

BLISS IN LISTENING (ਸੁਣਿਐ)

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ABSTRACT

The art of listening is a process that includes hearing, understanding, evaluating and responding to spoken messages. 'Listening' has been discussed by Guru Nanak in Jap as well as in his other Bani in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. This paper describes the root of listening, the wisdom in its religious significance and its vast impact in our relationship with one another and with God.

INTRODUCTION

Since the origin of humanity, the faculty of 'listening' has been instrumental in human development, education and spiritual progress. It is a common communication skill, but is the least understood and most difficult to master. Webster's New World Dictionary defines "Listen" as: 1. To make a conscious effort to hear; attend closely; so as to hear. 2. To pay close attention; take advice. Obviously, to listen is to do much more than simply "to hear". Listening requires hearing, comprehending, interpreting and understanding. However, to truly listen is difficult in our current times. With the environmental and societal stimuli revolving around us day to day, taking the time to listen to the outer as well as our inner self is a rare occurrence.

Listening is a basic but infrequently used skill in our language development. What we choose to listen, potentially have a profound effect on the formation of our attitudes, skills, behavioral patterns, and perceptions. Listening can make the difference between knowledge and ignorance, correct information and misinformation, involvement and detachment, enjoyment and displeasure.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, realized the significance of listening and in addition to a plethora of various sabds on 'listening', wrote four stanzas using the word 'Sunnyai' (ਸੁਣਿਐ), in Jap; the very first verse of Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1]. He provided several metaphors and references of established effective listeners so that his followers could be able to recognize the process, necessity and blissful rewards achieved by effective listening. As the theme of this verse, he wrote:

ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ॥
ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੁਖ ਪਥ ਕਾ ਨਸੁ॥੮॥

AGGS, Jap 8, p. 2.

Nanak, Devotees are forever in bliss, by listening (Guru's word) their sufferings and sins are vanished.

By effective listening and then indulging in singing the praises of the God, a common human being may become highly enriched in spirituality and enjoy the blissful living. In Raga Bilaaval, Guru Nanak Wrote:
ਸੁਣਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਮਾਨੈ ਵੇਖੈ ਜੋਤਿ॥੬॥

AGGS, M 1, p 831.

Listening repeatedly and then believing, one beholds the Divine Light.

ROOT OF LISTENING

In addition to reading and writing as essential tools for communication, listening and speaking also play a significant role in daily life. According to the USA department of labor, an average worker spends 8.4 percent of his/her communication time at work writing, 13.3 percent reading, 23.0 percent speaking and 55.0 percent listening [6]. It takes skill, effort and determination to listen carefully, comprehend it and to transfer the same message to the next group of listeners. Those who are attentive in listening and who comprehend the exact meaning of what they hear are rewarded in every aspect of life. The listener, as a communicator, is influenced by a number of factors that can affect his/her behavior as a listener at any given time throughout the communication transaction. the key factors—gender, age, race, culture, physical and psychological states, self concept, and timing can deter or facilitate listening efficiency, depending on the nature of the influence at the time [4].

The practice of listening is the awareness of sound as it rises, dwells and falls away. Pure listening is clear, not tainted by any particular sound. Listening does not rise, does not cease, and it cannot be brought about. Unless one is equipped with normal hearing organs and

functioning mechanism, it is very difficult to communicate and live an enjoyable, healthy and progressive life. The art of listening is a process that includes hearing, understanding, evaluating and responding to spoken messages [2].

Many historical and contemporary studies of the brain activity support the fact that at least five auditory-association areas of the brain participate when we listen to spoken language. Both left and right hemispheres are activated during listening tasks. The more complex task (i.e. listening for details, use of visualization, linking dates with events requiring silent rehearsal) involves even more brain activity. The Long-term memory (LTM-Semantic memory) is the filter that chooses what information to save for short-term storage, awareness and long-term storage. LTM determines what is relevant and worth capturing and what can be discarded. It is an efficient way to manage massive amounts of information. The left side of the brain possesses the logical meanings of the words and the right side, takes the speaker's tone and non-verbal gestures into account. We often want something from our listening, understanding others, intimacy, approval, agreement, or gratification. However, a person who is effectively listening to what is being said without attaching the taint of his/her own personal ideas or bias before the statement is even finished, and not thinking about what he/she will say in response. It is not easy for everybody to listen and comprehend the intent of what is heard. Most of the time, listened words can be and are misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misrepresented.

According to Albert Mehrabian [5], author of *Silent Messages*, the listener perceives 55 percent of the meaning of the spoken message through gestures and facial expressions; 38 percent interpreted through tone of voice, speech rate, rhythm, and emphasis; and words transmit approximately 7 percent of the message. Many of the emotional casualties in our lives stem from attending only to the words, the footprints and shadows of the message; and we regard that as listening. In other words, nonverbal cues communicate the bulk of the message. This supports the notion that actions speak louder than words. Yet it is up to the listener to synthesize words, actions, and vocal cues to arrive at the whole message the speaker intends to convey. The power of sound and listening can be well appreciated by considering the role of these faculties in our daily life and the perpetual progress of humanity in general. The human basically having an unpolluted pure mind without any distractions and no ulterior motives, can appreciate the sound messages and dwelling upon them can realize the truth. Then pre-formed precepts do not come into

play and one avoids being judgmental, relaxes and attains peace of mind.

Any person is capable of keeping an open mind and willing to listen without fear of losing self, while feeling secure with the ultimate choice of accepting or rejecting the message. Open minded individuals are willing to investigate issues, share in problem solving, and reconsider their own behavior, ideas, values and attitudes. In fact they encourage others to share their views with them for they know that the more information they have, the more knowledgeable they become, which helps them make better decisions. The close-minded individual seldom listens except to those that agree with and reinforce what he/she already knows is true or right. The closed minded individual has preconceived ideas of what is, what should be, and what will be. Gallway [3] sums up the important role that Self-Concept plays in our listening lives: "I know of no single factor that more greatly affects our ability to learn and perform than the image we have of ourselves, who we think we are, influences everything we do, every thought we have, every feeling we allow."

In addition to effectively listening to external messages and reflecting upon them, listening to oneself is equally important. The person who can listen to self may be more capable of actively listening to others. Listening to oneself enables listener to become cognizant of one's own responses as a communicator and creates a process that makes all kinds of communication possible [7]. Good listeners are lively and stimulating conversation partners who take an active communicating role in the process.

With our lives engulfed in sensory pleasures, we forget the true purpose of our sensory organs, particularly our ears. The ears are for hearing and developing discriminative, comprehensive perceptions and therapeutic, critical and appreciative skills. Guru Amar Das, who elaborated on objectives of human life, also wrote about the purpose of various sensory organs. As to the ears and their function, he wrote:

ਏ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਮੇਰਿਹੋ ਸਾਚੈ ਸੁਣੈ ਨੋ ਪਠਾਏ॥

AGGS, M 3, p 922.

O' my ears, you are blessed to me for listening to the attributes of God.

Most religions have survived and flourished because of the human ability to listen and comprehend words spoken over time by the prophets. Almost every religion before the fifth century had its holy messages committed to the verbal transmissions and active listening from one generation to the next. The world may have developed and progressed rather slowly and differently, had there been absence of listening faculty. Guru Amardas mentioned the significance of listening as:

ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਨ ਦੇਖੀਐ ਜਗੁ ਬੋਲਾ ਅੰਨੁ ਭਰਮਾਇ॥

AGGS, M 3, p 429.

Without the ability of listening, reading and speaking the Guru's word (sabd), the world would be blind, mute and deaf.

RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF 'LISTENING'

Guru Nanak in his writings elaborated so eloquently that by listening and then indulging in meditation and singing the praises of God, an ordinary human can become highly enriched in spirituality. Meditation teaches to pause before speaking. It helps neutralize one's false self, the part of ego that is self-consciousness, insecure, righteous, and deluded by one's barriers. The Guru Nanak, as the enlightened founder of Sikhism realized the significance of listening and wrote four stanzas using the word 'Sunnyai' (ਸੁਣਿਐ) in Jap, the first verse in Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). By referring to the examples of established heroic warriors, yogic masters, high spiritual achievers, he applied the psychology and philosophy about life to the wisdom in effective listening.

Guru Nanak emphasized that God is prevalent in all the continents, countries and at the same time is supporting the universe. Having realized God as omnipresent, the devotees do not indulge in the traps of Maya or fear of death; instead they are ever in bliss. Guru Nanak wrote:

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਿਧ ਪੀਰ ਸੁਰਿ ਨਾਥ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਧਰਤਿ ਧਵਲ ਆਕਾਸ ॥

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੀਪ ਲੋਅ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪੋਹਿ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਕਾਲੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੮॥

AGGS, Jap 8, p 2.

They, who hearken to (the word of the Lord), know what the Siddhas, the muslim spiritual teachers, heroic warriors, and the yogic masters are. What (substance) the Sky, what (nature) the Earth, and the Akashic Ethers, the oceans, the Islands of the world, the Spheres, the Underworlds: deathless (or became immortal) become they who hearken to the word.

Nanak: a devotee is forever in bliss, by listening to the guru's word, his sufferings and sins are vanished.

The significance of listening becomes very clear by understanding the meanings of the above verse with the theme message as, "Devotees are forever in Bliss, by listening (to the Guru's word) their sufferings and sins are vanished". That, All the established holy personalities, Spheres, Islands of the World, countries continents or in other words the whole universe came into existence only after listening to the order of God. This is an accepted fact (the Big Bang theory) almost in every religion that Creation took place only after the God willed it so.

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਈਸਰੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਇੰਦੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਲਾਹਣ ਮੰਦੁ ॥

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਨਿ ਭੇਦ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਾਸਤ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਵੇਦ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੯॥

AGGS, Jap 9, p 3.

Those, who hearken to the word of Guru, realize what Brahma, Shiva and Indra are; and can achieve the same status for them-selves. By listening to the word of Guru even the foul-mouthed people can learn to sing praises of the Lord.)

Those, who hearken the word of Guru, know the secrets of life and technology of Yoga, of Shastraas, Simiritees and the Vedas.

Nanak, the Devotee is forever in bliss, by listening to the Guru's word, his pain and Sins are erased.

In addition to effective listening of external messages and reflecting upon them, listening to self is equally important. Guru Nanak explained the realization of truth, contentment and spiritual proves as the rewards associated with effective listening. The devotee thus can achieve the peace of mind and fully imbibe him/herself in appreciation and praise of God. Guru Nanak described the same process in the fifteenth century, when he wrote:

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਕਾ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ॥

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਪਤਿ ਪਤਿ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੧੦॥

AGGS, Jap 10, p 3.

Those, who hearken to the word of the Guru, gather truth, contentment and the rewards of pilgrimage (Bathing) at sixty-eight holy Hindu places.

Those, who hearken the word of Guru, then hymn it in honor, grow their minds and attain equipoise. Nanak: a Devotee is forever happy by listening his pain and sins are vanished.

By listening empathically, one can achieve the deeps of all virtues and conduct with minimal effort to self, community and God. This process of empathic listening results in the recoding of the spoken symbols, by noting changes in the sound and in the order in which they occur. As the listeners regroup these sounds, they may translate them into images while they rehearse the sounds to themselves. Their effort is to recode the spoken messages as accurately as possible and bring the listener closer to the intended meaning of the speaker. Guru Nanak in the following stanza has elaborated so eloquently the strategies and rewards of empathic listening:

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਰਾ ਗੁਣਾ ਕੇ ਗਾਹ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸੇਖ ਪੀਰ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹ ॥

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਅੰਧੇ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਰਾਹੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਹਾਥ ਹੋਵੈ ਅਸਗਾਹੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਗਾਸੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਦੂਖ ਪਾਪ ਕਾ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੧੧॥

AGGS, Jap 11, p 3.

Those, who hearken to the word of Guru, fathom the deeps of All Virtues and become glorious like a king, a Sheikh, religious scholars and spiritual masters.

Listening to the Guru's word, even the blind find their path (become sublime), and the unfathomable deep comes into their grasp.

Nanak: the Devotees are forever happy, by listening to the word of Guru, their sins and pains have vanished.

The rich contents of the prior verse elaborate the ideas expressed in the symbolic metaphors to follow, so that we can make our lives and the lives of those around us more satisfying, productive and effective. By using the cumulative approach of reflection, realization and application, we can learn to abandon self-limiting views about listening. Regular meditation helps de-atomize false self, the part of the ego that is self-conscious, insecure, righteous, and deluded by our barriers. Meditation, however teaches to take a pause before we speak and achieve the goal of our communication.

The Sikh Gurus and the Bhagatas have used these words (listening and hearing) in addressing this faculty for personal listening, community listening and getting God's attention to listen to them as well. Gurbani (AGGS) is replete with the word 'Listening' applied in various forms by Guru Nanak, his descendents and the Bhagatas.

DIFFERENT WORDS USED IN THE AGGS FOR LISTENING, (SUNNYAA)

ਸੁਨ, ਸੁਨਾ(੩), ਸੁਨਿ(੫੫), ਸੁਨੀ(੪), ਸੁਨੇ(੮), ਸੁਨੈ(੮), ਸੁਨੁ(੧੩), ਸੁਨਾਂ ਸੁਨਉ(੬), ਸੁਨਿਆ, ਸੁਨੀਆ(੨), ਸੁਨੀਐ(੬), ਸੁਨਾਏ(੨), ਸੁਨਹੁ (੬੫), ਸੁਨਹਿ(੫), ਸੁਨਹੀ, ਸੁਨਾਹਿ, ਸੁਨਨ, ਸੁਨਣਾ, ਸੁਨਣੁ, ਸੁਨਣਿ (੨), ਸੁਨਣੈ, ਸੁਨੀਜਾ, ਸੁਨੀਜੈ(੨), ਸੁਨੂਆ, ਸੁਨਾਇਆ, ਸੁਨੀਅਹੁ, ਸੁਨਤ (੧੩), ਸੁਨਤਾ(੨), ਸੁਨਤੇ(੫), ਸੁਨੰਤਿ ਸੁਨਨੈਹਾਰੁ, ਸੁਨਨੈਹਾਰਾ, ਸੁਨੀਅਤ, ਸੁਨੀਅਤੁ, ਸੁਨਤੇ, ਸੁਨਾਵਹਿ, ਸੁਨਾਵੈ(੨), ਸੁਨਾਵਤ ਸੁਣਾ, ਸੁਣਿ(੧੭੫), ਸੁਣੀ(੧੪), ਸੁਣੇ(੧੨), ਸੁਣੈ(੧੫), ਸੁਣਉ, ਸੁਣਓ, ਸੁਣਿਆ(੧੧), ਸੁਣੀਐ(੨੩), ਸੁਣੀਐ(੧੨), ਸੁਣਈ, ਸੁਣਾਇਹਿ, ਸੁਣਾਇ(੩), ਸੁਣਾਏ(੭), ਸੁਣਾਇਆ(੪), ਸੁਣਈ, ਸੁਣਹੁ(੨੬), ਸੁਣਹੁ, ਸੁਣਹਿ(੬), ਸੁਣਾਹੁ(੩), ਸੁਣੀਅਹਿ, ਸੁਨਣਾ(੨), ਸੁਣਨਿ, ਸੁਣਦਾ, ਸੁਣਦੇ(੨), ਸੁਣਦੇ, ਸੁਣਦੇ(੨), ਸੁਣਤ(੩), ਸੁਣਤਾ, ਸੁਣਤੇ(੩), ਸੁਣਤਿਆ, ਸੁਣੀਜੈ ਸੁਣਣਾ, ਸੁਣਾਵੈ, ਸੁਣੀਅਰ, ਸੁਰਤਾ, ਕਾਨਾ, ਕੰਨਿ, ਕੰਨੀ, ਕਾਨ(੩), ਕਾਨੀ, ਕਰਨਿ, ਕੁਨ, ਸੁੰਤਿ, ਸੁੰਤੇ(੨), ਸੁਵਨ(੩), ਸੁਵਨਾ, ਸੁਵਨਿ, ਸੁਵਨੀ(੨), ਸੁਵਨਨ, ਸੁਵਣ, ਸੁਵਣੈ, ਸੁਵਣੀ(੮), ਸੁਵਣਹਿ, ਕਹਿਆ, ਕਥਾ,

The numbers next to the words are representing the times that word has been applied in AGGS. The underlined words are applied most commonly. The words (sune) and (sunuhu) are used mostly in the Bhagatas Bani, whereas the words (sunne) and (sunnuhu) have been applied frequently by the Gurus.

In AGGS, the word 'LISTEN', have been used approximately 700 times, in its various forms. The spellings and applications have been slightly different for the same words used by the Sikh Gurus and the Bhagatas in their Bani. For understanding messages

conveyed in various sabds, following classification may be helpful.

A. Physical

- i) **Individual-** fellow men, friends, teachers, Pundits, Mullahs
- ii) **Community-** in general human race.

B. Spiritual

- i) **Mind** - when applying it solo
- ii) **God** - when praying to the Lord and asking for his attention.

A. Physical

i) Individual: Gurbani has several sabds instructing individuals to listen to the Guru's words and make life worthwhile, for example Guru Ramdas has written:

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੜੀਏ ਮਨਿ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਹਰਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ਰਾਮ ॥

AGGS, M 4, p 538.

The words of the devotees are Ambrosial Nectar, O my Soul; listening them with the empathic mind, embrace loving affection for God.

ਹਰਿ ਜਸੁ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਸੋਈ ਭਾਈ ਮਿਤੁ ॥੧॥

AGGS, M 5, p 218.

From whom I listen the praises of God is my friend and brother.

ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਸਬਦਿ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਸਚਿ ਰਹੈ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥

AGGS, M 3, p 429.

Listen to the sabd, and understand the sabd, and lovingly focus your consciousness on the True One.

ਕਹਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ ॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 330.

Says Kabir: Listen, O my Mind.

ii) Community Fellowmen, friends:

Guru Nanak establishes the blessings of God as the provider of these powers:

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਦਿਸੈ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਭਉ ਸੁਖ ਸਾਰੁ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 464.

Through (Laws of) Nature we see, and listen, through the (Laws of) Nature we have love, and enjoy the essence of happiness.

ਜਬੁ ਲਗੁ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਰਹੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਿਛੁ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਕਿਛੁ ਕਹੀਐ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 661.

As long as we are in this world, O Nanak, we should listen and speak of the Lord.

ਸੁਨਹੁ ਜਿਠਾਨੀ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਦਿਰਾਨੀ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਏਕੁ ਭਇਉ ॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 856.

Listen, O my sisters-in-laws (elders and younger), a strange phenomenon has happened.

ਪ੍ਰਹਿਲਾਦੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਇ ॥

AGGS, M3, p 1133.

Prahlaad said, "Listen, O my mother."

Teachers, Pundits and Mullahs.

ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਰੇ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਸਰੈ ॥੨॥੧॥

AGGS, Ravi Das, p 1106.

Says Ravi Das: Listen O Saints, through the dear Lord, all is accomplished.

ਕਹਤੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਰੇ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਤਰਿ ਜਾਂਹਿਗਾ ॥੩॥੧॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 1106.

Say Kabir: Listen O Saints, in the company of the holy Sadh Sangat, you shall be saved.

Community at Large.

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਸੰਤ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਜਸੁ ਕਾਨੀ ॥

AGGS, M 4, p 667.

O Saints of the God, listen to the praises of God with your ears.

ਸੰਤ ਸਜਨ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਸਭਿ ਮੀਤਾ ਝੂਠਾ ਏਹੁ ਪਸਾਰਾ ॥

AGGS, M5, p 380.

O Saints, friends and all my devotees, listen to me: this entire world is false.

ਸੁਨਹੁ ਲੋਕਾ ਮੈ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਰਸੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

AGGS, M5, p 370.

Listen O people, I have enjoyed the nectar of Love.

ਕਹਤੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਰੇ ਲੋਈ ਭਰਮਿ ਨ ਭੂਲਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 692.

Says Kabir: Listen O people! Do not be deluded by doubts.

B. Spiritual

i) Mind

ਐਸਾ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਅਭ ਮੇਰੇ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 411.

Listen to such spiritual wisdom, O my mind.

ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਣੀਜੈ ॥

AGGS, M 3, p 1334.

O my mind, Listen to the Teachings of the Guru.

ਮਨ ਕਰਹਲਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ ਇਕ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਣਾਇ ॥

AGGS, M4, p 234.

O my dear beloved camel-like mind, Listen only to the teachings of the Guru.

ਕਹਤੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ ॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 330.

Kabir says: Listen O my Mind.

ਕਹਤੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਰੇ ਲੋਈ ਭਰਮਿ ਨ ਭੂਲਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 692.

Says Kabir: Listen O people! Do not be deluded by doubts.

ii) God - when asking God to listen our prayers or our mind.

ਸੁਨਹੁ ਬੇਨੰਤੀਆ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ॥

AGGS, M 5, p 547.

Listen to my prayers, O my God and Master.

ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਿ ਕੈ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਵਰਸੈ ਮੇਹੁ ॥

AGGS, M. 4, p 652.

Please, Listen to me O God, let your Grace rain over the whole world.

ਹਮਰਾ ਬਿਨਉ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਹਮ ਸਰਣਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਹਰਿ ਮਾਰੈ ॥

AGGS, M 4, p 172.

Listen my prayer O God, my God and Master: I beg for your sanctuary .

ਬਿਨਉ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਉਚ ਅਪਾਰੇ ॥

AGGS, M 5. p. 203.

Listen my prayers, O Lofty and Infinite God.

ਬਿਨਉ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀਨ ਦਇਆਲ ਗੁਪਾਲ ॥

AGGS, M.5, p 258.

Listen my prayers, O Supreme Lord God, Merciful to the Meek. Lord of the world.

ਸੁਨਹੁ ਬਿਨਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤਾ ॥

AGGS, M 5, p 742.

Please, Listen my prayers, O God, my friend.

From the aforementioned quotations, it is obvious that the faculty of Listening is very significant in our daily lives. We want our minds, our friends, fellow humans, saints and even God to listen, so that we can enjoy the bliss ourselves and help others to the same.

SUMMARY

It is evident that listening, like all of human communication, is a highly complex process, a process that requires a lifetime commitment to improving skills, attitudes, and behaviors on the part of listening communicator. Through his Gurbani, Guru Nanak taught us procedures of undoing rote behaviors rather than learning new ones. The teachings of Gurbani can help to dissolve the habits destructive to effective communication such as prejudice, negativity, closed-mindedness, and preoccupation with the self and to cultivate their opposites. Listening with the heart, body

and mind requires a change in our attitude toward how we relate to one another and to the world. Guru Nanak's approach to listening offers us insight into our true nature. This heightened awareness frees us from the confinements of self-interest and self-consciousness that bars us from connecting with the minds of others, and ultimately with the God. The wisdom in listening to realize the bliss, Guru Angad very eloquently narrated in the following sabd:

ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲਾ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਈ॥
ਸੁਣਿ ਸੁਣਿ ਮੰਨਿ ਵਸਾਈਆ ਬੁਝੈ ਜਨੁ ਕੋਈ॥

AGGS, M 2, p 1239.

The Naam, the name of the Lord, is immaculate and pure, listening it peace is obtained.

Hearing and Listening, it is enshrined in the mind, how rare are is that humble being who realizes it.

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