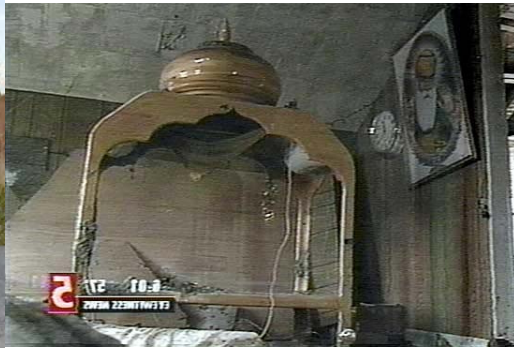


Arson, Forgiveness, and Healing in a Post 9-11 World



GOBIND SADAN, USA Statement on Forgiveness 12-14-01

The following is a statement of forgiveness offered by **Baba Virsa Singh**, the founder of Gobind Sadan, transmitted through Ralph Singh for Gobind Sadan, USA. This statement was read at the Sheriff's press conference in response to the arrests of the 3 youths that set fire to our place of worship in mistaken retaliation for the September 11th attacks on our country.

“We have offered a prayer of forgiveness that the ignorance or hatred that led to this senseless act be taken away

However there is a distinction between forgiving a person and forgiving the act they committed –

There is no doubt that the act was terribly wrong – no matter what the motivation.

Laws exist to hold people accountable for their actions – and we will not interfere in the process of law.

Yet we know God is all forgiving to those who seek His forgiveness. And the Sikh tradition like all others calls on us to forgive others (forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us) so they may seek forgiveness from God, and learn not to commit acts of violence or hatred again.”

“For if we show hatred to those who act against us then how will they ever understand that God whom they can't see is forgiving. And out of our hatred we will only perpetuate the cycle of violence that exists in the world. By forgiving our enemies we have the opportunity to create peace.”