CHAPTER IV

THOUGHT VALUE

Introduction : A Retrospect

The Adi Granth has been a perennial source of inspiration to the Sikh devotional poets since Guru Nanak. He handed down to his successors, his own compositions together with the collections he had made of the devotional pieces of other saints, whose disciples he had met during his travels all over north India, and the Punjab. Each Guru drew upon this fountain head and contributed his own shabads to it. Guru Gobind Singh put, on the accumulated body of the verse, his seal of finality, without adding, however, any verses of his own. It has been said that he could quote chapter and verse from it. It is asserted by some that the last version of the Adi Granth was dictated by him to Bhai Mani Singh at Damdama, from memory alone. Daily recitations of the Granth, sermons on its text, and private devotional readings from it, have made Gurbani the most important, the most effective and the most dominating influence in the life of the pious followers. No wonder that the Tenth Guru was most deeply influenced by the various strains of this spiritual chorus.

The Adi Granth may be divided into two parts, the bani of the Gurus and the bani of the Bhaktas including Baba Farid, a Muslim Sufi saint. Both the parts have a deep spiritual unity between man and his Maker, and stress the need for His Grace in the merging of the finite with the Infinite; while the Gurbani follows the Nirguna philosophy of Kabir, in the bani of the Bhaktas all the three schools, the Sufism of Baba Farid, the Vaishnavism of Ramanand, and the Krishna cult of Surdas and Mira Bai are represented.

Nanak, it is suggested, pinned his faith, like Kabir, in Nirguna Brahma and deprecated differences arising from the clash of creeds or dogmas. Nanak, Dadu, Sundardas, and several others, says Dwivedi elsewhere, were deeply indebted to him; and his ideas and examples guided their line of thought and mode of devotion. Likewise Kabir’s poetry was the model on which other saints fashioned their songs. Kabir provided both the impulse and the pattern for the Nirguna poetry and deserves special consideration as its founder.

The devotional, didactic as well as satirical verse of Guru Gobind Singh follows in the wake of Guru Nanak’s, for which again, we find a precedent in Kabir. The corner stone of Nirguna Philosophy, as professed by these saintly poets, is the idea of a single, impersonal omnipresent God. While, on the one hand, these saintly poets denounce most vehemently the worship of many gods, idols or symbols, on the other, they dwell at length upon the immanence

2. H. L., 38
3. H. L., 34
or the all-pervasiveness of the Deity. The conception of the Nirguna and the idea of inner realisation, of absolute oneness with it are the basic facts on which the superstructure of Kabir’s mystic, half-sufi and half-vedantic creed, is erected. To this, however, must be added the Vaishnava conception of complete dependence on the mercy of God, the infinite grace of the Infinite power, the democratisation of religion, the extending of the privilege of Bhakti to all, irrespective of caste or sex, and also, the use of vernacular in place of Sanskrit.

The fifteenth century was, as we have seen above, remarkable for the great religious revival led by Namdev, Ramanand, Kabir, Mira Bai, Guru Nanak and others. The movement was wide spread among the people and dominated by religious ideals. Being a popular movement, it adopted the vernacular as the medium of its expression. This was a great adventure on the part of the Bhakta poets who, as Keay puts it, ‘had to feel their way’ as the earliest authors in this language. It is, no doubt, true that the period (1400-1550) was “the youth of Hindi Literature.”

Emphasising the intimate relation between the religious poetry and the vernacular, Keay adds that from the point of view of Hindi literature the significance of the movement initiated by Ramanand was depending for its literature almost entirely on the vernacular. The followers and successors of Ramanand practically gave up the use of Sanskrit, and this, of course, gave a great impetus to the development of Hindi literature.

When Guru Nanak (1469-1538) wrote, Kabir’s influence was at its height and the movement had spread all over the country. But when Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) attempted devotional verse, things were quite different. It marked the end of the period of the Bhakti movement, during the eighteenth century, and coinciding as it did, with the time of decay of the Mughal Empire, it registered a decline in the high quality of Hindi literature and does not contain many writers of first rate excellence.

Elucidating the creed of Kabir, Dr. Dwivedi adds, that his more practical teachings stress the importance of a strictly moral conduct, refute false modes of worship and prevalent superstitions and advocate mutual tolerance between the Hindus and the Muslims as between sons of the same father. While his utterances communicating his spiritual convictions have a tone of lofty serenity and sweetness, his teachings, when he appears in the role of a reformer, are vehement and provocative. The three strains, viz., ‘a tone of lofty serenity and sweetness’ born of a spiritual conviction, the importance of mutual tolerance and moral conduct, and the refutation of the false modes of worship and prevalent superstitions, mentioned above, are found in the poetry of Guru Nanak as well as that of Guru Gobind Singh.

In the Dasam Granth, the Jap, Akal Ustat, Gian Prabodhi, Sri Mukhbak Swaiyas and Shabad Hazare contain the devotional poetry of Guru Gobind Singh. In addition to these his devotional thoughts are revealed in some parts and stray verses of his secular works of the Dasam Granth as well. We shall now examine the religious poetry of the

Dasam Granth in detail, in its different phases, (a) doctrinal, (b) devotional, (c) didactic and (d) satirical.

(a) DOCTRINAL POETRY

GOD

1. Sachchidanand

According to Guru Gobind Singh, God is ever true, conscious and blissful:

"God is ever the Supreme Truth, the Supreme Consciousness and the Supreme Bliss." 

2. Ever Tranquil

In His play of life and death, according to Guru Gobind Singh, God is:

"Ever Calm"; "Without anxiety"; "Without desire"; "Free from pain"; "Enjoyer of bliss"; "Like the sky above the earth, calm and deep."

3. Above Birth, Death and Worldly Entanglements

God is above birth and death, and free from worldly entanglements:

"Thou art fatherless, motherless, unbegotten, above birth and death." 

"He is without body?"

"God is without passion, without colour, without form, without outline; He is without worldly love, without anger, without enmity, without jealousy; He is without karma, without error, without birth and without caste; He hath no friend, no enemy, no father, no mother."

He hath no worldly attachment, no house, no desire, no home. He is invisible, without distinguishing dress, and unborn.

"He hath no disease, no sorrow, no worldly love, no mother, No karma, no superstition, no birth, no caste, He hath no jealousy, no garb and is unborn.

I bow to Him as One: I bow to Him as One."

Cf. He has neither form nor colour, nor even outlines.—Adi Granth, Mahala 1, Sorath, 6 : 2.

Cf. The Unseen, Infinite, Unattainable and Imperceptible has no time (or) destiny.—Adi Granth, Sorath, 6 : 1, Mahala 1.
"Thou hast no son, no grandson, no foe, no friend, 
No father, no mother, no caste, no descent!" 
"Thou were never born in the world; 
Wherefore every one describeth Thee unborn." 
"He hath no worldly love, no home, no grief, no relation, 

He hath no caste, no lineage, no friend, no minister. 
I bow to the One Independent Being! I bow to the One Independent Being!" 
"Without body, colour or attachment, caste, lineage or name." 

4. The Origin and Destiny of all Creation

God, according to Guru Gobind Singh, is the source of all life, which ultimately 
merges in Him:

"As from one fire millions of sparks arise, 
Though rising separately, they unite again in the fire; 
As from the heap of dust, several particles of dust fill the air, 
And on filling it again blend with the dust; 
As in one storm millions of waves are produced, 
The waves being made of water all become water; 
So from God's form non-sentient things are manifested, 
And, springing from Him, shall be united in Him again." 

This single passage shows the predominantly Vishishtadvaita position of the Guru's thought.

1. Jap. (148)  
2. Ch.A., Intro., (13)  
3. A. U., (104)  
4. Jap, (84)  
5. A.U. (87)  

Cf. न तथ विद्वान् भविष्यति । 
Yaj. XXXII, (3)  

The universe comes from God, lives in Him, and returns to Him is an expression commonly used in the Upanishads and Mahabharat. In the Bhagavadgita creation is represented as evolving from God, as the world at the approach of day slowly emerges from the darkness of night, and again dissolving or vanishing in Him as the world disappears after evening twilight.—S. R., Vol. V, 329.

"Arjuna, at the end of every Kalpa (Brahma's day) all beings enter My Prakriti (the Prime Cause), and at the beginning of every Kalpa, I bring them forth again.—Bhagavadgita IX, (7)

"In a thousand pots one air; the pots break and the same (air) remains—Adi Granth, Suhil Mahala 5

"As small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all bodies, all worlds, all beings, come forth from the One." 
—Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, II, 1, (20)
5. Eternal and Infinite

God, according to Guru Gobind Singh, is without beginning, without end, without measure, without equal:

"Thou art incomprehensible, O God, and fearless; Thou art most powerful, the Creator of sea and land. Thou art the unshaken, endless, unequalled, immeasurable Lord."

"Boundless is His form, boundless is His voice."

"Thou art an Immortal Being, Self-luminous, described Immeasurable in might."

6. An Eternal Mystery

God's mystery has baffled all the ages. He is, indeed, a mystery but a benevolent mystery:

"Thou art unascertainable,"

"Thou art unattainable and sublime."

"Thou hast no form or feature, no caste or lineage, None can describe Thy appearance, colour, mark or garb. Thou art an Immortal Being, Self-luminous described Immeasurable in might, Almighty Lord of millions of celestial kings, Thou art counted as the Sovereign of sovereigns. Thou art the Lord of the three worlds. Gods, men and demons, woods and even the blades of grass declare Thee beyond all things in nature.

Who can describe all Thy names? The wise recount only such of Thy attributes as are revealed by Thy works."

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1. अनन्त रूप अनन्त चारिता चलिस्थ चलिस्थ भलिया।
2. अनन्तरूप अनन्त चारिता चलिस्थ चलिस्थ भलिया।
3. अनन्त रूप अनन्त चारिता चलिस्थ चलिस्थ भलिया।

Cf. He does not undergo the least change—V.S., (ii) i, 27.

The Upanishads declare that He is avikari or changeless, nityam or eternal.—Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, 443

4. वचन भागवत हैं। जप १ (३७) ५. वचन भागवत हैं। जप २ (१२७)

5. वचन भागवत हैं। जप ३ (१०८)

6. वचन भागवत हैं। जप १ (१)

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"Cf. न संसारमें न चक्षु में न चिनामें सच्चतिः रूप रहति जगमम्।—Adi Granth, Slok Sahiskrit Mahala 5"

"सहस्रादि न ज्ञानिः विद्वान् अहं सर्वं सत्त्वं नान्तर ज्ञानिः भेद।—Adi Granth, Ramkali Mahala 5"
"To Thee who art eternal, who art merciful,  
Who art invisible and sublime,  
"To Thee I bow again and again."
"Who art formless, indeterminate incorporeal, and unborn.  
To thee I bow again and again."
"Who art imperishable, indestructible, nameless and abodeless! To Thee I bow again and again."
"Gods do not know Thy secret, nor the Vedas, nor Muslim Books.  
Thou hast no form, colour, caste or lineage, how can Thou be known?  
Thou art fatherless, motherless, unbegotten, above birth and death.  
At Thee the wise wonder, and the three worlds wonder."

God is, indeed, an impenetrable mystery which sages, prophets, and seers have failed to make out:

"Narad, Ved Vyas and other countless great Munis are weary of meditating on Him and are undergoing pains.
All the Gandharvas are tired of singing His praises and countless celestial maidens are weary of dancing.  
The mighty gods like Vishnu have sought Him in vain,  
But no one has penetrated His mystery."
"The astrologers, the Karm Kandis, the religions, the Vedas, the Trinity comprising Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma know not His secret.
Millions of Indras, Upindras, Vyas, Sanak, Sanat Kumar and others are weary of singing of His praises; Brahma is bewildered at His vastness."
7. Omnipresent

God is omnipresent as love. It is impossible to describe or define Him:

"Thou art the Primal Being, who never began, unborn, endless,
Worthy of all praise, revered in the three worlds, luminous, mysterious. All prior and above all,
Thou art the preserver, destroyer and the ultimate death of all.
Immovable and happy, Thou resides in every place."

"Thou hast no name, home or caste, no form, colour, or mark,
Thou art the Primal Being beyond all, birthless, primal and perfect.
Thou art placeless, without a guise, appearance or mark, without attachment.
Thou pervadest everywhere in the form of love."

"The One God is contained in all."

"The whole world entangled in false ceremonies hath not found God's secret."

"Thou art immanent in every form, absorbed in the contemplation of reality, O Destroyer of births."

"He is far from all and near all."

"Thou art both qualitiful and qualitiless."

"Immovable and happy thou resides in every place."

8. Omniscient

The Creator is not only universal and eternal, but, at the same time, present in the heart of every creature of His, and knows even the innermost:

"He knoweth what is within every heart,
And the sufferings of the good and bad.
He is pleased as He casteth a look of favour"
On all, from the ant to the huge elephant".  
"He is grieved when His saints are grieved,  
And happy when His saints are happy.  
He knoweth everyone's sufferings  
And every secret of man's heart.  
He is a searcher of all hearts".

9. Omnipotent

The Creator is the 'Sovereign of sovereigns', 'the Lord of the whole creation':

"Almighty, Lord of millions of celestial kings,  
Thou art counted as Sovereign of sovereigns,  
Thou art Lord of the three worlds,  
Gods, men and demons, woods and even the blades of grass, declare thee beyond all things.  
in nature'.

"Thou art the pardoner of sins,  
The King of kings,  
The Provider of means  
And the Giver of livelihood'.

10. A Trinity

God is Himself the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer, all in one:

"The eternal Being that hast established the entire order of creation.

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1. P. Ch., 405 (387)
2. Cf. It is I who am installed in the hearts of all (as their inner witness).—Bhagavadgita XV, (14)
   God's dwelling place is the heart of man.—Katha Upanishad, I, iii (17)
3. P. Ch., 405, (388)
4. P. Ch., 405 (387)
5. A. U., (2)
6. A. U., (2)
7. A. U., (2)
8. Cf. He is the Creator, the Omniscient, the Bounteous. He provideth His Creatures with sustenance.

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THOUGHT VALUE

Thou, out of Thyself, created the Universal frame and Thou makest and unmakest all”.

“Thou art the preserver, destroyer and the ultimate death of all”.

He is the Creator and Destroyer of the world;

He supporteth life on sea and land.”

“It is He who knows the right conduct and all that is good in this world.

He is the Primal Being, Limitless, the Lord of Maya, the Destroyer of the mighty and the wicked

He is the giver of food and the inspirer of wisdom.

Even kings respect Him.

He is the Creator of the several Vedas, Vyasa and millions of Indras and fifty-two incarnations”.

“Without body, colour or attachment, caste, lineage or name,

Thou art the Destroyer of pride, the Punisher of the wicked, and the Giver of salvation and success”.

“He destroys the wicked and feeds the world. He is beginningless.

He chastises the wicked and reduces the strong to atoms. He is from the very beginning and is indivisible”.

1. आदि देव अनादि सृजित चारियो सब जिन्ह थायत्॥

... ... ...
सर्व विश्व रचियो सुरंभव गज्ञ भंजननाहत्॥

Jap. (83)

2. आदि देव अनादि सृजित चारियो सब जिन्ह थायत्॥

सर्व विश्व रचियो सुरंभव गज्ञ भंजननाहत्॥

Jap. (79)

3. अन्न रत्न ग्रहण ग्रहण अन्न श्यात् लघु पुष्ट भरार॥

वेष विश्वास करे केव दिन कोट इत्र उपद्र॥

A. U. (246)

Cf. He provideth His creatures with sustenance.—Adi Granth, Asa-Di-Var, Pauri XXIV (2).

That knowable substance is the sustainer of beings (as Vishnu), destroyer (as Rudra) and creator (as Brahma).—Bhagavadgita X III/16 (iii and iv)

Brahman (ब्रह्म) is the origin, support and end of the world.—V.S., (i) 1, 2 (ii) 4, 23—7 (ii) 2, 3.

सिस्तालाच बिचार जेते जानोइ सब चार। आदि देव श्यार श्रीमति दुस्तु पुष्ट भार॥

अन्न श्यात् श्रीमति श्रीमता लघु पुष्ट महिर॥ एव विश्वास करे केव दिन कोट इत्र उपद्र॥

A. U. (197)

—Adi Granth, Goojari Mahala 5

He Himself createth, and He himself again destroyeth.—Adi Granth, Asa-Di-Var, Pauri XXIII, (2)

It is for Him who made the world to take care of it.—Adi Granth, Asa-Di-Var, Pauri XXIII, (4)
11. Man's Relative

Man's relation with God is not simply that of a creature to his Creator; but it has acquired the sanctity and love that is associated with children and parents, and relation between two friends:

"The Timeless is our Infinite Father,

The same is Goddess Kalika our Mother.

"Thou art mother of the world.

The bond of affection has turned Him into a kind friend;

"Thou art the companion-friend of all.

"He that is protected by the Friend (Syam) cannot be hurt by his enemies."

12. The Embodiment of Love

God is the Sublimest Love. He loves His creation. Love is a symbol of His existence:

"Thou pervadest everywhere in the form of love."

"Thou abidest everywhere as love.

By His love He has endeared all His creation to Himself:

"Thou art dear to all."

"God is the sublimest love."

"He beareth love to all."

13. The Merciful

God, according to Guru Gobind Singh, is Dayalam and Karim-ul-Kamal and Kripalam:

"Immortal is Thy mercy; pure Thy justice, constant Thy renunciation; and perennial Thy bliss."

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| 1. सरपंचक है फिता कपारा || देवि कलिका मात खमारा || | B.N., XIV (5) |
| 2. नमो योहकाथा || Jap. (38) |
| 3. रसील है || Jap. (36) |
| 4. निंसो माकं राखसी हुसमन कवन विचार || B.N., XIII (24) |
| 5. नू मेरे किता नू है चैरे माता ||—Adi Granth, Majh Mahala 5 |
| 6. नू संज्ञा सैदिव बाप दमारा नव निजिन वैंरे अवृट भंडारा ||—Adi Granth Majh Mahala 5 |
| 7. अवक फिता अकल के हम चारिक नू मेरे गुर हाई ||— Adi Granth, Sorstah Mahala 5 |
| 8. नामक फिता माता है हरि यम हम चारिक हरि प्रतिकाये ||—Adi Granth, Ramkali Mahala |
| 9. त्वमेव माता च विषा त्वमेव || त्वमेव बृहु शस्य त्वमेव ||—Pandavgita, (28) |
| 10. स नो रसिजुलिता स विबाला || यम, XXXII (10) |
| 11. जतू तेन दिना दिसा हु झिलियो अनुराग || Jap. (80) |
| 12. स्त्रियों सबदाराम है || Jap. (129) |
| 13. समसमुख अजीज है || Jap. (156) |
| 14. कृपयो ममाल || Jap. (68) | 15. अजीजुल मिहाल है || Jap. (124) |
| 16. पूरे ग्राम को श्रेय समार || A.U., (244) | सभेम समो || A. U., (247) |
| 17. दृश्यालं || Jap. (60) | 18. किरण कमाल || Jap. (158) |
| 19. अप्सिल करम || अजिज घरम || अप्सिल घोरे || Jap. (74) |
"Thou expellest the tyrants and art merciful to the poor!"
"Unparalleled is Thy goodness, persistent Thy favour."
"Thou art the home of mercy."
"Every merciful, thou art the feeder of the world."
"From the unseen beyond Thou showers Thy mercy on all."
"Thy deeds are merciful."
"Thou art the Ocean of mercy."
"Thou art the embodiment of mercy."
"He bestoweth the divine attribute and happiness on His servants."
"Thou removest in an instant the sufferings of those whom Thou beholdest with a look of favour."
"Compassionate to the poor, a mine of mercy, beautiful is the holy Lord of wealth."
"The world called Thee Ocean of favour."
"It is Thou alone who cherishest the poor."
"On seeing Thy saints distressed, Thou becomest uneasy. Wherefore Thou art styled the Kinsman of the poor."
"On beholding the poor, Thou art compassionate to them. So we deem Thee the 'friend of the poor.'"

His favours work wonders:
"The dumb would recite the six shastras,
The cripple would climb mountains,
The blind would see and the deaf hear,
If God would only show favour."

1. गणीवुल सिराज है || मगीवुल निवाज है ||
2. ब्राह्मण अयां अन्नं || दाता महंतं ||
3. करणालय है || जप, (171) :: करणालय है || विरंभयं है || जप, (175)
4. पर ते पर है || करणालय है || जप, (176) 6. करणालय है || जप, (178)
5. करणालय है || जप, (181)
6. करणालय है || जप, (199)

Cf. निकाल रीत पर होत दियारार, रीन शंथ हम वथे विजयार ||
7. दुःख हरसं देव सल्लन स्नियकारी ||—सुरदास
8. निरेह हृदय रीत पर होत दियारार, रीन शंघ हम वथे विजयार ||
9. दुःख हरसं देव सल्लन हितकारी ||—सुरदास

Cf. 

Also see P. Ch., I (43) 

सम्भव भगवान संसङ कर्म हत्या वर्तन पुजारक ||
10. सागरः सर्व निस्व तम प्रकाश षट्पकार ||—Adi Granth Slok Sahaskriti Mahala 5.
14. The Friend

It is to Him that we should appeal in time of distress:

"Convey to the Dear One the craving of His devotees for Him.
Without Thee the luxury of downy beds is painful like a malady;
Life in a palace is like dwelling amid serpents;
Without Thee, pleasant beverages are no better than the cross or a sharp poniard.
Without Thee, those comforts are killing like the butcher's knife;
A pallet of straw is dearer to us, if the Dear One be there;
Palaces burn us like the infernal fire, if Thou be not with us!"

"Being Sahib, Lord of the Dass!"

"He protects us in various ways from disease, sorrow and water sprites.
The enemy aims many blows at us, but none of them can touch our bodies;
For He shields us with His hand, and wards off all kinds of evil away from us.
What more shall I say? He protects us even in the mother's womb."

15. The Provident

God not only creates but also provides for the sustenance of all:

"Thou art the most supreme Lord, who feedest all from Thy privacy."
"Thou givest to all and knowest everything."
"All receive their food and guidance from Thee."
"Thou art — the Provider of meals and the giver of livelihood."
"Thou providest comfort and nourishment to all."
"Thou art the merciful giver of bread."
"Thou out of Thy mercy feedest all."
"Thou art the feeder of the world."
"Thou fillest and feedest the whole Universe."
"The suppliants are many while there is but one giver,"1
"Compassionate to the poor, an Ocean of mercy,
He beheldeth man's sins, but wearieith not giving,"2
"The Beneficient One ever beheldeth man's secret
Yet He becometh not angry, and withholdeth not their daily bread,"3
"To those who know Him He giveth,
To those who know Him not He also giveth;
He giveth to the earth,
He giveth to the heavens,"4
"He is the bestower of food,"5
"Than Thou there is none other cherisher of the poor."6
"He bestoweth on all but beggeth from none. Wherefore He is recognised as the Providence."7

16. The Unity in Diversity

Guru Gobind Singh believes in the unity of all creation, the central principle of which is God Himself. All life, according to him, is "Absolutely One"8

Addressing God, he says,

'Thou appearest in all forms and beholdest everything"9
'Thou art like an ocean rippling with countless waves unbroken and mysterious,"10
'Thou art quintessence of all things yet unformed of the elements,"11
'Thou makest all things flourish, and then scatterest away; to Thee I bow again and again."12
'Thou art Almighty Creator, whose hand is in all concerns of the world. To Thee I bow again and again."13
'Thou art multifarious and yet one,"14
'Thou dwellest in all that is,"15

1. आज्ञा 6 अनेक सु एक विचार है। आ. उ., (26) 2. जीन राजशाही दीर्घार्थि रूपम देखन है पर देत न हारें। आ. उ., (243)
3. रोजी हो राज विक्रेता राजक रोक स्वास्थ्य की रोजी न दारू ठारू। आ. उ., (244)
4. आज को देत ज्ञान की देत ज्ञान की देत ज्ञान की देत है। आ. उ., (247.)
5. राजक | आ. उ. (259)
6. गेयसज्ञान न दृश्या तीसरे। — भ. ल. 1 (92.)
7. उदाहरण से भाषाची सम ने। आज लयो करत हम तब ने। च. आ. (15) ए. आ. (247.)

8. सु एक! | जप (9)
9. फिर सरूप मेलेव। फिर सरूप रेखाव। | जप (119)
10. महाकुल तंग हैं। कमेश हैं अभाय हैं। | जप (124.)
11. नमो परम तर्थी। नमो सरवा भंडी। | जप (186.)
12. कमेश हैं। फिर एक है। | जप (22.)
13. संस्कार संरक्षित | संस्कार कितार | जप (184.)
14. संस्कार संरक्षित | जप (58.)

"If", says Teja Singh, "we were to study Sikhism as a new organic growth evolved from the existing systems of thought to meet the needs of newly-evolving humanity, we should find no difficulty in recognising Sikhism as a distinct system of thought.

"Take, for instance, Guru Nanak's Asa-di-Var which in its preliminary stanzas lays down the fundamentals of Sikh belief about God........God is called 'the in-dweller of Nature' and is described as filling all things 'by an art that is artless' (xii 1—2). He is not an impotent mechanic fashioning pre-existing matter into the Universe. He does not exclude matter, but includes and transcends everything."—Sikhism, 5

"In truth, the Sikh Gurus have combined the Aryan idea of immanence with the Semitic idea of transcendence, without taking away anything from the unity and the personal character of God."

—Sikhism, 3
"Thou art the fountain-head of all."1
"Thou art one, yet apparent manifold
Verily Thou hast countless forms
Having played the inimitable play,
Thou remainest one and above in the end."2
"Thou hast but one form, and that form is incomparable
Thou art in different places, a poor man, a lord or a king."3
"Sometimes thou sittest as monarch on the lotus flower;
Sometimes as Shiv Thou gatherest up creation,
Thou didst display the whole creation as a miracle.
Thou art the Primal One from the beginning of time; Thy form was uncreated."4

17. The Punisher of the Evil

God, says Guru Gobind Singh, is
"Effacer of evil acts, "5
"He destroyeth misery and sin; He crusheth an army of evil men in a moment."6
"He punishes wrong doers, tyrants, and oppressors."7

Addressing God, he says,
"Thou repellest away the tyrannical."8
"Thou expellest the tyrants.

... ... ...
Thou destroyest the oppressors,
And removest all fears."9

"Thou slayest the tyrants and discardest the fools."10
"Thou... crushest the evil doers,"11
"Thou puttest an end to terror and destroyest
Thou punishest the oppressors, the wicked."12
"Thou are the annihilator of the oppressors."13

"On seeing Thy saints distressed, Thou becomest uneasy."14

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1. समस्ती निवाने | Jap, (64)
2. एक मुरूलि अनेक दृष्टन को न कन्हा अनेक।
लेल लेल अखेल लेलन, जंत को फिरर एक। | Jap, (81)

"That is the Real Unity......all the worlds are held in it, there is nothing which transcends it. As the one energy pervading the universe appears in so many forms in the variety of objects, so the Innerself of everything, always a unity, appears to take on so many forms but for-ever transcends them." —Kath Upanishad
The One Self is the support of the whole universe, which, but for it, would be nowhere.

—Chhandogya Upanishad I. P. & M. C., 16

"As small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all bodies, all worlds, all beings, come forth from the One."
—Brihadaranyaka Upanishad I. P. & M. C., 17.

3. एक क स्व अनू र लहा। रंग भयो रावू की मूल। | P,Ch, 405 (394)
4. शु पृति राग ध भेंगा। शु पुषाटं भयो संक्षर इंडा। | P, Ch, 405. (395)
5. भूलकं प्रवाहकारं। Sh. H. (4)
6. रहत है तुह दशकं की दल दुधं के पल में दल बाएं। A. U. 244
7. दुधं के हनं। P, Ch, 405 (382) 8. गणप्राधुनिकर हैं। Jap, (244)
9. गणप्राधुनिकर हैं। गणप्राधुनिकर हैं। हरिधुलकिफन हैं। हरिधुलकिफन हैं। Jap, (153)
10. ज्ञान्यायं हैं। खल्लेंक हैं। Jap (171) 11. खल्लेंक हैं। Jap (180) 12. अर्गाज्ज न हैं। अर्गाज्ज न हैं।
18. The Lord of War

This is a unique conception of God, which only a soldier-poet could entertain. God is symbolised in the weapons of war. God is the world-hero. God is Death. God, as it has been noticed above, is the Punisher of the wicked and the tyrannical. He helps those who take a stand against evil-doers and tyrants. This aspect of God has been stressed again and again in his praise of the Timeless. To Guru Gobind Singh, God is, as Kipling calls Him, “The Lord God of hosts”. Guru Gobind Singh often calls God, as in the beginning of the Akal Ustat, “All Steel”; “All Death”. In the Sastra Nam Mala, also, we find him invoking God in the language of the weapons of war:

“Thou art the Arrow, Thou art the Spear
Thou art the Hatcher, Thou art Sword.”

“Thou art the Goddess of Death, Thou art the Sword and the Arrow,
Thou art the symbol of victory, Thou art the world-hero.”

“Thou art Bhalla, Sethi, Bhatha, Katura and Barokha
Thou art Knife and Sword, Thou art Arms, Missiles,
Thou art Shield, Thou art Sword and Bhatha
Thou art the Breaker of Kavach
Thou appearest in all these forms.”

In the beginning of the Bachitra Natak, he invokes God in the same style:

“I bow with love and devotion to the holy Sword,
Assist me that I may complete this work.”

“I bow to Him who holdeth the arrow in His hand,
I bow to the Fearless One
I bow to the God of gods who is in the present and future.”

“I bow to the Scimitar, the two-edged Sword, the Falcion and the Dagger.
I bow to the Holder of the mace who diied light through the fourteen worlds.”

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1. सर्वदानिक — A. U. Introductory Stanza.
2. संस्कृतादि — A. U., Introductory Stanza.
4. स्रोतादि — A. U., Introductory Stanza.
5. समाजार्थ — A. U., Introductory Stanza.
7. समाजार्थ — A. U., Introductory Stanza.
8. समाजार्थ — A. U., Introductory Stanza.
10. समाजार्थ — A. U., Introductory Stanza.

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S. M. (4)
S. M. (5)
S. M. (6)
S. M. (7)
B. N., I. (1)
B. N., I. (86)
B. N., I. (87)
"I bow to the Arrow and the Musket
I bow to the Sword, spotless, fearless and unbreakable;
I bow to the powerful Mace and Lance,
To which nothing is equal."1

"I bow to the Arrow and the Cannon
Which destroy the enemy.
I bow to the Sword and the Rapier which destroy the evil."2

"I bow to all weapons called shastar (which are held).
I bow to all weapons called astar (which are hurled or discharged)."3

"The God of war has a sword on His banner."4

"I bow to Him, Who holdeth the discus.
Who is not made of elements and who is terrible
I bow to Him of the Strong Teeth;
I bow to Him Who is supremely powerful."5

It was Guru Gobind Singh, who introduced the Sikh prayer with an invocation to the Sword:

"Having first remembered the Sword, meditate on Guru Nanak."6

It was he who inscribed sword (Khanda) on the Sikh banner of peace and war in fighting against the Moghal tyranny. In support of his recourse to sword, Guru Gobind Singh expresses his belief that:

"When all other means have failed,
It is righteous to draw the sword."7

God, Who, as Guru Gobind Singh says, adorneth the brave, is invoked as sword by him, to help him to fight for the oppressed:

"Thou art the Subduer of countries, the Destroyer of the armies of the wicked in the battlefield.
Thou greatly adorneth the brave.

..............I seek Thy protection.................Hail to Thee, O Sword!"8

1. नमस्कार! मोरे तीरे युद्धग। नमो लघ अर्ग अर्ग अर्ग अर्ग।
   गद्वष्ट्र प्रस्तु मोरे संह्रीषं। जिने तुलि भोर बोम न बोम। B. N., I. (88)

2. नमो युद्ध सिंह जिने सत थोड़े। नमो थोड़े पहट्टे।
   जिने दुस्त बुद्ध। B. N., I. (90)

3. जिने सब नाम ममस्कार सामा।
   जिने बक्स सेवै ममस्कार तेरे। B. N., I. (91)

4. बहादुरकै में सदिक पियारी।

5. नमो बक्स पाक।
   भयौं हाय। B. N., I. (89)

6. पिथु नगीती सिंहसरे गुर मानक कई विहार।

7. चुकार बाज हाय हैं। हैं। हैं। हैं। हैं। B. N., I. (2)

8. Zafarnama, (22)
Guru Gobind Singh addresses God as a sword to destroy his enemies:

"I bow with love and devotion to the Holy Sword
Assist me that I may complete this work."

Dr. Narang's appreciation of the Guru's conception of the sword is worth quoting:

"The following four verses of Govind Singh forming an invocation to the sword are among the finest of their kind to be met with in any literature of the world."

(The text is given in the footnote. * Here only the translation is given)

'O, Sword, that conquers countries,
That ravages hordes of fools,
That waggst the deadliest wars
That gives all the boons
Thy arm, it is infrangible
Thy flame, it is unquenchable
Thy light, it is un eclipsible
That shines like a hundred suns
Thy refuge I implore,
Thou sopest pure-in-heart
Thou razest the wicked to naught,
Hail, Creator of the world!
Hail, Saviour of the Globe
Upholder, O' me-Thy slave
Hail, hail mighty Sword.'

The idea of "Martial God", is further conveyed by Guru Gobind Singh in warlike names that he gives Him:

1. Chhatram Chhatri—The best hero (warrior)
2. Satram Pranasi—The Destroyer of enemies.
3. Asipan—The Holder of Sword.
4. Asidhari—The Holder of Sword.
5. Asidhuj—With sword on His flag.
6. Aishetu—With sword on His flag.
7. Kharagketa—With sword on His flag.
8. Astrapan—The Holder of striking weapons called shastra (i.e., Mighty destroyer).
9. Astrapane—The Holder of missile weapons called Astra (i.e., Mighty destroyer).
10. Astrapane—All-steel.
11. Bhagauti—Sword.
12. Banpanam—The Holder of an arrow.

1. S. R. V, 286 : B. N., I, (1)
2. T. S., 142
3. Jap, (106)
4. Jap, (198)
5. Rama Avtar, (803).
6. Shabad Hazare, (4)
7. P. Ch., 405, Benti Chaupai,(351)
8. P. Ch., 405
9. P. Ch., —Benti Chaupai—405, (401)
10. Jap, (52)
11. Jap, (12)
12. Jap, (52)
13. A. U., (1)
14. Ch. V, (1)
15. B. N., I (88)
14. **Dhanurpan** (धनुर्पन) — The Holder of a bow.

15. **Kharagdharan** (खरगधर्म) — The Holder of a sword.

16. **Sarangdhar** (सरंगधर) — The Holder of a quiver.

17. **Kharagpanam** (खरगपान) — The Holder of a sword.

The sword is the symbol of God Himself. It performs the dual role of preserving the good and destroying the bad in this world. The poet says,

"Thou bestowest happiness on the good, Thou terrifiest the evil, Thou scatterest sinners, I seek Thy protection. Hail! Hail! to the Creator of world, The Saviour of creation, my Cherisher Hail to Thee, O Sword!"

These lines clearly express the implicit faith, Guru Gobind Singh had in the martial type of heroism. The sword to him had a divine significance. It was meant more for self-protection than for over-powering others. Guru Gobind Singh acquired so much attachment for the sword that his love for this weapon appears like that of reverence which is indistinguishable from worship. The sword for him was a symbol of power and self-respect. The ills of society could be remedied only with this weapon. The wicked are destroyed and peace established only by force of this bright Sword.

### 19. The Guru

The need of a guru’s guidance has throughout been acutely felt in the Bhakti movement. This creed of guru was in vogue in the time of Guru Nanak also. He himself revived it when he installed Guru Angad in his place by ignoring the claims of his sons, Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das. The same cult continued till Guru Gobind Singh, who declared that his descendant was Guru Granth.

While the instruction of an earthly guru, the one who himself has experienced union with God, has been considered invaluable, the tradition of calling God as a True Guru or a Great Teacher is also very old. In his verses, Kabir is also sometimes found using the word Guru for God Whom he also calls Sat Guru.

The Sikh Gurus believed that the true Guru is God Himself. In the *Adi Granth* God has again and again been called as Guru. Guru Gobind Singh also, in his *Dasam*
Granth, considers God as his True and Supreme Guru. While speaking of his birth, the Guru states in most clear terms that his birth is due to the devotion of his parents to the Supreme Guru. Who being pleased with their devotion, sent him on a mission:

“The Supreme Guru was pleased with their devotion to Him.
When God gave me this order I assumed birth in this Kal age.”

The Divine Guru sent me for religious sake.”

In Benti Chaupai, at the end of the Pakhyan Charitra, he reiterates this belief, saying:

Know that He is my Guru,
Who made the whole world
Who created demigods, demons and yaksas
Who is the only God incarnate from beginning to end.
My obeisance to Him alone.

Such examples, as quoted above, are not few and far between in the Dasam Granth to show that to Guru Gobind Singh God was the Supreme and True Guru.

The God of Guru Gobind Singh, though real to him, is a very shadowy being. Like other Hindu thinkers, he uses negatives in describing Him. It must, however, be confessed that the Guru's conception of God, as outlined above, leads one to believe that to him God was not a mere abstraction. The attributes he has used to describe Him are not only impersonal but also qualitative and those which personify Him. To him God is the Saviour, the Cherisher, the Guru as well as Akal Purakh, the Beautiful (Sundar), the Sword to punish evil, the Holder of a bow (Dhanurpan), and the Lord of war and also Father, Mother, kind Friend and Lord of the dass (Guru Gobind Singh). God, according to him, is no doubt, Almighty, All-Powerful and Supreme, yet one within the approach of a common man irrespective of caste and creed and one with Whom man can have intercourse.

Guru Gobind Singh has shown a definite leaning towards Vishishtadvait conception of God or modified monism in which man's spirit is considered to be a portion of God and which when finally reunited to God, retains its own individuality and consciousness.

1. P. Ch.—Benti Chaupai—405 (385) Zafarnama, (71)
2. B. N. VI, (4)
3. B. N. VI, (42)
4. P. Ch.—
5. 1. P. Ch.—Benti Chaupai—405 (385)

Also see Jap (2—196)
SOUL, TRANSMIGRATION AND SALVATION

Guru Gobind Singh believes, like other Bhaktas, in the emanation of soul from God, and its eventual salvation by way of merging into Him. This thought is ancient and is met with in the Upanishads and the Bhagwadgita. There are verses in the Dasam Granth, which are inspired by this thought, e.g.,

“As in one stream millions of waves are produced, the waves being made of water all become water.
So from God’s form non-sentient and sentient things are manifested, and springing from Him, shall be united in Him again.”

“As light blendeth with darkness and darkness with light, so all things have sprung from God and shall be united in Him.”

The Guru maintains further that those who do not believe in God, are punished by Him in the form of transmigration:

“He who knows not the one God will be born time and again.”

Disbelief in God is, thus, a sin in the eyes of the Guru. No less sinful is, however, a disbelief in the mission of the Guru and a faith in the learning of ancient scriptures. The latter sin is also punished and the disbeliever is reborn again and again until he realises his sin. In this connection, he reveals that God said to him thus:

“They who shrink from suffering,
And, forsaking Me, adopt the way of the Vedas and Smritis,
Shall fall into the pit of hell,
And continually suffer transmigration.”

The transmigration of soul can, according to the Guru, be brought to an end and salvation attained, if one loves God and endures physical sufferings. As narrated in the Bachitra Natak, God Himself tells him:

“Ihey who endure bodily sufferings.
And cease not to love Me,
Shall all go to paradise,
And there shall be no difference between Me and them.”

The same thought is expressed in the Akal Ustat also,

“He who with single heart meditateth on Him even for a moment.
shall not fall into Death’s noose.

“They who touch the feet of the Lord of wealth shall not again resume a body.”

Again, in the Shabad Hazare, the poet stresses the importance of the need of God’s protection only:

“Except in the protection of the one sole God, nowhere is salvation.”

Guru Gobind Singh, accordingly, takes God as the origin and destiny of soul and believes in the transmigration of the soul and its eventual salvation. He vehemently rejects the belief that salvation is obtained by penance, lip-worship and self-immolation.

Guru Govind Singh believes in the idea of a saviour appearing from time to time when the world is in trouble and wickedness takes the upper hand of virtue. The Guru says:

Whenever a whole avalanche of miseries and sufferings rolls down upon the human creation the Avtar incarnates himself into one or the other form (animal, human or supernatural). He further says that he, too, has assumed birth with the same purpose:

“I assumed the birth for the purpose of spreading the faith, saving the saints and extirpating the wicked.”

He, however, believes that the saviours (Avtars) are not descents or incarnations of God; they are the elevated souls blended with Kal-Purakh:

“There are millions of Bishen and Mahesh in the body of Kal-Purakh (God).”

These elevated souls are called upon to come to the rescue of mankind in distress and save them from humility:

“The Infinite Kal-Purakh ordered Bishen to incarnate in the form of Bawan as eighth Avtar.”

Having done the needful, the Avtar goes back and remains blended with Him.

“Having relieved the earth of the burden, the Avtar (Bishen) went back to Heaven and remained blended with Him.”

THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

The Guru’s conception of universal fatherhood of God leads to his belief in the universal brotherhood of man. Though Guru Gobind Singh hated tyranny and rebelled against it, yet he bore no ill-will against any religion or community. He regarded all human beings as the children of the same common father:

“All men have the same eyes, the same ears, the same body, the same build, a compound of earth, air, fire and water.”

1. जब जब होत अरिसास अर्थाः ॥ तव तव ञेन थर्थ थकराः ॥
 वैशालि च परम परम च जगताः ॥
 अभ्याससाम परमस्य तदार्ताम् रुपवाःः ॥—Bhagavadgita, IV (7)

2. जब जब होत धर्म के हीः ॥ बाबूहः बसुर धर्म अश्रमााः ॥
 कालीि यमोत्र जाह नापि बसीः ॥ सीवाहः यिय पेतु सुर चर्मीः ॥

3. तव तव अनु धारा अनु धारा ॥ हरिहः हंसालिरिध समज पीरा ॥
 अनु सुर मारी अहां सुप्रहर राखाहि निज सुर सर्वतुः ॥

4. अश कितासाहि किंसाह अल शम जय कथ हैः ॥
—Tulsi : ‘Manas, Balkand, (121)

5. असम चलावन संत चलाराः ॥ दुर्दश सनम कृ शुक नाशराः ॥
—H. N. VI, (43)

6. पारिषासाहि सत्सानां सिन्हासाहि च दुर्दशाः ॥
 असम संसामातां सम्भाजिमणिम युगे युगे ॥—Bhagavadgita, IV (8)

7. कलसारख की तेहि सो कोटिक तिसन महसुः ॥—Sheh-shayi A (1)

8. द्रोहा आहस सरसुख भाराः ॥ असम मायाः बिसन असर्माताः ॥—Bawan A, (3)

9. मूलमार हर सुर पर जाई ॥ कलसारख भो रात मादै ॥—Bishan A, (4)

10. एक मन एके भान एके ढेह एके बान खाक पान आलस प्रो आश को रलाः है ॥ A.U., (86)
By nature they are the same. It is only in the outward appearance that they differ:

"Deities, demons, yakshas, heavenly singers, Muslims and Hindus adopt the customary dress of their different countries."

They have also different modes of worship though the object of their worship is the same, the one and the same God.

"The temple and the mosque are the same;
The Hindu worship and Muslim prayer are the same."

"The Sikh Gurus made this improvement on the previous idea that they declared the whole humanity to be one, and that a man was to be honoured, not because he belonged to this or that caste or creed, but because he was a man, an emanation of God, whom God had given the same senses and the same soul as to other men":

"Recognize all human nature as one."

"All men are the same, although they appear different under different influences.
"The bright and the dark, the ugly and the beautiful, the Hindus and the Muslims, have developed themselves according to the fashions of different countries."

All men are the same; it is through error they appear different:

"Allah and Abhekh are the same;
The Puran and the Quran are the same;
They are all alike;
It is the One God who created all."

"What is a Hindu or a Muslim to one From whose heart doubt hath vanished?
The Muslims use the Tasbih and Hindus Mala;
The Muslim recite the Quran, the Hindu read the Puran."

Those who have not realised the essential unity of humanity in God, are a source of great mischief to the society:

"Fools have wrangled and died over discussion of these differences."

These wranglers do not love God. They have not had any experience of meeting God, nor do they have any principles. He further says that:

"They who love God
Heed not these divergences and live joyfully."

They who realise the primal Being
Let no other belief enter their minds and hearts.

But They who cherish another belief, will not realise the Lord, Our Eternal Friend.
(b) DEVOTIONAL POETRY

WORSHIP

In the centuries before Guru Gobind Singh, the Bhakti movement had developed greatly in India. Guru Gobind Singh is in the line of succession of the religious leaders like Ramanand, Kabir, Tulsi, Sur and Nanak who advocated bhakti or loving faith and devotion, for those who would find God. According to Guru Gobind Singh, the ultimate goal of human existence is the attainment of real and eternal happiness which results from the liberation of the soul from transmigration, by way of its reunion with God, Who is its origin and destiny. For salvation and enjoyment of inherent bliss, therefore, man must seek union with his Creator, and that is possible through worship alone:

Salvation

"They who touch the feet of the Lord shall not again resume a body."1
"God is worshipped that by worship salvation may be attained."2

Immortal Bliss

If you wish (to have) always happiness of every kind, then plunge deeply into the sweetness of God.3
"If thou desirest to obtain the Supreme bliss, be absorbed in the love of God."4

Immensely Wealth—No Use

He apprises people of the fact that:
"Without worshipping the name of one God and loving Him, even kings are of no account."5
"Without worshipping the name of the Lord, they (Emperors) went at last to their final home (grave)."6

False Worship—A Distraction

He warns his followers against the false worship which may distract them from the right path and cause utter frustration:
"O man, worship none but God, not a thing made by Him."7

The Guru says union with God cannot be attained by false worship:
"No advantage can be obtained by the practice of false religion."8
"The Merciful One is not pleased with circumcision."9

Speaking for himself, he says:
"I will not close mine eyes (as some Indian faqirs do) or do any thing for show."10

Real Worship

The Guru, therefore, enjoins his disciples first to put faith in God, aspire for union with Him, develop perfect love for Him and then meditate on His name:

FAITH

Faith is the sheet-anchor of an aspirant. The Guru says:
"Put faith in no created thing beside the Creator."11
"Own Him as thy God."12
"There is no salvation for thee except in His name."13
"Blest is his life in this world who repeateth God's name with his lips and meditateth war in his heart."14

Without faith God cannot be obtained. Want of faith naturally weakens the desire to lead a line of spiritual discipline:

“How can he who is the slave of worldly desires and ever clever in obtaining wealth, obtain the one Lord of the world without faith in Him?”

“How can he who is a slave to worldly desires and addicted to lust and wrath, find God without faith?”

“Without faith how can there be any such meditation (on divine knowledge).”

ASPIRATION

Faith begets desire, desire begets knowledge. Without Bhavana (aspiration) there is no quest and without quest there is no knowledge:

“Without Bhavana one cannot attain salvation.”

“Without Bhavana there can be no knowledge.”

“Without Bhavana one cannot attain God.”

PERFECT LOVE FOR AND DEVOTION TO THE MASTER

The unflinching faith in God and a keen aspiration for Him should develop into perfect love for the Master and fullest and exclusive devotion to Him.

The Guru is himself enamoured of God and instructs his followers to develop their love for Him Who is the highest object of love:

“I am enamoured of Thy form,
No other gift hath charms for me.”

“I speak verily, hear me all ye people—they who love God have obtained Him.”

The Guru then expects his followers to be absolutely devoted to God, because:

“He made millions of Indras and Kings.
Many Brahmas and Vishnus who meditate on Him.
Many Rams, Krishans and prophets.
No one is acceptable without devotion.”

The true devotee of God lives in bliss even though a poor man:

“A pallet of straw is dearer to us, if the Dear one be there.
Palaces burn us like the infernal fire, if Thou be not with us.”

Devotion to the Lord is a life of praise, prayer, repetition of God’s name, righteous deeds, etc. This is the easiest road to success for an aspirant of bliss:

(i) Praise and Prayer

Praise and prayer are much used in Sikhism. The Sikh scriptures consist chiefly of these. The Dasam Granth contains a large number of verses in praise of God composed in the stotra style. The works like the Akal Ustat and the Jap are solely devoted to this form of poetry, while many other parts of the Granth begin with praises of and invocations to God.

Prayer means not a mere psychological union with God but an active yearning of the soul to feel one with Him, who is always active, always patient, and always hopeful. Prayer should, therefore, inspire a devotee to do God’s will.
A Sikh prayer generally begins with an invocation to God, followed by invocations to the Gurus in the order of precedence. The highest ideal of godliness, according to the Sikhs, was realised in Guru Nanak and his successors. Therefore, they are invoked next.

"May the Holy Sword assist me!
Having first remembered Bhagauti
Meditate on Guru Nanak, then on Guru Angad, Amardas and Ramdas, May they assist me!
I call to mind Arjum, Hargobind, and the holy Har Rai,
I meditate on the holy Har Krishen
A sight of whom dispelled all sufferings
I invoke Tegh Bahadur that the nine treasures* may hasten to my home.
Ye, holy Gurus, everywhere assist."1

The Guru directs his followers to pray for His protection:

"I speak the truth, hear it attentively—without entering the protection of the compassionate to the poor
And loving Him can God be found?"2
"Thou shall only escape from Death’s noose.
When thou seizest the feet of Him who existed before the world."3
"I have found refuge at the feet of God."4

In the Akal Ustat also, protection of God is sought:

"May we have the protection of the Immortal Being!
May we have the protection of All-steel!
May we have the protection of All-death!
May we have the protection of All-steel!"5

An excellent spiritual exercise for an aspirant is to weep before the Lord with an open heart, in a piteous and pathetic manner and in solitude. At the end of the Pakhyan Charitra in Benti Chaupai, the Guru makes supplication in the following words:

"O God, give me Thy hand and protect me,
... ...
Deem me Thine own and cherish me,
... ...
O Thou with the sword on Thy banner, protect me,
... ...
Preserve me, O Thou Preserver."6

1. Ch. di Var, (1)
2. B. N. T (100)
3. Sh. H., (5)
4. B. N., VI
5. A. U. (1)
6. P. Ch.—Benti Chaupai—405 (377, 381, 382).

*Untold wealth or prosperity. In the Hindu scriptures these treasures are specifically mentioned.—Sikhism, 120
(ii) Love of the Name of God

One form of devotion according to the Sikh Gurus is the repetition of the name of God. The word Name means manifestation of God or His attributes, His mercies, from which we know Him. The Guru himself, imbued with the name of God, stresses the need of repetition of His Name:

"I will repeat the One Name which will be everywhere profitable."1

"I will repeat Thy name and avoid endless sorrow."2

"Sorrow and sin have not approached those who have meditated on Thy name."3

"Fools utter names, but know not their meanings, and worship not Him by whom man is protected."4

"He who repeateth Thy name shall save his relations."5

"Make the support of the Name thine alms."6

"He who repeateth Thy name shall be free from poverty and the assault of enemies."7

"Without the support of the one Name deem all religious ceremonies as superstition."8

"Repeat God's name, establish God's name in thy heart. Do penance unto God, and repeat His name."9

Regarding himself he says:

"I am imbued with Thy name, O God"10

I am not intoxicated with any other honour,"11

I will not repeat any other name,

Nor establish any other God in my heart."12

"The name of no other do I pronounce."13

"I will repeat God's name and all my affairs shall prosper."14

In accordance with the bhakta poets, and particularly his predecessors, the nine Gurus, Guru Gobind Singh has used for God various names belonging to the Hindu and Muslim cults:

Hindu Cult


In Gujri-Ki-Var (Gujri-Ki-Var of Guru Amar Das.) There was no sin, no virtue; no Veda or any other religious book, no caste, no sex."—Sikhism, p. 2

"God is described both as nirgun, or absolute, and sagun, or personal. Before there was any creation, God lived absolutely in Himself, but when He thought of making Himself manifest in creation He became related. In the former case, "When God was Himself self-created, there was none else; He took counsel and advice with Himself; what He did came to pass. Then there was only the Formless One Himself; creation was not then (Gujri-Ki-Var of Guru Amar Das.) There was no sin, no virtue: no Veda or any other religious book, no caste, no sex."—Sikhism, p. 2

36. Sh. H., (4-1) 37. Sh. H., (1) 38. P. Ch., 1 (5) 39. P. Ch., 1 (6)
Muslim Cult.

Allah, Karim, Razaq, Rahim, Sahib, Rafiq, etc.

The names used by him are personal and impersonal, transcendental and immanent, and metaphysical and mysterious:

1. Personal

God viewed as having a definite form or shape (रूप)

Akal-Purakh—(Immortal Being)

Puran-Purakh—(Perfect Personality)

Banwari—(Lord of vegetable kingdom)

Shahanshah or Patshahi—(A King of kings)

Kharag-dharam—(Holder of sword)

Ugra-darham—(With strong teeth)

Sundar—(Beautiful)

Hum-ul-Wajah—(Of beautiful face and body)

2. Impersonal

God viewed as a spirit (सूक्ष्म रूप)

(i) The Form Pure

Arup—(Of no form)

Anang—(Incorporeal)

Aneel—(Countless)

Ajane—(One who never comes in mother’s womb, without feminity)

Mahajot—(Supreme light)

(ii) God as Conscious

Chit—(Conscious)

Gian—(Knowledge)

Tri Gun Atit—(Beyond the three gunas)

(iii) God in terms of matter, time and space

(a) MATERIAL

Atoi—(Unweighable like an ocean)

Abhang—(Unbreakable)

Achhed—(Unpiercable)

Achheh—(Imperishable, Immortal)

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1. Jap (38) A. U. (6)
2. Jap (25) ; A. U. (260)
3. Jap (110) ; A. U. (244, 269)
4. Jap (110) ; A. U. (244, 260)
5. A. U. (26, 26), P. Ch. 405 (382)
6. Jap (26)
7. Jap (14) A. U., Introductory line
8. Jap (83)
9. Sh. H., (4)
10. B. N., I (1) ; Jap (1, 88) ; G. P. (47) ; J. N., (71)
11. B. N., I (85)
12. B. N., I (89)
13. A. U. (246, 247)
14. Jap, (21)
15. Jap, (2)
17. Swaiya (2, 5) ; Jap (7)
18. Sh. H., (5) ; Swaiya (5)
19. Sh. H., (4)
20. Jap (58, 198)
21. A. U., (83)
22. A. U., (11)
23. A. U., (128)
24. Jap, (15)
25. B. N., I ; Jap, (7) ; G. P. (1, 3)
26. G. P., (3)
(b) TEMPORAL

Adi—(The Beginning)
Anadi—(Without any beginning)
Ant—(End of all)
Beant—(Beyond end. Endless One)
Avagat—(Eternal, always the same)
Aka—(Timeless)
Trikal Darshi—(Seer of the present, past and future)
Sada—(Ever-existing)
Hamesh-ul-rawan—(He goes on for ever)
Chakradhar—(One who holds the cycle of time in his own hands)

(c) SPATIAL

Atham—(Placeless)
Alok—(Does not belong to any particular world)
Ades—(Does not belong to any particular country)
Sada-Jag-Mahe—(Always in the world)
Tribhavan-Mahip—(Lord of the three worlds)
Samastam-Prasije—(Pervading everywhere)

(iv) Omnipresent

Sarab-bhaune—(Omnipresent)
Sarab-guna—(All pervading)
Adho-urdh-ardham—(Filler of all space below, above and in the middle)
Sanast-ul-niwisi—(Dwelling everywhere i.e. Omnipresent)

(v) Omnipotent

Sarab-palak—(Preserver of all)
Sarab-gnalak—(Destroyer of all)
Sarab-ko-punikal—(Ultimate death of all)
Gharan-bhanjan haru—(Preserver and destroyer of all)
Tribhavan Mahip—(Lord of the three worlds)
Sab-ko-Karta—(The destroyer of all)
Biswa pait—(Protector of the world)
Jagat-ki—(Destroyer of the world)

(vi) Omniscient

Sarab-Giata—(Omniscient)
Param-Giata—(Possessor of perfect knowledge)
Trikal-Darshi—(Seer of the present, past and future)
Antarjami—(Knowing everything innermost)
3. Transcendental
(Out of, beyond; too high, outside)

Paratam¹—(The soul beyond; The original Soul)
Tuhi²—(Thou)
Tun³—(Thou)
Tum³—(Thou)
Dur⁴—(Very far)
Sahib⁶—(Lord)

4. Immanent
(Near, pervasive, inherent)

Rame⁷—(Immanent)
Sarabatam⁸—(All pervading)
Sarab-bhaune⁹—(Omnipresent)
Sarab-gaunae¹⁰—(All pervading)
Sarab-dhandhe¹¹—(Whose hand is in all concerns of the world)
Adho-urdh-ardham¹²—(Filler of all space above below and in the middle)
Jale¹³—(In water)
Thale¹⁴—(In land)
Sarab-bhese¹⁵—(Immanent in every form)

5. The Guru refers to God in the following other ways too:
(a) METAPHYSICAL AND MYSTIC CONCEPTS

Ikra²⁰—(Changeless)
Akal¹⁷—(Timeless)
Nribujh¹⁸—(Not cognisable, Inascertainable)
Agadh¹⁹—(Unfathomable)
Asoojh²⁰—(Invisible)
Ageh²¹—(Intangible)
Agah²²—(Unfathomable)
Agam²³—(Inaccessible)
Achheh²⁴—(Immortal)
Nidhane²⁵—(Treasure of all excellencies)
Amik²⁶—(Most profound)
Anbhau Parkash²⁷—(Intuitively known)

(b) THEISTIC

Gopal²⁸—(Cherisher of the universe, Cow-herd)
Pratipal²⁹—(Cherisher)
Gobind³⁰—(Cherisher of the universe, Cow-keeper)
THE POETRY OF THE DASAM GRANTH

(c) AESTHETICAL ATTRIBUTES

Sundar¹—(Beautiful)
Husn-ul-Wajuh²—(Of beautiful face and body)
Husnul Charag³—(beauty of a Lamp)
Git Gitei—(Substance of all songs)
Tan Tane⁴—(Substance of all musics)
Nad Nade⁵—(Substance of all rhythmical sounds)
Wahiguru⁶—(Wonderful Lord)
Anbha Prakas⁷—(Self-luminous)
Anup⁸—(Most beautiful)
Param Rupe⁹—(Perfect Beauty)

(d) POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES

Rajan Raj¹¹—(The Ruler of rulers)
Shah¹²—(King)
Sachche Patshah¹³—(True King)
Shahan Shah¹⁴—(The King of kings)
Sarab Saham¹⁵—(The King of all)
Sarab Bhoopgo¹⁶—(The King of all)
Rajadhi Rajan¹⁷—(The Ruler of rulers)
Raj Rajeswaram¹⁸—(The King of kings)
Sah Sahan¹⁹—(The Sovereign of sovereigns)
Bhoop Bhoopgo²⁰—(The King of kings)
Nrinath²¹—(King)
Raj Raj²²—(The King of kings)
Sah sahe²³—(The Sovereign of sovereigns)
Rajan Raj²⁴—(The King of kings)
Rankan Rank²⁵—(The Poorest of the poor)

(e) MARTIAL GOD

Rokh Rokhe²⁶—(With terrible wrath)
Sarab Jeetam²⁷—(All-conquering)
Sarab Bheetam²⁸—(Awe-inspiring)
Narainae Karoor-karmae²⁹—(Eternal Lord of terrible action)

(f) BELONGING TO THE VEDIC RELIGION

Indra³⁰—(The god of firmament, the god of rain, the king of gods)
Indra Indre³¹—(Lord of Indras)
Bhan³²—(The Sun)
Bhan Bhame³³—(The Sun of Suns)
Suraj Suraje³⁴—(The Sun of Suns)

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1. A. U. (246, 247), G. P., (30)
2. Jap, (121)
3. Jap, (151)
4. Jap, (47, 68)
5. Jap, (47)
6. Jap; (48)
7. Jap (Introductory line)
8. Jap, (1)
10. Jap, (50)
11. B. N. I (9), II (1) Jap (89); G. P., (39, 47)
12. Jap, (1)
13. J. N., (71)
15. G. P., (2)
16. G. P., (2)
17. B. N., I (9)
18. Jap, (82)
19. Jap; (55)
20. Jap, (59)
21. Jap, (65)
22. Jap, (67)
23. Jap, (67)
24. B. N. II, (i)
25. Jap, (89)
26. Jap, (68)
27. Jap, (69)
28. Jap, (69)
29. Jap, (41, 53)
30. Jap, (119)
31. Jap, (185)
32. Jap, (119)
33. Jap, (46, 47, 89)
34. Jap, (185)
THOUGHT VALUE

Chandra¹—(The moon)
Chandra Chandre²—(The Moon of moons)
Ravi³—(The Sun)
Shashi⁴—(The Moon)

(g) BELONGING TO THE HINDU MYTHOLOGY

Kachh⁵—(The Tortoise)
Machh⁶—(The Fish)
Chakarpane⁷—(Holdeth the disc)
Murari⁸—(The enemy of Mur demon, Appellation of Krishna)
Padmapati⁹—(Lord of wealth)
Umapi²⁰—(Lord of Uma)
Banwarii¹¹—(Lord of forests)

(h) NEW NAMES OF GOD INVENTED BY GURU GOBIND SINGH AS EMBODIMENT AND SOURCE OF BRAVERY

Akali¹²—(The Immortal)
Sarabloh¹³—(All-steel)
Mahanlohi¹⁴—(Great-steel)
Sarabkali¹⁵—(All-death)
Mahanakali¹⁶—(Great-death)
Asidhuj¹⁷—(Having sword on his banner)
Kharahekuti¹⁸—(Having sword on his banner)
Asipan¹⁹—(Having sword in his hand)

Guru Gobind Singh has, thus, used many names for God. But it is not in any way to countenance polytheism; rather, in this way he leads people to feel that though they might use different names, there is only one God.

The repetition of the name of God with Guru Gobind Singh, seems, rather to be a means by which he reminds himself of God's reality and brings to recollection all that the name connotes, and so it helps him to realize his union with God.

(iii) Meditation and Introspection

Guru Gobind Singh has expatiated upon the value of meditation, introspection and inner-realisation of self as an element in the Supreme. He says:

"O men, meditate in your hearts on Him whose immeasurable power is diffused throughout the world."²⁰

"Without meditating on the name of the Compassionate to the poor, the Deathless, they have at last gone to the Death's abode."²¹

"Sorrow and sin have not approached those who meditate on Thy name,"²²

"Without meditation on divine knowledge, fools are drowned in hell's river."²³

1. Jap. (110)
2. Jap. (47, 185)
3. K. A., (1900)
4. K. A., (1900)
5. P. Ch., I (15)
6. P. Ch., I (15)
7. B. N., I (56)
8. Bh. H., (4-6)
9. A. U., (244, 245, 246, 247)
10. A. U., (259)
11. A. U., Introductory stanza
12. A. U., (252); Jap. (192);
13. A. U., (1)
15. A. U., Introductory stanza
16. K. A., (135)
17. P. Ch.—Benti Chaupai
18. P. Ch.—Benti Chaupai—405 (406)
19. Rama Avtar, (803)
20. A.U., (230)
21. A. U., (252)
22. B. N., VI (28)
23. A. U., (83)
"He who with single heart meditateth on Him even for a moment, shall not fall into Death’s noose."1

"They who meditate on any one else shall die of arguments and contentions."2

"I will meditate on the name of the Endless one and obtain the supreme light."3

"I will meditate on the Supreme and thus remove endless sins."4

"On no other do I meditate."5

Faith and meditation beget knowledge and knowledge leads to self-realisation.

(iv) Divine Knowledge

The poet tells us that the highest object of knowledge is God:

"He who is subject to worldly desires danceth with gestures, but being devoid of divine knowledge how shall he obtain heaven?"6

How many fly in the firmament! How many dwell in water! But they shall all be burnt in the fire for want of divine knowledge.7

"Without divine knowledge (penitents and readers of the Vedas) are all subject to the noose of death and ever wander through the cycle of ages."8

"How shall the wretch who is subject to woman and devoted to lust and wrath, be saved without the knowledge of one God."9

Without Bhavna there is no quest and without quest there is no knowledge. Guru Gobind Singh despises the traditional beliefs of blind followers of orthodox religion:

"Without divine knowledge one is never absorbed in the great benefactor."10

"Without divine knowledge (they) are always subject to the noose of death and ever wander through the cycle of ages."11

"Being devoid of divine knowledge, how shall he obtain heaven."12

(v) Good Actions

The life of devotion and introspection is not to be one of idle mysticism but of active service done in the midst of worldly relations. There can be no worship without good actions. These actions, however, are not to be formal deeds of so-called merit, but should be inspired by an intense desire to please God and to serve fellow men." At the end of the Chandi Charitra, the Guru says:

"Give me this power, O Almighty,
From righteous deeds I may never refrain,
Fearlessly may I fight all battles of life.
Full confidence may I ever have in asserting my battles.
When the mortal life comes to a close
May I die with the joy and courage of a martyr."13

In the same spirit, he adds:

“I am the son of a Kshatri, not of a Brahman, how can I perform austerities?
How can I turn my attention to Thee, O Lord, and for sake domestic affairs?
Now be pleased to grant me the boon I crave with clasped hands that
When the end of my life cometh I may die fighting in the mighty battle.”

Love and Favour of God

In the end, the Guru firmly believes that all the efforts for the attainment of God,
without the light and favour of God, are fruitless:

“Without the light of true love hath anyone obtained the honour of finding God.”

“Without a particle of the love and favour of God they (Saravagis, Sudhs, Sidhs, Jogis, Jatis,
Demons, Demigods, Religious sects) are only worth a ratti (a little).”

“God holds dear not only those who love Him but He also grants His love to those who do
not love Him.”

The way, as Guru Gobind Singh says, to realize Him is only one and that, too, is not
knowledge, formalism or the so-called meritorious actions which establish a claim to
reward, but love and faith, the aim being to obtain final emancipation and the grace
of God.

(c) Didactic Poetry

The didactic strain in the religious poetry of Guru Gobind Singh, or for
matter of that, in the poetry of Guru Nanak, may be traced, as we have hinted at
already, to the influence of the Nirguna School of Bhakti Movement. These mystics were
reformists as well. Ramanand and Kabir grounded their philosophy on everyday life
and combined their mysticism with moral teachings. Good actions, good thoughts and
good words formed the basic conduct which showed the way to spiritual life. Kabir, and
after him, Nanak stressed the importance of strictly moral conduct and refuted false
prevalent superstitions. The critics of today may not like didacticism in poetry but there
was a time when poetry was composed not for poetry’s sake but for making human being
better than before. It was not a hand-maid of Cupid as it is today, but of God himself.
It does indeed make moral teaching more forceful which otherwise would be direct, dry
and hard to assimilate.

The aim of the didactic poetry in Guru Gobind Singh’s works is to develop a good
moral character which will pave the way for spiritual progress. A pure mind and a pure
heart can beget true and noble desires which alone can render one fit for spiritual devotion. According to Guru Gobind Singh:

"God is virtue" (Karam and Dharam)
"Perennial Fount of virtue."

One should, therefore, be virtuous. One should be truthful:

"Every body ought to be a man of word, and not utter one thing while he meditateth another."  
"The merciful showeth mercy to him who acteth honestly."

Regarding ahimsa, the Guru says:

"Smite not anyone mercilessly with the sword, or a sword from high shall smite thyself."

The Gurus laid the foundation of man's uplift, not on such short-cuts in mantras, miracles or mysteries, but on man's own humanity, his own character; as it is character alone, the character already formed, which helps us in moral crises.

"He is not appeased by incantations, written or spoken or by charms."

Man is endowed with such weak faculties that he stumbles at each step and yet it is expected of him that:

"He should not step on the bed of another's wife even in a dream."

Condemning egoism, the Guru says,

"Gods and demons have been ruined by their egoism."

He, therefore, advises the disciples, saying:

"Amass the wealth of contemplation and run away from egoism, the mortal sin."

Yog, asceticism and renunciation are not religious denominations, creeds or cults, but each embodies a set of moral virtues.

(i) Renunciation

Regarding renunciation, he says:

"O man, practise asceticism in this way:
Consider thy house altogether as the forest and remain an anchoret at heart.
Make continence thy matted hair, union with God thine ablutions, thy daily religious duties the growth of thy nails.
Divine knowledge thy spiritual guide; admonish thy heart and apply God's name as ashes to thy body.
Eat little, sleep little, love mercy and forbearance.
Ever practise mildness and patience, and thou shalt be freed from the three qualities.
Attach not to thy heart lust, wrath, covetousness, obstinacy, and worldly love.
Thus shalt thou behold the Real Soul of this world, and obtain the Supreme Being."

(ii) Asceticism

Asceticism, to him is an attitude of mind that should be applied to the facts of life:

"O mortal, touch the feet of the Supreme Being.
Why steepest thou the sleep of worldly love? Be sometimes wakeful and alert.
Why instruct others, O beast, since thou hast no knowledge thyself?
Why ever accumulate sin? Even now lay aside the love of it.
Deem such things simply as errors and love truly religious acts.
Ever lay up the remembrance of God; renounce and flee from mortal sin.
By this means shalt thou not encounter sorrow or sin, and escape from Death's noose.
If thou desire ever to have a happiness of every kind, be absorbed in God's love."
About yog, the Guru thinks thus metaphorically:

"O man, practise jog in this way:
Make truth thy horn, sincerity thy necklace, and apply meditations as ashes to thy body
Make restraint of thy heart, thy lyre, and the support of the Name thine alms;
Play the primal essence as thy strings, and thou shalt hear God's sweet song.
By the practice of the songs of divine knowledge, waves of melody and exquisite pleasure
shall be produced.
The demons and the demigods in their celestial chariots will be astonished and the munis
intoxicated with delight.
Admonish thy heart, don the garb of self-restraint, and utter God's name inaudibly.
So shalt thy body ever remain like gold, and death never approach thee."

The Guru denounces the prevalent form of yog:

"O Jogi, jog consisteth not in matted hair.
Why wear thyself out and kill thyself wandering? Consider this in thy mind.
The man who knoweth the supreme divine knowledge shall obtain the great reward;
He shall then restrain his mind in one place, and not run wandering from door to door.
What availleth it to leave one's home, run away, and dwell in forest.
When one's heart ever remaineth at home? Such a person is not an udasi.
Boasting of thy religious fervour, thou deceivest the world by the exercise of great deception."
Thou thinkest in thy heart that thou hast abandoned worldly love, but worldly love hath
not abandoned thee."

On another occasion he says:

"O Yogi, yog lies not in saffron coloured clothes.
Not in growing matted hairs, not in smearing ashes on the body, nor in growing nails.
If one could attain yog by living in the forest, the birds who ever live in the jungle should
be called Yogis.
If rubbing the body with ashes could help attain yog the elephant which always throws dust
on its head should deserve it well. You should think over this in your mind.
If bathing at holy places could avail, the frogs and the fishes which ever live in holy waters
would have earned it.
The cat and the heron are always found in meditation. Do they know what is yog? Sitting
therefore, in meditation with eyes closed does not lead to yogas.
If hardships are borne in realising God just as they are done in hoodwinking people,
Then one may attain great knowledge and taste the divine nectar."

(iii) Worldly Pomp and Show

The worldly power and possessions at last fail man in his spiritual progress or salvation:

"Emperors before whom strong armed kings used to lowly bow their heads, in countless
numbers (also translated-regardless of their own position).
Who possessed proud elephants with golden trappings, incomparable, tall, painted with bright
colours;
Millions of horses which bounded like deer, and were fleeter than the wind.
What mattered it how great those emperors were? They at last departed bare-footed."
The earthly glory is vanity. It has no spiritual value:

"Though they roamed and conquered all countries beating their various drums;
Though many beautiful elephants trumpeted loud, and thousands of horses of royal breed neighed for them.
Who can number such kings in the past, the future, and the present? They cannot be counted—
Yet without worshipping the name of God the Lord of wealth, they went at last to their final home."1

Even those who have made conquests of the world came to a sad end for being without the favour of God:

"Trained soldiers, powerful, irresistible, well accoutred with coats of mail crush their enemies;
Filled with high martial spirit they would put mountains to flight, themselves unshaken;
They would shatter their enemies, destroy rebels, crush the pride of furious elephants;
Yet without the favour of God, the Lord of wealth they should all depart at last and leave the world."2

For even the emperors and mighty warriors have supplicated the favour of God as the worldly glory appeared to be unstable to them:

"Countless heroes very valiant, without hesitation face the edge of the sword,
Subdue countries, crush rebels, and the pride or furious elephants,
Break powerful forts and even without fighting conquer in every direction.
But their efforts avail not, the Lord is the commander of them all—the suppliants are many while there is but one Giver."3

The emperors, lords, nobles, great donors cannot achieve salvation by virtue of their possessions:

"Lords of men, and elephants, rulers who reign in the three worlds,
Who perform millions of ablutions, make gifts of elephants and other animals, and marry brides at various splendid swayamvars (Assemblages in ancient times at which young women selected their husbands).
They with Brahma, Shiv, Vishnu, and Indar shall at last be entangled and fall into Death's noose;
But they who touch the feet of the Lord of wealth shall not again resume a body."4

Even the commanders of hosts and mighty armies left the world deprived of all their power, for they had not worshipped God and earned His grace:

Worldly glory and human relations are short-lived and cannot accompany the soul to the God's court:

"Why impress false religion on the world? It will be of no service to it,
Why run about for the sake of wealth? Thou shalt not be able to fly from Death's mymidons.
Son, wife, friends, disciple, companions—none of these will bear witness for thee.
Think, O think, thou thoughtless and great brute, thou shalt at the last moment have to depart alone."5

"Hear, O fool when life leaveth thy body, the wife crying out 'Ghost, ghost', will flee thee. Thy son, thy wife, thy friends, and companions will give orders to remove thee quickly. When life leaveth thy body all thy mansions, storehouses, lands, and forts will become the property of others. Think, O think, thou thoughtless and great brute, thou shalt at the last moment have to depart alone.\(^1\)

On the other hand virtue will march glorious, destroy sins and achieve bliss:

> Even the demons, gods, and ghosts who repeat God's name in past, future, and present,  
> All the beings which in sea and land every moment set up God in their hearts,  
> Shall find their good deeds and glory increase, they shall hear the voices of gratulation and the multitude of their sins shall depart,  
> The congregations of saints wander happy in the world, all their enemies on beholding them are cowed.\(^2\)

The Guru condemns indulgence in luxury and the habits of vice which power or purse form in man:

> "How can he who is the slave of worldly desires and ever clever in obtaining wealth, obtain the one Lord of the world without faith in Him."\(^3\)

(d) SATIRE

The Religious Revival or Bhakti movement had two aspects, the positive as well as the negative, the devotional as well as the reformative. The movement, as a whole, writes Keay, was a revolt against the cold intellectualism of Brahmanic philosophy and, the lifeless formalism of mere ceremonial\(^4\). It was this aspect of the movement which adopted satire as the weapon of religious reform. The Bhakta poets attacked the cold intellectualism which justified caste, and ceremonial formalism which upheld the superiority of the priesthood. The poor people who were at the lowest rung of the social ladder, were doubly handicapped and consequently treated with scant religious courtesy or consideration. The neo-humanism of the Bhaktas could not accept that position as justifiable against their ideals of common Godhead and humanity.

Kabir led the attack. He attempted satirical verse. The nisarga had got initiation at the feet of Ramanand by having recourse to a clever stratagem\(^5\). He, therefore, appreciated and sympathised with the disabilities of others around him. He had that "amazing boldness with which he attacked the religious practices of his day, tolerating no shame and demanding reality in all those who were seeking after God"\(^6\). He had at the same time, the moral earnestness of appeal to men to put things of God first\(^6\). He may, therefore, be regarded probably first great satirist in Hindi poetry. He was, thus, a source of inspiration, in this negative aspect also, to Guru Nanak and his followers. It is, therefore, possible to appreciate the element of satire in the poetry of Guru Gobind Singh who waged a constant war against orthodoxy which appeared to side in the passive attitude of the hill Rajas towards the tyrannical Mughal rulers. We find in him echoes of Kabir's 'stinging satire'\(^7\) which, like the latter, he lashed ruthlessly.

Satire, in religious verse, appears to begin with the Bhaktas of the School of Ramanand. Most of them belonged to the lower classes and had inherited unconsciously the spirit of revolt against the formalism, caste superiority and cultural aristocracy of Brahmanic religion of those days. Ramanand delivered his message of Bhakti and Spiritual Unity in Hindi instead of in Sanskrit. "And this," says Dr. Kshiti Mohan Sen, "gave a great impetus to the Hindi literature."  

In his hymns or songs, he protested against the oppressive nature of religion with its insistence on pilgrimage, observance of vows, worship of images, rituals, etc. He taught tolerance and a strong faith in God.  

Kabir was a very powerful representative of the school and the most popular of all the Bhaktas whose influence dominated the Punjab. "With an uncommon power," says Dr. Kshiti Mohan Sen, "he dealt his blows against the false practices of his times." And he "has left many fiery sayings against caste, image worship and sectarianism." To me it appears that Kabir is the first religious satirist who influenced Guru Nanak and his followers down to Guru Gobind Singh in didactic and satirical verse. In Bhakti Kusumanjali, Mahamahopadhyaya Laxmidhar Shastri brings out, after giving quotations from Ramanand, Dharni, Tulsi, Surdas, Kabir, Palto, Sahjabai, Rai Dass, etc., that racial discrimination, untouchability, the degradation of women, caste distinctions, colour prejudices, religious denominations, dead rituals, life-less ceremonies, animal sacrifices, futile pilgrimages have all pulled humanity very low. They are, therefore, to be discarded in favour of sweet tolerance, and love for all.  

While Guru Gobind Singh's utterances communicating his spiritual convictions have a tone of lofty serenity and sweetness, his teachings, when he appears in the role of a reformer, are vehement and provocative.  

(i) Idol-Worship  

Guru Gobind Singh does not appreciate idol-worship for the simple reason that the images are inanimate and cannot respond to the feelings of the worshippers:—

"Without God's name thou canst not be saved.  
How shalt thou flee from Him who beholdeth the fourteen worlds in His power?  
Ram and Rahim whose names thou repeatest cannot save thee.  
Brahma, Vishnu, Shiv, the sun and moon are all in the power of Death.  
The Veds, the Purans, the Quran, all sects, Indar, Sheshnag, the kings of the Munis,  
Meditated for many ages on Him, who is called the Indescribable but could form no conception of Him.  
Why should He whose form and colour are not known be called black? (The reference here is to the Hindu God Krishna).  
When thou shalt seize and cling to God's feet, thou shalt be freed from the noose of Death."

1. M.M.I., 72  
2. M.M.I, 71 to 73 fn.  
6. Bhakti Kusumanjali, X to XII.  
7. Sh. H., (10)
Some worshipping stones put them on their heads, some suspend lingams from their necks.
Some see God in the south, some bow their heads to the west.
Some fools worship idols, other busy themselves with worshipping the dead.
The whole world entangled in false ceremonies hath not found God’s secret.”

The stone cannot be God and cannot, therefore, be an object of worship:

“Why worship a stone? God is not in a stone. Worship him as God, by the worship of whom all thy sins will be erased.
And by uttering whose name thou shalt be freed from all thy mental and bodily entanglements.
Make the meditation of God ever thy rule of action; no advantage can be obtained by the practice of false religion.”

Upholding monotheism the Guru says,

“I recognise none but the one God:
I know God as the Destroyer, the Fashioner, the Omnipotent and Eternal Creator.
What availleth it to men to worship stones in various ways with great love and devotion?
The hand growth weary by touching stones, and no spiritual power is obtained.
Rice, incense, lamps are offered to stones, but they eat nothing.
What spiritual power is in them, O fool? What blessing can they bestow on thee?
If they had life, they might give thee something, be assured of this in thought, word and deed—Except in the protection of the one sole God nowhere is salvation.”

(ii) Grave-Worship
Grave-worship is also a superstition like idol-worship:

“If for ages thou do penance to a stone, it will never please thee.
O fool, it will never generously lift its arm to requite thee.
Say, what confidence can be placed in it? When trouble arises, it will not come to save thee.
O ignorant and obstinate man be assured that thy false religion and superstition will ruin thee.”

Worship of images is, therefore, a false ritual which cannot help us to discover God’s secret:

(iii) Religious Controversies
Condemning barren religious controversies, the satirist says,

“The Muhammadans use tasbis, the Hindus malas;
The former read the Quran and the latter the Purans;
Fools have died over the discussion;
They were not imbued with God’s deep love.”

(iv) Mere Repetition of God’s Name
Guru believes in sincere devotion and not in mere lip-worship:

“Without love God cannot be obtained.”

If any one were, by repeating God’s name, to obtain God Who cannot be obtained by lip-worship the warbler ever uttereth ‘Tu hi! tu hi!’"
(v) Rituals

Most of the religious creeds lay stress on rituals, ceremonies and other performances, but do not inculcate the love of God:

"I have wandered and in their own homes seen crowds of Saravagis, Sudhs (means the clean in contradistinction to the saravagis who are reputed to be dirty in their habits) Sidhs, Jogis, and Jatis,

Brave demons, demongods feasting on nectar, and crowds of saints of various sects.

I have seen the religions of all countries, but none appeared to be that of Lord of Life. Without a particle of the love and favour of God they are only worth a ratti (Also translated—regardless of their own position)."

"False religion is without fruit, by the worship of stones Thou has wasted million of ages. How can perfection be obtained by touching stones? Nay, strength and prosperity thus decrease, and the nine treasures are not obtained. Time passeth away while saying to-day to-day: Thou shalt not accomplish thine object; art thou not ashamed?

O fool, thou hast not worshipped God, so thy life hath been passed in vain."

"Without the power of a perfect love for the Master, who has won the noble God?"

(vi) Worship of Gods and Goddesses

According to Guru Nanak, God's will is above Nature as well as working within it, and inspite of its immanence it acts not as an arbitrary force but as a personal presence working most intelligently. The first thing about God is that He is indivisibly One, above every other being however highly conceived, such as Vishnu, Brahma or Shiva or as Rama and Krishna. The second thing is that He is the highest moral being who has inscribed all men with His name or moral presence. Guru Gobind Singh is also of the same view and equally against the belief in gods and goddesses as they are subject to death and are, therefore, imperfect and powerless:

"Ram and Rahim whose names thou repeateth, cannot save thee.

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

When thou shalt seize and cling to God's feet, thou shalt be freed from the noose of Death."

Whatever powers they have are found in God Himself:

"O God, my honour resteth with Thee,
It is Thou who are the blue-throated, man-lion, moving in the water, blue-robed, wearing a necklace of flowers. (The gyanis translate banwari—dweller in the forest).
It is Thou who are the primal Being, Supreme God, Lord, Pure, living on air;
It is Thou who are the Lord of Lakshmi, Great Light, Destroyer of the pride of Madhu,
Bestower of Salvation, Destroyer of Mur.
It is Thou who art changeless, undecaying, sleepless, without evil passions, preserver from hell,
Ocean of mercy, Seer of the past, present and future, Effacer of evil acts.
It is thou who hast the bow in the hand, who art patient, Supporter of the earth, Changeless,
Wielder of the sword.
I of feeble intellect have taken the protection of Thy feet; take my hand and save me."

1. A. U., (28)
2. S., (20)
4. Sh. H., (10)
5. Sh.H., (4)
The gods also depend upon God for their position and power:

"Even the demons, gods, serpents, and ghosts, who repeat God's name, in the past, future and present, all the beings which in sea and land every moment set up God in their hearts, shall find their good deeds and glory increase; they shall hear the voices of gratulation and the multitude of their sins shall depart. The congregations of saints wander happy in the world; all their enemies, on beholding them, are cowed."¹

The names given to gods are generic and do not connote any special powers possessed by them:

"The tortoise, the fish, and the shark may all be called Narayan, if you speak of God as Kaulnabh, the lake in which there is a lotus is also kaulnabh. If you speak of God as Gopinath, all Gujars are Gopinaths, all cowherds Gopals; if you call God Rikabishekh, that is a name taken by superiors of religious orders. If you call God Madhav, that is the bumble bee, Kaniya is the name of the woodpecker, if you speak of God as the Destroyer of Kans, you speak of the myrmidons of Death. Fools utter names, but know not their meanings, and worship not Him by whom man is protected."²

The gods also like human beings seek to attain God in various ways:

"Demigods, demons, sheshnag serpents, famous sids have done great penance: The Veds, The Purans, the Quran, all have grown weary singing Thy praises, O God, but Thou art not known unto them. Thou knowest all hearts on earth, in heaven, in the nether regions, and in every direction. Thy praises fill the earth, they entering my heart told me this."³

Gods like Krishna are subject to birth and death like other living beings:

"Ye say that God is unconceived and unborn, how could he have been born from the womb of Kaushalya? If he whom we call Krishna were God, why was he subject to death? Why should God whom ye describe as holy and without enmity have driven Arjun's Chariot? Worship as God Him, whose secret none hath known or shall know."⁴

"Say if Krishan were the Ocean of mercy, why should the hunter's arrow have struck him? If he can save other families, why did he destroy his own? Say, why did he, who called himself the eternal and the unconceived, enter into the womb of Devaki? Why did he, who had no father or mother, call Vasudev his father?"⁵

It is not correct that Brahma, Vishnu or Shiv is Lord of the Universe. It is dull-headedness to think so:

"Why call Shiv God, and why speak of Brahma as God? God is not Ram Chandar, Krishan or Vishnu who ye suppose to be lords of the world. Sukdev Parasar, and Vyas erred in abandoning the one God and worshipping many gods. All have set up false religions; I in every way believe that there is but one God."⁶

"Some worship Brahma as God, others point to Shiv as God. Some say that Vishnu is the Lord of the world, and that by worshipping him all sins are erased. Think on this a thousand times, O fool, at the last hour all thy gods will forsake thee, Meditate on Him in thy heart who was, is, and ever shalt be."⁷

(vii) Religious Sects

(i) The various sects prevailing in the country do not help in the attainment of God, because they cannot win the love and grace of God:

"I have wandered and in their own homes seen crowds of Saravagis, Sudhs, Sidhs, Jogis, and Jatis.

Brave demons, demigods feasting on nectar, and crowds of saints of various sects,
I have seen the religions of all countries, but none appeared to be that of the Lord of life.
Without a particle of the love and favour of God they are only worth a ratti."7

(ii) They are like different poses which actor-man assumes in order to play a particular part:

"Like an actor, man sometimes poseth as a Jogi or Bairagi, sometimes he assumeth the guise of a Sanyasi.
Sometimes he appreareth to live on air, sometimes he sitteth in an attitude of contemplation, sometimes in his infatuation for self he singeth many praises of men.
Sometimes he is a Brahamachari, sometimes he produceth a garden in his hand, sometimes he holdeth a fakir's staff and deceiveth men's senses.
He who is subject to worldly desires danceth with gestures; but being devoid of divine knowledge, how shall he obtain heaven."8

(iii) The yogis, and yatis are like ordinary men, mere mortals or heroes:

"Jogis, Jatis, Bramacharis, and very great kings, the shadow of whose umbrellas extended for many miles,
Who wandered subduing kingdoms and crushing the pride of very great kings,
Sovereigns like Maan* and lords of the umbrella like Dalip, great kings who prided themselves on the strength of their arms.
Proud men like Dara, like the kings of Delhi, and like Durjodhan, having enjoyed the earth in their turn at last were blended with it."9

(iv) The creeds of Dattatre, Gorakh or Ramanand and Mohammad do not stand for the worship of God:

"Afterwards I created Dattatre who also struck out his own path. He paved not his finger nails, he decorated his head with mattered hair, and paid no heed to my worship."10

Then I created Gorakh who made great kings his disciples,
And tearing their ears put rings in them,
But he thought not of the way of My love."11

"Then I created Ramanand
Who wore the garb of a Bairagi,
Put a wooden necklace on his neck,
And paid no heed to my worship."12

"They who were created by Me
Struck out their several paths.
I then created Mohammad,
And made him king of Arabia."
He too established a religion of his own,
"Cut off the foreskins of all his followers

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THOUGHT VALUE

And made every one repeat his name;
But no one fixed the true name in man's heart."\(^1\)
"All these were wrapped up in themselves,
And none of them recognised Me, the Supreme Being."\(^2\)

(v) The Yogis, the Sanyasis, the Mohammedans cannot tell the secret of God:
"If any one go to a monastery of Yogis, they will ask him to repeat the name of Gorakh;
If any one go to a monastery of Sanyasis, they will say that only Dattatre is true, and they will give him his name as the spell of initiation;
If any one go to the Mussalmans, they will seize and convert him to the faith of Muhammad—Every sect deemeth that the Creator is with itself alone; but no one can disclose the Creator's secret."\(^3\)

(vi) The followers of different creeds are parasites on the worldly men and do not enlighten them about the ways of God:
"If any one go to the Yogis they will tell him to give every thing—house and property—to them;
If any one haste to the Sanyasis, they will tell him to part with his house in the name of Dattatre;
If any one go to the masands, they will tell him to bring all his property at once and give it to them.
Every one saith, 'Bring me, Bring me,' but no body will show me God."\(^4\)

(vii) The masands too have become corrupt like the others:
"If any one serve the masands, they will say, 'Fetch and give us all thine offerings.
'Go at once and make a present to us of whatever property is in thy house.
'Think on us night and day, and mention not others even by mistake.'
If they hear of any one giving, they run to him even at night, they are not at all pleased at not receiving.'\(^5\)
"They put oil into their eyes to make people believe that they are shedding tears.
If they see any of their own worshippers wealthy, they serve up sacred food and feed him with it,
If they see him without wealth, they give him nothing, though he beg for it; they will not even show him their faces.
Those beasts plunder men, and never sing the praises of the Supreme Being."\(^6\)
"They close their eyes like cranes and offer the world a spectacle of deceit.
They go about with their hands bowed down like poachers; cats on seeing such attitudes would be ashamed.
The more they go about clinging to the hope of wealth the more they lose this world and the next.
Thou hast not repeated God's name, O Fool; why art thou entangled in thy domestic affairs?"\(^7\)

(viii) Hypocrisy

The Guru is of the opinion that the different religions or wandering sects that assume religious garbs practise hypocrisy in the name of religion:
"They who wear a religious garb
Are deemed naught by the saints of God

1. B. N., VI (27)
2. B. N., VI (28)
3. S., (26)
4. S., (27)
5. S., (28)
6. S., (29)
7. S., (30)
Understand this, all men, in your hearts,  
That God is not obtained by hypocrisy.”¹

They succeed in deceiving the kings:
They who act for the sake of display,  
Shall not obtain salvation in the next world;  
And it is only for life their affairs prosper  
Kings on seeing their acting worship them.”²
But God is not to be found by mummeries.  
Yet every one wandereth about thus searching for Him.  
He who keepeth his heart in subjection  
Recognizeth the Supreme Being.”³

They make spiritual slaves of people:
“They who by wearing a religious garb keep the people of the world in subjection,  
Shall at last be cut with the shears of Death and take up their abode in hell.”⁴⁵

They make a good job of fleecing people:
“They who present appearances to the world,  
Experience extreme pleasure in fleecing others,  
Spurious, and not worth a kauri, is the religion  
Of those who practise suspension of the breath by stopping their noses.”⁶

(ix) Religious Hypocrisy
The Guru denounces those who specialise “in closing their eyes”:
“They who practise spurious religion in the world.  
Shall fall into the pit of hell.  
He who can in no way subdue his heart  
Shall not go to heaven by gesticulation.”⁷
“They who practise hypocrisy by closing their eyes.  
Should be treated as blind men.  
Since the road is not seen by closing one’s eyes,  
How can such persons, my brethren, meet the Infinite ?”⁸
“What availleth it to sit closing both eyes and meditating like a crane ?  
This world is lost, and the next also for those who go about bathing in the seven seas.  
They pass their lives in vain, dwelling in the midst of sin.  
I speak verily; hear me all ye people—they who love God have obtained Him.”⁹

He takes up yogis sharply and says that they have befuddled the world believing that the strength of Yog lies in hypocrisy and that they have persuaded themselves to believe that they have turned their back on Maya; but as a matter of fact, Maya has still a hold on them. He condemns them saying:
“O Jogi, Jog consisteth not in matted hair.  
Why wear thyself out and kill thyself wandering ? Consider this in thy mind.  
The man who knoweth the supreme divine knowledge shall obtain the great reward;  
He shall then restrain his mind in one place, and not run wandering from door to door.  
What availleth it to leave one’s home, run away, and dwell in a forest.”

When one's heart ever remaineth at home? Such a person is not an Udasi.

Basting of thy religious fervour, thou deceivest the world by the exercise of great deception.

Thou thinkest in thy heart that thou hast abandoned worldly love, but worldly love hath not abandoned thee."1

External marks of the yogi serve only to deceive men:

"O man with the garb, religion consisteth not in wearing a garb.

It consisteth not in wearing matted hair and long nails, or in smearing ashes on the body, or
dying thy raiment.

If man obtain Jog by dwelling in the forest, the bird ever dwelleth there.
The elephant ever throweth dust on his head; consider this in thy heart.

Frogs and fishes ever bathe at places of pilgrimage.
The cat, the wolf, and the crane meditate; what know they of religion?

As thou endurest pain to deceive men, do so also for God's sake,

Thus shalt thou know great divine knowledge and quaff the supreme nectar."2

"O man, by attitudes of contemplation, matted hair, and the overgrown nails of thy hands thou
decieveth all people.

Thou goest about with ashes smeared on thy face and cheatest all the demigods and the
demons.

Addicted to avarice thou wanderest from house to house; the means by which Jog is obtained
thou hast all forgotten.

Thou hast lost all shame and succeeded in nothing; without love, God cannot be obtained."3

This hypocrisy is practised for the sake of belly:

"O foolish man, why play the hypocrite? Thou losest thine honour by practising hypocrisy.

Thou cheat why cheat people? This world is lost to thee and so is the next.

Where the Compassionate to the poor dwelleth, there shalt thou find no place.

Think, O think, thou thoughtless and great fool, the Unseen is not found by assuming garbs."4

The unholy practise hypocrisy for the sake of their bellies:

Without hypocrisy they can obtain naught.

The men who meditate on the one Being
Never practise hypocrisy on any one."5

"Without hypocrisy they would obtain nothing,
For no one would bow before any of them.

If no one had a belly,

Who would describe anyone as rich or poor."6

Believers in one God regard their belly as nothing:

"They who have concluded that God is one
Never practise hypocrisy on any one
They give their heads, but abandon not their determination;
They regard their bodies as nothing."7

"Men who split their ears are called Jogis.

With great deceit they betake themselves to the forest.
They who know not the virtue of the One Name
Belong neither to the forest nor to the household."8
Magical Practices

Guru Gobind Singh, in his Bachitra Natak, says that his father preferred death to performing a miracle, which according to him was 'an act of jugglery or make-believe of which any man of God would be ashamed.' These he regarded as Bharmjal. Those who practise magic or perform miracles or unnatural tricks are equally condemnable:

"Swine eat filth; elephants and donkeys bespatter themselves with dust; jackals live at places of cremation; Owls live in tombs; deer wander alone in the forest; trees ever die in silence.

The man who restraineth his seed should only have the credit of the hermaphrodite; monkeys ever wander bare-footed.

How shall the wretch who is subject to a woman and devoted to lust and wrath, be saved without the knowledge of the one God?"

"It is known that demons live in the forest, all children on earth drink milk, and serpents live on air.

They who eat grass and renounce the desire of wealth, are no more than calves and oxen.

They who fly in the heavens have only the attribute of birds; they who engage in meditation resemble cranes, cats and wolves.

All great gyanis who knew, but asserted not themselves, never allowed such deceit as the above to enter their hearts even by mistake."

They who live in the earth should be called the offspring of worms; they who live in the heavens should be called birds.

As they do, so they become:

"They who eat fruit should be called the offspring of monkeys; they who wander unseen should be accounted as ghosts.

They who float on water are like gangetic; they who eat fire like chakors; They who worship the sun have the attribute of the lotus; they who worship the moon, of water-lilies."

Such feats or performances cannot discover the secrets of God:

"God is the Protector and Destroyer of the world, Compassionate to the poor, Punisher of enemies, ever the Cherisher, and free from Death's noose.

Jogis, wearers of matted hair, celibates, the true, great Brahmcharis who undergo hunger and thirst in their divine meditation,

They who perform the niwali feat, who sacrifice to water, fire, and wind, who hold their heads down, who stand on one leg and never sit.

Men, serpents, deities, and demons find not God's secrets; the Veds and the books of the Mussalmans say that God is indescribable."

Peacocks skip about dancing, the thunder roareth and the lightning presenteth many phases.

If God be obtained by being cold or hot, there is nothing colder than the moon, nothing hotter than the sun; if by being a Rajah God may be obtained, there is no king equal to Indar who filleth the whole world.

Nowhere can be found a penitent like Shiv, a reader of the Veds like primal Brahma, or penitents like the sons of Brahma;

Yet without divine knowledge they are all subject to the noose of death and ever wander through the cycle of ages."
"It is not by the practice of perpetual silence, nor by the ostensible relinquishment of pride, 
 nor by the adoption of a religious dress, nor by shaving the head, 
Nor by wearing a wooden necklace, nor by twisting matted hair round the head that God 
is found. 
I speak the truth, hear it attentively—without entering the protection of the Compassionate to 
the poor 
And loving Him can God be found? The Merciful One is not pleased with circumcision."1

(xi) Pilgrimage

Going on pilgrimage and doing other acts of merit are in vain unless one bears 
God in mind:

"Men bathe at places of pilgrimage, exercise mercy, curb their passions, bestow gifts, exercise 
abstinence, and perform various special ceremonies—
The Veds, the Purans, the Quran, and the other books of the Mussalmans, the earth and heaven 
all have I seen;
Thousands of fasters, Jatis who practised continence, all have I carefully observed;
Yet without worshipping the name of the one God and loving Him even kings are of no 
account."2

(xii) False Practices.

Yogic feats and acts of penances are equally fruitless because, being physical 
exercises, they cannot contribute to man's spiritual progress:

"The peacocks dance, the frogs croak, and the clouds ever thunder;
The tree ever standeth on one leg in the forest; as for those who take not life, the Saravagi 
bloweth on the ground before putting his feet on it; 
The stones through several ages remain in one place; the ravens and the kites travel from country 
to country. 
How can the poor fellow (the wretch) who is without divine knowledge and who is never absorbed 
in the great Benefactor, be saved without faith in Him?"3

"Like an actor man sometimes poseth as a Jogi or Bairagi; sometimes he assumeth the guise of a 
Sanyasi. 
Sometimes he appeareth to live on air, sometimes he sitteth in an attitude of contemplation, 
sometimes in his infatuation for pelf he singeth many praises of men. 
Sometimes he is a Brahmacari, sometimes he produceth a garden in his hand, sometimes he 
holdeth a fakir's staff and deceiveth men's senses. 
He who is subject to worldly desires danceth with gestures; but being devoid of divine knowledge, 
how shall he obtain heaven?"4

"In the cold season the jackal barketh five times, and the elephant and the donkey utter various 
cries. 
What availeth it to be cut in twain by the saw at Banaras? Thieves cut men in pieces and kill 
them with axes. 
What availeth it that a fool hath put a halter round his neck and drowned himself in the Ganges? 
Thags put men to death by putting halters round their necks. 
Without meditation on divine knowledge fools are drowned in hell's river; and without faith how 
can there be any such meditation?"5

"If any one were to obtain by penance the Lord who suffereth not pain, the wounded man 
suffereth pain of many kinds.

If anyone were by repeating God’s name to obtain God who cannot be obtained by lip-worship, the warbler ever uttereth ‘Tu hi, Tu hi!’

If anyone were to obtain God by flying in the heavens, the bird called anal wandereth in the firmament.

If salvation be obtained by burning oneself in the fire, why should not the Sati and also the serpent which liveth in hell be saved?“

“Artillerymen, huntsmen wearing decoy dresses, and they who eat opium, bow their heads many times.

What availleth it that men perform prostrations of different kinds to God? They are like wrestlers practising the exercise of dand.

What availleth it that men lie with their faces turned up? If they do not heartily bow to the supreme God, they are only as sick men.

How can he who is the slave of worldly desires and ever clever in obtaining wealth, obtain the one Lord of the world without faith in Him?”

“Peacocks skip about dancing, the thunder roareth and the lightning presenteth many phases.

If God be obtained by being cold or hot, there is nothing colder than the moon, nothing hotter than the sun, if by being a raja God may be obtained, there is no king equal to Indar who filleth the whole world.

Nowhere can be found a penitent like a Shiv, a reader of the Veds like primal Brahma, or penitents like the sons of Brahma;

Yet without divine knowledge they are all subject to the noose of Death and ever wander through the cycle of ages.”

“One Shiv was born, one died, and one was born again; there have also been many incarnations of Ram Chandar and Krishan.

How many Brahmans and Vishnus have there been! How many Veds and Purans! How many collections of Simritis have been and passed away!

How many preachers and Madaars!* How many Castors and Polluxes! How many Ansavatars have succumbed to death!

How many priests and prophets have there been! They are so many that they cannot be counted; from dust they sprang and to dust they returned.”

“Why performest thou false penance to the gods? It will not avail thee a Kauri.”

(xiii) Religious Learning

Mere learning of religious books or theological controversies cannot be helpful in attaining spiritual heights, which is primarily a matter of heart:

“The Veds, the Purans, the Quran, all have grown weary singing Thy praises, O God, but thou art not known unto them.”

These books of theology and religious philosophy cannot explain the mystery of God:

“The Veds and the books of the Mussalmans have not found God’s secret; all the Sindhis have grown weary contemplating Him.

The Simritis, Shastars, Veds, and Purans all describe Him in various ways;

But God who was in the beginning, and who had no beginning, whose story is unfathomable, cannot be known. He saved such as Dhru, Prahlad, and Ajamal.

The courtesan was saved by repeating God’s name; that name is my support, the object of my thoughts.”

1. A. U., (84) 2. A. U., (76) 3. A. U., (76) *Madaar was a celebrated Muslim saint.
"He who made millions of Indars, He who made and destroyed some millions of Bawan. Demons, demigods, serpents, sheshnags, birds and beasts innumerable, To whom till today Shiv and Brahma are doing penance without finding His limit, He whose secrets the Vedas and the Quran have not penetrated, is the great Being whom the Guru (Guru Tegh Bahadur) hath shown me."1

Mere controversy dries up the spirit of devotion:
"They who were smitten by the Simritis abandoned my worship.
They who attached their hearts to my feet
Did not walk in the way of the Simritis"2
"God remaineth apart from those
Who indulge in wrangling and pride,
He is not found in the Vedas or the books of the Muhammedans.
Know this in your hearts, O saints of God."3

Although the Guru has written so much satirising the religious practices, he does not altogether despise Hindu beliefs in the God-heads of Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh and others. He feels that even though these persons are also of divine origin and even though they, too, have been sent by God to preach true religion, they have failed. For, each one of them has led to a different interpretation of God. In the Bachitra Natak, he proclaims to all men what God told him:
"In their (demons') places I established the gods:
They also busied themselves with receiving sacrifices and worship
And called themselves supreme being."4
"Mahadev called himself the imperishable God;
Vishnu too declared himself to be God,
Brahma called himself the supreme Brahma,
And no body thought Me to be God."5
"They (Eight Sakhis) told people to worship them,
And said, 'There is no God but us.'"6
"How many worshipped the sun and moon!"7
How many made burnt offerings! How many worshipped the wind!
"Some recognized a stone as God."8
"They whom I appointed to watch over creatures,
On coming into this world called themselves Gods,
They altogether forgot my orders,
And became absorbed each in his own praise."9

Therefore, the Guru takes it almost as his duty to preach the true religion:
"Nothing is to be obtained by putting hopes in others;
Put the hopes of your hearts in the one God alone
Nothing is obtained by hoping in others;
Put the hopes of your hearts in Him."10

He discourages the old religious practices of the Hindus and the Muslims:
"Millions of men may read the Quran.
They may read innumerable Furans
But it shall be of no use to them in the future (life)
And the power of fate shall still rule over them."11

Duncan Greenlees, in his work, the Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib, has tried to appreciate this satirical vein in a very sympathetic manner, when he says:

"This is not an attack on sacred books but on bibliolatory, relying on adherence to one rather than another to supply the lack of virtue and devotion."¹

The Guru's general attitude towards religions is, however, based on doctrines and philosophies of his predecessors who recognised all the religions leading to the threshold of God. In this respect, in the Akal Ustat, he says—

"The temple and the mosque are the same; the Hindu worship and the Mussalman prayer are the same; all men are the same; it is through error they appear different.

Allah and Abhekh are the same; the Purans and the Quran are the same; they are all alike; it is the one God who created all."²

To sum up, the best of Guru Gobind Singh is found in his devotional poetry, not in his satirical or didactic verses. The heart makes fuller amends for the head which is liable to be impatient and intolerant towards the failings of the common man. It is his devotional poetry which rises from abundance of love or pity, of self-surrender or humility. Such poetry of his comes home to men's bosoms and it is this poetry that is chanted in moments of devotion or distress:

"O God, give me Thy hand and protect me,
And all my desires shall be fulfilled
May my heart be ever attached to Thy feet
Deem me thy own and cherish me!"³

Secular Poetry

The secular poetry was the hall-mark of the Ritiikal of the Hindi literature.⁴ The Dasam Granth which belongs to this period presents abundant poetry of this kind. This poetry of the Dasam Granth may well be classified into (a) heroic, (b) autobiographical, (c) mythological and (d) characterological poetry. These are discussed below.

(a) Heroic Poetry

Guru Gobind Singh developed into a soldier-poet. It is interesting to study the evolution of his art under the stress of circumstances. He was essentially a poet who took to sword and then wrote martial verse to breathe fire into the minds of his fellow soldiers.

The Guru believed that it was a mission of his life to fight against the oppressors:

He says—

"I assume birth for the purpose of spreading the faith,
Saving the saints, and extirpating all tyrants."⁵

To fulfil this mission was not an easy task, particularly in the days of the Mughal tyranny. He had to face many difficulties which were further aggravated by the bigoted policy of Aurangzeb. To those open to reason, he preached his message and against those who believed only in the physical force, he raised his sword.

His revolt against the enemies of religion and his attempts at war poetry were

¹ G. G. G. S., 212 ² A. U., (86) ³ P. Ch.—Poei Chaupai—405 (377) ⁴ H. L., 79 ⁵ B. N., VI (43)
not in any way prompted by any desire for wealth, land or fame. He attempted the heroic verse and had it sung or recited to his soldiers with the sole purpose of inspiring the people with the will to be perpetual fighters of the battle of Dharma i.e., to uphold righteousness. At the end of the *Krisanavtar*, the poet says:

"O God, I am composing the story of *Bhagout* for no other motive than to fire men’s hearts with the feeling of holy war."1

He, therefore, infused martial spirit into them by his soul-inspiring and heart-stirring descriptions of battles. Commenting on his *Chandi Charitra* I, at the end, the poet says,

"This composition is imbued with *raudra rasa*."2

Again, at the end of *Chandi Charitra*, II he says,

"Even if a low coward hears this ballad, he will be thrilled with love of war and offer himself to fight in the battle."3

At the end of *Chandi Charitra* I, he prays to Chandi to grant him the object (*namit*) with which this composition has been attempted.

"Chandi! grant the object with which the poet has translated it."4

No doubt, he took to sword but that was only as the last resort towards the fulfilment of his mission. In the *Zafarnamah*, addressing Aurangzeb, he says—

"Chun Kaar uz hamah heelte dar guzasht
Halal ust burdan ba shamsher dast"

"When all other means have failed
It is righteous to draw the sword."5

Guru Gobind Singh himself was a brave soldier. This is evident from his own writings in the *Bachitra Natak*. While describing the battle of Bhangani that he fought, he says

"When this insignificant creature saw
Shah Sangram fall in battle,
He took up his bow and arrows,
With the first arrow I struck a Khan

Who fell to the ground,
I then drew out another
And aimed at the face of Bikhan Khan.
The bloody Khan fled leaving his horse,
Whom the third arrow struck and killed."6

"When I felt the touch of the arrow,
My wrath was kindled.
I took up my bow
And began to discharge arrows in abundance."7

He could never forget that in his veins ran the blood of brave *Kshatriyas*. He, therefore, could not think of adopting an attitude of escapism towards the disturbed conditions of his time. He writes,

"I am the son of a Kshatri, not of a Brahman; how can I perform austerities?
How can I turn my attention to Thee, O Lord,
And forsake domestic affairs."8

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Rather, he was anxious to die in a battle-field and therefore prayed to God:

"Now be pleased to grant me the boon, I crave with clasped hands,

That when the end of my life cometh,
I may die fighting in a mighty battle."1

In battles, he always felt that he had full protection of the Almighty on whose injunctions he was acting:

"Who can meditate anything against those who enter the saints' protection?
God preserveth them as the tongue is preserved among the teeth; He destroyeth their enemies and allayeth their suffering."2

"The Master Himself saved (me) by His shielding hand."3

"What can an enemy do to him whom the Friend preserveth?
He cannot even touch his shadow; all his attacks would be fruitless."4

"All-death saveth all His saints.
He hath tortured and destroyed all sinners,
He had shown wonderful things to His saints
And saved them from all misery."5

"Knowing me to be His slave He hath sided me,
He hath given His hand and saved me."6

"The Lord of the world saved me."7

He, therefore, never felt proud of victory which he always thought, was won through God's grace. After the victory in the battle of Bhangani, he said:

"It is through the favour of Eternal God, I gained the victory."8

In defeat, desertion or despair, he believed that Almighty alone could save him and therefore, he always lifted his voice to Mahakal to protect him with his helping hands:

"Mahakal, be Thou my protector,
All steel, I am Thy slave;
Deeming me Thine own, preserve me;
Think of mine honour—deeming me Thine own, cherish me."9

Even at the most gloomy hour he invoked only the Almighty for help, guidance and protection and none else.

The Guru did not believe in deviating from the right course even while fighting against the enemy. At the end of the Chandi Charitra I, the Guru seeks God's blessings in the same spirit of a true warrior:

"Give me this power, O Almighty!
From righteous deeds I may never refrain."10

Nor did he expect his enemy to use any foul means. In his letter of protest to Aurangzeb, he charged the emperor with breach of faith for his commanders began to pursue him in the sands of Bhatinda inspite of their having promised protection on his surrendering the fort of Anandpur. While dealing with his unscrupulous enemies who had gone back on their word of honour, the Guru asserted that it was the sacred duty of a man like him to draw the sword and fight against his enemy to the last.11

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5. B. N., XIV (1) 6. B. N., XIV (2, iii, iv) 7. B. N., XI (69) 8. B. N., VIII (34)
He did not regard the loss of his father, mother, sons, followers he incurred, as acts of benevolence to the oppressed. On the other hand, he took them as acts of duty incumbent on him for the fulfilment of his mission. This is what he always expected his followers to do. He says,

"Blest is his life in this world who repeateth God's name with his mouth and contemplates war in his heart."

Guru Gobind Singh regarded the death of a soldier as the death of a martyr equal to the fruit of many years' devotion and ensured honour and glory in the next world. He prays to God:

"When this mortal life comes to a close may I die with the joy and courage of a martyr!"

He, therefore, earnestly prays to God:

"Be pleased to grant me the boon
I crave with clasped hands
That when the end of my life cometh
I may die fighting in a battle!"

The heroic poetry in the Dasam Granth may be classified into two types, the realistic and conventional. The realistic war poetry treats the themes of fight in which Guru Gobind Singh was himself engaged. It deals with events of history and their description is authentic, for Guru Gobind Singh himself was a commanding general and soldier. The conventional war poetry is mythical, legendary or historical. It describes battle-scenes in which gods, ancient or legendary heroes, fought against their demon or mortal enemies. The great quality of the poet of the Dasam Granth is that he is able to thrill his readers with martial spirit. He succeeds in creating the moods of enthusiasm and exaltation associated with the poetry of Vir-rasa from time immemorial.

(b) Autobiographical Poetry

Dr. Mohan Singh Diwana, in his essay on "Guru Gobind Singh as a Poet", while pointing out the personal element in Guru Gobind Singh's poetry, says,

"The personal element is something entirely new in him. No other saint or poet before him in the whole history of Indian literature has left an autobiography, which is informed by such strength of narration, such earnest conviction of the goal and such truth and freedom and fearlessness of factual indictment. 'I do not care for any god or man, says he; am not afraid of them, resting as I am in His bosom with my fullest trust in His Divine Omnipresent Aid.' A great man, for, an entirely self-conscious, self-confident, humourful and integrity-charged person."

This is indeed the distinct feature of the Bachitra Natak, a narrative verse, in which he gives his ancestral account mixed with legendary lore, the detailed account of his previous birth, his discourse with God when he was not quite willing to leave His lotus-feet, the story of his life, mission and the battles that he fought against his enemies. It is, no doubt, an incomplete story but its authentic value is immensely great. Historians have liberally drawn on this composition in their account of the political conditions prevailing in

the Punjab of his days. Towards the close of the *Bachitra Natak*, he discloses his plan of the *Bachitra Natak Granth* which was yet to be completed.

The traits of the personality of Guru Gobind Singh, as revealed in his autobiography, distinguish him from his predecessors. His personality, though in agreement with other Gurus in the essentials of Sikhism, struck a new note. It would appear as if under the stress of circumstances, the personality of the Sikh Gurus evolved in the form of Guru Gobind Singh’s personality. He had, no doubt, all the saintly qualities of his predecessors, the Gurus, but that was only one side of his personality. He was a saint for the good but for the wicked he was a soldier determined to finish him and extirpate the evil from the universe. Like his predecessors, he had no false vanity. He was full of humility but humble he would be only to those who knew the value of humility. To others he was a fierce opponent prepared to pay in the same coin. Like other Gurus, he entertained no fear of any mortal and he could sacrifice anything and everything for his principles, but he would not leave things to take their own shape. He would, on the other hand, spare no pains or consider no sacrifice too great to see the evil punished and the good rewarded.

He had a complete reliance on God, like his predecessors. He considered himself God’s chosen instrument for spreading the faith, saving the saints and extirpating all tyrants. In regard to the extirpation of tyrants, Dr. Indubhushan Banerjee has beautifully brought out the Guru’s conception of the role of sword in the following words:

“But for these purposes, particularly the second one the old weapons of service, humility and prayer were wholly out of place and in the very opening verses of the *Bachitra Natak* the Guru makes his position clear. His reliance was on God and the Holy Sword. The past that he had inherited and the circumstances in which he was placed naturally led him to think of God as the punisher of the wicked, and as the Sword is a great weapon for that purpose, in the Guru’s mind the two become identical. ‘God subdues enemies so does the Sword; therefore the Sword is God and God is the Sword.”

The Guru remained unmoved even in the most difficult hours of his life, fighting incessantly against enemies of humanity. He had an independent character and was frank and bold in his statements. He had a strong personality and adhered to his convictions. The personality of Guru Gobind Singh, therefore, combined in it the various divergent traits rendering him fully competent to fulfil his mission. It was this type of personality, his age needed but this would not urge him to escape the realities of life.

The art of biography was seldom tried in the medieval Hindi or Panjabi literature. In Hindi, there are stray examples of this type of composition: *Gosain Charitra* by Beni Madhav, *Tulsi Charit* by Baba Raghbar Dass. In Gurmukhi script, however, there are some more examples: *Gur Bilas* by Bhai Darbara Singh, by Bhai Sukha Singh, by Mohan Kavi and *Janam Sakhi* by Bhai Ganesha Singh based on the lives of the Sikh Gurus. Similarly in autobiography, the field was almost new. The *Bhakta* poets, like the secular poets in Hindi and Panjabi, had given some hints or clues about important incidents of their lives, scattered here and there in their devotional verses, but no poet, except Jain poet Banarsi Das who wrote his incomplete autobiography in *Ardha Kathana*, had ever thought of giving, or tried to give an account of his birth, parentage, his dreams and adventures. It was left to Guru Gobind Singh to make a fresh experiment in the art of autobiography.

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Guru Gobind Singh had long felt the need for awakening the slumbering souls of the down-trodden people. The masses had completely lost their way in the intricate paths of numerous creeds and castes and were mistaking the distortions for facts. In the introduction of the Chaubis Avtar he writes,

"Men are entangled with their own affairs; no one knoweth the Supreme God.
Some (Hindus) go to the places of cremation, other (Mussalmans) to cemeteries; but God is at neither."

To those who had pinned their absolute faith in him, he in his capacity as a Guru proceeded to enlighten them through his didactic poetry. But to those who had been attracted towards him not because of their faith in his religious doctrines but for his heroism, and whose faith in the Guru was still in its formative stage, he gave a psychological treatment. He knew that with such people neither religious sermons would be effective nor would the satirical approach bring any fruit. He, therefore, used the method of suggestiveness to bring them into his fold and, with this in view, he rendered freely in vernacular all the stories of the Avtars of Vishnu, Brahma and Rudra and the goddess Chandi. Through this compendium he sought to bring such people into his fold who otherwise would have shown reluctance in following his lead because of their different faith. Accordingly, the entire volume is devoted only to the narration of the life-stories of the Avtars, without the poet's indulging in any sort of criticism or interpretations thereof. He, however, does not forget to remind the reader, in a mild tone, of his own convictions when and wherever he feels that a particular work or portion of the story is likely to distract the people from the path he considers right. But while doing so he appears to have exercised caution in not vehemently refuting these myths. In the Krisanavtar accordingly the poet writes:

"I do not at the outset propitiate Ganesb,
I never meditate on Kishan or Vishnu;
I have heard of them but I know them not;
It is only God's feet I love."

Again, in Shesh-Shayi Avtar, he says:

There are millions of Bishen and Mahesh in the body of Akal-Purahk.

In the introduction of the Chaubis Avtar he says,

"They who recognize the Primal Being as One God,
All other belief to enter their hearts."

"They who cherish any other belief,
Shall be debarred from meeting the friend."

In other works also he loses no opportunity to bring home to his followers the fictional aspect of these myths. He says,

"He made millions of Indras and Bawans;
He created and destroyed Brahmans and Shiv
The fourteen worlds He made as a play,
And again blended them with Himself."
"He created millions of worms like Krishna."1

"I will not repeat any other name nor establish any other god in my heart."2

It is mostly in these religious works, he is at times sarcastic, and vehemently refutes these myths.

The poet's absolute faith in Bhagauti as revealed in the first pauri of Chandi-di-Var which is included in the daily prayers of the Sikhs should not lead one to think that by Bhagauti he means any goddess. The word Bhagauti, whenever used by Guru Gobind Singh stands for Akal-Purakh, the Creator Himself, and for none else.

This compendium has a utility also for the Sikhs, for it serves as a very comprehensive key to the mythological illusions referred to in the Adi Granth, without which it becomes difficult to appreciate fully the contents of this sacred book.

The most important feature of this work is chiefly the description of the war scenes. In the course of the Guru's narrating his stories, his dwelling on the war scenes reveals that he did not hesitate to exploit fully those portions of the stories which suited his underlying motive of inciting his men to holy war which had become a mission of his life. It is evident from his own writings:

"O God, I am composing the story of Bhagout in Hindi verse,
For no other motive than to fire men's heart with the feeling of holy war."3

While concluding the Chandi Charitra I, he says that his composition is informed with raudra rasa through and through, and that he has achieved the nimit (object) he had placed before himself in the composition:

"This poem is imbued with raudra rasa."4

At the end of Chandi Charitra II, he says,

"Even if a low coward hears the ballad, he will be thrilled with the love of war and offer himself to fight in the battle."5

Of the Mythological compositions, the Chandi Charitra first and second and Chandi-di-Var are purely war poems. The other compositions where war descriptions are found are Kachh Avtar, Bairah Avtar, Bavan Avtar, Paras Rum Avtar, Rudra Avtar, Jallandhar Avtar, Vishnu Avtar, Suraj Avtar, Ramavtar, Krisanavtar, Nar Avtar, Kaliki Avtar. There are duels, mass fights accompanied with storms of dust, filling the whole atmosphere with sounds and noises of all sorts.

(d) CHARACTEROLOGICAL POETRY

The Pakhyan Charitra is a rich gallery of descriptions of human types in mixed Punjabi and Braji. These Charitras are good examples of the art of character delineation. Though many of these characters belong to ancient times they appear to describe even some of our living acquaintances. The aim of this work, as already discussed in the preceding chapter, is to raise the moral standard of the readers by examples of various types of good and evil which may warn them against sex urges appearing in many a disguise, and

strengthen their moral convictions. These Pakhyans have been designed primarily for the simple people who had not the religious background strong enough to check such deviations from moral side of life.

The poet was, undoubtedly, fully aware of the human weakness brought out by sexual urges and gave a timely warning to his followers from going astray. Here it may not be out of place to mention that in these tales at no stage has the poet introduced the religious or moral force. He has, on the other hand, applied the effective technique of suggestiveness by acquainting his followers with the motives that lie behind the acts of all types of people one comes across in life and thus developing in them an insight into the human character.

The poet, at many places, has, through the Pakhyan Charitra, tried to enlighten his disciples on the subtlety of woman’s nature knowing fully well that it is far beyond the understanding of an ordinary person unless the reality is laid bare to him through the grace of God. He regarded it as his mission to eradicate the evil from the universe, by warning the people against such temptations. He says:

No body can divine the character of a woman, fickle-minded as they are
He alone, can see through their character traits whom God succours.¹
No body can read the character of woman
Not Vishnu, Shiva and the six-faced Kartikeya, etc.
Not even Brahma, the very creator of the universe who created them.²

He goes so far as even to assert that

There is no end to the fancies of these women.
Even the Creator has repented for having created them.³
After all, no body has understood the mind of women
Even the Creator after having created them repented
Even He Who has created the whole universe accepted defeat
After he had probed into the secrets of woman.⁴

The poet does not hesitate even to quote instances, when required, from his personal life to impress upon the people the charitra of the women.⁵

The women-characters of these tales, almost all, suffer from passionate desires and they use all the means, fair and foul, at their command to attract the opposite sex to have their thirst quenched:

O beautiful One! do not besmear such a shapely form with dust. Do not waste your youth,
O maiden!
When old age comes, thou shalt repent thy youth, that is no more.⁶
Do not be proud of riches and youth!
We are all happy, O youthful one!
Be thou also the same.
Old age will come and youth will depart.

1. P. Ch., 193 (7) 2. P. Ch., 377 (12) 3. P. Ch., 322 (25)
4. P. Ch., 812 (13) 5. Cf. P. Ch., 16, 21, 23 6. P. Ch., 303 (14)
They talk about the significance of merry-making with women of exquisite beauty by arguing that their beauty is only a temporary phase of their development and will soon fade out leaving the opposite sex repenting for not having enjoyed it:

Why to be vain of this youthful life which is fleeting and sticks to no body.
Come, let us both enjoy it. Why trust it (fleeting youth) ?

Among the men-characters of the tales, there are two types that we come across. The men-characters of the first type of these tales, soon after they fall a prey to the coquetry of the opposite sex, suddenly come to themselves; the philosophic element in them brightens up and they, realising that these are only distractions diverting the man from his real path, soon manage to be out of their clutches.

The other type, which appears to represent the earthly ignorant merry-makers, fall an easy prey to the evil desires of the opposite sex, lose themselves completely in their physical charms, thus preparing for both spiritual and physical death.

The first type is exemplary, and sets an ideal before the readers which they are persuaded to achieve even at the cost of their all. The second type is a bit realistic one, revealing the human weaknesses, thereby warning the readers against them.

From the themes discussed above, under Secular Poetry of the Dasam Granth, it is evident that like Bhushan, who strangely enough wrote heroic poetry in the Riti period, its poet tried to lift its poetry from the rut into which the poetic creations of his contemporaries tended to fall. He hit new marks by introducing autobiographical poetry which, according to Dr. Indubhushan Banerjee, is undoubtedly the most important of all the records about Guru Gobind Singh, and by reorientating heroic and mythological poetry. Character-tales which previously existed in Apbhransh, Rajasthani, and Avadhi for preaching religion, morality and social harmony appear in the Dasam Granth profusely in Braj. The reason for the profuseness of these tales was apparently the Guru’s desire to impart practical wisdom in the language of the day and in the mode of literature that specially appealed to the masses. The Guru rightly understood the importance of the secular form of poetry for the uplift of the masses and gave it its well-deserved prominence.

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1. P. Ch., 303 (16)
2. P. Ch., 303 (15)
3. P. Ch., 16, 21, 23
4. P. Ch., 114, 118, 262, 290.
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