skillfully polished that it reflected the idols just like a mirror. Thus the mind, which is free from negative emotions and is very pure, is capable of reflecting the qualities of the Lord.

Bhai Taru Popat henceforth meditated on the Lord, worked honestly and served the other devotees. He became a great saint of his time.

If You Shield Others the Lord Will Shield You

2.2 Bhai Moola Keer

When Bhai Moola Keer met Guru Nanak Dev, he was living recklessly. Guru ji advised him to stop drinking, gambling and womanizing. He showed him the way of a true devotee. Bhai Moola followed Guru ji’s instructions and changed. He began to associate with the assembly of devotees ‘Sadhu Sangat’ and immersed himself in the kirtan of ‘Gurbani’. He made an honest income and served all the Guru’s devotees with love.

A thief heard of Bhai Moola’s generosity and planned to cheat him. He memorized ‘Gurbani’ and gained entry into Bhai Moola’s house and heart, pretending to be a great devotee of Guru Nanak Dev. While enjoying the hospitality, the thief found out that the family jewels were kept in a box in the bedroom. One night he crept into the bedroom and stole the box. However, as he tried to leave the house he found the front door locked. He hid the box near the door and woke up Bhai Moola to open the door on the pretext of going to the fields for toilet. When he was told of the toilet facility in the house, he still insisted on visiting the fields. Not wanting to annoy a guest, Bhai Moola opened the door to let him go out. As the thief was picking up the jewel box it fell down. Bhai Moola quietly picked up the box and handed it to the thief and allowed him to go.

The next morning when his wife found her jewels missing, Bhai Moola quietly took her aside and narrated
the incident of the previous night and later bought new jewels for her. When Guru Nanak Dev heard about this incident he was very pleased with his magnanimity and blessed him thus “Just like you have kept the secret of one who deceived you by pretending to be my disciple, the Lord too will keep all your secrets. Treat the Guru’s words as your Guru and meditate on them as your true master ‘Satguru’. May God bless you.”

Bhai Moola Keer followed Guru ji’s instructions and lived to become a highly revered saint.

Worship the Unmanifest Aspect of the Lord

2.3 Bhai Pirtha and Bhai Khera

Bhai Pirtha and Bhai Khera belonged to a Soni Kshatriya family. They met Guru Nanak Dev at Kartarpur (now in Pakistan) while he was giving a discourse explaining the meaning of ‘Gurbani’. They were mesmerized by Guru ji’s words. At the end of the discourse Guru ji asked them to express any desires they had to which they prayed “O savior of the helpless, always keep us under your protection, take away our desires, bless us with devotion and always keep us under your protective umbrella”.

Answering their request Guru ji asked them to always serve the saints and devotees with all their resources and visit dharamshalas, as they would find him present in the assembly of saints. They would be under his protection when they made an honest living and shared it with the needy.

Guru Nanak Dev explained that one should be attached to his word, which is his unmanifest form rather than to his body or his manifest form. If the devotees are attached to the Guru’s body, they will have to face the grief of separation when he is not physically present. But if they focus on his word (‘Gurbani’), they would never be separated from him, as it is Eternal.
Note: Ashtpadi 16 of Sukhmani Sahib explains this aspect in greater detail.

True Significance of Namaz and Rozas

2.4 Bhai Mardana Rababi

One day Guru Nanak Dev was sitting at Talwandi Rai Bhoi (Nankana Sahib, now in Pakistan) when a professional musician came and played on his rabab (a stringed instrument) and sang pure Hindustani ragas (musical notes). Guru ji was enthralled and impressed by the musician and on inquiring about him found out that he was Dana belonging to the Mirasi caste, a community of singers and jesters in Punjab. Guru ji complimented him on his skill and knowledge of ragas. He asked him to play the ‘rabab’ only in the praise of the Lord and in return promised him success in this as well as the next world. At this Bhai Dana replied that he was a poor man and earned his livelihood by playing for the rich patrons. As for earning the blessings in the next world, he offered ‘namaz’ five times a day and also observed thirty ‘rozas’. If he stopped playing for money his family would go hungry.

Guru ji then explained to him that it was God who was feeding him and his family. It is God who takes care of the entire world. Therefore he should get rid of his mistaken assumption. Then Guru ji asked him to explain the real significance of the Namaz and Rozas. Bhai Dana was not able to explain its significance but only knew that the Namaz is offered five times a day and the Rozas come once every year. Then Guru ji asked him if he knew where the Namaz and Rozas were at other times? Bhai Dana replied that they were at God’s house but he had not seen it.

Guru Nanak Dev told him that God lived in the hearts of saints and saints live in the heart of God as saints meditate on God with each breath. Therefore Namaz resides in the hearts of saints. The saints have no desires and eat frugally
therefore the Rozas reside in their hearts. So those who accompany the saints are blessed with contentment. Guru ji told Bhai Dana that when God would ask him about his good deeds i.e. if he had shared his wealth with the needy, if he remembered God with every breath [twenty four thousand times per day] he would not be able to give any answer but would only hang his head in shame. Then, when the angels would beat him and he would turn to the prophets and saints for help, they would not be able to help him as he never meditated on the Lord's name inspite of their prodding. Then, when he would turn to his family members for help he would find that they were also in the same boat. Finally he would be imprisoned in a dark cell and be forced to repent for his sins.

Guru ji promised him that if he became Mardana from Dana, meditated on His Name ‘Waheguru’ and devoted his life to singing praises of the Lord while keeping the company of saints, he would be spared from such a horrible fate and be released from the miserable cycle of life and death. Mardana bowed to Guru Nanak Dev ji’s will and agreed to accompany him on his mission of mercy and awakening the world from the slumber of ignorance. Guru ji promised to look after his family and relatives.

Guru Nanak Dev then recited the following:

"Panj Niajwa wakhat panj panja panje Nau,
Pahila Sach halal due tija khair Khudai,
Chaithi niyat raas mun pajari sifit sanai,
Karni kalma akh ke tan Muslaman sadai,
Nanak jetie kuriar kure koori pai".

i.e. there are five Namazes observed at five times, all these are the Names of God. The first thing to be observed is Truth; the second is honest earning; the third is to wish well for all and share one’s earnings with the needy; the fourth is to keep one’s mind clean and have faith in the Lord; the fifth is to remember God with every breath; and the sixth is to perform good deeds.
This is the true precept (Kalma) and by observing this only, can one be called a Musalman. Thus, Bhai Mardana became Guru ji’s disciple and companion for life and accompanied him everywhere. Finally upon his death Guru ji performed his last rites himself.

The Meaning of Satwik and Rajsik Austerities

2.5 Bhai Prithimal and Rama Didi

Bhai Prithimal and Rama Didi were two great saints blessed by Guru Nanak Dev. On their first meeting, they requested Guru ji to show them an easy path to enable them to merge in Lord Vishnu. Guru Nanak Dev ji told them about three types of austerities i.e.

1) Tamsik austerities. It is like staying naked in winter and summer, starving oneself, sitting in water etc, or causing oneself extreme physical discomfort. These are again of two types. One is to perform these austerities with specific desires in mind. This results in attainment of ‘Siddhies’ and ‘Riddhies’. The second is to perform these austerities without any desires, which results in purification of the mind.

But these austerities are very difficult and do not guarantee ridding oneself of anger and desires. Guru ji advised them to follow Satvik or Rajsik austerities, which he has explained as under.

2) Rajsik austerities. It means controlling of one’s senses i.e. restraining the eyes from seeing wrong, ears from hearing falsehoods, tongue from backbiting, hands from theft and evil deeds and the feet from going to undesirable places. Instead, the eyes should be used for seeing saints and reading holy books, the tongue should be used to praise the Lord, the hands should be used to serve the saints and give charity and the feet should lead one to Gurudwaras and the abode of saints.
3) **Satvik austerities.** Guru ji explained that when one sits in meditation, various thoughts arise and the mind wavers. One should then make all efforts to bring the mind back from the desires to meditation. One should not tire of this effort. Guru ji likened this to feeding medicine to a horse. When the horse keeper puts the medicine in the horse's mouth, the horse spits it out. The keeper continues to keep his hand in the horse's mouth till it swallows the medicine and thereby recovers from his illness. If the keeper had lost heart and not persisted in feeding the medicine, the horse would not have become healthy. Similarly, the mind also tries all the tricks in its bag and swings from thought to thought. It needs great effort and stamina on one's part to stay focused on meditation. Once the mind stops fluctuating, one enjoys peace and bliss.

The two devotees accepted and acted on Guru ji's advice. When they served saints and meditated on Gurbani, they realized that when the Holy Word sinks into the heart via the mind, one attains freedom from the cycle of birth and death. All their family members were also liberated along with them by the grace of Guru Nanak Dev.

**Rise Above Body Consciousness**

2.6 **Daulat Khan Lodhi**

Daulat Khan Lodhi was the **Nawab** of Sultanpur Lodhi (near Jallandhar). Guru Nanak Dev's brother-in-law Bhai Jairam (husband of Bibi Nanaki) was in charge of his stores. On his recommendation, Daulat Khan Lodhi appointed Guru Nanak Dev to be in charge of the ration shop. When the weights were placed before Guru ji, he saluted the quarter seer weight saying that it is the smallest and humblest weight, therefore worthy of praise. It is like the feet, thought to be the lowest part of the body and yet it is only the feet,
which are worshipped and no other part of the body.

Guru Nanak Dev would offer food and clothes to all the holy people visiting Sultanpur. As estimated by the others, Guru ji's expenses on charities became exorbitant. One day, Daulat Khan's minister reported the matter to him and said that Guru Nanak Dev was spending on charities five times more than what is spent by Khan on his army. Daulat Khan summoned Bhai Jairam and ordered an audit of the ration shop. The audit revealed that everything was in order and even ten thousand rupees were due to Guru Nanak Dev. Then Daulat Khan said that the person in charge of the ration shops appeared to be an exalted soul and that he should be made his minister. Guru ji declined the offer and left the services of the Nawab. From then on he started spending all his time in the company of saints.

One day when Daulat Khan sent for Guru Nanak Dev, it was time for prayers. So the Nawab and his 'Qazi' (officer in charge of justice and religion) began to offer the Namaz. While they were praying Guru ji began to smile. The Qazi noticed it and complained to the Nawab that Guru ji was making fun of their prayers. Guru ji explained that while both were going through the motions of praying, their minds were not on God. The Qazi was worried about his newly born calf falling into the well. Therefore God had not accepted their prayers and since the Qazi was leading the prayers, he was the culprit.

Daulat Khan Lodhi was impressed and convinced that Guru Nanak Dev was an exalted soul and a prophet who should be worshipped. The Qazi immediately objected saying that if he was a real prophet then he should convert to Islam.

One day Guru Nanak Dev went to the river for a bath accompanied by a companion. When he dived into the water he did not come out. The companion reported the drowning of Guru ji to his brother-in-law, Bhai Jairam and Nawab Daulat Khan. They tried their best to find him by sending divers with fishing nets but to no avail.
After eight days, Guru Nanak Dev appeared upstream. When the Nawab and the Qazi went to meet him, the Qazi remarked that the Guru ji must be a magician and that the Nawab was mistaken about his holiness. Then the Nawab inquired whether Guru Nanak Dev was a Hindu or a Muslim, Guru Nanak Dev replied

"Koi akhe bhutna, koi kahe betala.
Koi akhe aadmi Nanak bechara.
Bhaia diwana Shah ka Nanak baurana.
Hau Hari bin awar na jana."

Guru Nanak Dev said that this body was composed of five elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether). Some one said that he was an apparition; some said he was a ghost and others said that he was a man. After the saints gave him Divine Knowledge, he considered himself a witness to this body. The body consciousness, which was with him since his birth had now gone. He was firm in the conviction that he was the 'Atma' or the soul and that there was no distinction between him and the Supreme Being. He and the Supreme Being were like the water and its' waves. Since he was convinced about this instruction by his Supreme Teacher (the Lord), he did not recognize anything but the Supreme Being. It was the body, which was Hindu or Muslim. He was the witness to his body and hence separate from the body.

Nawab Daulat Khan, on hearing this, bowed before Guru ji and said that he recognized Guru Nanak Dev as the prophet of the Supreme Being. He said that he had but one desire, which was to see the Khwaja Peer (angel of waters) as he had heard that Khwaja Peer was an eternal sage since the earth and sky were destructible, the air and water were permanent.

Guru Nanak Dev told him that, if the Nawab so desired, he could elevate Khan himself to be the Khwaja Peer. Nawab Daulat Khan replied that though Guru ji was capable of doing anything, he was desirous of having at least one glimpse of the Peer himself.
Guru Nanak Dev advised the Nawab to meditate. He said that all the elements like earth, sky, water, fire and ether had the power of ‘Atma’ (the Spirit) and that he was also the ‘Atma’.

The Nawab tried to meditate, but was not able to do so for a long period of time. So he requested Guru ji for help. Guru ji asked him to try and continue the meditation. He asked the Nawab to concentrate on the tip of his nose (the middle of the eyebrows or the ‘Ajna Chakra’) and to bring back his concentration as soon as it drifts away. Guru ji assured him of his blessings in this effort and that he would have a glimpse of Khwaja Peer in the night.

After about nine hours, early in the morning, Khwaja Peer appeared in a vision to the Khan. The room became brightly lit as the Peer appeared holding two vessels brimming with jewels. First he bowed to Guru Nanak Dev and offered him the jewels. Guru ji informed the Khan about the arrival of the Peer who then bowed before him. Guru spoke to the Peer telling him that henceforth Daulat Khan would be the King of the Water Kingdom. The Peer immediately expressed his happiness and was ready to serve him or Guru ji, as he desired. Nawab Daulat Khan said that as the Peer was an expert in the management of the water kingdom so he should continue his good work as his minister.

Guru ji then declared that Nawab Daulat Khan would continue in the world for another five years and then would join the Peer on leaving the earthly body. So the Peer should continue to work as his minister and after five years both would merge with the Supreme Being.

The Nawab was thoroughly devoted to Guru ji and spread his message all over Punjab.

Control of the Mind and Senses is the Highest Austerity

2.7 Bhai Malo and Bhai Manga

Bhai Malo and Bhai Manga were very devoted disciples of
Guru Nanak Dev. They used to give discourses explaining the God’s word and sing His praises in *kirtan*. One day they prayed to Guru Nanak Dev and asked him to bless them so that they may attain self-realization.

Guru Nanak Dev told them about ‘*Tamsik Tapas*’ or hard austerities. In this the aspirants sit inside fires, in the water, in extreme cold, observe fasts, live at holy places, roam about from place to place and live on roots and fruits to attain self-realization. Though this method is very difficult and tough on the human body and might result in the aspirant attaining some psychic powers, it does not result in the attainment of Divine Wisdom or Knowledge.

However, if one can control one’s senses, and make the mind free of desires, spend one’s time in listening to and singing the praises of the Lord, one then gains much more as compared to the earlier method.

Bhai Malo appeared a little confused and confessed that he was under the impression that the harder the labour the sweeter the fruit. And how was it that an easier and more comfortable practice of controlling the senses and mind brought greater gains.

Guru Nanak Dev ji then explained that people doing hard labor were generally illiterate and earned less. For example, a woodcutter or a potter worked very hard and for long hours but earned much less than a shopkeeper. The cloth merchants or jewellers worked even less, but the profits were higher. They led very comfortable lives and even their servants were well paid and learnt special skills like scrutiny of jewels and precious stones and pearls. Therefore, just doing hard labour was not enough to make a good living. Similarly, subjecting the body to hardships did not automatically endow one with Divine Knowledge. But those who controlled their senses, mind and sang the praise of the Lord were blessed with firm faith, devotion and Divine knowledge.

Both Bhai Malo and Manga were convinced by Guru ji’s words. Bhai Malo spread Guru ji’s word by explaining
his compositions (katha) from Pothi Sahib (a book in which Guru Nanak Dev’s compositions were recorded). And Bhai Manga would sit and listen with a focused mind. Then both would sing the compositions (kirtan). They performed the katha and kirtan with so much devotion and love that all those who listened to them were deeply influenced and turned towards spirituality. In this way the two great souls were responsible for their own liberation as well as that of many others.

Who is Guru Oriented? (Sanmukh)

2.8 Bhai Kalu Khatri

Bhai Kalu Khatri came to Guru Nanak Dev as he wanted an answer to his question, “Who is Guru oriented?” Guru ji replied that he who shies away from sins and acquires virtues is Guru oriented or Sanmukh. Such a person should very carefully listen to the Guru’s instructions and also be aware of his own state of mind. He then explained that there were four states of mind, which should be possessed by a Guru oriented person.

1. ‘Maitri’ or Friendship: In this state of mind, a person realizes that all the good things and happiness are not only for him and that he will get only as much as is due to him as per his ‘karma’ or fate.

   He considers all beings as his friends and their happiness as his own. Such a person shares his wealth, knowledge and any skill that he possesses for other’s well being. This state of mind is called ‘maitri’ or friendship.

2. ‘Karuna’ or Compassion: In this state of mind, if one finds others deficient in wealth, knowledge, skill, education or powers, he treats them like his own sons or younger siblings and tries to bring them up in life. Yet, there is no sign of ego in this regard. This is called compassion.
3. *Mudta* or Appreciation: In this state of mind, if one finds others higher than oneself in status, wealth, education or skills, he is thankful to the Lord for creating such high souls too. To put it simply, one should be as happy to hear the greatness and good of others as he is when he hears about the greatness and good of his father or Guru. One should never talk ill or gossip about others. This is called *mudta* or appreciation of others.

4. *Upekhia* or Disregard: One should teach others according to the instructions of the guru or according to one’s own self acquired knowledge. One should pursue only such pupils who accept, take interest in and follow the instructions. Those who do not take interest or accept or purposefully argue and belittle the instructions should be disregarded or ignored and left alone. One should not persist with such persons, as the deep understanding required for this knowledge is not in their *karma* or fate. This is *upekhia*.

Bhai Kalu and his disciples faithfully followed these four states of mind and were liberated.

‘Waheguru’ Name is the Giver of the Four Boons

2.8 Bhai Seehan and Bhai Gajan

Bhai Seehan and Bhai Gajan were first cousins. They came to meet Guru Nanak Dev, and asked for his blessings to be liberated from the cycle of births and deaths. They also wanted to be blessed in this life itself with the four boons i.e.

1. *Dharma*, fulfilment of all worldly responsibilities.
2. *Artha*, the worldly wealth.
3. *Kama*, fulfilment of worldly desires and
4. *Moksha*, liberation from the cycle of birth and death,

Guru Nanak Dev told them that the Lord’s or the Supreme
Being’s Name was ‘Waheguru’. If they meditated and repeated this Name, they would be gifted with all the four boons. Hearing this they were curious to know about the meaning of the name ‘Waheguru’.

Guru Nanak Dev explained that ‘Wahe’ is the expression of exclamation on seeing something wonderful and beyond human understanding. The Supreme Being created the universe, humans, the animals, vegetation etc, but we are not able to see or visualize the Creator himself. This is the wonder. ‘Go’ means the darkness or ignorance i.e. not to be able to see or visualize the Creator is the ignorance. ‘Ru’ is the light, which expels darkness. Thus, it is the Supreme Being who removes our darkness of ignorance and helps us to comprehend the Lord or the Creator of the universe. Hence, He is known as ‘Waheguru’.

The duo then asked, how would mere recitations of the name ‘Waheguru’ bestow upon them the four boons? Guru Nanak Dev explained thus:

1. When we go to meet the assembly of saints or ‘sadhu sangat’, every step is equal to the fruits of 100 ‘Ashvamedha Yagnas’ (horse sacrifice). This is ‘Dharma’ or the fulfilment of spiritual and worldly responsibilities.

2. The worldly people work tirelessly and run after worldly possessions. But it comes automatically to the devotees of the Lord as people come to them on their own with offerings. This meets the need of ‘Artha’ or wealth.

3. The desires of the devotees are fulfilled by the Lord Himself when His name is meditated upon. This is the accomplishment of ‘kama’ or desires.

4. When the name ‘Waheguru’ is understood and it’s meaning finally seeps into the body, mind and intellect, one is blessed with ‘Brahma Gyan’ or the Divine Knowledge. This will grant one ‘mukti’ or liberation.

Hearing these words of wisdom, both Bhai Seehan and Bhai Gajan would wake up early in the morning, bathe,
recite the ‘Gurban’ i.e. Guru Nanak Dev’s compositions and then go to work. All day long they would meditate on ‘Wahe’ while inhaling and on ‘Guru’ while exhaling. Thus, they were continuously reciting the name ‘Waheguru’ all the time. They would also offer food to the disciples of the Guru ji out of their earnings. The other devotees were also aware of the generosity of the duo.

It so happened, Bhai Seehan’s daughter’s marriage was fixed and the groom and his people were to arrive the next day. Delicious food was cooked for the marriage feast. In the evening before the marriage, a large number of Guru Nanak Dev’s devotees on their way to meet Guru ji stopped at Bhai Seehan’s house. They were tired and hungry. Bhai Seehan humbly offered them the food prepared for the marriage. This worried his wife very much. Bhai Seehan was however unperturbed and said that since the food was served to Guru ji’s disciples, Guru ji himself would save his honour.

The marriage party duly arrived the next morning. The lady of the house was extremely worried, but Bhai Seehan was unshakeable in his faith. He offered his prayers and unlocked the door to the room where the food was kept. Lo and behold! it was full of food fit for the king. The guests enjoyed the feast for full five days. The groom and his people, overwhelmed with Bhai Seehan’s hospitality, happily left with the bride. This shows how undoubting faith in ‘Waheguru’ fulfills all our desires and needs.

Note: Mary Pat Fisher in her book ‘Everyday miracles in the house of God’ has narrated such an incident at Shiv Sadan; home of Baba Virsa Singh in chapter 11 on page 99 which illustrates the power of faith.

Kali Sweeps the Floors of Guru Nanak Dev

2.9 Chaudhary Bhagirath

Chaudhary (the village head) of Malsihan village was a devotee of Goddess ‘Kali’, and respected all holy people.
When Guru Nanak Dev visited Malsihaan village, Chaudhary Bhagirath devotedly served him. At night he would sleep where Guru ji was sleeping. Early in the morning when Guru ji got up for prayers, Bhagirath went to fetch water for his bath. When he was returning with the buckets of water from the well, he noticed a beautiful lady with eight arms sweeping the floor with a broom. Bhagirath inquired who she was and why she had come from her house so early. She replied that she was the Goddess Kali. Bhagirath at once fell at her feet and prayed. He then asked her why was it that she being the mother of the whole world, supporter of all Gods and destroyer of the demons was sweeping the floors of Guru Nanak Dev's room? She replied that this holy person was none other than the Unmanifest aspect of the Supreme Being himself, whereas she was the Manifest aspect and her powers were derived from the services of saints like Guru Nank Dev.

On hearing this, Bhagirath became a disciple of Guru ji and devoted his life to the service of saints and meditation on 'Waheguru'. He was thus liberated from the cycle of life and death.

**Hath Yoga and Bhakti Yoga**

### 2.10 Bhai Ajita Randhawa

When Bhai Ajita Randhawa came to Guru Nanak Dev, he said that he had been to a number of saints but none had been able to clear his doubts and requested Guru ji to clarify them so that his mind may be at peace.

Guru ji told him that there were two methods for achieving peace of mind. *Vedas* and *sages* have advised that one should follow the method that is suited to one's mind. Bhai Ajita then requested Guru ji to explain the two methods and promised to do his best to follow them.

Guru Nanak Dev ji said the two remedies were:

1. *Hath Yoga*
2. *Bhakti Yoga*
On further request Guru ji explained both of these methods.

1. **Hath Yoga.** Hath Yoga has eight stages or parts.
   1. Yama
   2. Niyama
   3. Seclusion
   4. Asanas or postures
   5. Pranayama or breath control
   6. Dhyana or concentration of mind
   7. Dharma or making the mind single pointed
   8. Samadhi or state of trance or deep meditation

On hearing this, Bhai Ajita said that he being a simple peasant did not understand these terms and requested for an explanation. Guru ji explained thus:

1. **Yama.** These consist of ten practices. They are:
   1) Renounce violence. There are three kinds of violence:
      a) Violence of mind i.e. thinking ill of someone.
      b) Violence of speech i.e. speaking ill of someone.
      c) Violence of action i.e. doing physical harm to someone.

Renunciation of these three kinds of violence is called 'Ahimsa' or non-violence.

2) To know the Lord or Paramatma as the Truth.

3) Renounce theft. There are two types of theft:
   a) Physical theft i.e. to steal somebody's goods and hide them.
   b) Theft by mind i.e. to commit sins of mind and then conceal them.

4 Celibacy. True celibacy means to win over our seven types of desires or actions. These are:
   a) To talk about women.
   b) To listen to the talks about women.
   c) To sit with women in seclusion.
   d) To look at a woman with lustful eyes.
   e) To physically touch a woman
   f) To dress like women.
g) To commit sexual intercourse with a woman.

One must renounce all these activities to practice celibacy or 'Bhramcharaya'.

5) Forgiveness. This means to tolerate all good and evil actions and words and endurance of all good and bad times with a smile on one’s face.

6) Forbearance. To remain happy and satisfied in all kinds of circumstances and not to become restless or sad.

7) Compassion. To show concern and to help the needy as much as one can.

8) To possess a sensitive heart and never wish bad of anybody.

9) To take food with self control i.e. to eat one quarter less than needed.

10) Cleanliness of the body and mind i.e. to take bath regularly and to clean the mind of attachments and hatred.

2. **Niyama.** There are ten niyams or rules to be followed. They are:

1) Austerities or penances. There are three types of austerities i.e. 'Satwik', 'Rajsik' and 'Tamsik'.

   a) Tamsik austerities means to endure heat, cold, sit in water and to starve. Such austerities do give benefit in the form of 'siddhies' but do not lead to Divine Knowledge.

   b) Rajsik austerities means to control one’s sense organs from evil actions and to divert them towards good and pious actions.

   c) Satwik austerities are to divert one’s mind from bad thoughts and actions to God’s words or **Gurbani**.

One should follow Rajsik and Satwik austerities as these two lead to Divine Knowledge.

2) Contentment. Real contentment means that one
should remain happy whether one has got a thing or not. Under both circumstances, one should be grateful to ‘Waheguru’ since only He knows one’s needs the best.

3) Faith. One must have full faith in his master’s words.

4) Charity. Charity can be of wealth and knowledge. There are three types of charity. They are:

a) **Tamsik charity.** In this, the recipient is not treated with respect and the donor thinks that he is helping the recipient. This kind of charity gives little benefit to the donor.

b) **Rajsik charity.** In this type, the donor indulges in charity to enhance his prestige in the society. This also does not offer much benefit to the giver.

c) **Satwik charity.** In this type of charity, the donor does not make the recipient feel that he is doing him a favor by making the offering. This type of charity is most beneficial.

5) Devotion. Whatever one does, like praying, worshiping or serving it must be done with full devotion.

6) One must follow the precept of the master faithfully. He should not follow any other faith or belief or read or listen to any other matter against master’s teachings.

7) One should be humble about one’s knowledge and competence when dealing with others.

8) One should possess satwik bent of mind i.e. one should speak and behave humbly.

9) Follow the routine of prayers or *japa* strictly. One must not speak while practicing *japa*.

10) **Oblation.** This means making an offering in the sacrificial fire. This is done to please the Gods. The best way to offer oblation is to feed the hungry. This is because the God of mouth is fire
and any food given to the hungry and needy people is an offering to Him. The Lord is pleased when a hungry person on receiving food, utters the Name of the Lord.

The other type of oblation is called ‘Gyan Hom’ or knowledge sacrifice. In this, we offer or sacrifice our enjoyments in the fire of knowledge as all the enjoyments and senses are temporary like the body. Only the Divine knowledge is permanent.

3) **Seclusion.** One should stay in a place where nobody else would disturb (in these times one should find a peaceful place in his own house itself).

4) **Yogic Asanas or Postures.** In yoga, there are 84 *asanās* based on the sitting posture of some of the 84 lakh creatures. The main two postures are

(a) *Padama asana* or lotus posture and (b) *Siddha asana* or ascetic posture.

a) In lotus posture, the left foot is placed on the right thigh and the right foot is placed on the left thigh. The arms are crossed behind the back and the big toes of the left and right foot are caught in the right and left hand.

Before assuming this posture, the earth is dug up to make it soft and some grass is spread over it to make a comfortable seat.

b) For ‘*siddha asana*’ prepare a soft and comfortable seat like earlier. Sit with back straight, place left heel below the anus and the right foot over the left foot but over the reproductive organ.

In both of these postures, concentrate on the tip of the nose or in the middle of the eyebrows.

**Note:**

(1) These *asanās* are meant for celibate persons. Married persons should practice these *asanās* with caution.
(2) Lotus posture is not easy particularly for the aged. They can adopt any position of feet and legs that is comfortable, provided the back is straight.

5) **Pranayam or Breath Control.** The brain centers, which control our breathing and thinking affect each other. Breath control helps us to calm down our thought waves that can improve the quality of concentration in meditation.

Breath control has three parts. They are:

a) **Inhalation.** Be fully aware of your breath. Inhale through the right nostril simultaneously concentrating on the middle of the eyebrows. Repeat ‘IKONKAR’ 12 times during inhalation.

b) **Retention.** Now keep concentrating on the middle of the eyebrows and repeat ‘IKONKAR’ 3 times while retaining the breath.

c) **Exhalation.** At the end of retention, exhale through the left nostril and repeat ‘IKONKAR’ 12 times while concentrating on the middle of the eyebrows.

Repeat the above process by inhaling through the left, retaining the breath and exhaling through the right nostril. Continue this alternate inhalation and exhalation through the left and the right nostril.

**Note:** A beginner should start with only 3 cycles of alternate inhalation, retention and exhalation. Increase the number gradually under expert guidance as too much pranayama may lead to complications like hallucinations etc.

By gradual progress in pranayama, the Ajna Chakra, which is located in the middle of the eyebrows opens and the prana stays in the tenth door i.e. the Sahasrara or the crown chakra. Then, mystical sounds are heard and the practitioner sees lights. The concentration on the mystical music improves its duration.

6) **Dhayana or Concentration.** This is also of two types:
a) concentration on the manifest aspects of the Lord like the 4 armed Vishnu or a mantra given by the Master from ‘Gurbani’.

b) Concentration on a chakra like the navel chakra, middle of the eyebrows or Ajna chakra or the heart chakra.

7) Dharana or Persistence. While meditating, the wandering thoughts will try to break the concentration. One has to persevere and bring back the mind to the object of concentration till one succeeds in completely eliminating the thoughts.

8) Samadhi or Deep Meditation. When the thought process completely subsides and concentration becomes continuous, it is called samadhi. This is also of two kinds:

a) Swikalp Samadhi. In this case, the meditator, the object of meditation and the process of meditation are different entities i.e. the meditator is not one with the object of meditation like the Lord or a Mantra.

b) Nirwikalp Samadhi. In this samadhi, the meditator, the object of meditation and the process of meditation become one.

These are the eight limbs of ‘Hath Yoga’. The practitioner of Hath Yoga may enjoy the meditation, and when free, should read the ‘Gurbani’ or the Guru’s words given in the Guru Granth Sahib.

2. Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti yoga also has eight limbs. They are:

1) Yama. Always be humble and do not feel proud if you possess any good quality or knowledge.

2) Niyama. One must attend the assembly of saints (‘sadhu sangat’) and listen to kirtan (musical singing of ‘Gurbani’) and katha (explanation of Gurbani and the history of the Gurus and their Sikhs) with full concentration. If one can read, then
one should read Gurbani, otherwise listen to it being recited.

3) **Solitude.** One must feel the presence of 'Waheguru' or the Lord everywhere and be firm in conviction that there is nothing except the Lord everywhere.

4) **Asanas or postures.** This is to fix one's mind in the Lord all the time.

5) **Pranayama.** In Bhakti yoga, the three parts of pranayama are:
   a) Inhalation. It is to digest and preserve the instructions given by the master.
   b) Retention. It is to always practice the instructions of the Master, which has been understood.
   c) Exhalation. It is to renounce the undesirable qualities or actions as instructed by the Master.

6) **Dhayana.** When one sits to read or listen to the Master's instructions, one must concentrate one's mind fully on it and not permit other thoughts to arise,

7) **Dharana.** In case the mind begins to wander and other thoughts arise, one must persist in bringing back the Master's instructions to the mind.

8) **Samadhi.** If the mind stays on a Mantra or the Guru's words like Gurbani for some time, one should try to increase this duration by practice. When the mind stays on the Guru's words for full 24 hours, it is the perfect samadhi. This is of two types:
   a) **Swikalp Samadhi.** In this type, one thinks that he is listening to the 'shabad' or the Guru's word and he fully understands the meaning of it.
   b) **Nirwikalp Samadhi.** In this type, one does not repeat or concentrate on a 'shabad' but the mind stays on the true meaning or understanding of the 'shabad' or 'mantra' or
Guru’s words.

These are the eight parts of ‘Bhakti Yoga’. Bhai Ajita Randhawa, on hearing these prayed to Guru ji to bless him with the wisdom to accept Guru’s will sweetly. Guru ji blessed him with this boon and said that many others will also be liberated along with him.

The Wise Child, Baba Budha

2.11 Bhai Boora Budha

As a child, Bhai Boora was grazing his cattle when he met Guru Nanak Dev. The child Boora offered Guru ji milk and requested that he may be blessed with wisdom to be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Guru Nanak Dev asked the child as to who has put these wise thoughts into his mind. Bhai boora said that when the Mughal invaders came to their village, they cut all the crops standing in the fields without considering whether the crops were ripe or just grown to feed their horses. This led him to think that since no one was able to stop the mighty Mугals from destroying the crops, how could anybody hold the hands of messengers of Death. Death may come as easily to a child as to an old man. Hence, he was worried about his salvation.

Guru Nanak Dev smiled and said that although he was only a child, he spoke like a wise old man (budha). From then, he was called Bhai Budha. Guru ji promised that he would bless Bhai Budha with Divine Knowledge in His incarnation as the fourth Guru, Guru Ramdas. He blessed Bhai Buddha saying that his progeny would also be great saints.

Bhai Budha was a great saint and served as a faithful and trusted lieutenant to six Gurus. He had the honour and the privilege of anointing five Gurus i.e. Guru Angad Dev (second Guru) to Guru Hargobind Sahib (sixth Guru). When he died at a ripe age, Guru Hargobind Sahib personally
performed his last rites out of regard for his services to the Gurus.

Guru Nanak Dev told Bhai Budha that if he meditated on ‘Waheguru’ with single pointed dedication, he would be duly liberated. Bhai Budha further inquired as to the mode of meditation on Gurbani.

Guru ji said that there are four methods of meditation. The object of all the methods is to achieve single-minded concentration. One has to adopt a method depending upon his nature.

a) ‘Vaikhri’. These are the spoken words of Gurbani. In this process, the tongue and mind are used.
b) ‘Madhyama’. In this method, meditation on Gurbani is synchronized with the breathing, like saying ‘Wahe’ while inhaling and ‘Guru’ while exhaling. Here, the subtle forces are working with gross organs.
c) ‘Pasyanti’. In this method, the mind concentrates simultaneously on the heart chakra and recitation of Gurbani.
d) ‘Para’. In this and all the preceding methods, subtle forces are applied to the maximum. The mind concentrates on the navel and recitation of Gurbani.

Guru Nanak Dev advised Baba Budha to recite Gurbani in ‘Para’ mode and to serve the saints. He further told Bhai Budha that the Lord’s name is of great benefit. Just like clarified butter(ghee) adds taste to all kinds of food preparations, Meditation on the Lord’s name with one pointed dedication benefits all elements of life. This also improves health and life expectancy.

Humility and Service along with Meditation is the Secret

2.12 Bhai Firna Khahira and Bhai Jodh

Bhai Firna Khahira and Bhai Jodh came to Guru Nanak Dev ji and prayed for his blessings and advice so that they
may become His disciples and attain liberation.

Guru ji told them that to become a good disciple, one must be humble in his words and actions and should also serve other disciples and needy in the best possible way. One should get up early in the morning, bathe and then meditate on the Lords name. Simultaneously, one must practice humility (as spiritual practices often lead to pride). One must treat the Lord as the Master and himself as the servant. One must also attend the assembly of saints (‘sadhu sangat’) and listen to the Guru’s word with love and devotion. When two disciples meet, they should discuss only the Gurbani and the Lord.

The two devotees followed this advice and were thus liberated.
Chapter 3

Disciples of Sri Guru Angad Dev

Accept the Will of the Lord as Sweet

3.1 Bhai Jiwa

Bhai Jiwa used to serve Guru Angad Dev and would bring 'khichri' (a dish of salted rice mixed with lentils and vegetables) for the Guruji's free kitchen for breakfast. Once it rained very heavily and there seemed no prospect of the rain stopping till the next morning. Bhai Jiwa requested Guruji to stall the rain so that he may bring the food in time for next morning. Guruji told him that rain and wind were very important for the crops and the ships. Many insects living under the ground depended upon the rains for food. If the rain and the wind stopped untimely, lot of harm would be caused, whereas, the breakfast delayed by a few hours will not make much difference.

To accept the Will of the Lord is the fundamental principle Of Guru Nanak's teachings (in the first stanza of Japji Sahib, Guru Nanak Devji has advised all to accept the Will of the Lord which He has written for us).

Guruji further said that the saints should accept the Will of the Lord like a faithful wife who accepts the will of her husband. Bhai Jiwa should therefore remain happy in the Will of the Lord and He will then accept his services.

Bhai Jiwa faithfully followed these words of wisdom and attained salvation.