

## Understanding Jap - 2

### Jarnail Singh

---

॥ ਜਪੁ ॥

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥ ੧ ॥

ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥ ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥ ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ ਜੇ ਬੰਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਭਾਰ ॥ ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ॥ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ੧ ॥

Truth prevailed in the beginning and prevailed in the periods prior.

Truth prevails now and shall prevail for ever.

The pall of falsehood has shrouded us all. How do we pierce through it?

It does not happen if we purify by rituals.

It does not happen if we shut it out by force.

It does not happen if we keep on satiating your hunger for more and more.

It does not happen if we acquire all the wisdom from every source.

How to break down the facade of falsehood that blocks the light of Truth?

O Nanak, it happens only when we subdue ourselves to the Hukam of God. [1]

#### **The Title**

The first thing to be noticed is that a distinctive sign of two lines precede and follow the word Jap. As per the rules of grammar observed in Guru Granth Sahib, it means that word Jap is the title of the ensuing verse. What does the word Jap mean? As per Bhai Kahan Singh [2] it has three meanings

1. To remember or say in mind.
2. Recitations of Mantras
3. Sentence or set of words used for Mantras

Which one of these meanings applies to the word Jap here? Guru has made it clear by placing the vowel Aunkar underneath the last letter Puppā that makes it a singular. So Jap means to remember or say in mind or to meditate as this is the only meaning that can be classified as singular. Bhai Kahn Singh has also noted under this entry that those who treat Jap as Mantra for various types of benefits are wrong. It is important to note here that in his Mahan Kosh Bhai Kahn Singh has also given a separate entry for word Jap spelled as it is spelled here in Guru Granth Sahib. Under this entry he has said that it is the title of the opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib. He has not given any other meaning under this entry. So the one and only meaning that can be assigned to Jap is to remember, say in mind or meditate. Ever alert Guru has intentionally used vowel Aunkar to change this word to a singular so as to lock it to the desired meaning.

Another thing to be noted is that in the table of contents in Guru Granth Sahib this verse has been listed as Jap Nissān. Nissān means the seal, the logo or the hallmark. Jap is the logo of Sikhism, the hallmark of meditation practiced by Sikhs.

## **The Opening Statement**

After this title, we have the first statement made by our Guru regarding Truth and God.

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥ ੧ ॥

*Truth prevailed in the beginning and prevailed in the periods prior.*

*Truth prevails now and shall prevail for ever.*

As we noted earlier Sikhism is very emphatic about the existence of God. Further in Sikhism God and Truth are synonymous with each other. In this verse Guru gives us his theory of truth and God. However before we discuss it, it will be interesting to have a quick glance at what other people in this world say about truth. This will help us in understanding and appreciating the theory Guru has given us. There are so many theories of truth. The major theories are summarized below.

### **Theories of Truth**

**Correspondence Theory:** This is basically a realistic theory and as per this theory truth corresponds to the actual state of affairs. It assumes a relationship between thoughts on the one hand and things or objects on the other hand Plato and Aristotle in ancient times and Russell, Wittgenstein and Austin in recent times are proponents of this theory. [3]

**Coherence Theory:** As per this theory, truth requires a proper fit of elements within a whole system. Unlike the correspondence theory it takes into account the relationship between the statement and other propositions. A statement is true only if and when it fits into the whole system and not just if it corresponds with the actual object. For example hallucinations are true as per correspondence theory but coherence theory rejects them. Hegel, Spinoza and FH Bradley are proponents of this theory. [4]

**Constructivist Theory:** Truth as per this theory is historically and culturally specific and is partly shaped by the power struggles within the community. They believe that all our knowledge is constructed. "Truth itself is constructed" said Vico who was one of its early proponents. Karl Marx was also an advocate of this theory. The concept of dialectical materialism in Marxism is an example. [5]

**Consensus Theory:** As per this theory whatever is agreed upon is true. Habermas and Nicholas Rescher are among the proponents of this theory. [6]

**Pragmatic Theory:** According to this theory, a proposition is true if it is useful to believe. Truth is verified and confirmed by the results of putting one's concepts into practice. Charles S Pierce, William James and John Dewey support this theory. [7]

### **Guru's View**

Now coming back to the viewpoint of our Guru, truth has been very emphatically stated something that is everlasting and shall remain so.

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥ ੧ ॥

*Truth prevailed in the beginning and prevailed in the periods prior.*

*Truth prevails now and shall prevail for ever.*

Guru reiterates it at other places in Guru Granth Sahib.

ਸਚੁ ਪੁਰਾਣਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਸੀਤਾ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਪਾਟੈ ॥ ੫੯੬-੧, ਮ ੧

ਸਚੁ ਪੁਰਾਣਾ ਨਾ ਥੀਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਮੈਲਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ੫੧੨੪੮-੧੦ ਮਃ ੩

*Truth never ever becomes obsolete or irrelevant. [8]*

As I said before, in Sikhism, Truth and God are synonymous. God has been described as “The True” millions of times in GGS. So the statement that truth was, is and shall last forever, is required to be read in the context of the preamble from Ikonkar to Gurprasad wherein the concept of God has been explained. Since God and truth are synonymous, it means that attributes of truth are similar to those of God as described in the preamble. Just as God is one, truth is always one; there can never be two truths. Just as God is everlasting, Truth can not be transient. Just as God pervades everywhere, Truth can not be parochial. Just like God, Truth is always fearless and impartial. Just as God is beyond the limitation of time, so is Truth. Just like God, no one can create or construct Truth. And Guru (Knowledge) guides our way towards Truth.

It is very important to understand the concept of Truth given in Guru Granth Sahib. This concept has been and is the hub of Sikh thought and action. It is not an accident that the opening statement in Guru Granth Sahib is about Truth. History is witness to the fact that as long as Sikhs have stuck to the concept of truth as promulgated in Guru Granth Sahib; Sikhs and Sikhism have flourished despite all odds, but the moment Sikhs have gone astray from this path they have suffered immensely and will suffer a lot in future. This is a topic in itself. Suffice it to say here that Sikhism has always been in conflict with those in power because these people try to force others to adhere to their constructed truths. However, I must also add here that we don't have to search long and go far to find that these days most of the people who call themselves Sikhs support the constructivist theory of Truth practiced by most governments or they follow the pragmatic theory or consensus theory.

### **First Stanza**

The first Pauri or stanza of Jap that we are trying to understand has got six lines. In the fifth line Guru Nanak posits a fundamental question faced by each one of us in our lives. And in the first four lines Guru Nanak, in his unique style, prepares our mind for this question. In these lines Guru rejects the popular recipes to solve this problem and at the same time explains how these popular recipes are complicating instead of solving the problem. In the last line Guru Nanak answers this question. The fundamental question put forward by Guru Nanak is:

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ॥

The pall of falsehood has shrouded us all. How do we pierce through it and let the light of Truth in?

How to dismantle the façade of falsehood and become a Sachiarā? Sachiarā means the home lit with the light of truth. We may agree or not, but it is a fact that barring a very few exceptions, we are all busy building around us a cocoon of falsehood. When I was in university, we studied a play called *The Iceman Cometh* by an American author Eugene O'Neill as part of our syllabus. I still remember the line repeated by one of the characters (Larry) in this play. "To hell with the truth! As the history of the world proves truth has no bearing on anything. The lie of a pipe dream is what gives life to the whole misbegotten mad lot of us, drunk or sober. And that's enough philosophic wisdom to give you for one drink of rotgut." [9]

The message of the first stanza of Jap has helped me fully understand the agony of that character. This play is about the "lower depths" of our society. Even those who live in the upper echelons of the society are no exceptions. T S Eliot has written a play called *Murder in the Cathedral* about the assassination of Archbishop Thomas Becket. He knew that he will be murdered and gets ready for this like a religious person. In this process he realizes how he has been building a façade of falsehood all his life. To quote from the play:

"Man's life is like a cheat and a disappointment;  
All things are unreal,  
Unreal or disappointing;  
The Catherine wheel, the pantomime cat;  
The prizes given at the children's party;  
The prize awarded for the English Essay;  
The Scholar's degree, the statesman's decoration;  
All things become less real. Man  
Passes from unreality to unreality,  
This man is obstinate, blind, intent  
On self destruction,  
Passing from deception to deception,  
From grandeur to grandeur to final illusion,  
Lost in the wonder of his own greatness,  
The enemy of society, enemy of himself." [10]

The point that I am trying to make is that be it a lay man or an aristocrat, falsehood has engulfed us all. That is why Guru Nanak puts forward this question. How to break open this cocoon of falsehood and embrace the rays of truth? In order to answer this question we got to find an answer to another question. Why and how do we weave this veil of falsehood around us to conceal ourselves? Guru has answered this question in the first four lines of this

stanza. Before we find out the answer given by our Guru, it will be worthwhile to note that there was, and still exists, a philosophical thought that supports and promotes this façade of falsehood. [11]

Coming back to the answer given by Guru, we all feel that the pall of falsehood has shrouded us. And we start making efforts to get rid of it. There are plenty of people in this world who approach us with their ready made recipes for this. Some advise us to indulge in some rituals to purify our mind; others ask us to practice strict disciplines like abstinence or willful silence. And there are recipes who propose to accumulate an abundance of wealth, still others advise us to gain as much wisdom as we can. All these recipes are misdirected and complicate the problem. Because, all these recipes allow our minds to take full control of our actions. But Guru says that this shroud of falsehood is the direct result of following the dictates of our mind. As long as our mind is dictating our actions we are bound to keep on accumulating falsehood. Interestingly our mind does it in the guise of getting away from falsehood. (That is reason why some of the recipes mentioned about are so popular.) Our mind offers us a ride to the destination of truth, but shuts us up in the cocoon of falsehood.

In the first line, our mind offers us truth via purity of mind that ends up in ritualism of cleanliness. In the second line it leads us astray by practice of silence that fails to shut out the noise from within. In the third line it takes us on a ride on the horseback of our desires and we find this a never ending journey.

In the fourth line our mind takes over the complete command and we end up manufacturing our own truths by our wisdom. In these lines Guru is explaining us the reasons of the falsehood and at the same time prepares us for the all important question. The reader spontaneously comes up with the question, what is the way to light the lamp of truth in our minds? Then Guru gives his answer. The lamp of truth is lit by subduing our mind to the Hukam [12] of God. ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ੧ ॥

Before I go into the details of this answer, I would like to explain a bit more about the reasons for accumulation of falsehood in our lives. No one can say it better than the Guru. Guru tells us that as long as we follow the dictates of our mind we will continue to accumulate piles of falsehood around us. Guru called them Manmukh or Sakat who are driven by the dictates of their minds. The following quotes [13] from Guru Granth Sahib tell us how a Manmukh or Sakat is building this façade of falsehood around him.

ਮਨਮੁਖੀ ਮਨਹਠਿ ਹਾਰਿਆ ਕੂੜੁ ਕੁਸਤੁ ਕਮਾਇ ॥

GGGS Page 87 Line 15

*Those who follow their minds with stubbornness are losers as all they get at the end of day is a pile of falsehood.*

ਮਨਮੁਖ ਖੋਟੀ ਰਾਸਿ ਖੋਟਾ ਪਾਸਾਰਾ ॥ ਕੂੜੁ ਕਮਾਵਨਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਲਾਗੈ ਭਾਰਾ ॥

GGGS Page 116 Line 1

*Those who follow the dictates of their minds do the ostentatious display of fictitious wealth of falsehood and suffer deep agony.*

ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਅਗਿਆਨੁ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੀ ॥ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਜੁਐ ਮਤਿ ਹਾਰੀ ॥ ਕੂੜੁ ਕੁਸਤੁ ਓਹੁ ਪਾਪ ਕਮਾਵੈ ॥ ਕਿਆ ਓਹੁ ਸੁਣੈ ਕਿਆ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ ॥

GGGS Page 314 Line 15

*Those who follow the dictates of their minds are full of ignorance, ill advice and ego. They have gambled away their sense of right or wrong in a fit of anger. They gather falsehood all their lives, they got nothing worthwhile to tell and do not have the will to listen from others.*

ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਸਚਿ ਨ ਭੀਜਈ ਕੂੜੁ ਕੂੜਿ ਗਣਾਵੈ ॥ ੪ ॥

GGGS Page 419 Line 11

*Those who follow the dictates of their mind do not like Truth. They sow and reap the crop of falsehood.*

ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਊਧਾ ਕਉਲੁ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਸਕਤੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਹੈ ਉਪਾਉ ॥

GGGS Page 511 Line 12

*Those who follow the dictates of their mind are heading towards the wrong direction. They have no love for God. Their efforts go in vain.*

ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹੁ ਹੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਨ ਲਗੋ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥ ਕੂੜੁ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਕੂੜੁ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹੈ ਕੂੜੁ ਕਰੇ ਆਹਾਰੁ ॥

GGGS Page 552 Line 1

*Those who follow the dictates of their mind are trying to capture a mirage and do not go for the Truth, the glories of God and Its creation. They practice falsehood, earn falsehood and live on falsehood.*

ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਕੂੜੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਹੇ ॥ ੧੩ ॥

GGGS Page 1024 Line 7

*Those who follow the dictates of their minds are self deluded and continue to live on and in falsehood. Their delusion can not be ended without the help of True Knowledge.*

The above quotes from GGS show that the reason why the mask of falsehood is getting thicker and thicker is that our mind is driving us in the opposite direction. The answer that Guru has given is to rein in our mind and subdue it to the will of God enshrined in the words of Guru. ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ॥ Truth is the opposite of falsehood. So when we cease to obey the dictates of our mind and accept God's Huakam as our way of life, we are on our way to Truth. God's Hukam is synonymous with teachings of Guru. There are only two ways in this world. First is to follow the mind, the second is to follow the Guru. Guru calls them ways of Manmukh ( ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ) & Gurmukh ( ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ).

Manmukh loves falsehood, Gurmukh loves and lives for truth.

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਕੂੜੁ ਨ ਭਾਵਈ ਸਚਿ ਰਤੇ ਸਚ ਭਾਇ ॥ ਸਾਕਤ ਸਚੁ ਨ ਭਾਵਈ ਕੂੜੈ ਕੂੜੀ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਸਚਿ ਰਤੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਮੇਲਿਐ ਸਚੇ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ੩ ॥ ੫੨੨ ਮ ੧

GGGS Page 22 Line 7

*Those who follow the path of Guru do not like falsehood. They remain intoned to the Truth. But those who follow the dictates of their mind do not like Truth.*

*They remain engrossed in falsehood. However those who are intuned to the Truth get the True wisdom and are merged with Truth.*

When a person follows the teachings of Guru, he is not hoodwinked by the deceitful dictates of his mind. As and when his mind guides him to indulge in any kind of purification of soul by way of cleanliness, he knows that this is a useless exercise. Because his Guru has advised him;

ਸੂਚੇ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਹਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਜਿ ਪਿੰਡਾ ਧੋਇ ॥ ਸੂਚੇ ਸੇਈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜਿਨ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਸੋਇ ॥ ੨॥

GGGS Page 472 Line 9

*Pure are not those who indulge in purification rituals. Pure are those who remember the True Lord in their minds.*

If his mind asks him to practice willful silence, he refuses to do so because his Guru tells him that it is a useless exercise.

ਇਸੁ ਤਨ ਮਹਿ ਮਨੁ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਦੇਖੈ ॥ ਭਾਇ ਭਗਤਿ ਜਾ ਹਉਮੈ ਸੋਖੈ ॥ ਸਿਧ ਸਾਧਿਕ ਮੋਨਿਧਾਰੀ ਰਹੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ਤਿਨ ਭੀ ਤਨ ਮਹਿ ਮਨੁ ਨ ਦਿਖਾਵਣਿਆ ॥ ੨ ॥

GGGS Page 124 Line 2

*Those who follow the wisdom of the True Guru are able to recognize themselves in their bodies. But those who have indulged in willful silence for a long time to get a glimpse of themselves in their bodies have not been able to do so.*

In case his mind spurs him to ride the horses of his desires, he knows that it will be a journey into the wilderness. Guru forewarns him against such ventures.

ਵਡੇ ਵਡੇ ਰਾਜਨ ਅਰੁ ਭੂਮਨ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨ ਨ ਬੂਝੀ ॥ ਲਪਟਿ ਰਹੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਰੰਗ ਮਾਤੇ ਲੋਚਨ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੂਝੀ ॥ ੧ ॥

GGGS Page 672 Line 2

*Even the rich Kings and Landlords have not been able put an end to their desires. They remained drugged by this desire and wanted more and more and could see nothing else.*

When his mind instigates him to be his own master as if he has the brains to beat the God, Guru advises him strongly against this step. Guru tells him in a loving manner

ਏ ਮਨ ਚੰਚਲਾ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਕਿਨੈ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

GGGS Page 918 Line 6

*Beware! my nughty mind, no one has ever found the Truth by being clever.*

We might be able to cheat other people by being clever, but we can not cheat God. Our Guru says

ਲੋਕ ਪਤੀਣੈ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਹੋਈਐ ਨਾਹੀ ਰਾਮ ਅਯਾਨਾ॥

GGGS Page 669

*It does not matter if you are able to convince the whole world. God is not a child to get impressed by this.*

### **Conclusion**

So the only way to truth is to resign to the will (Hukam) of God by way of following the teachings of Guru. When a person follows the teachings of Guru, the lamp of truth is lit in his heart. When he lives this truth, he starts acquiring

the attributes of Truth. He becomes fearless and impartial. He realizes that everything is manifestation of Ikonar God. Guru says later in Jap that when a person makes the right use of this opportunity of humal life by following the teachings of Guru he realizes that everthing around him is manifestation of God (Truth). nwnk eyvY jwxIAY sBu Awpy sicAwru ] 4 ]. In fact there is no other way. If we want to dismantle the façade of falsehood and realize God (Truth), we got to cultivate Its attributes in the soil of our mind. Kabeer explains it in his beautiful style using the logic of trial and rejection.

ਕਬੀਰ ਬੈਸਨੇ ਹੁਆ ਤ ਕਿਆ ਭਇਆ ਮਾਲਾ ਮੇਲੀ ਚਾਰਿ ॥ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਕੰਚਨੁ ਬਾਰਹਾ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਭਰੀ ਭੰਗਾਰ ॥ ੧੪੫ ॥ ਕਬੀਰ ਰੋੜਾ ਹੋਇ ਰਹੁ ਬਾਟ ਕਾ ਤਜਿ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਐਸਾ ਕੋਈ ਦਾਸੁ ਹੋਇ ਤਾਹਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਭਗਵਾਨੁ ॥ ੧੪੬ ॥ ਕਬੀਰ ਰੋੜਾ ਹੁਆ ਤ ਕਿਆ ਭਇਆ ਪੰਥੀ ਕਉ ਦੁਖੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਐਸਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਦਾਸੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਉ ਧਰਨੀ ਮਹਿ ਖੋਹ ੧੪੭ ॥ ਕਬੀਰ ਖੋਹ ਹੂਈ ਤਉ ਕਿਆ ਭਇਆ ਜਉ ਉਡਿ ਲਾਗੈ ਅੰਗ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜਨੁ ਐਸਾ ਚਾਹੀਐ ਜਿਉ ਪਾਨੀ ਸਰਬੰਗ ॥ ੧੪੮ ॥ ਕਬੀਰ ਪਾਨੀ ਹੁਆ ਤ ਕਿਆ ਭਇਆ ਸੀਰਾ ਤਾਤਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜਨੁ ਐਸਾ ਚਾਹੀਐ ਜੈਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਹੀ ਹੋਇ ॥ ੧੪੯ ॥

GGGS Page 1372

*If we put on the appearance of a religious person to know the truth and be one with God, that won't work because we still have ego inside us and this appearcne might aggravate our ego. If in order to destroy our ego we treat ouselfs like a pebble on the street, that still does not work as that might hurt others as the pebble hurts the pedestrians. If we grind our ego further and instead of a pebble we treat ourselves as dirt, it still does not work because ego does not go away instead it makes our mind mirky as the dirt soils your body and clothes. If in order to cleanse ourself of ego we behave like water instead of dirt as water can clean the dirt, it still does not work because still our mind is not stable as some times water becomes very cold and very hot on other times. The bottom line is that in order to know the truth and be one with God we have to cultivate all the attributes of God in our mind.*

In order to cultivate the attributes of God, when a Sikh follows the wisdom of his Guru, Guru lives in him. The Sikh becomes a Gurudwara- the abode of Guru, the abode of God. The Sikh becomes a house lit up by Truth. However Guru makes it clear that it is not enough to know the Truth. It is like have the unlit lamp of truth and sitting in darkness of ignorance. The real test is to live the Truth. Very few people pass this test. Guru says that truthful living is the highest possible achievement for a human being.

ਮਨਹਠ ਬੁਧੀ ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕੇਤੇ ਬੇਦ ਬੀਚਾਰ ॥ ਕੇਤੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਜੀਅ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰ ॥ ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ ॥ ੫ ॥ ੫੬੨ ਮ ੧

p 62 m 1

*There are many strict disciplines, many books of knowledge in the market. All of them take you no where; instead you end up in lot of pain. The only way that gives you the right direction is to follow the truth enshrined in the words of wisdom from Guru. The truth the Great, but greater still is the practice of truth in real life.*



It is important to note here that when Guru Nanak gave a clarion call to wake up the people from their slumber and to follow the path of Sikhism, he asked them to come with a will to die and sacrifice the existing wisdom stored in their heads. And precisely this was what Guru Gobind Singh did when he institutionalized this procedure in 1699. [14]

The will to die or the will to annihilate our ego to follow the teachings of the Guru is what is called being a Gurmukh and ceasing to be a Manmukh or Sakat. This is the way to dismantle the façade of falsehood that has erupted around us.

### **Notes**

[1] This is my humble attempt to translate Jap. I understand there is a lot of room for improvement.

[2] See The Encyclopedia of Sikh Literature by Bhai Kahan Singh 1991 edition page 505 and 506

[3] See Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol 2, page 223, auth. Arthur N Prior. Those who have studied literature would know that Aristotle called poets liars in his famous book Poetics as what they say does not correspond to the factual reality. For example if a poet calls his beloved a flower, he is telling a lie as the girl is not a flower.

[4] See Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol 2, Auth A R White Page 131-133 The concept of thesis, antithesis and synthesis can be studied as an example.

[5] Truth like history and culture is man made. This theory is most obvious by practice by the people in power even today. Everyday we are flooded with the constructed truths. Every government, irrespective of its political or social philosophy has constructed its own truths to stay in power.

[6] Refer to “Knowledge and Human Interests” by Habermas and “Pluralism: Against the Demand for Consensus” by N Rescher. Democracy is an example of this theory. However the history of mankind tells us that those who dare to tell the truth were never in majority. When Guru Nanak refused to wear the sacred thread, he was all alone and the consensus in the public was to wear the sacred thread.

[7] Refer to “The Meaning of Truth: A Sequel to Pragmatism” by William James, “Truth and Falsity and Error” by Pierce. Pragmatic theory is practiced by most political parties in India (Including Akali Dal that proclaims to represent Sikhs) and rest of the world. The way politicians shift their allegiance is an example of it. Pragmatism, in fact, is euphemism for selfishness.

[8] The quotes from GGS other than the stanzas of Jap have not been translated. An attempt has been made to capture the central idea of these quotes in plain English.

[9] The Iceman Cometh by Eugene O Neill, 1993 Edition, Page 5

[10] T S Eliot , The Complete Poems and Plays, Faber and Faber 1987 Edition  
Page 256

[11] For example Nietzsche believed that truth should be used as long as it promoted life and the will to power. In his opinion untruth was better than truth if it enhances life. In other words he openly advocates falsehood. Nietzsche is the one who declared that God is dead. Alfred North Whitehead says that “there are no whole truths; all truths are half truths. It is trying to treat them as whole truth that plays the devil” Eric Fromm also rejects “absolute truth “and advocates “optimal truth”. He says “the history of thought is the history of ever increasing approximation to the truth.

Scientific knowledge is not absolute but optimal; it contains the optimum of truth attainable in a given historical period.” Albert Camus, the French writer and philosopher, says that “Truth, like light, blinds. Falsehood, on the contrary, is a beautiful twilight that enhances every object.” From the above it is apparent that falsehood is a huge reality, and people are accepting it as a substitute of truth. Big lies are often mistaken as truths. None of these philosophers are trying to explain the reasons for this storm of falsehood. They are accepting it as a truth. Chanakiya and Machiavellian policies are accepted and respected. The answer that Guru gives also explains why these writers and philosophers are supporting untruth.

[12] Hukam is a Punjabi word and it has been translated as order, command, control, rule, authority etc. Guru Nanak has not used this as a simple word. It has been used as a concept. We will understand it more when we go to the second stanza of Jap.

[13] For the sake of brevity, I have quoted only one line from the Shabad (verse). Those interested to read it further can refer to GGS for the full verse.

[14] Many scholars (for example Gurtej Singh (IAS) expressed this view in Sikh Bulletin) opine that Guru Gobind Singh created an, what they call “Order of Khalsa” in 1699. But a careful study of GGS shows that these scholars are far from truth. We have seen that the very first stanza of GGS has a direct link to what Guru Gobind Singh did in 1699. In my opinion, this view has serious repercussion and can create a big disorder in Khalsa.