

BANI OF BHAGAT KABIR AND GURU NANAK

ARTICLE

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INTRODUCTION

It is important to discuss brief life-sketches of Bhagat Kabir and of Guru Nanak before discussing if there are similarities between their bani as claimed by some writers.

BHAGAT KABIR

According to Wikipedia [1] Bhagat Kabir, a mystic poet and saint, was born in 1398 or 1440 and died in 1448 or 1518. According to these dates he could be either of 50 or 62 years, but some claim that he was 120 years and a contemporary of Guru Nanak. Kabir was born in the city of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh in a Muslim family but was influenced by the Ramanand of Bhakti Movement. He was a weaver by profession. The Bhakti movement developed around different gods and goddesses, and some sub-sects were Vaishnavism (Vishnu), Shaivism (Shiva), and Shaktism (Shakti goddesses). Some writers consider Bhakti Movement as a de facto catalyst to the formation of Sikhism.

Kabir was critical of both organized religions, Hinduism, and Islam, and questioned their meaningless and unethical practices. Therefore, he was threatened by both Hindus and Muslims for his views. His followers are known as “Kabir Panthis”.

Birth of Bhagat Kabir

The Sikhiwiki [2] reports Bhagat Kabir was adopted by Neeru and his wife Neema who named him Kabir (the Most High). Though a Hindu by tradition, he was a Muslim by upbringing. A weaver by profession, Kabir said he had been sent by the Lord himself. Some historians accept 1398–1448 as the period Kabir lived, while others favor

ABSTRACT

Some writers have compared the bani of Bhagat Kabir to show similarities to that of Guru Nanak. This information leads readers to believe that there is no originality and uniqueness in the bani of Guru Nanak. Some are of the opinion that Guru Nanak was member of Bhagati Movement and even consider the possibility of Guru Nanak to be follower of Bhagat Kabir. This article discusses that Guru Nanak was neither a member of Bhagati Movement nor the follower of Bhagat Kabir; rather, he promulgated original and unique bani.



Figure 1. Kabir Weaving - <http://oldsite.library.upenn.edu/texts/asiasaii/mini-paintcompany004.html>

1440–1518. If Bhagat Kabir was born about 71 years before Guru Nanak and died in 1448, this would be 21 years before the birth of Guru Nanak (sikhwiki), Therefore, it is not possible that Guru Nanak could ever meet Bhagat Kabir, and collected the bani from Bhagat Kabir as claimed by Gogia. [3] On the other hand, some believe that Bhagat Kabir lived for 120 years (1398 to 1518) then there could be some possibility.

In the Sikh Holy Scripture, Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS), Guru Nanak, the Founder of Sikhi, has 976 hymns whereas, Bhagat Kabir has total of 464 hymns (227 *Padas* in 17 ragas and 237 slokas) about 47.54% of 976 bani of Guru Nanak. The bani of Guru Nanak appears first, followed by the bani of other Gurus; similarly, the bani of Bhagat Kabir appears first followed by that of other Bhagats in the AGGS.

Authenticity of his Work

Hess and Singh [4] reported that numerous poems of Bhagat Kabir, however, the authenticity of many songs credit to Kabir in *The Bejki of Kabir* are doubtful. Schomer and McLeod [5] reported that Rabindranath Tagore translated one hundred poems of Bhagat Kabir in 1915, but many doubts their authenticity except only six out of one hundred. On the other hand, there are 464 hymns of Bhagat Kabir in the AGGS. A couple of questions to be resolved by the Sikh intelligentsia:

How many poems (hymns) are in *The Bejki of Kabir*?

Were all 464 hymns in the AGGS copied from *The Bejki of Kabir*?

GURU NANAK

Some have presented Nanak as a Sufi (mystic man in Islam), a follower of the Bhagati Movement, a social

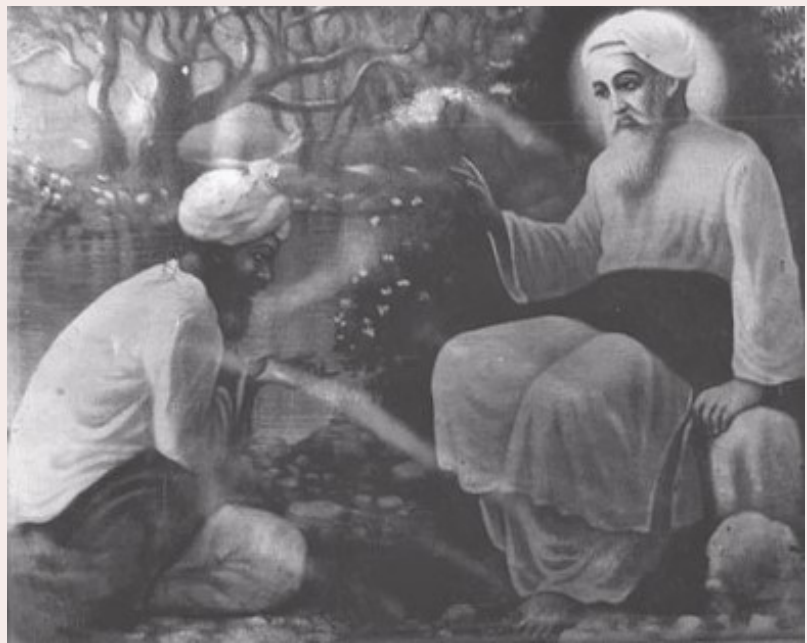


Figure 2. Guru Nanak in Baghdad in 1520. It may be painted by a Muslim artist. He is not wearing any mala around his neck, not around his turban, and not holding any in his hand.

reformer while some Sikh and non-Sikh writers had misunderstood his philosophy and labelled him as the founder of Sikhism as the hybridization of Hinduism and Islam. The following brief life-history of Guru Nanak is based on the writing of Dawe [6] in the Encyclopaedia of Sikhism. Nanak was born on *Vaisakh Sudi* (days of the waxing of the moon) 3, 1526 *Bikrami* (April 15, 1469, CE*) at Rai Bhoi Ki Talwandi, called Nankana Sahib, about 65km southwest of Lahore, now in Pakistan. His father, Mehta Kalu, was a Patwari, an accountant of land revenue, in the government. However, Cunningham [7] (p 35) reported that he was grain merchant. His mother was Bibi Tripta. He had an elder sister called 'Nanaki'.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) promulgated a philosophy about God, Cosmology, and political, social,

and cultural behavior of humanity after having critical dialogues with many seers and mentors of various religions of South Asia and Middle East. He was recording his bani in a *pothi* (a notebook), which was passed on the next Guru, Angad. Unfortunately, it was not preserved by his followers. Today we do not have the original bani written by Guru Nanak, however, we have preserved his *kharanvan* (wooden sandals) and *chola* (long robe). When we read his bani in the Holy Scriptures of today, the Sikhs addressed it with various titles. Here it is addressed as the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). [9] Guru Nanak's philosophy is based on his vision about Nature/Universe and its laws and human behavior. Guru Nanak defines his philosophy as "SIKHI" (ਸਿਖੀ) [10]:

ਸਿਖੀ¹ ਸਿਖਿਆ² ਗੁਰ³ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ⁴ ॥

Sikhī¹ sikhī² ā gur vīchār.

SIKHI¹ is the teachings² based on

enlightening³ philosophy⁴.

ਨਦਰੀਂ ਕਰਮਿ ਲਖਾਏ ਪਾਰਿ ॥

Nadrī karam laghā=e pār.

Having⁵ the above vision⁵ of Guru Nanak¹ can get across⁸ the life successfully⁷.

AGGS, M 1, p 465.

Guru Nanak laid the foundation of Sikhi (philosophy) in South Asia during his life period (1469-1539) which is the same as that of the “Period of Renaissance” covering and spanning between the 14th and 17th centuries and marking the transition from the Middle Ages to Modernity in Europe. During this time, Natural Philosophers were challenging the medieval teachings and authority of the Church in Europe, and Guru Nanak was busy challenging the ancient mythology and rituals in which the peoples of South Asia were shackled to for centuries.

COMPARISON OF BANI OF BHAGAT KABIR WITH THAT OF GURU NANAK

Prof. Sahib Singh (*Guru Granth Darpan* Vol. 5 page 756) says that Guru Nanak collected Bhagat Kabir's bani when he visited Banaras during his first travel (1507-1515) as he liked them. [11] This collection contained 227 padas in 17 Ragas and 237 slokas of Bhagat Kabir which reached Guru Arjun through successive gurus to be included in the in Aad Granth. However, there is no such evidence that Guru Nanak had met Bhagat Kabir since some historians think (as mentioned earlier) that Bhagat Kabir died in 1448.

Gogia [3] reports that the bani of thirteen Bhagats have been included in the AGGS, however, the bani of Bhagat Kabir is more than all other Bhagats and his bani comes next after the bani of the Sikh Gurus in the AGGS. He continues to report that

this is due to the fact there is a remarkable similarity of ideas and expression in the compositions of Bhagat Kabir and those of the Sikh Gurus. Sometimes, they have used the same metaphors or similes for expressing the same idea.

He has quoted a few examples of similarity between the bani of Bhagat Kabir with that of Sikh Gurus. I found only a few verses of Guru Nanak showing similarities to that of Bhagat Kabir. However, a critical analysis indicates that original and unique bani of Guru Nanak has nothing like that of the bani of Bhagat Kabir. For example,

A. GOD

1. Bhagat Kabir

The phrase of Kabir quoted by Gogia is replaced with the Unicode Gurmukhi:

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥

Aval alah nūr upā=ā kudrat̄ ke sabh bande.

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਦੇ ॥੧॥

Ēk nūr t̄e sabh jag upji=ā ka=un bhale ko mande. ||1||

(Bhagat Kabir.SGGS:1349)

The following interpretation is by Gogia.

“First, Allah (God) created the Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So, who is good, and who is bad?”

2. Guru Nanak

Gogia compares similarity of the above phrase of Bhagat Kabir with the following phrase of Guru Nanak. I have replaced this phrase with Unicode:

ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੇਇ ॥

Sabh meh jot̄ jot̄ hai so=e.

ਤਿਸ ਦੈ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

Fis dai chānaṇ sabh meh chānaṇ ho=e. Guru Nanak Dev.SGGS:13.

Gogia interprets literally this phrase as follows:

“Amongst all is the Light-You are that Light. By this Illumination, that Light is radiant within all.”

This phrase of Guru Nanak is about Arti for the God mentioning about Suns as stars, Moons as natural satellites of planets (including our Earth) in the Universe. Therefore, *jot* (ਜੋਤਿ) in this phrase is considered as ‘energy’ which is present in all the stars, planets, moons and in every living being. This energy comes from the ONE in **ੴ**. Coincidentally and scientifically this ONE is SINGULARITY that is infinite amount of energy. [12] Under these conditions the following phrase of Guru Nanak has interpreted scientifically and thematically as followings:

ਸਭਾ ਮਹਿ² ਜੋਤਿ³ ਜੋਤਿ⁴ ਹੈ ਸੇਇ⁵ ॥

Sabh meh jot̄ jot̄ hai so=e.

Everybody (every living being)^{1,2} has the same⁵ energy^{3,4} as that in the God (ੴ).

ਤਿਸ⁶ ਦੈ ਚਾਨਣਿ⁷ ਸਭ⁸ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ⁹ ਹੋਇ

॥

Fis dai chānaṇ sabh meh chānaṇ ho=e. Therefore, everybody⁸ is radiating⁹ the same energy⁷ which came from⁶ the same source (ੴ).

AGGS, M 1, p 13.

Hence proper interpretation of phrase of Guru Nanak does not show any similarity with that of Kabir’s phrase.

B. SINGING SONGS

1. Bhagat Kabir

Another example of similarity

between the bani of Guru Nanak with that of Kabir is quoted by Gogia as follows:

Bhagat Kabir says:

(Here again I have replaced this phrase with Unicode).

ਗਾਉ ਗਾਉ ਰੀ ਦੁਲਹਨੀ ਮੰਗਲਚਾਰਾ ॥

Gāo gāo rī dūlhanī mangalchārā.

ਮੇਰੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਆਏ ਰਾਜਾ ਰਾਮ ਭਤਾਰਾ ॥੧॥

ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Mere garih āe rājā rām bhātārā. ||1|| rahāo.

Sing, sing, O wedded- mates, the marriage songs of the Lord.

The Lord, my King, has come to my house as my Husband.

Bhagat Kabir says: Sing songs of happiness since his husband (King Ram as God) has come to his house.

2. Guru Nanak

In contrast to Bhagat Kabir Guru Nanak says:

ਗਾਵਹੁ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਕਾਮਣੀ ਬਿਬੇਕ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

Gāvhu gāvhu kāmṇī bibek bīchār.

ਹਮਰੈ ਘਰਿ ਆਇਆ ਜਗਜੀਵਨੁ ਭਤਾਰੁ

॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Hamrai ghar āiā jagjīvan bhātār. ||1|| rahāo.

My thematic interpretation is as follows which is not at all like that of the above phrase of Bhagat Kabir:

Oh, beautiful woman (mind)! Sing¹ the songs of discriminating/ discerning³ philosophy⁴

Because my⁵ mind⁶ has understood⁷ the One⁹ who gave me this life⁸.

AGGS, M 1, p 351.

Guru Nanak is talking about songs of discriminating/discerning philosophy rather than songs of happiness mentioned by Bhagat Kabir. Moreover, Guru Nanak is talking about the God who gave him life while Bhagat Kabir is talking about the king Ram as god.

C. TRANSMIGRATION

1. Bhagat Kabir

Gogia writes that Bhagat Kabir and the Sikh Gurus both believed in the theory of transmigration and according to them, it happens by the God's Command/Will:

Here he quoted incomplete Rahao (pause) and I have added the missing phrase before the main phrase. I have replaced the phrase with Unicode:

Gogia interprets it as follows:

ਬਹੁਰਿ ਹਮ ਕਾਹੇ ਆਵਹਿਗੇ ॥ (added missing phrase)

Bahur ham kāhe āvhige.

Why should I come into the world again?

ਆਵਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਬੁਝਿ

ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

Āvan jānā hukam ṭisai kā hukmai bujh samāvhige. ||1|| rahāo.

Coming and going is by the Hukam of His Command; realizing His Hukam, I shall merge in Him.

||1||Pause||

AGGS, Kabir, p 1103.

2. Guru Nanak

Here again his phrase has been replaced with Unicode:

ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣੁ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ॥

Jamaṇ marṇā hukam hai bhāṇai āvai jāe.

Guru Nanak says:

Birth¹ and death² are according to the Laws of Nature/Universe³ so, is the coming⁵ (birth) into this world and leaving⁶ (death) from this world is also under the Laws of Nature/ Universe⁴.

AGGS, M 1, p 472.

Here Guru Nanak is not talking about the merging with the God to avoid the cycle of birth-death as discussed

by Bhagat Kabir in a phrase before the main phrase. Whereas Guru Nanak does not believe in transmigration in his bani and says the birth and death are governed under the Laws of Nature/Universe.

D. VEDAS

1. Bhagat Kabir

The views of Bhagat Kabir about Vedas are as follows:

a) Kabir praises Vedas, Bible and, Quran

ਬੇਦਾ ਕਤੇਬ ਕਹਹੁ ਮਤਾ ਬੂਠੇ ਬੂਠਾ ਜੋ ਨ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ ॥

Beḍ kaṭeb kahhu maṭ jhūṭhe jhūṭhā jo na bichārai.

Kabir says:

Do not⁴ call³ the Vedas¹, the bible, and the Quran² are false/incorrect⁵ instead those, who do not contemplate⁷ them, are liars⁶.

AGGS, Kabir, p 1350.

b) Now Kabir himself criticizes Vedas, the Bible, and the Quran

ਬੇਦਾ ਕਤੇਬ ਇਫਤਰਾ ਭਾਈ ਦਿਲ ਕਾ

ਫਿਕਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

Beḍ kaṭeb iftarā bhāi dil kā fikar na jāe.

Vedas¹ and other religious scriptures² (the Bible and, the Quran) are false (incorrect)³, therefore, they are not helpful to get rid of anxiety⁴ of the heart (in the mind).

ਟੁਕੁ ਦਮੁ ਕਰਾਰੀ ਜਉ ਕਰਹੁ ਹਾਜਿਰਾ

ਹਜੂਰਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ ॥੧॥

Tuk ḍam karārī jāo karahu hājir hājūr khudāe. ||1||

If one tries to think seriously⁷ even for a⁵ moment⁶, the existence⁸ of Eternal Entity⁹ will become apparent everywhere.

AGGS, Kabir, p 727.

Note:

ਇਫਤਰਾ :GGS Gurmukhi-English Dictionary

[Ara. adj.] False, false show, concoction, incorrect.

Kabir continue to criticize the Vedas

ਬੇਦਾ ਕੀ ਪੁਤ੍ਰੀ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਤਾਈ ॥

Beḍ kī puṭrī simriti bhāī.

ਸਾਂਕਲ ਜੇਵਰੀ ਲੈ ਹੈ ਆਈ ॥੧॥

Sā'nkāl jevrī lai hai āī. ||1||

Bhagat Kabir says:

Oh Brothers! Simriti is the daughter of Vedas (means based on rituals in Vedas) has brought the iron chains with fetters/shackles (jewellery) of rituals to trap the people.

AGGS, Kabir, 329.

2. Guru Nanak

The views of Guru Nanak about Vedas are as follows:

a) Vedas have different philosophies

ਚਾਰੇ ਵੇਦ ਹੋਏ ਸਚਿਆਰ ॥

Chāre ved hōe sachīār.

ਪੜ੍ਹਹਿ ਗੁਣਹਿ ਤਿਨ੍ਹੁ ਚਾਰ ਵੀਚਾਰ ॥

Paṛeh guṇeh ṭinḥ chār vīchār.

Many Sikh scientists, theologians and writers quote this phrase to support that Guru Nanak accepts four Vedas are true. However, its logical and rational interpretation conveys entirely different meanings:

In the first phrase Guru Nanak is writing what is generally accepted by people and by Bhagat Kabir:

It is mostly understood by people that four Vedas are true.

However, when one reads and studies critically then one finds four different philosophies in four different Vedas.

AGGS, M 1, p 470.

In the second phrase Guru Nanak is advising the people that four different gods appeared during four Vedas' time and each god had different philosophy than the others. There is a long sabd about four Vedas, before

the above phrase of Guru Nanak under discussion, indicating four different philosophies of four different gods.

b) Simritis, based on Vedas, have also been condemned by Guru Nanak

ਤੀਰਥ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਕਿਛੁ ਲਾਹਾ

ਮਿਲੈ ਦਿਹਾੜੀ ॥

Firath simriti punn dān kichḥ lāhā milai dihāṛī.

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਮੇਕਾ

ਘੜੀ ਸਮੁਹਾਲੀ ॥੮॥੧॥੮॥

Nānak nām milai vadiāī mekā gḥarī samḥālī. ||8||1||8||

AGGS, M 1, p 1191.

Guru Nanak first explains behavior of people:

Going to various pilgrimage to sacred places and following the rituals of simritis, and giving charities get a little benefit for that much labor.

Thereafter, Guru Nanak explains the real beneficial act:

One can get glorious greatness (one spends a few minutes (one ghari) to understand Naam (working of Laws of Nature/Universe). 1. 8.

Note: According to Bhai Kahn Singh there about 27 *simiritis* of rituals in Hinduism.

E. WOMEN

1. Bhagat Kabir

It is Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh [13] states, "Kabir's opinion of women is contemptuous and derogatory". She also quoted that Wendy Doniger declared Kabir as a misogynist and Schomer says a woman is "*kali nagini* (a black cobra), *kunda naraka ka* (the pit of hell), *juthani jagata ki* (the refuse of the world)". She herself quoted Kabir that a woman prevents man's spiritual progress:

"Woman ruins everything when she comes near man.

Devotion, liberation, and divine knowledge no longer enter his soul."

However, she has not quoted any verse in Gurmukhi and its source if these are from the AGGS or from any other sources for verification of authenticity of her interpretation.

Sagar [14] has also reported that Kabir hates women. He quotes from *The Kabir Vachanavali* - Oriya Translation of the Selected Poems of Kabir by Dr. Satyendra Mishra as follows:

"Kabir hates the sin and not the sinner. So, he hated women towards whom men were attracted to and equated them with sin. He says, associating with woman is like associating oneself with hell. The world that relates to her or influenced by her is a world that is strengthless and lifeless.

He says, undergoing crucifixion (crucifixion) sometimes may save one's life but a woman is more dangerous than that and there is no chance of living for the one who is involved with women.

Kabir compares a lustful woman to a biting cat and a venomous cobra."

Nirmal Das [15] referring to the Aad Guru Granth Sahib advises to a young married woman not to veil her face and avoid such social habits. Similarly, Sagar has also quoted the source of bani of Bhagat Kabir discussed by him is from the *Kabir Vachanavali* - Oriya Translation.

2. Guru Nanak

However, Guru Nanak narrates the importance of woman as follows:

ਭੰਡਾ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣਾ

ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥

Bḥand jammīai bḥand nimmīai bḥand mangan vīāhu.

ਭੰਡਹੁ⁸ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ⁹ ਭੰਡਹੁ¹⁰ ਚਲੈ¹¹ ਰਾਹੁ¹² ॥

Bḥandahu hovai doṣṭī bḥandahu cḥalai rāhu.

Man establishes friendship⁹ with a woman⁸, is engaged⁶ to a woman, gets married⁷ with a woman and woman³ gets conceived⁴ and a new man/woman¹ is born² from a woman¹⁰ to continue¹¹ the humans population¹².

ਭੰਡੁ¹³ ਮੁਆ¹⁴ ਭੰਡੁ¹⁵ ਭਾਲੀਐ¹⁶ ਭੰਡਿ¹⁷ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ¹⁸ ॥

Bḥand mu=ā bḥand bḥālī=ai bḥand hovai bandḥān.

When a woman¹³ (wife) dies¹⁴ then man seeks¹⁶ another woman¹⁵ this connection¹⁸ of man and woman¹⁷ is continued.

ਸੇ ਕਿਉ¹⁹ ਮੰਦਾ²⁰ ਆਖੀਐ²¹ ਜਿਤੁ²² ਜੰਮਹਿ²³

ਰਾਜਾਨ²⁴ ॥

So ki=ō mandā ākhī=ai jitṭ jamēh rājān. *Thus, why¹⁹ to call²¹ that woman bad²⁰ who²² gives birth²³ to kings^{*24}.*

ਭੰਡਹੁ²⁵ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ²⁶ ਉਪਜੈ²⁷ ਭੰਡੇ²⁸ ਬਾਬੁ²⁹ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

Bḥandahu hī bḥand ūpjai bḥandai bājḥ na ko=e.

ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੇ³⁰ ਬਾਹਰਾ³¹ ਏਕੇ³² ਸਚਾ³³ ਸੋਇ³⁴

॥

Nānak bḥandai bāhrā eko sachā so=e.

Finally, Guru Nanak says:

It is a fact that man/woman²⁶ is born²⁷ from a woman²⁵ and this cycle cannot continue without a woman²⁸.

However, the One³² (in ਏਕੇ) who³⁴ exists forever³³ is not born³¹ by a woman³⁰....

AGGS, M 1, p 473.

F. Humility

Gogia has shown similarity in the following phrase of Bhagat Kabir with that of Guru Nanak. (I have replaced

his phrase with Unicode.)

1. Bhagat Kabir

ਕਬੀਰ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਹਮ ਬੁਰੇ ਹਮ ਤਜਿ ਭਲੇ ਸਭੁ

ਕੋਇ ॥

(Bhagat Kabir.SGGS:1364) 'Kabeer, I am the worst of all. Everyone else is good.

2. Guru Nanak

ਹਮ ਨਹੀ ਚੰਗੇ ਬੁਰਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥ (Guru

Nanak.SGGS: 728) *I am not good; no one is as bad as I am.*

However, if we interpret the complete phrases rationally then we find the bani of Guru Nanak is quite different that that of Bhagat Kabir.

1. Bhagat Kabir

ਕਬੀਰ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਹਮ ਬੁਰੇ ਹਮ ਤਜਿ ਭਲੇ ਸਭੁ

ਕੋਇ ॥

Kabīr sabḥ ṭe ham bure ham tajḥ bḥalo sabḥ ko=e.

Kabir says:

I am worst than all others who are good.

ਜਿਨਿ ਐਸਾ ਕਰਿ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ

ਸੋਇ ॥੭॥

Jin aisā kar būjḥi=ā mīṭ hamārā so=e. ||7||

The one who has recognized this principle is a friend of mine. 7.

AGGS, Kabir, p 1364.

2. Guru Nanak

ਹਮ ਨਹੀ ਚੰਗੇ ਬੁਰਾ ਨਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥

Ham nahī cḥange burā nahī ko=e.

Nanak admits that:

If I am not good, then the others are not bad.

ਪ੍ਰਣਵਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਾਰੇ ਸੋਇ ॥੪॥੧॥੨॥

Paraṇvaṭ Nānak tāre so=e. ||4||1||2||

However, Nanak prays that the One (Eternal Entity) will save all of us. 4.

1.

AGGS, M 1, p 728.

G. MIRACLE

Miracle defined: Noun: *An effect or extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers and is ascribed to a supernatural cause.* (dictionary.com). Many Sikh scientists and theologians, and theologians of other religions have strong faith in their God who has supernatural power to perform miracles.

1. Bhagat Kabir

In the following stanza Bhagat Kabir is writing about a miracle happened to him when his enemies had put iron chain around him and fetters/shackles on his feet and was drowned deep into water of *Mother Ganga* (the Ganges), His iron chain around him and fetters/shackles were broken by the waves of the Ganges since he had full faith in his god/gods:

ਗੰਗਾ ਕੀ ਲਹਾਰਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਟੁਟੀ ਜੰਜੀਰ ॥

Gangā kī lahar merī tuṭī janjīr.

ਮ੍ਰਿਗਛਾਲਾ ਪਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਕਬੀਰ ॥੨॥

Marigcḥālā par baitḥe Kabīr. ||2||

The waves of the sacred river Ganges (Mother Ganga) have broken the chain around me and fetters/shackles on my feet. Thereafter, Kabir came out of the water on a skin of a deer.

AGGS, Kabir, p 1162.

2. Guru Nanak

On the other hand, Guru Nanak teaches us that nobody even the God/god/gods can perform any miracles by breaking the Laws of Nature/ Universe. He has explained in his following bani that Pathan ruler requested millions of religious leaders of all religions to pray to God to the kill the Mughals, who attacked Saidpur/Aminabad. But the God did not kill or blinded any Mughal:

ਕੋਟੀ ਹੂ ਪੀਰ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਏ ਜਾ ਮੀਰੁ ਸੁਣਿਆ

ਧਾਇਆ ॥

Kotī hū pīr varaj rahāᵉ jā mīr suᵇiᵇā dᵇhāᵇiᵇā.

When the Pathan Ruler heard that Mir, Mughal – Babur, is attacking then millions of religious leaders were engaged for prayer to God to stop the attack.

ਥਾਨ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਜਲੇ ਬਿਜ ਮੰਦਰ ਮੁਛਿ ਮੁਛਿ

ਕੁਇਰ ਕੁਲਾਇਆ ॥

Thān mukām jale bij mandar muchᵇ muchᵇ kuᵇir rulāᵇiᵇā.

Babur burned palaces (residences), strong temples (worship places) and cut the princes limb by limb and were mixed in dust.

ਕੋਈ ਮੁਗਲ ਨ ਹੋਆ ਅੰਧਾ ਕਿਨੈ ਨ ਪਰਚਾ

ਲਾਇਆ ॥੪॥

Koᵇī mugal na hoᵇā andᵇhā kinai na parchā lāᵇiᵇā. ||4||

None of the Mughals were blinded by the prayers and by the miraculous powers of the religious leaders (to stop the attack).

AGGS, M 1, p 417-418.

CONCLUSIONS

- Many writes are of the opinion that the bani of Bhagat Kabir is like that of Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus that is why his bani has been included in the AGGS.
- Sawan Singh Gogia has compared similarities of some bani of Bhagat Kabir with that of Guru Nanak.
- However, critical interpretation of bani of Guru Nanak indicates that it is original and unique and there is no similarity with the bani of Bhagat Kabir.
- Nikki-Gurinder Kaur Singh has reported some bani of Bhagat Kabir showing derogatory remarks about woman but has not supported her claim by quoting the bani in Gurmukhi script and its source.

- The Sikh intelligentsia needs to explore the originality and uniqueness in the bani of Guru Nanak.

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