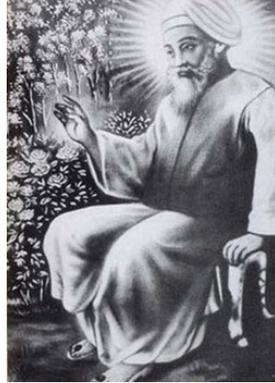


ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ



*“Baba Nanak Shah Faqir,
Hindu Ka Guru, Musalman Ka Pir”*

To celebrate dates as given by nature rather than man-made calendars is not exactly in fashion anymore. It seems to be inconvenient in our economy-ruled global society if weekday and number of date change every year. Today, we enjoy life with precise and predictable time management rather than according to the rhythm of nature.

For this reason, most holy days have been fixed in our calendar, with few exceptions. It seems to be one of these "Divine coincidences" that **Guru Nanak's birthday**, which we celebrate today, Thursday 6th November, did not get fixed in this way, but is always celebrated on the full moon in November. I am sure this is very much to Guru Nanak's pleasure, him being what I like to think of as a Divine rebel.

Living in the Divine Will is what he embodied and shared. The Divine Will, the "Hukam," the mystery of communicating with Here and Now, everywhere and at all times, is something that surely transcends our modern understanding of how to measure time, and what has to happen when. The Bhagti movement of those centuries in India was a movement of complete surrender to the Divine, and renunciation of the personal agenda. *“You, the Creator, act, I can do nothing; if I try, nothing happens.”* (Guru Nanak) All bhagti poetry infuses a spirit of rebellion against all manifestations of the smallness of the human mind.

My understanding of the message of Guru Nanak is, that it all starts with a lifestyle of simplicity, which prepares us for honesty and humility. He unmasked much of the make-believe of mysterious rituals as hypocrisy, politics and compensation for lack of true union (very much like Luther at the same time in a different part of the world). Instead, he infused the excitement of the true and timeless consciousness into people around him by his spontaneous song and poetry, filled with wonder, devotion, and praise of One existence.

Guru Nanak was a cross-dresser. In order to make people stop thinking in boxes like "Hindu" and "Muslim" (very popular boxes of his time), but make them see that there is a much more important common essence within all of us, he used to wear garments of both traditions at the same time. To complete the confusion of the onlookers, one of the two disciples who accompanied him on his journeys was Muslim, the other Hindu.

Guru Nanak did not speak, but sing. This way of communicating seems to be more efficient to bring the human mind into a space where all our essential questions are filled with surrender and blissful devotion. He channelled Divine Word in his poetry, which he recognised as the authority of Guru, the "Shabad Guru."

His practical teachings are intriguingly short, natural and universal: repeat the meditation on the Self (Naam) continuously, work in the world with honesty, and share everything you have with everybody around you.

Complication and confusion are signs of our infamous iron age of darkness (kaljug). We have adorned and worshiped maya to such an extent that the fog of artificiality and the arousal of needs and desires have won the better part of our mental, emotional and physical bodies. Today, simplicity is often understood as fast-food instead of home-grown veggies, social media apps instead of meeting people (sat sangat), pills instead of healing (healing will usually only be considered if all pills have failed).

Simplicity does not mean that meditating on the Self and living in Divine Will is easy, but it makes a statement about priorities: Make meditation (mastering the mind and raising of consciousness) the essence of your life, and have it in everything you think, say and do. This may be difficult enough to achieve, but it is a simple point of reference to keep in mind and live by. Yogi Bhajan translated it in many of his aphorisms, like *"If you cannot see God in all, you cannot see God at all."*

I find the application of this priority and simplicity to be very liberating, clearing and relaxing. It might just help me to slightly shift my perspective on my problems and worries and their actual unimportance.

May all our efforts serve the Naam through Nanak and spread the Ever-Rising Spirit and Divine Prosperity to All. Satnaam.

Cherdi Kalaa
SS Sat Siri Singh Khalsa

