

UNDERMINING OF GURU NANAK

2. Are Bhagats Gurus Of Sikh Gurus?

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INTRODUCTION

I want to draw attention of the readers to the statement made by Gurnam Singh Mukatsar in his article on page 39 of *Sikh Virsa* of September 2002. He has stated, “ I have noted hundreds of Sabds from the Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) written by Guru Nanak, Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas and Guru Arjan Dev. In these Sabds the Gurus have made it very clear again and again that the untouchable Bhagat, Namdev, Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Ravidas and Bhagat Sain were their spiritual leaders, and true Gurus in the image of Almighty. (ਮੈਂ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਉਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨੋਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਰ-ਵਾਰ ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਛੂਤ ਭਗਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ, ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ, ਭਗਤ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਭਗਤ ਸੈਣ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਬਰ ਹਨ, ਸੱਤ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਨਾਂ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਕਹੀ ਹੈ।)

This is a clear-cut activity of a Sikh *Bipran* for undermining Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus.

REFUTATION

As far as I know, there is no support in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1] for what he has stated. It is his imagination or misunderstanding of Sabds, which has led him to make this statement. If there were Sabds like ones he says, surely scholars like W H McLeod and others would have pointed them out. Gurnam Singh should have quoted the Sabd to support his above assertion.

Here, I want to emphasize that Nanakian philosophy is much more in scope than the thoughts of Bhagats.

Coming back to the issues of who was Guru Nanak's Guru and who was the founder of Sikhism? It is explained many times very clearly in the AGGS that Guru Nanak's Guru was Sabd / God and Guru Nanak was the founder of Sikhism. For Guru Nanak, God is knowledge and the source of all knowledge. God made Himself manifest through Its creation. His creation is the laboratory for gathering knowledge and testing it. Guru Nanak attributed all his knowledge, understanding and experience to God. What he was saying and doing was at the command of God is clearly stated in the following verses:

ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ॥
ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ॥
ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੈ ਮਹਿਲ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ॥
ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 150 [1].

*I was an unemployed minstrel (dhadi),
God gave me an occupation;
Ordered^d me to sing Its praises day and night.
God called me to Its abode of Truth and
Honored me with a robe of honor
To propagate Its true glory.*

Furthermore, when the *Jogis* asked Guru Nanak about his Guru, he explained it as follows:
ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ॥

ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ॥...

AGGS, M 1, p 942.

“ *Who is your Guru or whose are disciple you?*”

He replied:

The Sabd (Divine Revelation, Divine Knowledge) is my Guru and my mind which is focused on the Sabd and comprehends it is the disciple.

Here he has made it abundantly clear that Guru is the *Sabd* (Divine Knowledge), not the personal Guru.

The God is the Guru has been explicitly pointed out in the following verses:

ਗੁਰੁ ਦੇਵਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਲਖ ਅਭੇਵਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਸੋਝੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 1125.

Guru is God, the Enlightener, the Ineffable and Un-reachable.

Comprehension of the nature of the universe is the service to God.

ਸਤਗੁਰੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ॥ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਕਾ ਕਰਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਜਾਨੁ॥

AGGS, M 5, p 895.

The true Guru is Niranjana (beyond the influence of Maya).

Do not believe that God is in the form of a man.

Guru Nanak is the founder of Sikh philosophy (ਸਿਧਾਂਤ) is confirmed in the following verses:
ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਕਿਆ ਉਪਦੇਸੀਐ ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ॥

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AGGS, M 2, p 150.

What teachings can be imparted to those who have been taught by Guru Nanak?

ਹੋਰਿਓ ਗੰਗ ਵਹਾਈਐ ਦੁਨਿਆਈ ਆਖੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਓਨੁ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਈਸਰਿ ਜਗਨਾਥਿ ਉਚਹਦੀ ਵੈਣ ਵਿਰਿਕਿਓਨੁ॥

AGGS, Sattay Doom, p 967.

The people of the world say that Nanak, the Controller (Nath) of the world has promulgated a philosophy of highest order that has changed the course of Ganges.*

(* That means that Guru Nanak's philosophy has challenged many religious beliefs; and social, political and economic systems of his time.)

ਬਲਿਓ ਚਰਾਗੁ ਅੰਧਾਰ ਮਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਕਲਿ ਉਧਰੀ ਇਕ ਨਾਮ ਧਰਮ॥

ਪ੍ਰਗਟੁ ਸਗਲ ਹਰਿ ਭਵਨ ਮਹਿ ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ॥

AGGS, M 5, p 1387.

Nanak person, the Guru, an image of the Almighty, has appeared in the world as light in darkness to dispel ignorance of the whole world with Divine Wisdom.

ਸਭੁ ਤੇ ਵਡਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਲ ਰਾਖੀ ਮੇਰੀ॥

AGGS, M 5, p 750.

Satguru Nanak is the greatest of all, who protected my honor.

The nine successors of Guru Nanak preached and taught his philosophy by enriching and strengthening it by introducing innovative practices in the Sikh community over a period of two centuries.

CONCLUSIONS

From time to time people have alleged ignorantly or with some ulterior motive that Bhagats like Kabir were the preceptors of Sikh Gurus without providing any evidence. Recently, Gurnam Singh asserted that there are hundreds of references in AGGS, which say that Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas and Sain Das were the Gurus of Sikh Gurus. But he didn't quote even a single reference to back up his assertion. To my knowledge there is not a single verse in AGGS, which supports his claim. On the contrary, Guru Nanak has made it abundantly clear in his composition at many places that his Guru is God, the Sabd (Knowledge). His successors and the Bhattas have stated unequivocally that Nanak was the greatest Guru and founder of Sikhism.

REFERENCES

1. AGGS = Aad Guru Granth Sahib. 1983 (reprint). Publishers: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. (M = Mahla, i.e., succession number of the Sikh Gurus to the House of Guru Nanak, p = Page of the AGGS).

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