Ashtapadi 5

Giving up God, Who is the Giver, those
who get attached to other things -
Nanak says, "Such ones will never be
successful, and without Naam they
will lose their honor."
After getting ten things, he ignores them,
And for one thing he loses his faith.
If He did not give one thing, and took
away the ten
What could the fool do?
Always bow down before Him,
In front of Whom no force works.
Those who find the Lord to be sweet in
their hearts,
Get all the happiness.
Those who are made to obey his orders-
Nanak says, They get all things.
He gives His countless capital to man,

Who eats, drinks, and with great pleasure and joy uses it.
If He takes back some of what he has given,
The ignorant one feels angry.
Now he himself loses his reputation, and he doesn't get trusted again.
He who places things before the Owner, and obeys His order, surrendering to Him -
- God makes him fourfold happy;
Nanak says, God is always gracious.
The attachments of Maya are of various kinds;
Know this for sure; that they are all temporary.
The man gets attached to the shadow of the tree -
When it vanishes, he repents in his heart.
Whatever is seen is perishable;
Still the blind man is attached to it.

He who loves a traveler will get nothing;
Don't love a traveler.
Oh my mind, the love for the Naam of
God gives happiness;
Nanak says, graciously God attaches
man to Himself.
Perishable are the body, wealth, and en-
tire family;
Perishable are ego, attachment, and maya.
Perishable are kingdoms, youth, wealth
and property;
Perishable are lust and dreadful anger.
Perishable are chariots, elephants, horses,
and clothes;
Perishable is Maya - by getting himself
attached to which, man becomes
pleased.
Perishable are deceit, worldly love and
pride;
Perishable is the pride of one's own self.
The shelter of the Master and the de-

votion of the Lord are imperishable;
Nanak says, O man, live by meditating upon God's feet.
Vain are the ears which listen to others' criticism,
Vain are the hands which steal others' wealth.
Vain are the eyes which see the beauty of another man's wife,
Vain is the tongue which tastes forbidden food.
Vain are the legs which run after sins;
Vain is the mind which tempts us towards others' wealth.
Vain is the body which does not work for the benefit of others;
Vain is the nose which smells pleasures.
All is vain without understanding Him.
Nanak says, The body which remembers the Naam of the Lord is successful.
Useless is the life of the worldly person;

How can he become a True One without
the Truth?
Useless is the body of the blind without
Naam.
From his mouth comes foul smell.
Without Simran his days and nights
pass away in vain,
As the crop perishes without rain.
Without the meditation of the Lord
all worship is useless,
As the wealth of the miser remains
useless.
Hail, Hail those within whom the
Naam of the Lord is manifested:
Nanak says, I sacrifice myself on them.
He who teaches one thing but does some-
thing else-
He has fragrant words on his tongue,
but no love in his heart.
God Who knows everything is compe-
tent;

We cannot please Him by putting on
outward garbs.
He who teaches others but does not
himself practice,
Continues to come and go and take
birth and die.
He within Whom the Formless One
resides–
By His teachings the world gets lib-
eration.
Only those on whom He is pleased can
realize Him –
Nanak says, "I lay myself down at
their feet."
I pray to the Almighty Who knows
everything;
He Himself approves what He Him-
self does.
He Himself decides this–
To whom He will show Himself near
and far.

He is beyond all wisdom and cleverness;
He knows everything of the hearts.
To whom He wants, He attaches him
to Himself;
He is present at every place.
He becomes the servant on whom He is
gracious.
Nanak says, Remember Hari with
every single breath.

Chapter 5

On Truth and Vanity

Giving up God, Who is the Giver, those who get attached to other things–
Nanak says, "Such ones will never be successful, and without Naam they will lose their honor."

In this sloka Guru Arjan Dev Ji is lovingly telling us that God is the giver to everybody and He is the Emperor to all the creatures in this creation. And He has given us all the things which we are enjoying. He says, "You see how He is giving food to everybody; how He has given all things to everybody. He is the only Giver. He has given us these trees, and He has given us the fire to use and He has given us this earth to live on and He has given us this sky to live under, and in this way, He has given us all things. It is a pity that we forget the One Who has given us all things, and we are in a very sorrowful state. We go and waste our time in worldly pleasures and in that way we are not appreciating the things which God has given us. That is why the Guru says that those who forget God Who has given us all these things, and forgetting Him indulge in the worldly pleasures, their honor is lost: because they do not find peace here, and moreover, after they leave this world, the angels of the Negative Power give them a very hard time. That is why Guru Nanak says, "O, Nanak, we will not be set free if we do not have the Naam, and only this truth will take you across this world."

When Masters come in this world, they always tell us, "You should never lie—you should always be truthful," because truth, after all, is truth; that is why they tell us, "Always be truthful; do the meditation on Shabd Naam, and always make your mind sit for meditation, whether he likes it or not." Meditation on Naam is the only truth, and that will always exist.

In the olden days there was a perfect Mahatma Who was once invited by some dear ones to visit them. Since in those days they didn't have any good means of transportation, that Mahatma started to walk. There was one greedy man who thought that he could get something from the Mahatma, so he accompanied Him. That Mahatma had taken three stuffed chapatis with him, to eat on the way. When they came to a resting place, the Mahatma told that greedy man to watch his clothes because he wanted to bathe in the pond. While the Mahatma was bathing, that greedy man thought that the Mahatma might have some things in His clothes. So he searched in the clothes but he couldn't find anything, because there was nothing there; but when he saw that there were three chapatis, he ate one of them and left the other two.

When the Mahatma came back, he was surprised to see only two chapatis there, because he knew that there were three chapatis when he started. So he asked him, "Did you eat the chapati?" He said, "No. I didn't eat the chapati. I didn't even know what you had in your bag." The Mahatma said, "All right." He gave one chapati to the man, and He ate the other one. Again they started walking, and as they were walking, they came to a river. Both of them were crossing it, when suddenly that greedy man found himself drowning and cried for help. The Mahatma said, "You should remember God, Who has created you. If you will remember Him, He will definitely help you, and He will definitely make you cross this river." Because that greedy man had had a little bit of the influence of that Master, he obeyed Him, and started remembering and praying to God. So God helped him across that river. When both of them had crossed, the Mahatma said, "All right, you should be grateful to God Who has saved your life, and Who has made you cross this river. Now you should swear by Him, and tell me if you ate that chapati which was missing." He said, "No. I swear by God I didn't eat any chapati. I ate only the one which You gave me. I don't know about that missing chapati." The Mahatma kept quiet, because He was very patient, and he said, "All right."

Again they started walking and they came to one forest which was burning. And again it was very difficult to cross that burning forest without the help of God. So the Mahatma told that man, "You see, again we are caught up in a situation where we need God's help. Remember Him Who has created you and Who saved you from that river; and if you remember Him, He will definitely help you in crossing this fire." Because there was no substitute, that greedy man again started remembering God and praying for help. So God again started helping him, and he crossed through the fire of that burning forest. When they

were safe, the Mahatma said, "Now you should be even more grateful to God, because He has saved you twice—once in the river and once in crossing this fire. You tell me now if you ate that chapati. You should remember Him, and understanding Him as before you, you should swear by Him." He said, "No, I swear by Him, I never ate that chapati. I am telling you truly that I ate only that chapati which you gave me." That Mahatma kept quiet, because He was still very patient. The Mahatma wanted to be gracious on him, and He knew that unless he would speak the truth, he wouldn't be able to knock on the door of God; if he would not give up speaking lies, he would not be able to enter the home of God. It was because He wanted to be gracious on him that he was doing this.

They again started walking, and the Mahatma was trying His best to make that person speak the truth, but he would not. So at one point, the Mahatma created some maya; he made some gold and other valuable things, and divided them into three parts. He said, "You see, dear one, God has given us these valuable things; but they are in three parts. One part is for me, another one is for you, and the third one is for that dear one who has eaten the chapati. So now also there is a chance. Tell me the truth: What happened to that missing chapati? You should swear by God, and remembering Him, and being grateful to Him because He saved you many times, you should tell me."

You know that we, the worldly people, can change very soon. When we see that we get some material help or things, we are ready to sacrifice our principles and everything. Many people use the name of God only for swearing by Him, and for taking promises. It is said in one hymn that even though God is the creator, and He is the giver of all things, still people put God to tests, and, although the name of God is the only thing which will liberate souls, still people use that name of God only for swearing by Him. So that greedy man, because he saw that he would get a lot of wealth just by telling the truth, finally did tell the truth: "Master, Mahatma Ji, before I said that I didn't eat the chapati, but now, remembering Him Who has created me, Who has given me His protection, and saved my life many times, I swear by Him that I am the one who ate that chapati." And by telling that truth he got that extra wealth.

One day you will have to speak the truth. You may go on lying, but you can't lie forever. Just to hide one lie, you will have to say many lies. But if you speak truth in the beginning, then you won't have to lie. So that is why we should always remain true to our own self; because the truth always wins.

After getting ten things, he ignores them,
And for one thing he loses his faith.

Now you see that God has given many things – numerous things – to the soul. Ever since the soul got birth into this world, God has been giving many things to the soul. As soon as he gets birth, God starts the source of milk for him. He brings the milk into the breasts of the mother, and in that way, He is taking care of the soul. And when we get a little older, in our childhood, God provides us with our brothers and sisters, and they give us love and affection. And when we grow a little bit older, in our youth, God gives us the understanding of how we have to deal with things in this world, how we have to work in this world, and how to be comfortable, etc. He gives us understanding and knowledge of all these things. In fact, He is the only one who gives us all the things of this world; all the things for our comfort, etc. And even after getting all these, we still complain to Him. When we do not get even one thing that we want, we blame Him. We say that God is not just, and He has not given us this thing. When He doesn't give us something we want, even if it is just one thing, we forget all the things that we have received from Him, just for the sake of that one little thing, and say that He is not just. We do not appreciate the ten things – or the many things – which He has given to us, and instead of appreciating them, we blame Him for just one little thing.

If He did not give one thing, and took away the ten,
What could the fool do?

God is almighty, and He can do anything He wants. For one little thing, a person blames God because He has not given it to him; if, instead of giving that little thing to the man, if God – because He can do everything – if God were to take back all the things which He has given to us, then what would this foolish man do?

Always bow down before Him,
In front of Whom no force works.

In front of God your force can do nothing. There is no court where you can go and file a complaint against God. There is nobody in this world who is equal to God or who is higher than Him where you can go and say that God is not just to you. So when your force cannot do anything against Him, and there is no place where you can go and com-

plain against Him—in front of such a God, the only thing which you can do is to remain in His refuge. By offering your prayers to Him, you can get that which you cannot get by applying force to Him. Your force will do nothing to Him.

Those who find the Lord to be sweet in their hearts,
Get all the happiness.

One who meditates on Shabd Naam and who does not understand that meditation as a burden but always enjoys doing it, and who always feels the sweetness of it—because Naam is the sweetest thing in this world—one who is meditating on Shabd Naam in this way can easily manifest the Master within him, and daily he can have His darshan.

The needle is in search of iron. She doesn't realize that she herself is made out of iron, but still goes on searching for iron. In the same way the fish remains in the water, but still she cannot quench her thirst. She doesn't know that just by opening her mouth, she will be able to drink the water in which she is living. We are like the fish, and like the needle which is in search of iron. God is within us, but instead of looking within and contacting Him within, we understand Him as residing in some holy books, or living somewhere on top of a mountain, or somewhere in the forest.

As a matter of fact, God is in search of a man. Master used to say that God is always searching for a man. If anyone would become a man, God would come there to see him. We have not yet become man. If we would become man, God would come and find us, because God is within us, and we just need to look within to see Him.

Those who are made to obey His orders—
Nanak says, They get all things.

Now He says that all the powers in this world bow their heads in front of those who meditate on Shabd Naam, who manifest the Shabd Naam within them. Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say that if by doing our practices we get all the powers of this world, it is not good that, using those supernatural powers, we perform miracles such as drinking all the water of the sea, etc. He used to say that all the beloveds of God are very near to God—truly they are one with God—but they do not give their secret to others. Even though they have become one with God, still when they live in this world, they always say that they are the low ones, and they always present themselves as the lowest creatures of this world.

He gives His countless capital to man,
Who eats, drinks, and with great pleasure and joy uses it.

To whom God is gracious, He gives all His capital; He gives a lot to them. He gives them so much that even if they go on spending it day and night, it will never end. His treasure is limitless.

If He takes back some of what He has given,
The ignorant one feels angry.

We receive only according to what we have done in the past. Whatever karmas or whatever actions we have done, we get their reaction only. Whatever we have sown in the past, we are reaping that now, and we get only those things to eat and to enjoy. But still we blame God if we do not get anything from Him. We say, "God is not just to us, He is not gracious on us, because He is not giving us that thing which He is giving to someone else." But we do not realize that whatever we get, that is all the reaction of our own past karmas. God doesn't give us anything—we get whatever we have sown in our past. But being controlled by ignorance, we say all these things and blame God.

Now he himself loses his reputation, and he doesn't get trusted again.

If we do not keep our promise, we lose our reputation. Suppose we have borrowed some money from someone, on the promise to repay him after a certain time. If we do not do that, we lose our reputation because we have not kept our promise. Then if we want to borrow money from the same person, and we go and ask him to give us that money, he will never give it to us, because now he doesn't believe in us.

In the same way, every time the soul is in the womb of the mother, she promises to God, "O God, take me out from this painful place, and I will always tithe in Your Name. I will always do the meditation on Your Name. I will not develop any bad karmas during this life." God hears that prayer, and He always takes the soul out of that painful place; but when the soul gets out, she forgets about God, and never remembers to do His devotion.

We have broken the promise many times. Life after life we have been breaking the promise that we made to God, and in that way we have lost our reputation. That is why He says here, "Once the soul has lost her reputation, who will believe in her?" But still, God is gracious: even though we break the promises we have made to Him many times, still

God knows that we are poor and helpless, and He is gracious. That is why He always showers grace on us, and He always helps us in doing our meditation.

He who places things before the Owner, and obeys His order, surrendering to Him—

Now lovingly He tells us that we should sacrifice to God all the things which we have received from Him, and always remain in His Will. Guru Gobind Singh had four sons, and all four were killed by the Mogul army. When He heard that all of his sons had been killed, He did not become sad. He became grateful to Master and to God, and said, "You have given me these four sons to take care of, and I have been doing that. Now, when You have taken them back, I am worryless, and tonight I will sleep without worries, because I no longer have to take care of the sons which You had given to me." He didn't have even a single trace of sadness. When He met His family, He saw everybody else except the four sons, and all the dear ones told Him that everybody else had come back but the four sons had been killed. The other people of the family started weeping because they had lost them, but Guru Gobind Singh didn't weep. He said, "What if four sons are sacrificed for the sake of all the sons? All the Sangat are my children; they are all my sons."

—God makes him fourfold happy;
Nanak says, God is always gracious.

If we always remain in the will of God, if we always accept His will and His orders, and always remain happy in His will, then God gives us much more.

The attachments of Maya are of various kinds;
Know this for sure; that they are all temporary.

This Maya in which man is entangled has been created in many forms. The only way to get out of it is by taking the human body and taking Naam; only with the help of Naam can we get out of this Maya. As long as we do not get Naam and utilize this human body, we will have to come back to this Maya, and remain in it.

The man gets attached to the shadow of the tree—
When it vanishes, he repents in his heart.

Those who are attached to the things of Maya, their condition is just like those who love the shadow of a tree. You know that the shadow of a tree is not permanent; when night comes, the shadow of the tree goes away. So the one who is in love with that shadow of a tree, he repents when that shadow goes away. In the same way, those who are attached to the things of Maya also repent, because these things are perishable, and one day they will be destroyed.

Whatever is seen is perishable;
Still the blind man is attached to it.

Whatever you see with your eyes—your son, daughter, wife, property—all these things must leave this world one day; nothing can remain in this world forever. And even when we see all these things leaving, still we are blind and do not realize the truth. We see that our companions are not permanent, one day they all must leave; but still we think that death is only for other people, and we are never going to die.

He who loves a traveler will get nothing;
Don't love a traveler.

Those who love travelers will repent in the end; what can you get from a traveler? One day the traveler has to leave, so if you have love and affection for him, it will be of no use. One day he has to go. In the same way, we are all like travelers in this world, and if we are in love with each other, or if we have love for the things of the world, we will not get anything from that love; one day either we have to go or the things have to go. Even if we have love for our kin and folk, still we won't be able to maintain that love after we have left this world. There is nothing which can go with us except Naam. Naam is our only companion. Either the mother will leave the son, or the son will leave the mother; or the father will have to leave the daughter, or the daughter will have to leave the father; the husband will leave the wife, or the wife will leave the husband. One day everybody will leave the other companions; only Naam is our real companion. That is why, if we are having love and affection for the travelers—all the things in this world—it is useless.

Oh my mind, the love for the Naam of God gives happiness;
Nanak says, graciously God attaches man to Himself.

Out of all the loves and affections, which is the love which gives us eternal happiness? Only our love with God gives us eternal happiness; only that love gives us peace. But this love which we have for God cannot be grown in the fields, and we cannot get that from any merchant's shop. Guru Nanak says, "Only they can get that love on whom He is gracious."

Perishable are the body, wealth, and entire family;
Perishable are ego, attachment, and maya.

Whatever you see—body, mind, wealth, family—all is perishable. Whatever egotism or pride you feel, that also is perishable.

Perishable are kingdoms, youth, wealth, and property;
Perishable are lust and dreadful anger.

Power, praise, wealth, lust, anger—all these things—they also are perishable.

Perishable are chariots, elephants, horses, and clothes;
Perishable is Maya—by getting himself attached to which, man becomes pleased.

Even if we have elephants, horses, and all sorts of wealth and property, still it is all perishable.

Perishable are deceit, worldly love, and pride;
Perishable is the pride of one's own self.

To deceive others, and to love others—except for the love of God—if you love others, and are proud of your position, and say, "I am the supreme one"—all these things are also perishable.

The shelter of the Master and the devotion of the Lord are imperishable;
Nanak says, O man, live by meditating upon God's feet.

What is that which is stable, which will always remain, which will never be destroyed? If you can get the company of any perfect Mahatma and get Naam from Him, those are the only things which will always remain in this world. Kabir Sahib says, "If you see any Saint passing by, follow Him. If He looks at you, He will make you pure, and if you spend some time in His company, He will make you meditate on Naam."

Vain are the ears which listen to others' criticism,
Vain are the hands which steal others' wealth.

Once a Mahatma went to a king, whose name was Ajassar, to ask for a donation for his langar. But that king played a joke on Him; instead of giving Him something useful for His langar, he gave Him some horse dung: he was making a fool of Him. But the Mahatma was very patient, and He accepted whatever donation was given to Him, and went home. It is the law that any donation we give goes on increasing and increasing unless it is used. At the time of donation, it grows by tenfold. And if it is not used it goes on increasing and increasing until it is used in some cause. So because nobody was using that horse dung, it went on increasing and increasing. After some time there was a big pile of horse dung near the Ashram of the Mahatma.

A long time passed, and one day when King Ajassar was passing by the Ashram, he noticed a lot of horse dung. "Let me go and see how many horses this person has," he thought. But he found the same Mahatma there and no horses, nor any other animals. He was very surprised, and asked the Mahatma, "Mahatma Ji, tell me why you have so much horse dung, even though you don't have any animals – I cannot see any horses here." The Mahatma said, "Yes, one of my dear ones has given me this donation, and since I have not used it, it is growing and growing. And it will go on growing until that dear one finds some way to use it. If he will not find some way to reduce it, he will have to eat it up, and in that way he will get the fruits of donating this horse dung to me."

Then King Ajassar realized that it was he who had done this. Then he understood how bad it was to play a joke on the Mahatma. He fell at His feet and asked for forgiveness, and he asked Him if there was any way to get rid of that karma. So the Mahatma said, "Yes, there are two ways: either you eat this horse dung and finish it, or make people criticize you. This horse dung will go and fall in the mouth of those who criticize you. When this is finished you will become free from this bad karma which you have done."

So King Ajassar thought, "Who is going to criticize me? I am a good king; I am a just king. Everybody praises me and many people worship me. What can I do to make people criticize me?" After thinking a lot he did this: Although he was an old man, he forced one young girl to come and live with him in the palace. So people started criticizing him: "Look at our king! He used to be very just and noble, and the father of all the people in his kingdom. But look what he has done! He has forced a young girl to live with him, and he is enjoying with her!"

But in the palace the king was not doing anything like that. He was respecting that young girl as a daughter and he treated her as his daughter. But still the people were criticizing him, and as they went on criticizing him, the horse dung went on reducing. Almost everybody in his kingdom criticized him, so almost all the horse dung was finished. The king came to the Mahatma's place and he saw that there was still some dung left there. He asked why, and the Mahatma said, "There is one carpenter who has not taken part in the criticism against you. If you can make him criticize you, only then this will be finished; otherwise you will have to eat this dung."

So the king changed his form. He wore some torn clothes and he disguised himself as a pauper. He went to meet that carpenter late at night, when he was working. The king said, "Do you know what our king has done? He has forced a young girl to come and live with him in the palace and he is enjoying with her!" As soon as he spoke those words, the carpenter took one stick and said, "Do you see what I have in my hand? I have a stick. I don't want to take part in the criticism of the king; what he has done he will have to suffer for, and what we are doing we will have to suffer for. So why should we criticize others? If you will not stop criticizing him, I will give you a good beating."

So the king came back disappointed, because he was not able to make the carpenter criticize him. So he came back to the Mahatma and requested him to find some other way. So the Mahatma replied, "Since the carpenter was the only one who didn't criticize you, his share is still here. You didn't succeed in persuading him, so now it is your turn. You must eat this dung and finish it, otherwise it will go on increasing and increasing, unless it is used. And I am not going to use it; I don't have any place to use it. So you eat it." Then King Ajassar realized how bad it was for him to play a joke on the Mahatma. He ate that horse dung, and in that way he became free of that karma.

So regarding King Ajassar, Guru Nanak Sahib has written that King Ajassar realized how bad a deed he had done and he saw that if he would not finish the dung, he would get much punishment in the court of the Lord.

Vain are the eyes which see the beauty of another man's wife,
Vain is the tongue which tastes forbidden food.

Useless are those eyes who see other women with lust; useless is the tongue which is eating meat and other bad things. One should never look at another man's wife with lust in his eyes, but should always remain in the company of the Master.

Vain are the legs which run after sins;
Vain is the mind which tempts us toward others' wealth.

Those legs are useless which lead us to sins. And useless is our mind which leads us to usurp other people's rights. This is called greed; and it is useless.

Vain is the body which does not work for the benefit of others;
Vain is the nose which smells pleasures.

If after having such a good body, we do not use it for the sake of others, then our body is also useless. And in the same way, our nose is for smelling the odor of the Naam. And if, instead of smelling Naam, we are smelling worldly pleasures and other bad smells, that is also useless.

Master Sawan Singh used to tell His own story: once in the month of April He was going some place when suddenly He started feeling a beautiful smell coming from one direction. At once He felt much happiness within Himself. He thought in His mind that He was not going to get any increment in His job, nor any son, nor any other worldly happiness, so why should He be so happy? The smell was increasing and increasing. After walking for some time, He came to a place where one intoxicated devotee of God was sitting; then Master Sawan Singh realized that the smell was coming from his body; and that devotee told Him, "Few are the noses who can really smell the smell of God."

All is vain without understanding Him.
Nanak says, The body which remembers the Naam of the Lord is successful.

Useless is the body in which God is not manifested. Which is the best body, and which is the body which can be called useful? Only that body within which the meditation of Naam is going on; the body of one who is having the remembrance of Master with every single breath. If when they are breathing in they are remembering God, and when they are breathing out then also they are having the remembrance of God—only such a body can be called useful.

Useless is the life of the worldly person;
How can he become a True One without the Truth?

The life of the worldly people—those who do not do the devotion of the Lord—is not counted in any good place; whatever time they live

in this world is all useless. Kabir Sahib says that the worldly person who doesn't do the devotion of God, or is against God—his condition is like a store of garlic: Even though it may be very far away from you, still you will smell the fragrance of it. In the same way, even if the worldly person who is against God is living far away from you, still you can tell that he is present in that area.

Kabir Sahib says that you should not go in the company of such a worldly person who doesn't believe in God, and if you see him, you should run away from him; because even if you don't touch his body, there are many chances that you may get a stain from his body. Kabir Sahib says, "What is there to say about going in the company of a worldly person? You should never go in his company, and moreover you should never let him come in your company. If you see him coming, you should run away from him, because your whole generation can be stained—only by his fragrance."

Useless is the body of the blind without Naam.
From his mouth comes foul smell.

Those who do not have the light of Naam within them are blind and their body is useless; and a bad smell comes from their mouth.

Without Simran his days and nights pass away in vain,
As the crop perishes without rain.

Now the Master lovingly explains to us by giving us a beautiful example: Just as, if it doesn't rain, all the plants are dried up and we cannot have a good crop—in the same way, if we are not doing Simran, our days and nights are passing like those of that field which is not getting rain.

Without the meditation of the Lord all worship is useless,
As the wealth of the miser remains useless.

The worship and the practices performed by the worldly man who is not doing the devotion of Naam are all useless, just like the wealth of the miser is useless. The wealth of the miser is useless because he does not spend it, nor does he allow his children to spend it.

Once a Rajasthani farmer went into an Arabian country, and saw many date trees. He had never seen them before, because they don't have them in Rajasthan. So he climbed one tree and ate some dates. Just as he was going to come down, he was very surprised to see that

the date tree was very tall—when he looked down he was very afraid. He was not sure whether he would be able to reach the bottom safely or not. So he requested to his Master, "O Master, if You will take me down safely, I will donate one hundred bedsheets to Your Ashram." Then he started down. When he was halfway down, he looked down and he felt a little bit relieved because the distance was decreased. So he thought in his mind: "One hundred bed sheets are too many. I think fifty will be enough for the Ashram." He again started down. When he got a little bit farther down, he saw that the distance was still decreasing, so he said, "Well, fifty also seems a lot, because Master doesn't need much. I think twenty-five will do." He continued coming down, and thinking like that, until he came to five bedsheets. At last he came down safely; but when he went into the market to buy those five bedsheets, and saw that it was going to cost him a lot, he thought, "I don't think Master needs all these bedsheets—I think one will do, because He only needs one. There are many other people who will donate bedsheets, so I think one is enough." So he bought one bedsheet and went to the Master. When Master saw him with one bedsheet He said, "You know that in this Ashram God is very gracious, and I have everything here. Why did you bother to bring this one bedsheet to me? You must have spent a lot of money; you should take it back." So that dear one said, "Master, I am telling you the truth: When I was needing Your help, I promised that I would give one hundred bedsheets, and as my fear went on decreasing, the donation also went on decreasing; and at last I have got only one, instead of one hundred. And if You will not accept this, I think that I will take it back to my home; so You had better accept it." This is the condition of the misers.

Hail, Hail those within whom the Naam of the Lord is manifested:
Nanak says, I sacrifice myself on them.

Blessed is the devotee who is doing the devotion of the Lord day and night. The Guru says, "I sacrifice myself on him who is involved in doing the devotion of the Lord day and night." You should never think that whatever meditation you are doing regularly, or whatever efforts you are trying to make to please Him, that all that is useless and nobody is keeping account of it. Master is keeping account in His treasury of all your meditation, and one day you will get the benefit of it. Even if we attend to that Shabd and hear the Sound Current for one second, then also our attendance is marked in Sach Khand. Guru Gobind Singh Ji says, "One who wholeheartedly remembers Him even for one moment doesn't fall in the noose of the Negative Power."

He who teaches one thing but does something else–
He has fragrant words on his tongue, but no love in his heart.

Those whose outward appearance is very good, and who are outwardly very loving and very sweet in talking, but who have deception in their mind – they are not what they appear. In their mind they have deception, but on their face they show love and humility, and say very good and sweet things. We can deceive people, but we cannot deceive Him Who is residing within us; we cannot deceive the Almighty Perfect God Who is residing within us, and Who knows our every single action.

God Who knows everything is competent;
We cannot please Him by putting on outward garbs.

God resides within you, and He knows your every single thought. Even before you think, He knows about your thoughts; you cannot deceive Him by acting and posing. Kabir Sahib says, "The Lord, sitting at the terrace – the eye center – sees our every single deed. And whatever service we have done for Him, we get its fruit."

He who teaches others but does not himself practice,
Continues to come and go and take birth and die.

What is the condition of him who preaches to others to meditate on Naam, and preaches to others to maintain chastity, and not to be involved in the worldly pleasures – but he himself is not doing the meditation of Naam, and he is involved in criticism and the worldly pleasures and all these things; what happens to him and what is his condition? Such a person is punished very harshly by the Negative Power: his skin is taken off and his coming and going from this world never comes to an end. He continually comes to this world, and always, after suffering, he has to go back from this world.

He within Whom the Formless One resides–
By His teachings the world gets liberation.

Now Guru Arjan says, "He within Whom God resides, and He within Whom God has manifested – by obeying His teachings, all the world can get liberation."

Only those on whom He is pleased can realize Him–
Nanak says, "I lay myself down at their feet."

Now the Master says, "I touch Their feet, and I lay myself down before those whom You have liked—because those whom You have liked, have realized You. Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "Who are They, looking at Whom all bad thoughts go away? They are our true friends; but if we go and search for them, we will find only few in this world."

I pray to the Almighty Who knows everything;
He Himself approves what He Himself does.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji says, "Now I pray to the Almighty Lord, and I lay myself down before the Almighty One, because He knows what He is doing."

He Himself decides this—
To whom He will show Himself near and far.

God has kept everything in His own hands. If He wants, He can give His darshan very near; even in the human body, He can give His darshan. If He doesn't want, He can lead the people into the forest, and even after leading them into the forest, He may not give them His darshan. It is all in the hands of God; and it is all in His hands to decide to whom He should give His darshan, and to whom He should not. Those on whom He is gracious, He brings them very near to Him, and He gives them His darshan, in their body. But those on whom He is not gracious, He makes them think in their mind that God can be had only by going to the forest, and only after running away from this world. But even when they run away from the world, and go in the forest, since God is not gracious on them, they do not get His darshan. So it is all in the hands of God.

He is beyond all wisdom and cleverness;
He knows everything of the hearts.

We cannot achieve God without the help and guidance of the Master. No matter how much wisdom we may use, still we cannot be successful in realizing Him, because without Naam there is no way by which we can realize Him.

To whom He wants, He attaches him to Himself;
He is present at every place.

God, Who is the dweller of Sach Khand, is sitting within us; and He knows within whom the yearning is there, and within whom it is not.

It is just like the person who is standing on top of the mountain—he knows where the fire is burning. In the same way, God knows within whose heart the fire—the yearning to realize Him—is existing, and within whose heart it is not.

He becomes the servant on whom He is gracious.
Nanak says, Remember Hari with every single breath.

Only he can be His servant on whom He is gracious, and such a servant remembers Him with his every single breath. Keeping quiet, we should always remember our Beloved moment after moment; because the inner truth is, except for our Beloved, all our relations in this world are false.

Ashtapadi 6

O God! Make lust, anger, greed and attachment be destroyed from within!-
Nanak says, O Lord, I have taken refuge in You - O Gurudev, shower Grace on us!

By Whose Grace you eat delicious kinds of foods:
Keep that Lord in your mind.
By Whose Grace you put perfumes on your body:
Remembering Him, you get the highest status.
By Whose Grace you live happily in this temple:
Always remember Him in your mind.
By Whose Grace you live in comfort with your family:
Do His Simran with your tongue day and night.

By Whose Grace you enjoy the worldly
pleasures:
Nanak says, Remember Him Who is
worthy of remembrance.
By Whose Grace you wear beautiful
clothes:
Why should you forget Him and be at-
tached to others?
By Whose Grace we sleep in a comfort-
able bed:
O mind! Sing His praises day and
night.
By Whose Grace everyone is honoring
you:
Sing His Praise with your mouth and
tongue.
By Whose Kindness your religion is main-
tained:
O mind, always remember that Parbrahm!
By repeating the Name of the Lord, one
gets honor in His court,

Nanak says, one goes to his home with
respect.
By Whose Grace your beautiful body re-
mains healthy :
Get yourself connected with that lov-
able Lord.
By Whose Grace your evils remain
unknown :
O mind, get the happiness by singing
the praise of the Lord.
By Whose Grace all your holes get
sealed :
O mind, take the shelter of such a
Lord.
By Whose Grace none can reach you:
O mind, with every single breath,
remember that highest God.
By Whose Grace you have obtained this
precious body :
Nanak says, do His devotion.
By Whose Grace you wear ornaments :

O mind, why are you lazy in doing the Simran?
By Whose Grace you ride on horses and elephants:
O mind, never forget that God.
By Whose Grace you own gardens, property, and wealth:
Sew that God into your mind.
He who has made your mind and body:
Always remember Him whether standing or sitting.
Remember Him Who is invisible and one:
Nanak says, He will protect you both here and there.
By Whose Grace you do many righteous deeds and donate a lot:
O mind, remember Him day and night.
By Whose Grace you do your dealings:
Remember that Lord with your every single breath.

By Whose Grace you have a beautiful body:
Remember that most beautiful God always.
By Whose Grace you have got the highest caste:
Do the Simran of that Lord day and night.
By Whose Grace your honor is saved:
Nanak says, Sing His praise with the Grace of Master.
By Whose Grace you hear the sound with your ears,
By Whose Grace you see wonderful things–
By Whose Grace you utter nectarful words with your tongue,
By Whose Grace you live in ease and happiness–
By Whose Grace your hands do their work,

By Whose Grace you succeed completely
By Whose Grace you get the highest status,
By Whose Grace happiness dwells within you easily –
Why do you attach yourself to any other, forgetting such a God?
Nanak says, Awaken your mind with the Grace of the Guru.
By Whose Grace you are known in the world:
Don't forget that God even a little bit in your mind.
By Whose Grace you have this Glory:
O foolish mind, repeat His Name.
By Whose Grace your works are done:
Always understand Him as present within you.
By Whose Grace you have got the Truth:
O my mind, remain imbued with Him.
By Whose Grace, all are liberated:

Nanak says, Always remember Him.
He whom He makes repeat the Naam,
repeats the Naam;
He whom He makes sing God's praises,
sings God's praises.
With the Grace of God the Light is
manifested;
With the Grace of God the lotus blooms.
When God is pleased, He resides in the
mind;
With the Grace of God, one becomes
wise.
O Lord, all the wealth is Your Maya:
No one can obtain anything by his
own efforts.
O Lord, wherever you keep us, we remain
there;
Nanak says, The created ones have
nothing in their hands.

Chapter 6

On the Grace of God

O God! Make lust, anger, greed and attachment be destroyed from within!–
Nanak says, O Lord, I have taken refuge in You–O Gurudev, shower Grace on us!

In this hymn, Guru Arjan Dev Ji is praying to His Master, Guru Ramdas Ji, because within us there are five dacoits or bandits–lust, anger, greed, attachment and egoism. There is nobody in this world who can save and protect us from these five dacoits: Neither friends nor relatives can help us against them. There is only one Thing Which can save us, and that is the Naam of the Satguru: Master Himself. That is why the Guru is praying to His Master: "You are the only One Who can save us, so please shower Grace on us, and be merciful on us, so that we can be protected from these five dacoits."

By Whose Grace you eat delicious kinds of foods:
Keep that Lord in your mind.

Guru Arjan says: O man, see how much Grace God has showered on you–how He has given you different kinds of food to eat, and so many other things–so you should be grateful for everything which you have received from God. In other words, you should do His Simran.

By Whose Grace you put perfumes on your body:
Remembering Him, you get the highest status.

See, by the Grace of God, we put oil and scent and many other things on our body to beautify it, and as long as that God is within us, as long as that Power is working within us, our body looks beautiful and

people like it and praise it and care about it. But when God withdraws His Power from the body, after that you may put any oil or scent or cosmetic you like on it, but still it will not beautify it: because the real thing which was beautifying the body was the God Power Which was working, and when that Power is withdrawn by God nobody will care about the body after that. So that is why Guru Arjan Dev says, God has given you the Light; because of His presence your body is respected and people care about it; why don't you remember Him?

By Whose Grace you live happily in this temple:
Always remember Him in your mind.

By the Grace of God we are living in this body, so we should be grateful to Him for keeping us in it, and we should do Simran.

By Whose Grace you live in comfort with your family:
Do His Simran with your tongue day and night.

Only because of the Grace of God are we living happily with our brothers and sisters in comfortable places. So day and night we should go on singing His praises, and we should always be grateful to Him Who has given us all these things. The best way to be grateful to Him is to remember Him and to do Simran.

By Whose Grace you enjoy the worldly pleasures:
Nanak says, Remember Him who is worthy of remembrance.

It is only because of the presence of God in your body that you like this world and are enjoying this world. That is why you should always remember God: He is the only thing worth meditating upon, and He is the only thing worth worshiping. So always worship Him and always remember Him.

By Whose Grace you wear beautiful clothes:
Why should you forget Him and be attached to others?

Only because of the presence of God in our body are we taking such good care of our body that we put good clothes on it. We should be grateful to God for giving us all these things, including our beautiful body: We should always remember Him, by doing His Simran.

By Whose Grace we sleep in a comfortable bed:
O mind! Sing His praises day and night.

You see, it is only because God is gracious on you that you are able to sleep on this comfortable bed and are getting all sorts of comfort. Be grateful for the comfort, and do Simran.

By Whose Grace everyone is honoring you:
Sing His Praise with your mouth and tongue.

It is only because God is gracious on us that people respect us and give us name and fame. So be grateful for His grace and always remember Him.

By Whose Kindness your religion is maintained:
O mind, always remember that Parbrahm!
By repeating the Name of the Lord, one gets honor in His court,
Nanak says, one goes to his home with respect.

What is the benefit of doing the meditation on Naam? What do you get after meditating on Naam? By meditating on Naam, you get back to your Real Home; and when you get there, you are given much honor and respect.

By Whose Grace your beautiful body remains healthy:
Get yourself connected with that lovable Lord.

Our good health exists only because of the Grace of God. So when we have good health we should take advantage of it, and we should be grateful to God for giving us good health. We should take advantage of it by using it for meditation and remembrance of God.

By Whose Grace your evils remain unknown:
O mind, get the happiness by singing the praise of the Lord.

Now Guru Arjan says, O man, you see how many bad deeds you do. But still God is keeping them all hidden, and all your evils remain unknown, only because of the Grace of God. So you should be grateful to Him and do His Simran day and night, to express your gratitude.

By Whose Grace all your holes get sealed:
O mind, take the shelter of such a Lord.
By Whose Grace none can reach you:
O mind, with every single breath, remember that highest God.

Only because of the Grace of God, the Negative Power cannot approach us, or harm us. So we should always remain grateful to Him, for His Grace, and we should always do His Simran, whether we are awake or sleeping, walking or sitting, eating or drinking. We should always go on remembering Him and we should always go on doing His Simran.

By Whose Grace you have obtained this precious body:
Nanak says, do His devotion.

We have got this human body only because of the Grace of God; we cannot make even one part of our body by ourselves. God has given us this human body only to do His devotion. So we should be grateful to God because He has given us this human body; and we should take advantage of it and fulfill the purpose for which it was given to us: to do the devotion of God.

By Whose Grace you wear ornaments:
O mind, why are you lazy in doing the Simran?

Why are you becoming lazy in remembering God, Who is protecting you at every place and helping you at every place? All day long a man goes on doing work, but when the time of meditation comes he feels as if somebody has put a stone on his head.

By Whose Grace you ride on horses and elephants:
O mind, never forget that God.

Only because of the Grace of God are we able to ride on elephants or horses, drive in cars, fly on planes and enjoy all these things. So we should never forget God Who has given us all this comfort, and day and night we should always go on remembering Him.

By Whose Grace you own gardens, property, and wealth:
Sew that God into your mind.

In this hymn Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj is singing the praise of Almighty God: How much has God arranged for the human being! How

many things He has created for the human being – He has made gardens and orchards, and He is growing food and many other things for man. And only because of His Grace are we able to enjoy these things which He has created for us, so we should always remain grateful to Him – we should never forget Him – we should always go on remembering Him.

He who has made your mind and body:
Always remember Him whether standing or sitting.

Now the Guru says: O man, you see how God turned one drop of liquid into a good body, how He protected you when you were in the womb of your mother, how He supplied your needs when you were still in the womb, and, after you came out from there, how God has been protecting you everywhere. So we should also remember Him day and night, we should always be grateful to Him, and we should always keep Him in our mind.

Remember Him Who is invisible and one:
Nanak says, He will protect you both here and there.

Whose devotion should you do? The devotion of the Invisible One Who protects you here, and the One Who will come to help you when you leave this world – you should do His devotion. God is the only One Who helps and protects us when we are in this world, and when we go into the other world, there also God alone helps us. So we should do the devotion of such an Invisible God Whom we cannot see with our outer eyes.

By Whose Grace you do many righteous deeds and donate a lot:
O mind, remember Him day and night.

Now the Guru says: O man, see how much grace God has showered on you! It is only because of the Grace of God that you are able to share your belongings with other people and give donations. Because of God's will you were gifted with this ability, and because of His Grace you are able to give your belongings to other people as donations so that you get benefit from their life. You should be grateful to God because He has given you all this so that you can share it with other people. And the only way you can be grateful to Him is by doing His Simran and remembering Him always.

By Whose Grace you do your dealings:
Remember that Lord with your every single breath.
By Whose Grace you have a beautiful body:
Remember that most beautiful God always.

Now Guru Arjan Dev says: O man, see how much Grace God has showered on you! He has given you a beautiful body, and you are the most beautiful among the beings he has created. You are more beautiful than the animals. And after creating your beautiful body, God has put his Light in you, and He Himself is residing within you. And you know that as long as that Light of God is within us, our body looks very beautiful and attracts many other people, but when God withdraws that Light from our body bad smells start coming from it, and even our very dear ones, those who have much love for us, they also want to get rid of our body, because the Light of God is not there. So our body looks beautiful and is cared for, only because of the presence of the Light of God. We should be grateful to God that He has kept His Light in us, and we should always do His Simran.

By Whose Grace you have got the highest caste:
Do the Simran of that Lord day and night.

Only because of the Grace of God, we become the highest—even though we may have been born in a low caste. Kabir was born into a *Julaha* family of weavers who were considered very low caste people, but because he did the devotion of God and became one with God, even great kings came and got initiation from him. So only because of the grace of God can we become the highest from the low.

By Whose Grace your honor is saved:
Nanak says, Sing His praise with the Grace of Master.

Only because of the Grace of God is the honor of the soul safe. That is why we should always go on singing the praise of God, Who is within us, and we should always go on remembering Him, and do Simran.

By Whose Grace you hear the sound with your ears,
By Whose Grace you see wonderful things—

Only by the Grace of God are we able to know the inner secret of God which is within us, and only by His Grace are we able to hear His Sound which is within us, and only by His Grace are we able to see His Light which is within us. All these things are the gift of God to the soul.

By Whose Grace you utter nectarful words with your tongue,
By Whose Grace you live in ease and happiness–

Only by the Grace of God are we able to speak sweet words with our tongue, and only because He is gracious on us, are we able to do His Simran with this tongue. And only because of His grace are we living in this world happily. So we should be grateful to Him and we should always remember Him.

By Whose Grace your hands do their work,
By Whose Grace you succeed completely,
By Whose Grace you get the highest status,
By Whose Grace happiness dwells within you easily–

Only by the Grace of God are we able to achieve high status. And only because of the Grace of God are we able to come into the company of a Saint. And only if He is gracious on us can we do His devotion and reach our Real Home.

Why do you attach yourself to any other, forgetting such a God?
Nanak says, Awaken your mind with the Grace of the Guru.

Should we forget God Who has given us this human body, and Who has given us all these things in the world? No, we should never forget Him. And we are able never to forget Him only when our Master showers Grace on us. The souls on whom the Master showers Grace start sleeping in respect to the world, and awake in respect to God.

By Whose Grace you are known in the world:
Don't forget that God even a little bit in your mind.

We are manifested into this world only by the Grace of God. We are honored in this world only because God is gracious on us, and we are loved in this world only because of the Grace of God. So we should never forget God Who has given us all these gifts, all this blessing. With our every single breath we should remember Him, and we should always do His Simran. We should never forget Him.

By Whose Grace you have this Glory:
O foolish mind, repeat His Name.

We are well known in this world, and we are glorified in this world, only by the Grace of God. Otherwise, who would know us in this world? So that is why, o foolish mind, you should always remember God by Whose Grace you are known in this world and by Whose Grace you are glorified.

By Whose Grace your works are done:
Always understand Him as present within you.

Whatever work you start doing, God always showers His Grace on you; and He always helps you in achieving that thing which you want. From behind the curtain He is always helping you in all your work. Never think that He is far away from you. He is always near you and helping you, and He is showering all His Grace on every work you are doing.

The Masters Whose eyes are open know how much Grace God is showering on the souls; They know how much Grace He is showering on each soul. And They know that if God had not been gracious on the souls, they would have no life in this world; the life of the souls would be empty without the Grace of God.

By Whose Grace you have got the Truth:
O my mind, remain imbued with Him.
By Whose Grace, all are liberated:
Nanak says, Always remember Him.

Only by the Grace of God is anybody protected; only because of the Grace of God is anybody helped. So we should be grateful to God for everything which He has given to us. With our every single breath we should be grateful to Him—by remembering Him, always.

He whom He makes repeat the Naam, repeats the Naam;
He whom He makes sing God's praises, sings God's praises.

In this Ashtapadi Guru Arjan Dev has sung the glory of God and He has praised God in many ways. Now he talks further about the Grace of God. He says, If God were not gracious on us, could we have done the devotion of God? Could we get initiation if God were not gracious on us? No. Until we have the Grace of God and until He is gracious on us, we cannot come to the Master and we cannot get initiation. If He is not gracious on us, we cannot do the devotion of God. We do all these things only by His Grace. And if He had not been gracious on us, we would not have achieved all these things.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, "People say that they are 'going to the Master.' But who says this? Only those whose eyes are not opened." Only they say that they are "going to the Masters." But those whose eyes are opened know that Master is directing them towards Him; that Master is in fact pulling them towards Him. They are not the ones who are going to the Master; Master is the one Who is pulling them towards him. And people say, "We do the meditation on Naam." Who says this? Only those whose eyes are not yet open. But those whose eyes are opened, they know that there is some other Power Which is making them meditate on Naam. It is not within our reach that we may meditate on Naam: It is all His Grace and, in fact, He is the only One Who is making us do all these things.

Guru Arjan Dev says, If it were in our control, why would we have gotten separated from You? And why have we got all this suffering? O God, if it were in our control, why didn't we always remain with You?

With the Grace of God the Light is manifested;
With the Grace of God the lotus blooms.

People should not think, "What is the need of going to the Master and becoming grateful to God? We can also manifest the Light within us by practicing the meditation as the satsangis do." That can never happen. No matter if you sit, and try to get that Light, you will not be able to get It unless you are guided by a perfect Master. Unless God showers Grace on you and you get initiation from the Master, no matter how much you try to experience the Light by yourself, you won't be able to do it. The experience of Light can be had only if God is gracious on us.

When God is pleased, He resides in the mind;
With the Grace of God, one becomes wise.

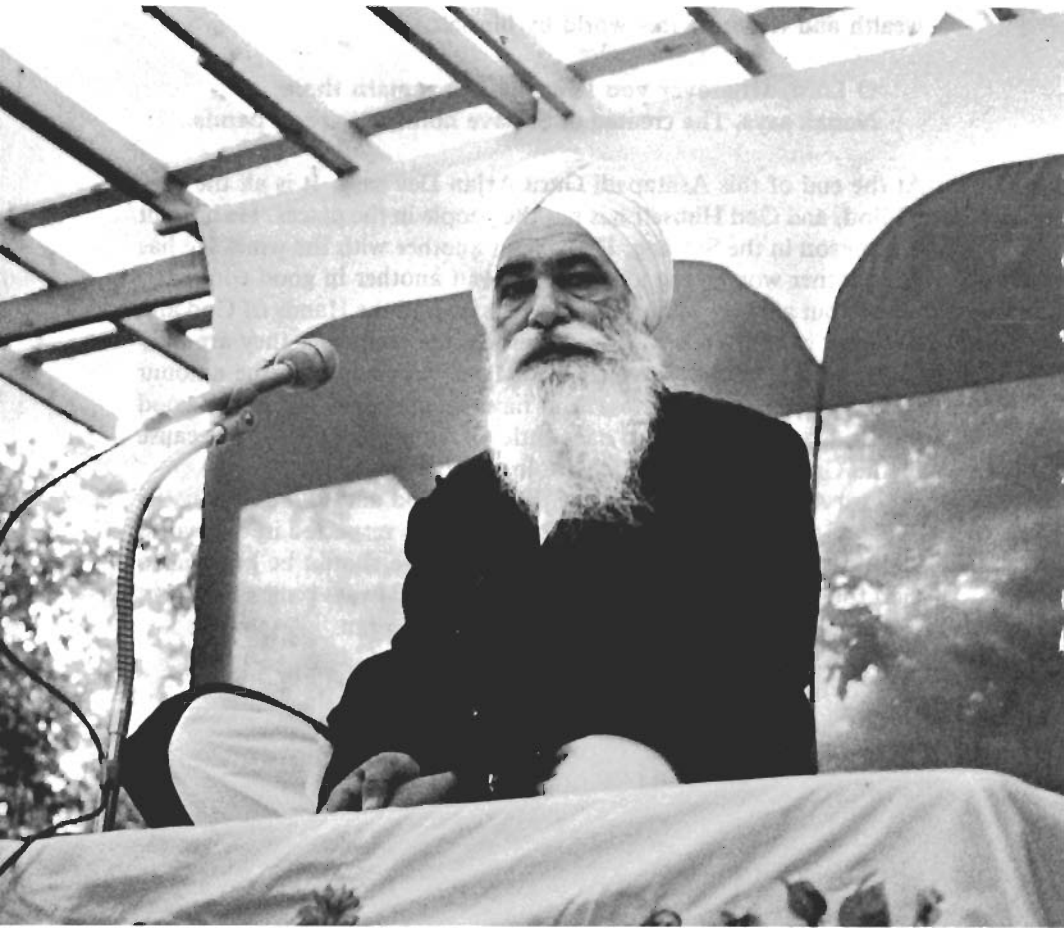
Only because of His Grace, God comes and resides within us. Our intellect becomes the highest only when we manifest God within us, only when we feel Him all the time: whether we are walking, sitting, or doing any other thing. When we have such a state of feeling for Him, only then can our intellect become the highest.

O Lord, all the wealth is Your Maya:
No one can obtain anything by his own efforts.

The Guru says, O Lord, You are the only owner of the wealth and riches of this material world. Nobody can have this by himself. Only when

You are gracious on anyone, and only if You want someone to have this wealth, only then does that person receive. Nobody can obtain the wealth and riches of this world by himself.

O Lord, wherever you keep us, we remain there;
Nanak says, The created ones have nothing in their hands.

At the end of this Ashtapadi Guru Arjan Dev says, It is all the play of God, and God Himself has put the people in the places. He has put one person in the Satsang, He has put another with the wine. He has put another worshiping idols, He has put another in good company, He has put another in bad company. It is all in the Hands of God and the souls cannot do anything. Wherever the souls are, they are only there because of the Grace of God. It all depends upon the amount of Grace they receive.Those who have much Grace are in the good places, whereas those who have little Grace are not. It is all because of the Grace of God that we are in a good place.

Guru Arjan Dev has sung the praise of God and told us: Only because of the presence of God within us are we respected in this world and do we have anything in this world; so we should be grateful to God for giving us what we have and we should always remember Him. Day and night we should go on doing His Simran.