

Understanding Jap- 6

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ਥਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਜਿਨਿ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗਾਵੀਐ ਗੁਣੀ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ॥
ਗਾਵੀਐ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਮਨਿ ਰਖੀਐ ਭਾਉ ॥ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਘਰਿ ਲੈ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਦੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵੇਦੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਈ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਈਸਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਰਖੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਰਬਤੀ ਮਾਈ ॥

ਜੇ ਹਉ ਜਾਣਾ ਆਖਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਹਣਾ ਕਥਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥

ਗੁਰਾ ਇਕ ਦੇਹਿ ਬੁਝਾਈ ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਇਕੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਸੋ ਮੈ ਵਿਸਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ

God can not be sculptured and installed in temples
God is beyond Maya, God is self-created
Let us sing praises of God, the treasure house of all merits and virtues
To earn his respect
To get rid of pain
To be in blissful joy
The one who follows the Guru, the light that lits up the melody of God in us
Enjoys the primordial sound, the unstruck celestial viberation
Is blessed with the supreme knowledge
Realizes the all pervasiveness of God
Guru is Issar, Guru is Gorakh, Guru is Brahma and Guru is Parvati
Even if I know; I cannot describe
Nanak says, O Guru, bless me with the understanding and resolve
To always carry in my heart
love for God
who provides for all.

It sometimes appears that God is abused in this world. God has been treated sometimes as super human and at other times as an animal, a bird and what not. The way mankind treats God is a classic example of hypocrisy and double talk. In one breath they say God is the creator, in the second breath they themselves become the creator of God. On the one hand they say God is indescribable, on the other hand they start capturing God into some weird sculptures.

In the fifth stanza of Jap, Guru nails this hypocrisy. In India, God was/is sculptured out of stones or rocks and installed in temples for worship [1]. Guru discards and repudiates this idea, as usual, with logic. Since God is Niranjana, the one who is beyond Maya, beyond the illusionary creations of this world, so God cannot be captured into a sculptured shape or idol. No one can create someone who is the one

and only source of all creations. God is self-created. Kabeer hits at this hypocrisy from another angle when he says that if this idol/sculpture is really the all powerful God, then how come it is helpless when the sculpturist insults it by standing on its chest.

ਪਾਖਾਨ ਗਢਿ ਕੈ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਦੇ ਕੈ ਛਾਤੀ ਪਾਉ ॥ ਜੇ ਏਹ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਹੈ ਤਉ ਗੜੁਣਹਾਰੇ ਖਾਉ ॥ ੩ ॥

GGS, Page 479

(The sculpturist chisels this idol by sitting on it, if it is really a God, then how come it tolerates this insult.)

Bhagat Namdev has also picked up this hypocrisy for criticism in his verses.

ਏਕੈ ਪਾਥਰ ਕੀਜੈ ਭਾਉ ॥ ਦੂਜੈ ਪਾਥਰ ਧਰੀਐ ਪਾਉ ॥ ਜੇ ਓਹੁ ਦੇਉ ਤ ਓਹੁ ਭੀ ਦੇਵਾ ॥ ਕਹਿ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ
ਹਮ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ॥ ੪ ॥ ੧ ॥ (GGS Page 525)

(You respect one stone to the point of worship, but demean the other stone by standing on it. How come one stone is god and other is not. So I do not worship any stone, says Namdev, I only worship God)

Guru advises us that instead of indulging in this hypocrisy we should rather focus on singing and listening to the praises of almighty God with a heart full of love and respect. This will help us get rid of all pains in our life. Guru makes an important point here that we should not miss. Guru says that source of joy is appreciating the virtues of God. This is totally different from what humans believe in and practice. It is a considered view in all societies that worldly possession, being rich, powerful and famous, living a luxurious life, having good health and similar other pursuits are the fountain heads of joy and pleasures in life. But Guru gives us a totally different recipe of joy in life.

As per this recipe, if we appreciate the virtues of God, sing and listen to his praises, we will be able to eradicate all pain in our life and joy will bloom in our heart for ever. This recipe has links to the statement made in the first stanza of Jap. If we remember, in the first stanza of Jap, Guru explains how when we follow the dictates of our mind and start accumulating wealth and other worldly pursuits, we start to sink into the marsh of falsehood. All this leads us into a vicious cycle of suffering. We don't have to go far to find examples of people who are reeling in severe agony and pain even though they have achieved all that an average man is making frantic efforts to achieve as a panacea for all his pains and sufferings. As we all know suicides by celebrities is not uncommon. Guru has warned humanity against things that psychiatrists and psychologists are now discovering. The real and everlasting happiness is in focusing our life on appreciation of the virtues of God. Guru explains this from another angle in the verse known as Sodar

ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥ ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ ॥ ਆਖਣਿ ਅਉਖਾ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਸਾਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਭੂਖ
॥ ਉਤੁ ਭੂਖੈ ਖਾਇ ਚਲੀਅਹਿ ਦੂਖ ॥ ੧ ॥

(It is very hard to admire the True name of God, but if I don't I cease to live. When I am able to develop an appetite for the True name of God, the satisfaction of this appetite relieves me of all the pains in my life)

All of us have "appetites" in life; some have it for money, some for power, and others for sex. The list can go on and on. This hunger by nature is insatiable and leads to many types of sufferings. However, the hunger for God's true name is a rare blessing that can lead to joy in life.

In the fourth line of this stanza, Guru explains this recipe further by telling us how to sing praises of God. In this line the term Gurmukh has been used for the first time in GGS. Though this term is a subject in itself, it will be pertinent to mention in brief that this once again takes us back to the first stanza of Jap. Gurmukh is a person who has disciplined his mind to follow the teachings of Guru.[3] Instead of following the dictates of his mind, his mind follows the dictates of Guru. However the grammatical form of the word tells us that it has not been used as a noun, but as an adverb. It tells us what happens on being a Gurmukh.

Guru says "when a person listens to Guru, the whole world vibrates with manifestation of God." [4] Then Guru says "when a person listens to Guru, he is blessed with the ultimate wisdom." Guru further says "when a person listens to Guru, he understands the all pervasiveness of God."

Singing of God's praises is the natural concomitant of following the teachings of the Guru. We must note here that a common perception among Sikhs is that when we sing verses from Guru Granth Sahib in a Gurudwara, we are singing praises of God. This could be wrong, this could be right. Guru gives us the test here. If listening to the verses disciplines our mind and our heart vibrates with the manifest existence of God, then it works. But if our mind overpowers us the moment after the singing stops or even before that, then this is of no use.

In the fifth line Guru refers to the famous deities of Hinduism such as Brahma, Shiva, Gorakh and Parvati. The idols of these deities and many others are installed in temples as Gods for worship. Guru repudiates this concept and tells us that Guru, the ultimate knowledge, replaces all these deities. These deities of Hindu religion have been accorded special functions such as creation, operation and destructions in this universe. There are specific details about their functions in religious books of Hindus. In the next line Guru repudiates this by saying that even if he has realized God, he cannot describe Him. This statement occurs almost on every page of GGS. We will try to understand it in more detail as we proceed further in our understanding of Jap.

The last line of this stanza is a prayer for an insight from Guru. An insight that God is the only giver or provider for the whole world. This is an extremely important statement from Guru. It looks simple at the surface but has depths of the ocean in it. Have a look around, and we will find that there are many who claim to be the source of support for humanity. From a small family to a large nation, we have a long list of people who claim to be the bread winners for those they support. People in the developed world feel that numerous lives in the third world countries are dependent on their generosity. They have statistical data to support their assertion. All these statistics are an attempt to turn their back from the truth that God is the only provider

for entire humanity. The moment they accept this truth, the dirty politics and chicanery of diplomacy is exposed [5].

Notes

1. Recently in India a new God has been invented. It is the Goddess of Aids. Its temples have been established in Southern India. And idols of this Goddess have been installed in temples.

2. I will be failing in my duty if I do not mention here a practice among Sikhs of installing Guru Granth Sahib as Guru in the Gurudwaras. This has striking similarities with the practice amount Hindus of installing deities in temples. Guru does not require installing anywhere in the world.

3. When I say Guru tells us this, I do not mean Guru Nanak the person who existed in this world from 1469 to 1539, but the ultimate knowledge that is never born and will never die.

4. When Walt Whitman's heart was full of praise, love and appreciation of God, he bursts into the poem "I hear America Singing".