Ashtapadi 22

O, Lord of men and other living beings!
You are present everywhere.
The One God Himself pervades, and
no other can be seen, says Nanak.
He Himself speaks and hears Himself
He is one and He Himself is many.
When it came in Your Will You created the creation.
And absorbed it in Yourself in Your Will.
There is nothing without You
You have strung everyone in Your String.
He, whom God Himself gives the understanding,
Gets the gift of True Naam.
He, who looks on all men with an equal eye, realizes the Reality.
He conquers the whole universe,
says Nanak.

All men and other living beings
are in His hand;
He is kind to the poor and is Lord
of the orphans.
No one can destroy those whom He
protects;
Whoever forgets God is dead.
Where can one go after leaving Him?
One God, who is unaffected by Maya,
is the need of all.
He in whose hands are the ways of
all living beings –
Understand Him to be internally
as well as outwardly with you.
God is the treasure of all qualities
and is without any limits.
Servant Nanak is ever a sacrifice
to you.
The Perfect One remains gracious
forever.
He is merciful to all.

He Himself knows His plays.
The all conscious One is present everywhere.
He protects and nourishes everyone in different ways.
Whatever He has created, meditate upon Him.
To whomsoever He likes, He blends him with Himself.
Such ones do His devotion and sing His praise.
He who believes in the reality of God with firm faith in his mind
Realizes the Doer, says Nanak.
He who is attached with the One Naam of God,
His hopes never go in vain.
It becomes the Seva for the servant.
By understanding the Will, one gets the highest status.

There is no thought above it
For those within whom the formless
One resides.
Their fetters are broken and they
become free from enmity;
They worship the feet of the Master
day and night.
They are happy in this world and the
world beyond;
Nanak says, God Himself unites them
with Himself.
Get joy in the company of the Sadhus;
Sing the praises of the Lord, Who is
Supreme Joy.
Meditate and ponder over the Naam
of Lord and Its essence.
Make the precious body successful.
Sing the nectar-full words of God's
praises:
This is the method of liberating the
soul.

See God near you for all the eight watches of day,
Then the ignorance and darkness will be removed.
Hear and absorb the teachings into your heart.
Nanak says, then you will get the fruit according to your desires.
Improve your life in this world and in the world beyond
By keeping the Naam of the Lord within your heart.
The teachings of the perfect Master are perfect.
He in whose heart these teachings dwell, realize the Truth.
Repeat the Naam with mind and body
Then the pains, grief and fear will leave the heart.

O, trader do the trading of Truth:
Your cargo will be valued in the
court of the Lord.
Keep only one support in your heart.
Then you will not come and go again,
says Nanak.
Where can one go away from Him?
One is saved by meditating on the
Preserver.
All the fears vanish by meditating
on the Fearless One.
Man gets liberation with the grace
of the Lord.
He who is protected by God doesn't
have any suffering.
By meditating on Naam he gets
happiness within.
The worries go away and egoism
vanishes.
None can reach such a devotee.
The Brave Master is watching over
his head;

His affairs get completed, says Nanak.
He whose wisdom is superb and whose
glance is full of nectar:
By whose mere glimpse the entire
creation is liberated.
He whose lotus feet are unique -
Whose darshan is successful and whose
form is beautiful.
Blessed is His Seva and His servant
who does it.
He is the Supreme Being, the All-
Conscious One.
Those within whom He dwells become
blessed.
Kal cannot come near them.
They become Immortal and attain
the status of Immortality.
Nanak says, They meditate upon
Him in the company of Sadhus.

Chapter 22

On the Protection of God

O, Lord of men and other living beings! You are present everywhere.
The One God Himself prevades, and no other can be seen, says Nanak.

In today's Ashtapadi, Guru Arjan Dev is singing the glory and praise of Almighty Lord by saying, "O Lord, you are present everywhere, You have created everyone, and you are protecting and nourishing everyone." All the Mahatmas—those who have done the meditation and have realized Him—have always said, "O Lord, there is nobody else except You and there is no one else whose devotion we can do. So when only You are present everywhere and when You are the One Who does everything, we cannot describe Your glory because there is no one else equal to You. So how can we compare You with anyone and how can we sing Your glory?"

When we see God within ourselves and when we manifest Him, He becomes our personal experience. Wherever we look, we see God everywhere, in enemies, in friends, whether it is human, animal, whether it is bird or anything else, wherever we look we always see God present.

He Himself speaks and hears Himself
He is one and He Himself is many.

O Lord, You Yourself sit down and read from the Holy Scriptures, and You Yourself sit down and listen to what is being read.

O Lord, You are One, and whenever it comes in Your Will, You become many from one and You spread, You expand Yourself.

When it came in Your Will You created the creation.
And absorbed it in Yourself in Your Will.

When it came in Your Will you created this creation and when it comes in Your Will You dissolve this creation and make it one with You.

There is nothing without You.
You have strung everyone in Your String.

There is no creature—nothing—without You. You are present within everyone and You have tied all the souls, all the creatures in Your rope. God is in the soul and the soul is in God. But you can know this secret only with the Grace of Master.

He, whom God Himself gives the understanding,
Gets the gift of True Naam.

God makes those souls meditate on Shabd Naam to whom He wants to show His play, to show that He is residing everywhere. By the meditation of Naam one comes to know that everything happens because of Naam, and without Naam nobody can do anything.

He, who looks on all men with an equal eye, realizes the Reality.
He conquers the whole universe, says Nanak.

What happens by doing the meditation of Shabd Naam? We acquire the qualities of God, and as God looks at everybody with equal sight in the same way we also become like Him; and we become the knower of the ultimate Truth, which is God. One becomes the knower of all the things in the world and one becomes the conqueror of the world. Conquering the world does not mean to fight with the world and control it using arms and weapons. He means that when one conquers his mind he becomes the conqueror of the whole world. When we control our mind, we become the Owner of the One who has created this Creation, because when you have eliminated mind from within yourself, then nothing stands between you and Almighty God and you become one with God.

All men and other living beings are in His hand;
He is kind to the poor and is Lord of the orphans.

The strings of all the creatures are in the hands of Almighty God and He is the Father of all the orphans.

No one can destroy those whom He protects;
Whoever forgets God is dead.

No power in this world can destroy the one protected by God. Who dies? Who is destroyed? Only those who forget God and only who therefore do not get His love and protection.

Once a pregnant deer was sleeping, and seeing her sleeping a hunter trapped her on all four sides. On one side he put a trap and on another side he lit a fire. On the third side he had his dog standing there, and on the fourth side he stood with his bow and arrow. The deer was sleeping and she did not know what was going on around her. But when she felt the heat of the fire and heard all the noise, she saw that she was trapped in all four directions and there was no way to escape from this hunter. At that time she prayed to Almighty God, "O Lord, save me from all these problems." You know that even the birds and animals remember God and do His devotion in their own way. And it is natural to pray to God whenever you are trapped in any danger. This is the nature of all creatures: whether they believe in the existence of God or not, whenever they face any danger or any problem, it is natural for them to remember God because He has created all the creatures. So when that deer prayed to Almighty God, what did He do? Suddenly there was a big storm and the fire spread wide and burned the trap, and the hunter thought the deer was trying to escape but he couldn't see correctly and he shot his dog instead of the deer; and at the same time a snake bit the hunter and he was also killed. Whether one is man or animal, whether one is bird or any other creature, if he remembers God with a true heart and if he prays to God, God will always come there to help him.

Where can one go after leaving Him?
One God, Who is unaffected by Maya, is the need of all.

It is a pity that people—giving up such a God Who protects everyone and gives life to everyone, nourishes everyone and brings help to everyone—go and worship other things. Is there anyone who can help us, is there anyone worth being devoted to, to worship, except that God Who has given life to everyone?

There is one very famous story in the Hindu scriptures about two brothers. One was called Hota and the other was called Brahma. They were both very learned pundits. Once it so happened that they were invited by some householders to attend a feast, and they were served very good food, they were given some money for the wear and tear

of their teeth, because it was a custom in the olden days that when learned people were invited by householders, after being given food they were also given some money. It so happened that Brahma, who was less learned than Hota, got less money. Now Brahma was very clever and when he saw that Hota was getting more money than him, he thought, I should get some money from his share also. So he said, "Listen brother, no matter if they have given us more or less money, we should collect this money and share it equally." Now Hota said, "Well, they gave me more and gave you less. It was all written in our fate that we should get that much, so there is no question of sharing it equally; we both got separate money; I shouldn't bother about that." But Brahma said "No, you should definitely share, because you are my brother," and things like that. But Hota didn't do what he wanted. So Brahma got angry and said, "You are very egotistical and you are not listening to me. I am giving you this curse: that in your next lifetime you will become an elephant." Now Hota was also a pundit and he also had the power of cursing others; so he said, "You have cursed me, that in my next lifetime I will become an elephant. Well! I curse you—that in your next lifetime you will become an octopus, and you will always remain in the water and have many problems."

In the olden days when these learned pundits were giving curses to each other, they meant it: they also had some powers. So in their next life both brothers according to their curses got the bodies of the elephant and the octopus. And it is written that once that elephant came to drink the water and the octopus was there living in the water, and suddenly the octopus came out and caught hold of the elephant. The other elephants who came to the water tried their best to release the elephant, Hota, but they were not successful. And he also resisted—the octopus wanted to pull him into the water but the elephant was resisting. It is said that it went on for thousands of years, and during that time the elephants brought food for Hota, and the octopus didn't have to go far for food because he was an animal of the water and he was getting his food from the water. It is said that after thousands of years, when the elephants stopped bringing the food, and the elephant Hota started losing his strength, it so happened that the octopus was able to pull the elephant into the water, and when only his trunk remained out Hota requested the Lord, "O Lord, now I have only your support: I am praying to you to save me from this calamity."

So it is said that the Lord came down and cut the bindings, the arms, of the octopus, and released the elephant. This is a very famous story and Guru Nanak has mentioned it in his writings. He says, "O Lord, save us in the same way that you protected that elephant from the octopus."

He in whose hands are the ways of all living beings–
Understand Him to be internally as well as outwardly with you.

God has the schedule of all the souls. He knows when the souls should be sent in the world and when they should be brought back. And sitting within, He protects and nourishes the soul and when the nighttime comes He brings that soul back. When we manifest that God within we can easily see that the same God Who was helping and protecting us within was helping us outside also, and He is always accompanying us like a shadow. In all vegetation there is life; there is curd in all types of milk; in the same way God resides in everyone.

God is the treasure of all qualities and is without any limits.
Servant Nanak is ever a sacrifice to you.
The Perfect One remains gracious forever.
He is merciful to all.

God is perfect, He is gracious, He is merciful on all, and He protects all. And it is not true that He is pleased only with those who do His devotion and He is not pleased with those who do not do His devotion. He says, "Whether someone does Your devotion or not, You are pleased with them, You are gracious on them. Even if one abuses You, then also You are gracious on them." It is not true that God gives pain and unhappiness to those who do not do His devotion and those who abuse Him. We suffer pain only because of our own karma; God does not give any pain, because He is gracious on all.

He Himself knows His plays.
The all conscious One is present everywhere.

God Himself knows about His plays. He is all-conscious, He is all-pervading, He is almighty. He knows everything without your saying, then why pray to Him? No doubt we become happy and we please our mind by praying to Lord, but there is no *need* for it because God knows everything about us even without our asking.

He protects and nourishes everyone in different ways.
Whatever He has created, meditate upon Him.

He protects all the creatures who He has created and they are all expressing their gratitude towards Him in their own language.

To whomsoever He likes, He blends him with Himself.
Such ones do His devotion and sing His praise.

Now He says that no doubt God is within everyone and we all are expressing our gratitude toward Him in our ways and our own languages. But who becomes one with God? Who manifests that God within them? First of all God brings those whom He has to make one with Him into the human body. Then He gives them the knowledge of the Shabd Naam. And after making them do the meditation of the Shabd Naam He makes them one with Him.

"Those who forget the Path of the Naam, in the end they repent. Nanak says, This is the truest statement of all: without Naam nobody can get liberation."

He who believes in the reality of God with firm faith in his mind
Realizes the Doer, says Nanak.

In order to do devotion, first of all we need faith. Only if we have faith can we do devotion, only then will God open His door to us. Since He is sitting within us He does not open His door to us if we are not faithful to Him, if our faith is shaky. He is sitting within us and He knows everything. Kabir Sahib says, "Sitting within us, God is looking at the service we are doing to Him. And He gives the prize according to the amount of service we are doing for Him."

He who is attached with the One Naam of God;
His hopes never go in vain.

When those who start doing the devotion of Shabd Naam have the desire of realizing God, of seeing God, definitely they do it. We cannot become successful if we go on doing the old practices which we did before we started doing the devotion of Shabd Naam. If we do the practice of Shabd Naam along with our old practices, we can never become successful.

Swami Ji says, "When a soul comes and takes refuge in the Saint He should give up all rites and religions, all other religions. Whatever Path Master shows to the disciple, that practice becomes his religion and his everything."

Before taking Naam initiation, no matter how many deeds we do they are all counted in our search, because we are still searching for the Naam. But after we get Naam from the Satguru, whatever He tells us to do, we should do it with firm determination.

It becomes the Seva for the servant.
By understanding the Will, one gets the highest status.

The disciple should do his Bhajan and Simran, his meditation, understanding it as a service to the Master. And he should meditate without missing it. If lovingly we do our meditation without missing it, then what do we get from the Master? Master gives us the highest status for our service, for our meditation for Him. Up until now all those who have done the meditation of Shabd Naam, all those who have done the service of the Master, have not returned empty-handed from His court.

There is no thought above it
For those within whom the formless One resides.

There is no one above the Naam of God. And when there is no one above God, then the disciple should not have any other understanding. When he has got the way of doing devotion to God, when he has got the Naam, then he should not look here and there and for any other thing.

Many times I have said that once in a Satsang like this, Master said that if anyone wanted to see God they should close their eyes. Everybody did that except me. So one dear one complained to Master, saying that I was not closing my eyes. And when Master came and asked me, I said, "Well, you have said that those who want to see God should close their eyes. But I am seeing God with my open eyes, God who is six foot tall, and has two legs, and Who is moving here and there. Why do I need to close my eyes to see something else? Because I don't want to see any other God except You; I don't want to believe in any other God except you; and when I am able to see You without closing my eyes, then what is the use of closing my eyes?"

Guru Nanak says, "Understand the Lord and Master as One. Whatever is in the will of the Master, only that happens."

Kabir Sahib says, "Both Master and Lord are standing in front of me. To whom should I pay homage? I will definitely pay homage and respect to my Master Who made it possible for me to meet the Lord." "O my mind, go on repeating Master, Master, because without Him I am nothing. Day and night have the support of the Master Whose gift cannot be destroyed by anyone. Master is the Creator, Master is Perfect, and Master is the Almighty Lord."

Their fetters are broken and they become free from enmity;
They worship the feet of the Master day and night.

Master has cut down all the attachments so we don't have any attachments with anyone. We don't have any enmity for anyone because now we know that God is present in everyone. Nobody is our enemy, and now with the grace of the Master we have come to know this. And Nanak says, "There is no one except God."

They are happy in this world and the world beyond;
Nanak says, God Himself unites them with Himself.

The soul has got peace. When we are at peace in this world, our life becomes successful. When we leave this world, in the other plane also we will remain peaceful because Master is the One who is going to take us. It was not within our reach or our power to obtain this peace; it was the Grace of Almighty God Who came in this world in the form of our Master and gave us the knowledge of the Shabd Naam. After making us do the devotion of Shabd Naam He will take us back Home. It was because of His Grace that we were able to obtain all these things.

Get joy in the company of the Sadhus;
Sing the praises of the Lord, Who is Supreme Joy.

If you want real happiness, what should you do? You should go in the company of some Sadhu Who has done meditation. What will be the use of going in the company of the Perfect Sadhu Who has done the meditation? You will get the bliss of God and that Mahatma will make you do the devotion of the Almighty Lord.

Kabir Sahib says that even if you don't get good food to eat, you should still remain in the company of the Sadhu. It is much better than being in the company of worldly people who can provide you with good food. Kabir Sahib says, "Don't leave the Path on which the Saint is coming, because when you see Him you will become pure. And when you meet Him, you will start doing the meditation of Naam."

Meditate and ponder over the Naam of Lord and Its essence.
Make the precious body successful.

Once you are in the company of the Sadhu, don't waste your time in sleeping or in criticizing others. Utilize it in doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, and make the precious gem which God has given to you, this human body, successful, and utilize it for the purpose for which it was given.

Sing the nectar-full words of God's Praises:
This is the method of liberating the soul.

Mahatmas are full of nectar; their words are full of nectar. If there is any way by which you can get liberation, it is by obeying the nectar-full words of the Master, molding your life according to the instructions of the Masters.

See God near you for all the eight watches of day,
Then the ignorance and darkness will be removed.

What is the use of going in the company of the Master? When we go in His company, Master creates the desire within us to do meditation, and removing the darkness of ignorance from within us, He lights the lamp of knowledge.

Hear and absorb the teachings into your heart.
Nanak says, then you will get the fruit according to your desires.

Whatever the Master says, make that dwell in your heart, and always keep it there. If you draw a line on a stone, it stays there. In the same way, whatever Master says, keep that in your heart. If you do it, then the desire you have of realizing God will definitely be fulfilled, and you will be successful in that.

We should not become like the stone in the water when we come to the Satsang. As Swami Ji says, "The stone remains in the water but does not absorb any water from it." When we come into the Satsang we should not make our hearts like stone, so that when we are sitting in front of the Master we receive the impression and the effect of all that He is saying, but when we leave the Satsang we don't have any effect. We should always keep all the Master's words in our heart and we should always obey. Whenever the Masters say anything, their words are full of nectar and in their words is real happiness. Drinking the nectar of the words of the Master, you can satisfy your thirst.

Once Guru Gobind Singh went in the village of some thieves in the Malwa region. Guru Gobind Singh asked them what their purpose was. They answered that they were thieves. Guru Gobind Singh said, "You should not continue doing this because nobody is going to come and rescue you; nobody will help you if you continue doing this." They replied that they could not leave that business. The Guru replied, "Well, if you cannot leave this business, at least you can keep an account of

how many times you have stolen things from other people's houses. And you should know that as many times as you have stolen, you will be punished." So when they started counting the times they had stolen they were terrified, looking at the number, and they thought it would be terrible for them to face the Lord and His court when they left the world. So they all decided and promised that they would never do that business of stealing things again. When once again Guru Gobind Singh went into their village, he asked how they were doing. So they replied that they had left that business completely because once they counted how many times they were doing bad deeds, they were afraid that in the Court of the Lord nobody was going to help them, and they were collecting a lot of sins. "Now since we have left our old business and we are not stealing things anymore, You will be the One who will rescue us and You will have to help us." So that was the way in which Guru Gobind Singh told them to stop doing their bad deeds: by counting how many times they had done them.

In the same way, our beloved Master Kirpal was very gracious on us and He invented this way, in this age, of keeping the accounts of our deeds: he invented the procedure of keeping the diary, and it is the best way to know our faults. It is very good to keep account of our faults because when we do so we can tell our mind, "Look here, how many times you have done this bad deed!" It is a very good way of making your mind ashamed of your bad deeds. Keeping the diary is like a cashbook so we can know for sure where we stand and how many times we have committed bad deeds. So we should wholeheartedly keep the diaries, and once we do any bad deed we should never repeat it.

Improve your life in this world and in the world beyond
By keeping the Naam of the Lord within your heart.

If we manifest the Naam in our within, we improve in this world as well as in the other.

The teachings of the Perfect Master are perfect.
He in whose heart these teachings dwell, realize the Truth.

The Initiation of the perfect Master, the Naam of the perfect Master, is perfect. And those who get that, and practice it with faith, they themselves know this for sure: they can test the Naam initiation of the Master. When the Saints give Naam initiation they don't leave room for doubt in their disciples, because They connect the souls with the real home.

Repeat the Naam with mind and body
Then the pains, grief and fear will leave the heart.

Master never dies; even if He leaves the body right after giving initiation, He is always living for those disciples who have received the initiation from Him. If the disciples have any problem, any difficulty in meditation, they can go for guidance to the spiritual successor of the Master, who will be very happy to guide them and help them in any spiritual problem. When the Master leaves the body, His initiates do not have the benefit of His physical darshan. But that is the only thing they miss; every inner thing remains the same, and He works on the inner planes as usual. New people can become initiated only by the spiritual successor of the Master.

O Trader, do the trading of Truth:
Your cargo will be valued in the court of the Lord.

If you are a businessman you should know that Naam is the only commodity in which you should deal. The merchandise of Naam is the only thing which is accepted by God; and God is pleased with those who do this business. Many times I have said that the receiving of Naam is like getting a passport or visa to enter into another country. If our documents are not properly stamped or written nobody will allow us to enter into a foreign country. In the same way if we don't have the stamp of Naam on us they they will not let us enter our real Home. When the Satguru gives us Naam He puts His stamp on us and nobody asks for anything from those souls who have got the stamp of the Satguru on them. And those who have got the stamp of the Satguru are welcome and accepted in the court of Lord without any problem.

Keep only one support in your heart.
Then you will not come and go again, says Nanak.

Now He says that one should have faith in the Masters, one should have love for the Masters, one should understand only the support of the Master. Such a disciple does not have to come back in this world again and again; all his coming and going from this world comes to an end.

Where can one go away from Him?
One is saved by meditating on the Preserver.

If anyone says that he has left the Master, it is his misunderstanding, because where can he go when the Master is sitting within him? And even if he leaves the Master outwardly, he cannot leave the Master inwardly: not only is Master sitting within him, He is protecting him from within.

Master used to say that it is very possible that the Master might leave the rope very loose for the disciple and that He might wait for the disciple for a long time. But after all, the one end of the rope is still in the hands of the Master and he can pull it back any time He wants.

All the fears vanish by meditating on the Fearless One.
Man gets liberation with the grace of the Lord.

To do the devotion of the Lord we cannot be afraid of anyone: we have to become fearless. When we do the devotion of the Lord fearlessly, we will become one with Him; we will also become the Fearless One and we will not have to be afraid of anyone.

He who is protected by God doesn't have any suffering.
By meditating on Naam he gets happiness within.

He who has accepted the support of the Lord, he who has done the devotion of the Lord, may live in the world, but still he does not become dirty with the dirt of the world. Because the souls of those who do the devotion of the Lord get the strength to face the pain and suffering of this world.

Kabir Sahib says, "Everybody gets the punishment because he has got the body. The one who has the knowledge about it bears the pain happily, and the ignorant one who does not have this knowledge bears it unhappily and complaining."

The worries go away and egoism vanishes.
None can reach such a devotee.

By doing the devotion of Naam worry goes away. Then you don't have to worry what is going to happen next, tomorrow, and like that. And by doing the devotion of Naam egoism also goes away, and the devotee who does the devotion of Naam cannot be reached by anyone: nobody can become equal to him.

The Brave Master is watching over his head;
His affairs get completed, says Nanak.

After giving us initiation the Master does not become worryless; He is always concerned about us. He says, "My Almighty Master Who is Perfect is always on my head and He is always protecting me. And He is helping me in every single thing." The only difference is that unless we have complete faith and love for Him, we cannot see Him working for us; but He is still always with us.

Many dear ones come and tell me about those people who have never seen me, but still they felt and experienced the Grace of the Master. I have told you the story of Harnam Singh many times: that how he had the darshan of the Master while he was driving in the car. He was not initiated but still when he left the body Master came there to protect him.

He whose wisdom is superb and whose glance is full of nectar:
By whose mere glimpse the entire creation is liberated.

The teachings of the Master are perfect for the disciple. In the darshan of the Master is Nectar, and if the Master wants He can liberate the whole world just by looking at them. Hazrat Bahu has said, "If the Master looks at hundreds and billions with just one loving glance He can liberate them all. But even if millions of learned men look at the world, they cannot liberate anyone."

That is why Bhai Nand Lal, a devoted disciple of Guru Gobind Singh, told Him, "O Lord, on Your side it is the question of one glance; but on my side it is the question of my whole life."

Once Master Sawan Singh was traveling and He met a sadhu who was wearing colored robes. Looking at him that sadhu said, "Well, after all, you have come here." And Master Sawan Singh replied, "Yes, I have come." Then they talked about many things, and the disciples who were with Master Sawan Singh couldn't understand what was happening. After the meeting was over the disciples asked Master Sawan Singh if He knew that sadhu. Master Sawan Singh replied, "Yes, He is a great meditator sadhu and he has done so much meditation that if he wants, looking at anyone, he could take them to Sach Khand. But he is not showering his grace on people." There are so many Mahatmas, so many meditators in this world who have attained that position and have become perfect; but they are not showering grace, they are not spreading their will in this world.

He whose lotus feet are unique–
Whose darshan is successful and whose form is beautiful.

His Feet are very beautiful and we cannot describe the beauty of his form.

Guru Nanak describes the beauty of the Master; He says, "O Master, having Your darshan I live my life. Whenever I look at You, my object in coming in this world is fulfilled."

Swami Ji Maharaj also describes the beauty of the Form of the Master by saying, "If anyone looks at the beauty of my Master, he may become astonished and surprised."

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "I wish I could look at my Master all the time, because whenever I look at Him I feel at peace. Whenever I don't look at Him, whenever I am away from Him, I wander here and there like a madman."

I also requested the same thing of my beloved Master. Once we were sitting on the same dais and there were so many people there and Master asked me to sing something and say something. So I told Him, "Oh my Beautiful One, Oh my Beloved, I wish that I could go on looking at You, making You sit in front of me." Master never let me sit in front of Him, and I always wanted to sit in front of Him so that I could have His darshan. But He never let me do that. Always He would have me sit on His side, and He never let me sit in front of Him and have His darshan.

Blessed is His Seva and His servant who does it.
He is the Supreme Being, the All-Conscious One.

Blessed is that disciple who does the seva of the Master. Don't think that Master is not aware of your seva, He is the all-conscious One and He knows everything. If you donate in His Name, or if you do the meditation of Shabd Naam, whatever you do in His Name, He accepts that and keeps account of it.

Those within Whom He dwells become blessed.
Kal cannot come near them.

He within whom He dwells, day or night, whether he is sleeping or awake, whether he is standing or sitting, Kal cannot come near him and Kal cannot do anything.

They become Immortal and attain the status of Immortality.
Nanak says, They meditate upon Him in the company of Sadhus.

God is immortal and Master is sent by God to bring the souls back. He works like the bridge between God and the souls. Since God is immortal the Master also is immortal, and the place where Master takes the souls back, the Home of God, that also is immortal. Guru Nanak says, "By going in the company of the Masters we have also become immortal, because of their grace, and because of doing what they have told us to do." Guru Nanak says again, "After searching a lot and going within, we have come to one conclusion: O brother, there is no difference between Master and God. Master is Lord, and Lord is Master. My Satguru is always present; He never comes, He never goes. He is all-conscious, all-pervading and He is always present."

Earlier, Guru Arjan Dev told us the glory of the Lord and that the Lord is present everywhere, the owner of all Creation, the creator of all creation, and sitting within everyone, He protects them. Later he told us of the glory of the Master Who makes it possible for us to meet the Lord, what the point is of going in the company of the Masters, and what Master does. Like God Master is also immortal and He takes us to His immortal Home. He takes us to the Anami place which does not fall in dissolution or Grand Dissolution.

Ashtapadi 23

When the Master gives someone the
mascara of knowledge, the darkness
of ignorance is removed.
Nanak says, He who meets the Saint
with the grace of the Master gets
enlightened within.
In the company of the Saints God
is seen within.
The Naam of Lord tastes sweet.
All that exists is only within One:
All the different colors and forms.
The nectarful Naam of Lord is the
Nine Treasures.
It dwells within the human body.
The sunna samadhi and the Sound
are within;
The wonderous ecstasy cannot be
described.

Only the one to whom He shows it
sees it
And realizes Him, says Nanak.
The Limitless One exists inside and
outside.
God pervades everything.
He is present on the earth, sky, and the
world below water.
He is the sustenance in all regions.
In the forests, in the grass and in
mountains is the Supreme Being.
As He orders, so they act.
In wind, water and fire:
He is present in all four quarters
and ten directions.
There is no place without Him.
Nanak says, One gets happiness
with the grace Master.
He is seen in Vedas, Puranas, Simritis;
God alone is present in the moon, sun
and the stars.
All speak the Bani of God;

He is stable and never wavers.
Through all His powers He plays the play.
His qualities are Invaluable, their worth cannot be assessed.
His light is within all the lights.
He supports all, like warp and weft in the cloth.
By the grace of the Master the illusion is destroyed.
They develop this firm faith, says Nanak.
The Saints have the vision that God is present everywhere;
Within the heart of Saints are all religions.
The Saints have the virtuous words.
They remain absorbed in the All-Pervading Lord.
He who has realized the truth lives like this:
That the Saints utter true words only.
Whatever happens, he accepts that as happiness:

He understands that God is the Doer
and One Who makes others do.
God lives within all and outside also;
All those who have His darshan are
fascinated, says Nanak.
He Himself is the Truth, whatever He
has done is Truth;
The entire creation is made by God
alone.
If He wishes, He expands;
If He wishes, He becomes One again.
He has countless powers, no one can
estimate them.
Whomsoever He wishes, He unites
with Himself.
Who can be called close or far
When He is all pervading?
The one whom He makes realize His
presence within–
Nanak says, To that one God Him-
self gives the realization.
God works in all beings;

He is the watcher through everyone's
eyes.
The whole creation is His body.
He Himself hears His praises.
He made coming and going as a play
In which He cast Maya as his servant.
He lives in all and yet remains de-
tached from all:
Whatever He wants to say, He Him-
self says.
The soul comes in His orders, goes
in His orders;
Nanak says, He merges the one with
whom He is pleased into His own Self.
Nothing bad is done by Him;
Who else can do this?
He is noble; His deeds are noble;
He Himself knows about His Soul.
He has adopted Truth, He is All Truth;
He has blended Himself with His creation..
His conditions and limits cannot be
described.

It would be possible to understand
only if someone else were like Him.
All His doings are acceptable;
By the grace of Master one understands this, says Nanak.
The one who knows Him ever remains in Happiness;
God unites him with Himself.
The one in whose heart the Lord resides is truly wealthy:
He is of high family and honorable, and is liberated while living.
Blessed, Blessed, Blessed is that Person
By whose grace the the whole world is liberated.
The object of the coming of such a person is
That in His company one remembers Naam.
He Himself is liberated, He liberates the world.
Nanak says, I always bow to such a person.

Chapter 23

"Where Will All the Garbage Be?"

When the Master gives someone the mascara of Knowledge,
the darkness of ignorance is removed.
Nanak says, He who meets the Saint with the grace of the
Master gets enlightened within.

In this Ashtapadi Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj describes the glory of the Master. He asks, "What does the Master give to the disciple? What is the benefit to the disciple in using what the Master has given him?" Because we are stuck in the darkness of ignorance very badly, we need some light which will clear our way. Master gives us that ointment—lampblack or mascara—by putting which in our eyes we can remove the disease and see the inner thing. When anybody has a problem with his eyes, he goes to a doctor and the doctor gives him some medicine to put in his eye and that removes whatever is blocking the vision. Guru Arjan Dev is calling that medicine "mascara." He says, "My Master gave me the mascara of the Truth; by putting it in my eyes the darkness of ignorance was removed and I was able to see what was happening within." When the Master gives His Naam and we use it, when we apply that medicine of the Master to ourself, when we manifest that Naam within, then the darkness of ignorance is cleared up and we see Light within. Then we are able to see the arrangements which are made by God, and our inner path becomes open to us, as clear as an open book, and we know for sure what is happening within.

So here the Master is saying that we have got that lampblack of Knowledge from the Master. He says, "*We* are not able to achieve that lampblack, *we* are not able to remove the darkness of ignorance from within. By our merits, we could not do anything; it was the Grace of the Master, Who made the inner Path clear to us."

In the company of the Saints God is seen within.
The Naam of Lord tastes sweet.

What did we get after going in the company of the Saints and the Mahatmas? He says that by going in their company we were able to see God within us. We were looking for Him outside but when we manifested the Lord and we saw Him within, His Naam was so delicious that we did not want to taste the worldly pleasures because they were tasteless in front of the Naam.

Guru Ramdas Ji says, "In our within is the desire to realize God, now whatever words of the Master we hear, they pierce in our heart like an arrow."

All that exists is only within One:
All the different colors and forms.

Before going to the Masters perhaps some of us used to think that people of different races and different countries were made by different gods. We might have thought that people from America were made by one god and people from India by another. But when we went into the company of the Masters and our inner veil was lifted and we saw God within, we understood, we realized, that God is the only Creator of all the creatures. Before this creation was created all souls were one with Him; when this creation is dissolved, then all the souls have to go back and become one with God.

One Mahatma says, "Whatever exists in the Brahmand, exists in your body also. Those who search for it, realize it."

The nectarful Naam of Lord is the Nine Treasures.
It dwells within the human body.

Naam is the owner of all treasures, and He is the Emperor of all Peace. Naam is the greatest Peace-giver in this creation. And it is not a word of any language: it is neither written in Punjabi nor Hindi nor English; it is not in any language. Where is that Naam? It is within our body; and Masters come in this world to connect us with that Naam.

The sunna samadhi and the Sound are within;
The wondrous ecstasy cannot be described.

When we cross Daswan Dwar, after shaking off our physical, astral and causal covers from our body, we come to the *sunna* plane and there

the pure sound, the *Sar Shabd,* is coming. He says, "The glory of Sar Shabd cannot be described, it can be experienced by the soul; hearing that Shabd the soul becomes intoxicated."

Only the one to whom He shows it sees it
And realizes Him, says Nanak.

Can you solve this problem by yourself? Can we see God by reading books and other things? No. Only that one can see God to whom God is gracious, whom God wants to see Himself, and whom God makes realize Him.

The Limitless One exists inside and outside.
God pervades everything.

When we see God within, and when we manifest Him in our own self, we know for sure that He is limitless and nobody can reach His limits. But only when we have seen Him within can we say outside, also, that His glory cannot be described. He is limitless but still He is present in every individual soul.

He is present on the earth, sky, and the world below water.
He is the sustenance in all regions.

The creatures who are living on earth are protected by God and He gives food to them. The creatures who are living in the sky are also protected and nourished by Him. And the creatures who are living in the world below are also nourished and protected by the same God.

In the forests, in the grass and in mountains is present the Supreme Being.
As He orders, so they act.

The same God is present in the fields, in the forest and even in the mountains.

In wind, water and fire:
He is present in all four quarters and ten directions.

God is in the air, God is in the fire, God is in the water, God is everywhere. His power is extended, He is working in all the four directions.

There is no place without Him.
Nanak says, One gets happiness with the grace of Master.

There is no creature without the presence of God within, but when can we understand this? When can we reach that country of peace? Only when Master showers Grace on us and we go into the company of the Perfect Master.

He is seen in Vedas, Puranas, Simritis;
God alone is present in the moon, sun and the stars.

His importance is written in the Vedas and Puranas, also in the holy scriptures. And they all say that in the moon and sun His Light is manifested. Even in the stars His Light is twinkling.

All speak the Bani of God;
He is stable and never wavers.

He is sitting within each of us and from there He is calling all the souls to come back. Guru Nanak says, "The Lord is stable—He is not shaky—and those who do His devotion become as stable as God is."

Through all His powers He plays the play.
His qualities are Invaluable, their worth cannot be assessed.

God is perfect and competent in all powers. If anyone says that he can buy God, that is not possible: He is priceless. One Mahatma says, "If God could be achieved by bathing in the water, then the frogs and fishes would have realized Him. If God could be achieved only by cleverness and wisdom, the ignorant would have remained without Him. If God could be achieved by riches, then the poor people would not have any chance to realize Him." He says, "God cannot be realized by wisdom, cleverness or riches, He can be realized by one attachment, and that is Love: which we can get from the Masters."

His light is within all the lights.
He supports all, like warp and weft in the cloth.

In all life His Life is present, in all creatures His Light is working. He is present in everything in this world, as the thread is in the piece of cloth, and the cloth is in the thread. He is present everywhere like that.

By the grace of the Master the illusion is destroyed.
They develop this firm faith, says Nanak.

Now He says that with Master's Grace, with Master's Help, and by doing the meditation of Naam which was given to us by the Master, the illusion which we have is removed, and now we have faith in this judgment: that God is the only Creator and Protector and Nourisher of all the souls, and He is present everywhere. The soul will get peace only by meeting God and by becoming one with God; ever since the soul was separated from God she has never experienced any happiness. "O brothers, without the Masters, you can never have any knowledge. If you don't believe us, go and ask Ved Vyas, Brahma and Narada."

The Saints have the vision that God is present everywhere;
Within the heart of Saints are all religions.

With which kind of glance do the Masters help? Wherever the Masters look they see God present in everyone. That is why they respect all the religions. Saints do not criticize any religion, any faith or community, and they do not even criticize any person. That is why they always respect every religion and every person. The only difference between their practice and the practice of the religions is that they do not get involved in the rites and rituals which most of the religions practice, and they never tell their disciples to get involved in those rites and rituals.

If a woman's husband goes to a foreign land, but she continues to dress up and make herself beautiful as if he were there, what will people say? They will say that she does not have a good character—"why is she dressing up, and who is she trying to please when her husband is gone?"

In the same way, when we do rites and rituals in the name of God, we say we are trying to please God. But God is not present there, and we have not seen God. Guru Nanak says, "Doing rites and rituals is like a woman dressing up when her husband is away. She does not get any honor in this world, and her husband does not accept her devotion."

Whenever Saints and Mahatmas come into this world they emphasize the practice of Surat Shabd Yoga. They teach the message of Shabd Naam. You can read any scripture, any holy book written by any Mahatma, and you will find that he has practiced and taught the same thing. And always people from different religions come to the Perfect Saints and become Their disciples.

When the Saints and Mahatmas leave this world, what happens? Their disciples collect the teachings of the Masters and do not read the

teachings of the Masters to the people. Instead of that they start preaching their own things, and they color the spiritual teachings of the Masters in the color of religion, and make the teachings of the Masters as principles of that religion. In that way the teachings of the Masters, which once belonged to the whole universe, are limited only to a certain group of people. And in that way they do not do many spiritual practices after the Master leaves the body. Only a few people are left who can be called "practical"; the other people, the intellectual or learned people who have the knowledge of those teachings, remain and they do not practice and they do not preach the teachings in their right sense. I will say that those who act like this after their Master has left the body are doing a grave sin.

The Saints have the virtuous words.
They remain absorbed in the All-Pervading Lord.

Saints themselves utter the precious words, and they tell the disciples also to deal lovingly with all. Saints are themselves absorbed with God, they are one with God. That is why they tell the disciples also to rise above the level of mind and the organs of senses and to become one with the all-pervading God Who is present everywhere.

He who has realized the truth lives like this:
That the Saints utter true words only.

This bani is written by that Mahatma Who had appreciation of the Sadhus. He says that Sadhus never say from hearsay; they mention only what they have seen with their own eyes.

Whatever happens, he accepts that as happiness:
He understands that God is the Doer and One Who makes others do.

Mahatmas do not become equal with God; they are the dear children of God. Whether they get good food or bad food, whether they get pain or happiness, they accept that as the Will of God: they never complain, they never turn against the Will of God, they accept it happily.

When Guru Arjan Dev Ji, whose bani we are reading, was being tortured in the city of Lahore, He was made to sit on the hot coals. At that time Mian Mir, a Muslim friend of Guru Arjan who was very devoted to him, came, and he saw that Guru Arjan Dev's body was burning—he had burns all over his body and he was sitting on hot coals—

and he said, "O Gurudev, what is your condition? If you will let me do it, I will raze the city of Lahore to the ground." Guru Arjan Dev replied, "Mian Mir, I can also do that; but it is a very good thing to remain happy in the Will of God." Then he said, "O Lord, I like your Will; the Will of God is very sweet for me. Nanak always asks for the gift of Naam."

God lives within all and outside also;
All those who have His darshan are fascinated, says Nanak.

God, Who lives within us, is present everywhere outside also. Wherever we look we see the same God. And Mahatmas say that God has attracted all the world by His darshan. Mahatmas see Him everywhere.

Guru Nanak says, "O Lord, if You had any equal, if there was some other God, only then could it be said that there are two."

He Himself is the Truth, whatever He has done is Truth;
The entire creation is made by God alone.

Whatever God has done, it is Truth—He Himself is Truth. Whatever we see with our eyes—all this creation—was created by God Himself. He didn't have anybody else to create it.

If He wishes, He expands;
If He wishes, He becomes One again.

If God wishes, He expands into the creation, and when it comes in the Will of God, He brings back everything and only He remains.

He has countless powers, no one can estimate them.
Whomsoever He wishes, He unites with Himself.

No one can estimate the Power of God; no one can say how many powers God has. But when He is pleased with someone, it does not make any difference to which caste or religion that person belongs, God unites him to Himself.

There is no question as to whether one is man or woman; all those who do His devotion, and with whom God is pleased, are accepted by God.

Who can be called close or far
When He is all pervading?

God is within everyone; so how can we say that God is nearer to this one and farther from that one? Water is everywhere in the earth under the ground. But only those who dig out a well can get that water. In the same way, those who manifest God, those who see God within, only they can become one with God.

The one whom He makes realize His presence within—
Nanak says, To that one God Himself gives the realization.

God Himself inspires the soul, and tells her, "I am sitting within you in this form, and if you want to meet Me, do this and you will come to Me." It is God Who inspires the souls, and brings the soul in contact with the Master; and Master connects her with Naam.

God works in all beings;
He is the watcher through everyone's eyes.

God is the owner of all creation, and He sees through the eyes of everyone. This means that in the eyes of everyone the Light of God is working.

The whole creation is His body.
He Himself hears His praises.

All bodies are made by Him; He glorifies His own Self, and He Himself listens to it. It means that on the tongue also His power is working, and in the ears also His power is working, and He is listening to what is said.

He made coming and going as a play
In which He cast Maya as his servant.

The coming and going—births and deaths—this is all a play which He has made, and in order to continue this play, He made Maya as a servant; and He told Maya and the other gods—the other powers—"You will have to do this work." Whatever is happening in this world is happening with the orders of the Almighty Lord.

He lives in all and yet remains detached from all:
Whatever He wants to say, He Himself says.

In a very beautiful way He is sitting within everyone, and whatever He wants to have said, He Himself says—sitting within the people.

The soul comes in His orders, goes in His orders;
Nanak says, He merges the one with whom He is pleased into His Own Self.

The soul comes to this world with the orders of the Lord, and the soul goes from this world with the orders of the Lord. If God wishes, the soul goes back into God.

Nothing bad is done by Him;
Who else can do this?

Whatever God does, He does for good. He never does anything bad; whatever He does, He does for the benefit of the people.

He is noble; His deeds are noble;
He Himself knows about His Soul.

God is noble; He is good; and He knows about the requirements of the soul. He knows who wants what. If we have the burning desire to realize God, God will bring us into the contact of the Master, even if the Master is living thousands of miles away from us; but if we don't have the burning desire to realize God, then no matter if Master is living right in our neighborhood, we will never come to Him or ask for Naam-initiation.

He has adopted Truth, He is All Truth;
He has blended Himself with His creation.
His conditions and limits cannot be described;
It would be possible to understand only if someone else were like Him.

We cannot describe the glory of God. He is perfect by Himself: He does not have any equal. He does not have any brother or any relatives, so how can we go and ask anyone about His glory? Since there is no one equal to Him; since there is nobody else like Him, how can we pray to anyone except Him? We should pray only to the Almighty Lord.

All His doings are acceptable;
By the grace of Master one understands this, says Nanak.

Whatever God has done is done for good, and it is all true. This understanding has come to us only with the Grace of our Master.

The one who knows Him ever remains in Happiness;
God unites him with Himself.

Those who learn about God, and who get some understanding of God, they catch peace and happiness forever, and the pain of the births and deaths which they have always had is now removed; and they have no other pain.

The one in whose heart the Lord resides is truly wealthy:
He is of high family and honorable, and is liberated while living.

In this world, only the one within whom God is manifested is the rich one, the one belonging to a high family. He is the only one who has the honor of the world. He is liberated while living, and his coming into this world was worthwhile. Blessed is his coming into this world; He got liberation for His own self, and helped others also to get it. Blessed is the disciple who goes to the feet of the Master and surrenders himself to Him. Blessed is the Satguru who meditated on the Naam. Those who saw Him got liberation. He Himself was liberated, and those who saw Him also got liberation. Blessed is the family, blessed is the mother, who gives birth to such a Master. Blessed is the Satguru who did the devotion of Naam and those who saw Him, they also got liberation.

Blessed, Blessed, Blessed is that Person
By whose grace the whole world is liberated.

Now Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Hail, hail, to that person who came into this world by Whose Grace the whole world gets liberation." Mahatmas do not come in this world for a few people or for some communities. If all the world goes with the Mahatma, God is not going to question Him, "Why did you bring all these souls with you?" If the whole world stands in front of the Master, saying that they want to go back, then He can take them, and nobody will ask Him why. But the Negative Power does not let this happen. That is why only a few people, which we can count on our fingertips, come to the Master. Once Narada told Lord Krishna, "O Lord, if people from the mortal world come and live in your heavens, it is not going to be crowded. Why don't You let them come? They are suffering so much, and You should shower your Grace on them." Lord Krishna smiled and said, "Well, Narada, I give you the authority that all those who come with

you can live here." Narada was very happy that God was pleased with him, and that he would be able to release many souls from their sufferings.

So when he came into this mortal world, he went everywhere, and eventually he went to a pig, who seemed to him to be suffering very much. So he asked the pig if he wanted to go to heaven. The pig asked Narada one question: "Will I be able to have children in heaven?" Narada said, "Well, if you still have to bother with children, what is the use of going there? In heaven there is nothing like that." So the pig asked Narada again, "Well, tell me! Will I get this garbage to eat in heaven?" Narada replied, "Well, if you still have to eat garbage there, how would it be heaven? It would be better to remain here." Hearing that, the pig became so upset with Narada that he started running after him, saying, "You are a foolish person and you are trying to fool me. How can you call a place "heaven" where you don't have the happiness of children, and when you can't get garbage to eat?" So Narada was very sad, and he came back to Lord Krishna. He couldn't bring even a single soul from the mortal world to live in heaven.

So when Lord Krishna saw him, he said, "Narada, what happened? Why didn't you bring anyone?" He said, "Lord, what can I say? Everywhere I went in the world I saw suffering. One person is suffering because he doesn't have a good job; another is suffering because he has a good job but he is not satisfied with it; somebody is suffering because he has loaned some money to people, and he is not getting it back; somebody is suffering because he has borrowed money and is unable to pay it back; some people are unhappy because they have become husbands; some people are unhappy because they had a wife, and now the wife has left; and so forth. Everybody is unhappy in one or another way. But nobody wants to leave the world!"

In the same way, when the Masters come into this world, they have this boon from the Almighty Lord; They always pray, "O Lord, shower grace on the souls so that they may come back from the suffering world and become one with You." And the Almighty always tells the Mahatmas, "I will welcome all those who come with you." So when the Masters come in this world, they give this message of the Almighty Lord to every single soul who comes in contact with Him. They say, "Come on! We will take you to that country of peace where there is no birth, no death, where there is no pain, no problems; where you will live in the light of the Shabd, and where you will have a peaceful and happy life. There you will not have to have enmity for anyone, you will not be anyone's enemy; there is complete love and Light of God there."

But when Mahatmas tell us that we should follow Them, that we

should obey Them, in order to get released from the suffering world—what to speak about *doing* what they are saying! We are not even ready to *listen* to them. That is why, like Narada, the Masters feel sadness when the people from this world are not ready to go to Them.

Many times I have told this story about Sunder Das, an initiate of Baba Sawan Singh, who used to live with me. When he left the body, all three Masters—Baba Sawan Singh, Baba Jaimal Singh and Master Kirpal Singh—came to take his soul, and many people were present when he left the body. When he was about to leave the body, I was called, because he was in another room. When I went to him, I asked him if he had any worldly desires. (Six months before this, he had told me that he was going to leave on a certain day, and I should prepare his coffin beforehand. So I had bought all the things and they were with him.) So, when he was about to leave the body, I asked him, "Sunder Das, do you have any desire of the world? Do you want anything?" He said, "No, I don't have any desire, I don't want anything—except one thing: that my sister should also be taken at the same time that I am." He had one sister that was older than him; he was ninety years old when he left the body, and his sister was a little bit older. She was very much in pain, suffering a lot because of her old age; she didn't have Naam initiation, and she had become so weak that she was not able to walk without the support of a stick. So when Sunder Das was about to leave the body he told me, "It will not make any difference to the Master to shower grace on my sister, but if she can also be released at the same time, I will leave peacefully: I am worried about her." So when he said this, I looked at that old woman and asked her "Are you ready to go?" When she heard that I was asking her whether she was ready to go with Sunder Das or not, whether she was ready to leave this world or not, she at once—with a lot of pain—got up somehow, and tried to stop Sunder Das from requesting me about taking her, and she left the room, because she didn't want to leave. And after that, Sunder Das left the body peacefully.

That old lady spent the rest of her time in great pain, and she left the body with a lot of pain. At that time when Sunder Das was asking for his sister's liberation, she was also in pain, but she was not ready to leave this world.

Once there was an old woman whose daughter became sick, and that old woman always used to pray, "O Lord, take me from this world instead of my daughter, because I am old, and I have seen this world a lot, and I don't have any interest in living," and things like that. Once it so happened that one cow wandered into the house and was looking for food. Somehow she got her head stuck in one big pot with a black

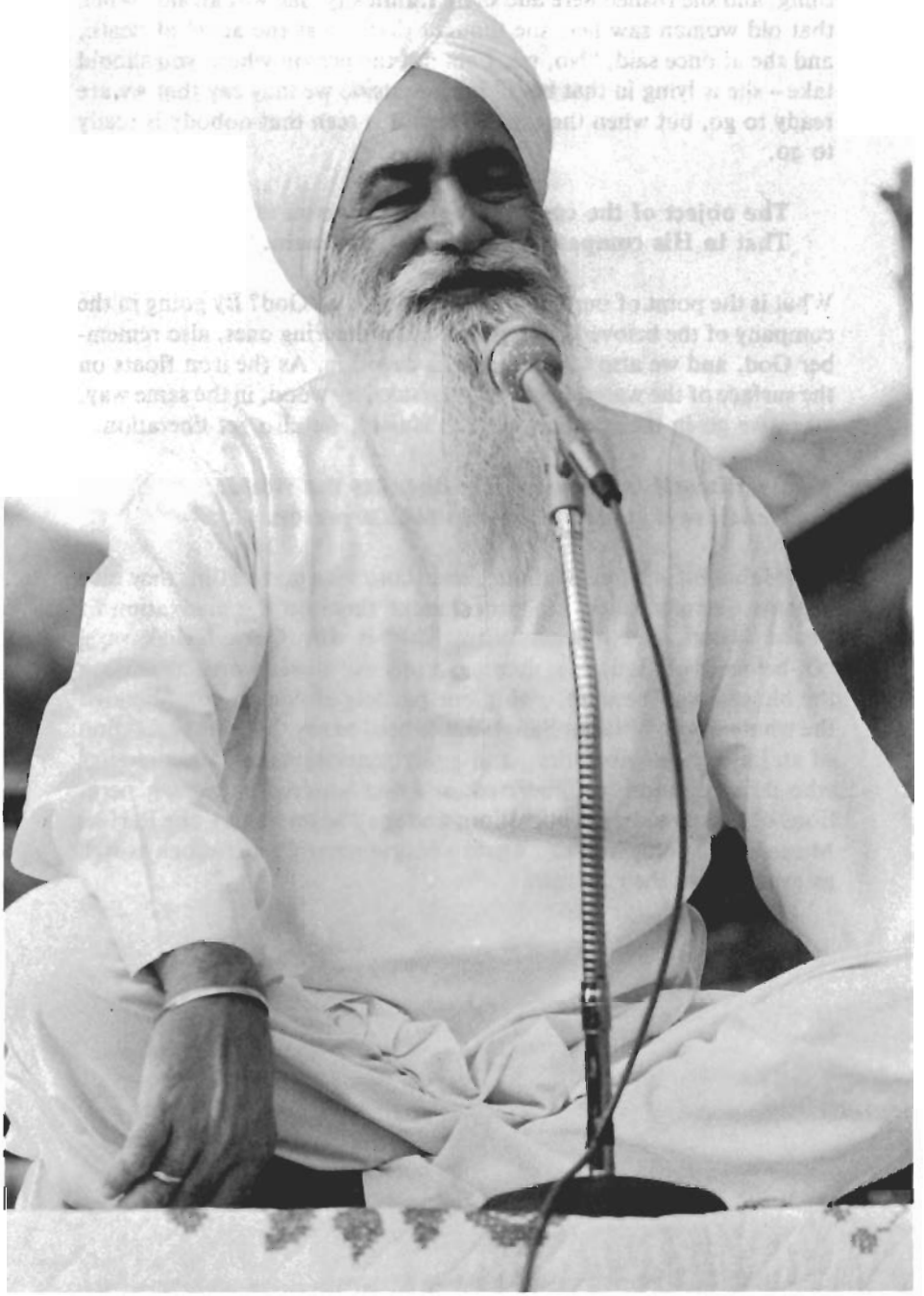
bottom. When the cow's head was in the pot, she could not see anything, and she rushed here and there frantically; she was afraid. When that old woman saw her, she thought that it was the angel of death, and she at once said, "No, no, I am not the person whom you should take—she is lying in that bed!" From outside we may say that we are ready to go, but when the time comes, it is seen that nobody is ready to go.

The object of the coming of such a person is
That in His company one remembers Naam.

What is the point of our going to the beloved of God? By going in the company of the beloved of God, we, the wandering ones, also remember God, and we also start doing His devotion. As the iron floats on the surface of the water, being accompanied by wood, in the same way, when we go in the company of the Master, we also get liberation.

He Himself is liberated, He liberates the world.
Nanak says, I always bow to such a person.

The Mahatma is a liberated one, and those who go to Him, they also become liberated ones. Mahatmas make them do the meditation of Shabd Naam, and liberate them. That is why Guru Nanak says, "O, beloveds of God, your coming in this world was worth it; you are the blessed ones because, giving one particle of Naam, you liberated the whole world." Master Sawan Singh used to say that one generation of an initiate gets liberation, and many generations of those initiates who do meditation, get liberated; and one hundred and one generations of Gurumukhs get liberation; and the Param Sants—the Perfect Masters who come into this world—liberate many generations as well as everyone in their Sangat.



Ashtapadi 24

I worshipped the Perfect Master,
whose Naam is Perfect;
And I got the Perfect One - Nanak
says, Sing His praise.
Listen to the teachings of the Perfect
Master
And see the Parbrahm as near.
Remember God with your every
breath
So that the worries of your mind
may go away.
Give up the bad desires and waves
of the mind.
O mind, long for the dust of the
Saints.
Give up the ego and pray;
And swim across the Ocean of Life
in the Sadhu's company.

Collect the wealth of God and fill
up your store.
Nanak bows down to the Perfect Master.
Well being, happiness, comfort and joy-
In the company of the Sadhus remember
the Supreme Joy.
Thereby save your soul from the fires of hell.
Drink the nectar of the Praise of God.
Meditate upon One God alone in your
heart.
He has one Form but many mani-
festations.
He is the Sustainer, the holder of
Maya and He is merciful to the
suffering ones.
He is the destroyer of miseries and
the perfect Gracious One.
Do Simran of Naam again and again.
Nanak says, This is the only support
of the Soul.
The words of the Sadhu are the best
hymns.

These are priceless rubies and gems.
He who listens to and acts upon them
is liberated.
He swims across and makes others
swim across.
Successful is His life and successful
is His company.
The one whose mind is dyed in the
color of God.
The limitless Shabd within Him sings
His victory.
He hears it and happily glorifies God.
God is manifested in the forehead of
the Saint.
Nanak says, Many people are saved
in His company.
Those who are worthy of taking refuge
in Him come to Him-
Lord, shower grace and unite us.
Our enmities vanish and we are
dust under everyone's feet

Uttering the nectarful Naam in
the company of the Saints.
The Gurudev has now been pleased.
The Seva of the servants is accepted.
They remain free from entanglements
and sins;
They hear and repeat the Naam of
Lord with one tongue.
God has kindly showered His grace;
Nanak says, One cargo has been
accepted.
O saint, friend, praise God -
With full attention and concentrated
mind.
The Jewel of Happiness is in fact
the Praise of God and His Naam.
He in whose heart it dwells becomes
full of Naam virtues.
All his desires are fulfilled
And he becomes a distinguished person,
renowned throughout the world.

He gets to the Highest Place ;
He no more comes and goes.
He leaves this world with the well-
earned wealth of Naam -
He who has obtained the gift of the
Sukhmani, says Nanak.
Well-being, peace, the supernatural
powers, the nine treasures,
Wisdom, knowledge, all spiritual
powers,
Learning, austerities, yoga, contem-
plation of Lord.
The best knowledge and the most
purifying baths,
Four boons, the enlightenment of the
soul.
Detachment while living amidst all,
Beauty, intelligence, the knowledge
of reality,
The quality of looking at everyone
alike.

All these blessings are bestowed upon
one who recites
And hears the Naam of the Master
with concentrated mind, says
Nanak.
This is a Treasure : whosoever repeats
it in his mind
Is liberated in all the Ages.
The Praises of the Lord and the
constant listening to Naam
Are also described in the Simritis,
Shastras and Vedas.
The Naam of Lord is the fundamental
teachings of religions.
It resides in the devotee of Lord.
Millions of sins are erased in the com-
pany of the Sadhu.
With the grace of the Saint one be-
comes free from Yama.
Those on whose forehead such fate is
written by God

Come to the refuge of the Sadhu, says
Nanak.
He within whom it dwells and who
listens to it with love -
Such a one always remembers God.
God removes his pains of birth and
death.
The Priceless human body is made
successful in a moment.
He earns pure glory, His words are
full of Nectar;
God's Naam alone is absorbed in
his mind.
Pains, diseases, fear and illusions,
all these are removed.
His Name is Sadhu, His deeds are pure.
His glory becomes the highest of all;
Nanak says, Through this quality
the Naam of the Lord is called
Sukhmani.

Chapter 24

Conclusion

I worshipped the Perfect Master, whose Naam is Perfect;
And I got the Perfect One—Nanak says, Sing His praise.

Once a disciple came to Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj, and asked Him, "How did you get the perfect God? How did you get the perfect Master?" We know that if anyone doesn't work really hard, even in his worldly work, he cannot become successful. In this world there is no work, which—if someone wants to do it—cannot be done. If we start doing any work with strong determination, with strong faith in our own selves, with confidence, and we go on doing it lovingly, no doubt it will take some time, but definitely the day will come when we will be successful. It is like an ant who tries to climb a wall. She reaches so high and she falls down; again she tries, and again she falls down. She does not lose heart, she keeps on trying, and the time comes when she reaches the top.

Why do we go on saying all day long, "My mind is not still, I cannot keep my mind still, I cannot take my soul up . . . " Why do we go on complaining all day long? Only because we do not meditate; we have become thieves of meditation. Read the history of any Mahatma who has come into this world and you will find that They spent many nights remaining awake; They suffered a lot, and after working so hard, They were able to realize God. By reading the histories of the Mahatmas we come to know how much love and faith They had for their Masters and how, for Their Masters, They sacrificed many things, understanding them as little mean things.

Even though Kabir Sahib was a Param Sant, and He had come from above, He was already a Saint when He came into this world—still He

worked very hard and stayed up late in the night. In His Bani He has written that, "Happy are the people of the world who eat and sleep, but unhappy is the slave Kabir, who remains up and weeps in the separation of God."

In the same way, Swami Ji Maharaj did meditation for seventeen years, sitting in a secluded dark room, beginning at a very young age.

Baba Jaimal Singh Ji Maharaj also worked very hard in meditation. Even when He was in the Army, and had to fight on the battlefield, then also He continued doing His meditations.

In the same way, Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj worked very hard. He stayed up all night many times, and for many days He would not come out of the meditation hall.

Master Kirpal Singh also worked very hard. You know how He used to go and stand in the water of the River Ravi, and all night long He would meditate in that place.

Mastana Ji used to say that those who wanted to see the result of meditation, they should see Kirpal Singh.

In the same way, Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj also worked very hard for eleven years. He did not sleep on a comfortable bed; He used to sit on dry hay and grass and meditate on that.

Regarding myself, you already know how I meditated for seventeen or eighteen years on the first two words, and it was very hard work, sitting underground. During that time I did not have any connection with the world and I bore the thirst and hunger. Those who were watching me doing that work were saying that I was mad, or some ghost had control of me. When Hazur Maharaj Kirpal showered grace on me and gave me the knowledge of the planes beyond the second plane, again I meditated for five or six years continuously, eventually in the underground cave in 16 PS. At that time I had only one sevadar with me, whom I had told, "You should eat food whenever you want, and not wait for me. Whenever I want, I will come out and eat food."

Why do Saints and Mahatmas work hard in meditation? This is a matter of great understanding: if They are sent in this world by God, and They are already perfected before coming into this world, why do They have to work so hard and meditate, and suffer many hardships? They do all these things only because They want to demonstrate to people that nothing can be achieved in this world without working hard. Just as the melon changes color when it is in the company of the other ripe melons, in the same way, when people come in the company of the Mahatmas and know that They have worked very hard in order to achieve God, they realize that they also should meditate—because nothing can be achieved without working hard.

Our soul is the essence of God. We have got this body only to pay off our Karma. Right now we are living in the physical body, and we have a physical mind and physical organs of senses, which are not letting us go within. In this physical plane, Maya is manifested everywhere and Brahm, or the all-consciousness, is not manifested. In Sahans-dal Kanwal both Maya and Brahm are equally manifested, and in Trikuti the Maya is latent and the Brahm is manifested. So when our soul goes beyond Trikuti, beyond the limits of the mind, then our soul is not affected by Maya, because Maya does not exist beyond the second plane. Usually the yogis do practices which enable them to reach up to the second plane, and what they experience there, they understand as the Almighty One. In the beginning, Baba Bishan Das gave me knowledge only up to the Brahm, the second plane. And in the beginning he also used to say that there was nothing beyond the Brahm, and that Brahm was the Almighty Lord, the Creator.

So Guru Arjan Dev is here replying to the questions of the disciple. He is telling him, "Brother, I have meditated on the perfect Naam given to me by the perfect Master. And that is how I got the opportunity to do the devotion of the perfect God, and that is why I am singing His Glory."

When Masters talk about perfect Naam and perfect Masters, it naturally implies that there is some imperfect master, or imperfect Naam. The Perfect God is sitting in the *Anami* place above Sach Khand, and when it came in His Will, He created Sach Khand and then He came down and He created Bhanwar Gupha, Daswan Dwar, Trikuti, and then He created Sahans-dal Kanwal, and even this world was created by Him. He created the astral planes in which He put the gods and goddesses. He made the Negative Power as the owner of all the astral planes, and He gave all the arrangements of these planes to the Negative Power. Guru Nanak says that the kingdom of the divisions of this world, the world below, were given to the Negative Power by God Himself.

The Gurumukh who is not affected by the three gunas is the real one, and He gets the highest glory. So the Perfect Naam of God can be received from the Perfect Master, and Perfect Masters connect us with that Perfect Naam. They have worked hard, and that is why they inspire us to work hard, because we cannot get anything in this world without working hard. Swami Ji Maharaj says that those who are the thieves of meditation always remain in illusion. They get all kinds of pain, they remain in laziness and sleep, they get kicked and knocked by lust and anger, and they drown in the river of greed.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say that mind may agree to stand

in front of a cannon, but he will not agree to sit for meditation. We should not listen to our mind; we should not meditate understanding it as a burden, we should do it lovingly. Because the devotion of the Almighty Lord is a precious thing; it is the giver of real happiness and contentment; it is the destroyer of lust, anger, greed, attachment and egoism. It is the giver of real honor. Those who do the devotion of the Lord with their true heart—those who search for God with their true heart—they definitely realize Him.

The devotees of the Lord are the dear children of God; we cannot get this wealth of devotion of the Lord by ourselves, unless we go to the Perfect Masters and get initiation into Naam from Them. Naam is not a word. If it was a word, then why go to a Saint? We could have easily got it from some book. Naam is not a word: *Naam is the attention.* Mahatmas give us the Naam which They have earned, and behind the Naam given to us by the Mahatmas, Their charging, Their power, is working.

Listen to the teachings of the Perfect Master
And see the Parbrahm as near.

Listen to the teachings of the Perfect Master. If you do that, you will be able to see the Almighty Lord within you, as nearer than the nearest.

Remember God with your every breath
So that the worries of your mind may go away.

Which kind of Simran should we do? When we breathe in, we should do Simran; when we breathe out, then also our Simran should be going on; when we are sleeping, we should be doing Simran; when we are in the state of wakefulness, then also we should be doing Simran. No matter what we are doing, with every single breath the Simran should go on happening with us.

Master Sawan Singh used to say that our mind never has to do anything, because we work in the world with our hands and feet. He used to say that our hearts should always be towards our Beloved, no matter what our hands and feet are working at. Guru Nanak says that the devotee of God talks to the people with his tongue, but in his heart he is always one with his Beloved. If we get the habit of doing Simran, then it does not make any difference if we are in crowded places, because the dear ones can do their Simran even in the crowded places. "Wherever your mind is stilled, no matter if you are in a crowded place, for you it is a secluded one."

Give up the bad desires and waves of the mind.
O mind, long for the dust of the Saints.

We should have yearning – we should have longing – for realizing God within. And we should remove all the waves and fantasies of the world which are going on in our mind. Just as we use a broom to remove dirt from a room, in the same way, we should use the broom of Simran to remove the rubbish, the waves and fantasies, from our mind. And if you want to ask anything from God, you should ask only for the dust of the feet of the Master. Guru Sahib says, "Bathe in the dust of the Sadhu's feet, and sacrifice yourself on the Sadhu."

Give up the ego and pray;
And swim across the Ocean of Life in the Sadhu's company.

If there is any obstacle between us and God, that is the obstacle of egoism. So eliminating your own self, make this request to the Almighty Lord: that you will do His meditation and always keep yourself in the company of the Sadhus. Because if we want to swim across the ocean of life, we can do that only by keeping the company of the Masters.

If an unknown person comes to any city where he has never been, and if he wants to reach his destination, he will ask directions at every single crossing. Even then he will not be sure about reaching his destination until he finally gets there. But if he has someone with him who knows that city, then he will not have to hesitate about anything; he will not have to ask people where to go. He will drive his car and not be afraid; he will not have any worries as to whether he will reach his destination or not. He has someone in his car who knows about the ways and the directions in that city.

In the same way, we know nothing about the inner Path; we know nothing about spirituality. Therefore it is very dangerous for us to go within, unless we have a guide with us who knows about the inner Path. If we have someone Who has travelled on that Path, Who has manifested that Path within Him, then we don't need to worry about anything. We know that He is with us, and He will take us to our destination and save us from all dangers. We don't have to worry about pitfalls, or anything which might come in our way.

Collect the wealth of God and fill up your store.
Nanak bows down to the Perfect Master.

Whatever meditation we are doing from day to day is counted, and we are collecting a big store of meditation. All the remembrance of God which we have done – even one moment's remembrance – is counted in our devotion. Don't ever think that whatever time you are devoting is not being counted. Master knows about our devotion; He knows

how much we have done. He is perfecting our path of meditation, and when the time comes, He hands it over to us. So here He says, "You collect the wealth of the devotion of Lord." Guru Nanak says, "I sacrifice myself on the Perfect Master, because I have been able to do this only with the Grace of the Master."

Well being, happiness, comfort and joy—
In the company of the Sadhus remember the Supreme Joy.

Master will take you to your real home. Happily, lovingly, and after saving you from all types of dangers, he will take you to that place where there is complete and supreme bliss. Kabir Sahib says, "O Kabir, in the company of the Saint, the Lord is remembered. Only the moments which are spent in the company of the Master are counted. All other moments are useless, because we don't remember God in those moments."

Thereby save your soul from the fires of hell.
Drink the nectar of the Praise of God.

What is the use of doing the meditation of Naam? By meditating on Naam, you will be having pity on your own Self, and you will be saving your soul from hell. Guru Nanak says, "O, Nanak, nobody will escape without the protection of Naam."

Meditate upon One God alone in your heart.
He has one Form but many manifestations.

No matter what we are doing, God should dwell in our heart and we should always go on remembering Him, because whatever we are seeing with our eyes is all His play, all His Glory.

He is the Sustainer, the Holder of Maya and He is merciful to the suffering ones.
He is the destroyer of miseries and the perfect Gracious One.

God always showers grace on everyone, and He always removes the pain of the people, and in His home, He gives a place to all who reach there. And He is merciful; He always showers His Grace and Mercy on the people.

Do Simran of Naam again and again.
Nanak says, This is the only support of the Soul.

Now the Master says, "Don't think that you have done enough Simran." He says, "No, you can never do enough Simran. Again and again

go on doing Simran, because if there is any medicine which can liberate our soul and remove our pain, that is the medicine of Simran; the medicine of Naam and Shabd."

The words of the Sadhu are the best hymns.
These are priceless rubies and gems.

The words of the Saints and the Mahatmas are precious. You cannot buy them at any cost; they are priceless. And they are the best words. Whatever They say is for the benefit of the dear ones, for the benefit of the whole creation.

He who listens to and acts upon them is liberated.
He swims across and makes others swim across.

Those who listen to the words of the Master, and who practice the words of the Master, do get liberation for their own self; but they liberate and improve the condition of other people, also. Kabir Sahib says that if the love for the Master is maintained throughout one's lifetime, then what to speak about one's own liberation—such a person can liberate millions of other souls.

Successful is His life and successful is His company.
The one whose mind is dyed in the color of God.

Such a Mahatma's life is successful, and so is the time which we spend in His company because He is always dyed in the color of the devotion of the Lord. Day and night, He is in the remembrance of Almighty God. Guru Nanak says, "Blessed is that day when I met the Sadhu."

The limitless Shabd within Him sings His victory.
He hears it and happily glorifies God.
God is manifested in the forehead of the Saint.
Nanak says, Many people are saved in His company.

Where in the body of the Mahatma is the Lord manifested? In the forehead of the Mahatma, and by remaining in the company of such a One, we can get liberation.

Those who are worthy of taking refuge in Him, come to Him—
Lord, shower grace and unite us.

Now Guru Arjan Dev is telling His disciple that those who are worthy of coming in the refuge of the Masters—that is, those who will make use of what they are given—only they are brought by God into the refuge of the Masters. And God Himself makes all those arrangements for them.

Our enmities vanish and we are dust under everyone's feet,
Uttering the nectarful Naam in the company of the Saints.

When Naam manifests within us, then we no longer think, Whom should we criticize? Who should be our enemy? Who is not ours? and so forth. Because when we see God sitting in everyone, if we criticize anyone, it means that we are criticizing God; if we think of him as our enemy, and we see that God is sitting within him, it means that we are making God our enemy. So when God is sitting within everyone, and we see Him sitting everywhere, we make ourselves very humble. Paltu Sahib says, "You should make your mind thin. When you make your mind thin, then you start doing the real devotion. When you start doing the real devotion, you will consider yourself as the most humble one. So give up discriminating and finding fault with people, and don't complain." Guru Nanak also says, "Don't think ill of others. In that way you will not have any bad reaction."

The Gurudev has now been pleased.
The Seva of the servants is accepted.

If we adopt humility within, if we give up egoism, and if we see and think that all people are the children of God—when we have such an attitude, only then our Master is pleased with us, and opens His door for us. He accepts the seva of only such disciples.

They remain free from entanglements and sins;
They hear and repeat the Naam of Lord with one tongue.

Such people always remain unaffected by the entanglements and the problems of the world. Whenever they open their mouth, they will speak the Glory of God. We will see that whenever any beloved of God says anything, he will be praising God.

God has kindly showered His grace;
Nanak says, One cargo has been accepted.

It was not within our ability to love all; it was not within our efforts to understand all as the children of God. It was the Grace of our Master that we have maintained this, and made our lives successful.

Once there was a Sadhu who was taunted by a woman. That woman would ask him, "Do you have a beard on your face or a bush?" But that Sadhu always kept quiet. When his end-time came, he told the peo-

ple to call that woman; and when she came, he told her to ask him the same question—whether He had a bush or a beard. He answered, "Today I am about to leave—I am completing My earthly life—and I can say that I have a beard on my face, and I am taking it as I brought it." The woman asked, "Why didn't you say this earlier?" He replied, "I was not sure about my mind. Nobody knows when his mind is going to delude him. That is why I was not claiming the beard as a beard; I didn't know whether I would retain the purity in my mind or not. But today I am leaving, and I have done that, and I can say that I am taking the beard back with me."

O Saint, friend, praise God—
With full attention and concentrated mind.

Now Guru Arjan Dev is summing up His teachings. He says, "Dear ones, sleeping and waking, sing the songs of God; do His meditation. But when you are doing all these things, you should be cautious about your mind. Don't do like this: that when you are sitting for meditation, your body is sitting, but your mind is sight-seeing and wandering here and there in the market." "The meaning of what I say daily—'Make your mind quiet, as only a quiet mind can meditate,' is that the fantasies and thoughts which come in our mind bother us during our meditation; quiet them, remove them, and in their place do Simran."

The Jewel of Happiness is in fact, the Praise of God and His Naam.
He in whose heart it dwells, becomes full of Naam virtues.

The Name of this bani is *Sukhmani*—the Jewel of Happiness—only because this gives happiness to the mind, and those that take this bani to be that jewel, by the light of which the snake searches for his food—who understand this as a light-giving bani, then this bani helps manifest the Light within them. In this Sukhmani, I have given the message of Shabd Naam, and I have talked about those karmas which are an obstacle between us and God, and how we can do the devotion of the Lord, and realize God. Meditation of the Naam is the only way by which we can realize God.

All his desires are fulfilled
And he becomes a distinguished person, renowned throughout the world.

All the desires of the person who does the meditation of Shabd Naam are fulfilled. "All the desires" means the desire for realizing God, and

such a person becomes the highest one in this world and He gets honor; He becomes the owner of all creation.

He gets to the Highest Place;
He no more comes and goes.

He goes back to the *Anami* place which is the highest plane, and God makes Him one with Him. When God brings back any soul from the suffering world, that soul never comes back into the suffering world again.

He leaves this world with the well-earned wealth of Naam–
He who has obtained the gift of the Sukhmani, says Nanak.

He knows that the Naam is the only thing that will go with Him, and He takes only the meditation of Naam with Him. But who carries the wealth of Naam with him? Only those who are chosen by God – on whom God is gracious; and who are sent in this world to do the devotion of Lord.

Well-being, peace, the supernatural powers, the nine treasures,
Wisdom, knowledge, all spiritual powers,

Mahatmas do not exhibit their supernatural powers, and they do not make prophesies. If they want, they can, because they have those powers – they have got them without working for them. The supernatural powers are the slaves of those who do meditation. Mahatmas do not allow their disciples to perform miracles or to use their supernatural powers. That is why they say, "Whenever you get any experiences, whenever you see anything, don't tell the people and don't misuse them." Kabir says, "Like chemicals are absorbed in the bones, we should absorb the Naam within ourselves."

Learning, austerities, yoga, contemplation of Lord.
The best knowledge and the most purifying baths,

They are aware of all kinds of knowledge, and they know every yoga system. Yoga means the union with God. They know everything, and for them it is not difficult to talk with a disciple in the language of the disciple. But they do not do such surprising, such miracle-like things, in this world. Within, where the soul talks with the Shabd, there is no language as such, there is no speech; when the soul talks with the Almighty Lord, they talk like we are talking outside. Hazrat Bahu has

said, "Within, nobody teaches, nobody learns, and no stories or statements are given there." Guru Nanak says, "The soul who does the devotion of the Lord, no matter if she is learned or illiterate, she realizes Him."

Four boons, the enlightenment of the soul,
Detachment while living amidst all,

The Lotus, the heart, of such a Mahatma always remains in bloom, and He does not have any sadness. He has all the four bounties (*Kama, Artha, Dharma, Moksha*) in his power, and even though He is living in this world, He is not affected by its dirt. His attention is always on His destination. His attitude is like that traveler who does not get stopped by any hindrances or obstacles, and keeps on moving toward His destination.

Beauty, intelligence, the knowledge of reality,
The quality of looking at everyone alike.

He is beautiful; He looks at everyone alike, and He is very wise. He does not become the equal of God; He understands Himself as a dear Son of God.

All these blessings are bestowed upon One who recites
And hears the Naam of the Master with concentrated mind, says Nanak.

Who gets all these qualities? Only those who obey the instructions of the Master, and those who accept the very word of the Master as a commandment—those who do their devotion and serve their Master with love and faith for Him. If we do not have faith in Him, we cannot travel on the inner path. If we do not have love for Him, we cannot see Him, even though He is sitting within us. But He knows how much love and faith we have in Him. If we do not have enough love and faith in Him, He will not open His door for us.

This is a Treasure: whosoever repeats it in his mind
Is liberated in all the Ages.

Golden Age, Silver Age, Copper Age, and this present Iron Age—There are just four ages, and one comes after the other. In all the four ages, Naam is the only way of getting liberation. But who gets the wealth of Naam?

The Praises of the Lord and the constant listening to Naam

Are also described in the Simritis, Shastras and Vedas.

By repeating the words, "Govind, Govind," or "God, God," we cannot get God. We have to *listen* to God. Guru Nanak says that repeating the word "Govind" is useless for listening to Him, we have to go to the perfect Master Who makes us listen to the Sound. Guru Nanak has described that very power, using the words, "The Sound of the Lord," "The Voice of God." The Muslim fakirs also described that same power as "The Sound of God; the sound coming from the other world." All the Vedas and Shastras describe the glory of that Naam, which is coming from Sach Khand and is sounding in our forehead. Guru Nanak has said that the Bani of the Perfect Master resides within everyone. The perfect Master listens to that Bani Himself and makes those who come to Him also listen.

The Naam of Lord is the fundamental teaching of religions.
It resides in the devotee of Lord.

Hundreds of wise people have the same thing to offer; foolish people will each have their own thing. You can read the writing of any Mahatma, and you will find that in all the scriptures, there is a description of the meditation of Shabd Naam.

Millions of sins are erased in the company of the Sadhu.
With the grace of the Saint one becomes free from Yama.

No matter how bad our sins, our karmas, are, we should not be afraid of them; we should come in the company of the Master. But when we come to the Masters, after that we should not do them again. When we go to the Masters and repent for our sins, then the Masters do not give us to the Angels of Death. If we have to face the Angels of Death even after going to the Mahatma, and if we still have to suffer the pains of the Angels of Death—if at the time of death the Satguru does not come to take us—then what is the use of going to such a Mahatma? But what can the poor Master do, if the disciples keep on making the mistakes—if they do not listen to what the Master is saying, and if their condition is like that blowpipe which does not absorb any wind in it? Then what can the Master do?

We people take Naam initiation, and we continue indulging in lust, anger, greed, attachment and egoism. Whatever we were doing before

coming to the path, we continue doing that. How can we gain anything from the Naam initiation? I have said many times that whenever any initiated person does any bad thing that is against the teachings of the Master, the Negative Power laughs at the Master and says, "Look at him!! You gave initiation to him and look at what he is doing!" But Masters are very patient, they have a very big heart; they always say, "No, he will come back and he will understand his mistake." Whenever we come in the company of the Masters, we stop doing the bad things. But when we have to face the world, again we forget our promises and become one with the world and start doing them again.

The gracious sight (the darshan) that we get of the Master is used up in washing our sins and again we make our soul dirty with the dirt of lust, anger—and when we go to the Master, His Grace, His gracious sight, is again used for our purification. If we work hard, and keep ourselves pure, then the gracious sight of the Master, which we now use for purifying ourselves over and over again, could be used for uplifting our soul. In that way, we could be successful in no time.

Those on whose forehead such fate is written by God
Come to the refuge of the Sadhu, says Nanak.

Again and again Guru Sahib is emphasizing this point: The ones in whose fate God writes this line—that they are supposed to meet the Master, that they are supposed to do devotion, and go back to their real home—only such chosen souls come in the company of the Master, no matter if He is living thousands of miles away from them; they come to the Master anyway, and get the knowledge of Naam, and do the devotion and go back to their home. But the ones in whose fate this line is not written by the Almighty Lord—no matter how hard they try, they can never come in the company of the Master, get initiation, and go back to their real home. No other rite and ritual—no other practice of religion—is equal to Naam. Nanak says that, "Those who have got the Naam are the most blessed ones, because they are entitled to the right to go back to their real home."

He, within whom it dwells and who listens to it with love—
Such a one always remembers God.

God starts dwelling within the heart of such a devotee who does the devotion of Shabd Naam with all his faith, with all his love, wholeheartedly. Heart talks to heart. When you are remembering anyone, at the same time he is remembering you.

God removes his pains of birth and death.
The Priceless human body is made successful in a moment.

He gets rid of the pain, the disease, of this birth and death, and He makes the precious human body come into its true worth. He makes it successful.

Rabia Basri was a famous meditator Mahatma among the Muslims. She was a woman Saint, and once it happened that She didn't get up for meditation early in the morning. On that day, all Her disciples had the experience that She had died. But when they came to see the dead body of the Master, they saw that Rabia was still living there. So they said, "We had this experience that You had left the body." Then Rabia confessed, "Yes, my condition was like that – that I had left – because I didn't get up for meditation." Whenever you wake up in anyone's remembrance, whenever you sit in meditation in the remembrance of the Master, He also comes there; He also sits with you. And when the Master does not get up – when He does not meditate – it means that He is no more in this world.

He earns pure glory, His words are full of Nectar;
God's Naam alone is absorbed in his mind.

Master's Glory is true; His Glory is pure; His Glory is high. And in the words spoken by the Master – the Nectar is flowing.

Pains, diseases, fear and illusions, all these are removed.
His Name is Sadhu, His deeds are pure.

Unhappiness, sadness, pain, and bad Karmas are removed, and they become of pure karma. Of whom is this true? "Of the ones we call 'Sadhus' – who are doing the meditation of Shabd Naam, who become pure in their heart and who take their souls back to Sach Khand, Only they should be called 'Sadhus'." Swami Ji Maharaj says, "O, brother, I call them Saints who take their souls to Sat Lok."

I have said that Saints have one foot in the world and the other one in Sach Khand. Whenever He closes His eyes, He is with God; He is in Sach Khand; and whenever He opens His eyes he is back in the world.

His glory becomes the highest of all;
Nanak says, Through this quality the Naam of the Lord is called SUKHMANI.

The Glory of that Mahatma is very high; He who does the devotion, His Glory becomes very high. Nanak says that, "This is the quality of

the Sukhmani." This is the Bani which gives happiness; like that jewel, it brightens us within. In this Bani, whatever subject Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj touched, He clarified that subject a great deal. If He took the subject of Simran, He said a lot about doing Simran. He told us the benefits of Simran, and how we should do it. If He was talking about love for the Master and faith in Him, He said a lot about it; how we should love Him, and what kind of love we should have for Him. If He commented on that which is the main hindrance between us and God, He said a lot about it: criticism. He said that criticism is the sweet disease from which everybody is suffering. And when He talked about the devotion of the Lord, and how we should remain happy in the Will of God, He told us a lot; He emphasized all these subjects.

He even said, "How can the critic of the Sadhu get liberation? Because on his head he is carrying the load of all the hells." He said, "The liberation is in Naam, and Naam is with the perfect Masters. Masters are sent into this world carrying a Naam from God, and we can get Naam only from Them. Only those who please God get the Naam and come to the Master, and only those who are chosen by God for the total liberation come to the Masters and get the Naam!!

In this Bani He emphasized love for the Master, and doing the meditation. And we should mold our lives according to these instructions, and make it our experience.

This Bani is from Guru Granth Sahib, and it was a very long Bani. You know that I have been commenting on this Sukhmani since last year and I hope that Russell Perkins and dear ones from Sant Bani Ashram will try hard to make this Bani very soon available to you in the form of a book; as you all know, this commentary is being published in SANT BANI magazine, and you might be reading that. But I hope that it will be available in the form of a book also. I hope that you will read it and will take benefit from it. Today I am pleased because this was a big work, and I am very grateful to my beloved Master Kirpal, with Whose Grace this work was completed.

The Jewel of Happiness

The *Sukhmani* of Guru Arjan

is one of the five basic Sikh scriptures, an integral component of the Granth Sahib. Written in the sixteenth century it here receives its definitive modern commentary from Sant Ajaib Singh Ji, a contemporary Saint in direct spiritual descent from Guru Arjan, who receives seekers after Truth from around the world in his simple ashram in the Rajasthan desert.

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