destroyed by the combined action of mind control, desire control and True Knowledge. Therefore, they should remember ‘Waheguru’ with every breath, treat the world as an illusion and meditate on Gurbani simultaneously.

Control of the Mind is the Best Alchemy

6.60 Bhai Sigeru and Jaita

Bhai Sigeru and Jaita were great warriors and benevolent men. Guru ji entrusted them in the care of Guru Har Gobind. He said that he would wield weapons in the form of Guru Har Gobind. Then being the dark age or ‘kaliyug’, he would in that form take away the rule of the rulers by training in weapons and by love of Gurbani, acquire the spiritual leadership. Therefore, they should remain in the service of the sixth Guru (Guru Har Gobind).

When a warrior tastes the salt of a ruler, he entrusts his body to that ruler. Here they would not only be paid wages to maintain themselves, they would also be liberated and become ‘jiwan muktas’.

These two men told Guru ji that one yogi had given them a specially prepared ash of mercury. One ‘rati’ (equivalent of 111 milligram of weight) of it mixed with one maund (37 kilograms) of copper would turn the whole copper into gold. If a person took equivalent to one grain of rice, it was equal to fifty kilogram of food and that person would acquire the strength of an elephant. Guru Arjun Dev advised them to take it to Guru Har Gobind.

Guru Har Gobind Sahib told that this ash of mercury was of no value to those who had controlled their minds. It could change copper into gold but a controlled mind would lead one to Supreme Being.

Because of the devotion and faith of the disciples, he took equivalent of one grain of rice on a betel leaf. The remaining ash was thrown in the holy tank of Amritsar wrapped in a bel fruit skin. The two disciples were retained by him in his service.
Remember His Name with Every Breath. 
It is Most Purifying

6.61 Bhai Jaita, Nanda and Piraga

Bhai Jaita, Nanda and Piraga came to Guru Arjun Dev, prostrated and prayed that Guru ji may kindly give them precept that would lead them to liberation. Guru ji told them to control their senses and remember ‘Wahguru’ with every breath. If their mind fluctuates, then meditate on the magical formula of ‘Gurbani’. They started practicing on this precept.

The Brahmins told them that since they had abandoned the practice of ritual worship, they were defiled. The Pundits further told them that if a birth or a death took place in a house, that house was polluted and rituals were necessary for purifying it. Unless this was done, all the good and virtuous actions of the occupants went waste.

The Guru’s disciples replied that from the day they had met Guru ji, their ignorance, which was like a father to them had died and spiritual knowledge like a son was born. This was why they were not performing any ritual or purifying worship. Moreover, this pollution was temporary and lasted only for a short period. They further told the Pundits that their Satguru had advised them that the breath is born in the navel and dies in the nostrils. He had instructed them to remember the Supreme Being with every breath. Thus, no time was left with them for any rituals because all the time they were breathing and remembering ‘Wahguru’.

The Lord’s Name is Cooling in this Burning World

6.62 Bhai Tiloka Parka and Tota Mehta

Bhai Tiloka Parka and Tota Mehta came to Guru Arjun Dev, prostrated before him and said that Guru ji had advised them that if they recite Ram’s Name, they would be saved from going to hell. But the Brahmins said that when they
conducted worship, they saved the whole world from going to hell. Why were the hell and heaven created by God?

Guru ji told them that although everyone remembered God, without a true teacher and His Grace the mind does not become one pointed and firm and thus faith in God is not established. In absence of it, meditation is not effective.

Guru ji illustrated this with the story of Kauda rakshash (demon) and Guru Nanak Dev. When Guru Nanak Dev was travelling in the forests of Madhya Pradesh, he came across a cannibal named Kauda rakshash who took away Guru ji’s attendant, Bhai Mardana. The demon heated a cauldron of oil and was ready to put Bhai Mardana into it when Guru ji appeared on the scene. Bhai Mardana was terrified and asked Guru ji, “Have you brought me with you to be fried in oil?” Guru ji told him to say ‘Waheguru’ and then put his finger in the oil. When Bhai Mardana said ‘Waheguru’ and put his finger into the oil, the oil became cold. The demon fell on Guru ji’s feet and apologized.

Then the disciples asked Guru Arjun Dev whether they could also try and put their hands in boiling oil after saying ‘Waheguru’?

Guru ji explained that this world is itself a boiling cauldron of desires.

"Tapat karaha bujh gaia Gur sital Naam dio."

i.e. when the Guru blessed one with the soothing Name of the Lord, the boiling cauldron (of the desires in the world) becomes cool. So they should meditate on the Name in the company of saints.

Human Mind is an Obdurate Horse. Practice is Needed for its Control

6.63 Bhai Sain Dass Jaria

The whole family of Bhai Sain Dass Jaria used to serve the disciples with great devotion. He came to Guru Arjun Dev
and prayed that while hearing Gurbani, his mind gets distracted but as per Guru ji’s instructions, one must listen to Gurbani with one pointed mind.

Guru ji told him that previously he was not witnessing his mind and thus did not know whether his mind was one-pointed or not. Now that he had started keeping company with the saints, he had become aware of his mind’s behaviour. Now whenever his mind is diverted from Gurbani, he should advise his mind that the object of distraction was temporary and perishable and bring back the attention to the eternal ‘Gurbani’. It was just like training an obdurate horse. Only after practice the horse learns that it has to go where its master wants to go.

Obedient Devotees Follow the Instructions of the Guru, Not Omens

6.64 Bhai Paira Kohli

Bhai Paira Kohli was staying with Guru Arjun Dev. He was very obedient. Once a Pandit was called from Kashi who used to give discourses on Vedanta and Upanishadas. Guru Arjun Dev asked him for more information on Vedanta. The Pandit said that he could get the books from Kashi by sending his son. The Pandit was claiming to be a very obedient devotee of Guru ji. Guru ji told the Pandit that there were very few obedient people like his disciples.

The Pandit got five hundred rupees as expenses from Guru ji, checked up the almanac, conducted the worship and sent his son on the journey. But the son returned soon as a short distance away he had come across a donkey. It was considered to be bad omen.

‘Guru ji told the Pandit, “You call yourself an obedient devotee, but returned on seeing a donkey. Now you see the obedience of my disciples.”’ Then Guru ji said that when Guru Nanak Dev went to Sangla Dweep (modern Sri Lanka), the country of king Shivnabh, he had left a book named
‘Pran Sangli’ there and asked if any disciple could go and bring it back?

Bhai Paira Kohli stood up with folded hands. Guru ji explained him the details of the journey, the route, distances and the dangers on the way and wrote it all down on a paper for him. One devotee had offered five paise to Guru ji. Guru ji handed over them to Bhai Paira for the expenses. After taking the money and Guru ji’s blessings he started on the journey. Guru ji then told the Pundit that this was an example of the obedient devotee who does not consult any almanac, position of the planets, day of the week or any other omen. They simply pray and start on the journey.

Bhai Paira went to Sangla Dweep and returned with the book along with a large number of gifts. Guru ji blessed Bhai Paira, “O Bhai Paira, you are liberated. You have achieved obedient discipleship.”

When Guru ji studied ‘Pran Sangli’, it contained secrets of yoga. After the study of the book, Guru ji said, “this is the dark age or ‘kaliyug’. Who has the inclination for practicing yoga?” So the book was torn and cast away in the river.

Guru ji then composed verses in praise of obedient devotees and included it in Guru Granth Sahib. He said whosoever will listen to it with one pointed attention shall be liberated.
Chapter 7

Disciples of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib

Fruitful and Fruitless Discussions

7.1 Bhai Dargah Bhandari

Bhai Dargah Bhandari came to Guru Har Gobind, prostrated and prayed that during spiritual discourses some disciples start a discussion. Was it correct of them?

Guru ji said that discussion was of four types. The devotees should follow the first two types of discussion and avoid the other two types. Guru ji explained the types as under:

a) **Eliciting Knowledge.** If someone does not know a subject, one should humbly request the person who knows about it and keep the knowledge in his mind.

b) **Friendly Discussion.** This is friendly exchange of knowledge between two persons. One should explain what one knows and listen attentively to what the other has to say about the subject. Then one should apply one’s discrimination and keep the useful information in his mind.

To understand the utility of this practice, take the case of a lamp. It can light another lamp. But behind the lamp there is darkness. If there is another lamp behind it, both the rear and the front are illuminated.

c) **Unfriendly Discussion.** In this discussion, one gives many arguments in favour of his side and tries to disprove the other side by counter arguments. This type of discussion feeds one’s ego and is to be avoided.
by the devotees

d) Fruitless Discussion. In this discussion, one goes on arguing without knowing anything on the subject. If some other person who knows about the subject tries to explain, he does not pay heed to it. This kind of discussion is also to be avoided by the devotees.

Guru ji advised that the devotees should only indulge in discussions with humility, not hurt anyone’s feelings but shower praise on everybody.

Atma is Beyond Being Gross and Subtle

7.2 Mian Jamal

Mian Jamal came to Guru Har Gobind, prostrated and prayed for being made Guru’s disciple. Guru ji advised him to recite Gurbani with full faith and said that all beings are made up of five elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether) but there is only one consciousness or ‘Atma’ in them. Those who recognize the Atma are the Guru’s disciples.

Mian Jamal asked Guru ji,

1) If one consciousness is in all, why does everyone not get satiated when one person eats food?

2) By one person being blessed with Divine Knowledge, how is it that everybody’s ignorance is not dispelled?

Guru ji explained that all pots contain ether but the pot in which some material is put, only from that can it be retrieved. Darkness is dispelled only from that pot in which a lamp is lighted. Eating food is the function of ‘prana’ or vital airs in the body. Understanding knowledge is the function of the mind. ‘Atma’ is the witness of all i.e. body, mind, prana and intellect. Atma is beyond the three types, i.e.

a) Similar type of things but separate.

b) Different type of things.

b) Part of the same thing.

These three types can be explained as under:

a) Similar type like ‘Atma’ and consciousness i.e. same
but separate. Take an example of two persons. They are similar but separate.

b) Different type is like Atma is consciousness and the human body is gross. Take the example of a man and a tree that are entirely different classes.

c) Part of the same thing is like parts of a human body. But the 'Atma' is formless. A formless thing does not have different parts.

Guru ji explained that Atma is like “Sabh te madh sabhu te niaro, jiu jal bhitar disat taro.” i.e. Atma is in everybody yet separated from everybody. Our body is like a pitcher and Atma is like moon. Moon is seen in the water filled pitcher and also is seen outside it. Whoever has understood it is his disciple.

Make Your Character and Actions Pure

7.3 Bhai Ananta and Kuko Wadhwan

Bhai Ananta and Kuko Wadhwan came to Guru ji and said that Guru Nanak Dev had decided on offering 'karah prasad' (pudding made of wheat flour, sugar and clarified butter). What is its importance? Why not some other sweet?

Guru ji explained that there is nothing in ‘karah prasad’ which is not edible i.e. disposable. Similarly, no part or story of Gurbani is disposable. So the disciples should make their actions and character in such a manner that nothing out of these be disposable. Such disciples will attain liberation. The Lord’s Name is such that one gets absorbed in the Eternal Being.

Recitation is Virtuous but only Meditation on Gurbani Results in Divine Knowledge

7.4 Bhai Nivala and Nihalu

Bhai Nivala and Nihalu came to Guru ji and prayed for their liberation. Guru ji told them that there is fire in the wood but it cannot be ignited without rubbing. The wood
is not even warm. But when somebody rubs two wooden pieces together, the wood starts burning.

There is ghee in the milk. But effort and technique is required to extract it from the milk. One has to churn the milk, extract the butter and then heat it to make ghee.

Similarly, by reciting Gurbani one earns virtue but not the Divine Knowledge. Divine Knowledge is attained only by meditation and discrimination (vivek).

Bhai Nivala and Nihalu used to give discourses on Guru Granth Sahib. The audience would listen attentively and their hearts would fill with devotion. They absorbed Guru’s instructions.

The two disciples were also liberated and those who heard them also became ‘jiwan Muktas’.

Ideal Preacher and Listener

7.5 Bhai Takhtu Dhir Etc.

Bhai Takhtu Dhir, Dargah Tuli, Mansa Dhar and Tirath Uppal came to Guru Har Gobind, prostrated and prayed, “O True Emperor, when we listen to other preachers, we do not feel at peace. But when we hear Bhai Nivala and Nihalu (of previous story), we feel at peace and our evil tendencies are dispelled.”

Guru ji said that Gurbani is like nectar. A good preacher and listener should have fourteen qualities. Only then are the listeners most benefited. If there were less of good qualities in the speaker and the listener, there was less benefit. But if the speaker had all the qualities, the listeners were automatically blessed with good qualities.

Then the disciples asked as to what were the good qualities to be had in the speaker and the listener. Guru ji explained as under:

Qualities in the speaker

1. Full understanding. The speaker should have full
understanding of paraphrasing of the text of Gurbani, control his voice to reach the whole audience and read as per the concept and notion of the verse. (The original Guru Granth Sahib is written in continuous type with out separation of letters, words and paraphrasing)

2. The speaker should take the interest and feelings of the listeners into consideration. When the listeners are deeply interested, he should explain in detail.

3. When the audience is bored, he should be brief.

4. The speaker should use a pleasant tone so that the audience loves the discourse. He should explain the meanings of the words as per context.

5. If some listener has a doubt or asks a question, it should be fully explained. A story or parable should be relevant in the discourse.

6. The examples given in the discourse should suit the level of the audience.

7. The speaker should be fully conversant with all scriptures. The discourse should be close to the subject under discussion and there should be no dispersion or diffusion of the subject.

8. He should not talk or narrate a story out of context.

9. The speaker should be erect in posture and simple in mind.

10. The audience should be so moved during the discourse that their hearts fill with the love of 'Waheguru'.

11. The audience should be won over in such a manner that their eyes and ears are directed and tuned towards the speaker.

12. The speaker should remain humble.

13. He should first practice his teachings and the teachings should be engraved on his heart.

14. He should be contented. He should not be desirous of many objects. Whatever he receives without asking, he should accept happily.

Guru ji said that they should listen to only such preachers
who had all these fourteen qualities. He further explained the qualities in a listener.

**Qualities in a listener**

1. The listener should have faith in the speaker in his mind, speech and actions.
2. He should not be proud of his own knowledge or his service to the speaker.
3. He should listen to the discourse with full reverence.
4. He should not try to show any cleverness in speech or body actions.
5. He should be sharp in understanding.
6. He should be capable of formulating and asking questions.
7. He should have heard and studied many scriptures.
8. He should not show laziness.
9. He should not speak during the discourse.
10. He should engrave on his heart whatever is said during the discourse.
11. He should share his wealth and food with others.
12. Whatever contrary to the Guru's teachings is said in the discourse should be rejected.
13. He should be clean and alert in body.
14. He should not be a hypocrite and should lister with full devotion.

If the listener had all the fourteen qualities, he can acquire Divine Knowledge very quickly. Bhai Nihalu had all these qualities. The disciples should therefore remain in his company. His company would bless them with all the good qualities.

**Board the Ship of the Lord’s Name**

7.6 **Bhai Kishna Jhanjhi and Pammu Puri**

Bhai Kishna Jhanjhi and Pammu Puri came to Guru Har Gobind, prostrated and prayed for their liberation. Guru ji told them that 'Waheguru Naam' is a big ship in kaliyug and
advised them to come aboard it and practice recitation of ‘Gurbani’. They said, “O Lord and True Emperor, many disciples listen to and recite Gurbani and renounce their evil actions. But some disciples, on the contrary, have an increased tendency towards hostility and enmity. What station do they achieve?”

Guru ji said that Gurbani liberated all, though some took a longer time. The ones who were murderers of knowledge were not benefited at all. When an ignorant person heard ‘Gurbani’, his sins were erased and his thirst for knowledge is increased. The seeker of knowledge was blessed with more knowledge. For those who were already in the know of the things, their knowledge was enhanced. But those who were the murderers of knowledge listened to Gurbani only to exhibit their ego. They pretended to know the Truth. Although they were not yet firm in knowledge, they declared themselves as such only to get a good name in public. They also did not keep company with the saints. Such persons never gained True Knowledge.

To illustrate this, suppose a man is to go to Amritsar but does not know the way. He can inquire from others and reach his destination. Some can accompany other travellers going to Amritsar. One who knows the way i.e. a person blessed with Knowledge or a ‘gyani’ also reaches there. But one who does not know, does not ask anybody and instead goes in the opposite direction can never reach Amritsar. Similarly, one who considers himself in the know and does not seek knowledge from the saints cannot be liberated and become ‘Jiwan Mukta’.

Selfless Service Leads to Mukti

7.7 Bhai Dhinagar and Maddu

Bhai Dhinagar and Maddu, two carpenters, were very gifted persons. They came to serve Guru Har Gobind. They would cut wood for the kitchen, prepare cots and seats or any
other thing required for the disciples. They were very punctual to attend kirtan and spiritual discourses. Early in the morning, they would bring water for the disciples, take bath themselves and recite ‘Gurbani’.

When their last hour arrived, they prostrated before Guru ji, had bath, distributed their belongings to the poor and needy and breathed their last while reciting ‘Gurbani’. Guru ji went to their funeral pyre and blessed them with liberation.

Importance of the Company of the Saints

7.8 Bhai Banwali and Parasram

Bhai Banwali and Parasram were Ayurvedic practitioners or ‘vaids’ (doctors). They would dispense medicines to the sick disciples and even make house calls when needed. They would also sing ‘Gurbani’ and perform kirtan.

One day they prayed to Guru ji, “O Lord and True Emperor, ‘Gurbani’ benefits everybody, then why is so much importance given to the company of saints?”

Guru ji said that although they had medicines for all the diseases, but before prescribing any particular medicine they check the pulse to identify the malady i.e. whether it was a case of disturbed balance of wind, heat or liquid flow (vata, pitta or kaffa). They also prescribed usual self-control to be followed. Then only was the patient cured. But if the patients were there and the medicines were also available but there was no doctor, no patient would be cured.

Similarly, the saints or the Guru-oriented disciples examine the seekers and prescribe the teachings in Gurbani as per their requirement. Then only can the seeker attain Divine Knowledge.

(Gurbani has all the instructions from nursery to the highest level. The saints are needed to diagnose the mental level of the seeker and guide him properly).
Test for a Royal Swan

7.9 Bhai Tirtha

Bhai Tirtha was employed in the king’s army. He came to Guru ji, prostrated and prayed that he was engaged in worldly chores and all his time was spent in these. How could he seek his liberation? Guru ji advised him to serve the saints. Those who fed grass to the cows enjoyed the milk. Similarly, those who served the saints were blessed with knowledge and devotion.

Guru ji then told a story about a king who wanted to see the royal swans, which according to a legend lived in the Mansarover Lake and fed on milk and pearls. They are supposed to be gifted with the art of separating milk from water. His Minister said that it was difficult for the king to find such swans as the royal duties could not be neglected for finding the swans. He suggested that the king fill a pond with water and spread grains for birds around it.

This was done and slowly birds started coming from far and wide. They returned to their countries and sang the praise of the kind king. Soon the royal swans of Mansarover heard the fame and glory of the king. A pair of them decided to fly and see for themselves and reward the king for his kind deed. Soon they reached the pond with the other birds. The guards immediately reported to the king that a pair of beautiful, shining white royal swans had arrived who would not touch the bird feed spread around the pond. The king came and brought milk and pearls for the swans. They separated the milk from water and fed on it. They then threw up white shining precious pearls and flew away. When the king showed the pearls to the jewellers they said that each pearl was more precious than his kingdom. The king was highly pleased.

So Guru ji advised Bhai Tirath to serve all the disciples. Some Guru oriented saint will deliver him from the bondage of life and death with his invaluable teachings.
Mischief by Chandu

7.10 Bhai Haridas Soni

Bhai Haridas Soni was a resident of Gwalior and used to serve all the disciples and saints with mind, speech and actions. He was very keen to see Guru ji.

Chandu shah was a highly depraved person. He maliciously reported to the king that the son of Guru Arjun Dev, Guru Har Gobind calls himself the ‘True Emperor’. Earlier he had sent a proposal for his daughter’s marriage with Har Gobind ji but Guru Arjun Dev had not accepted it. Chandu had then maliciously reported to the king and Guru ji was called, tortured and he gave up his body.

Now Chandu made a complaint to the king against Guru Har Gobind. The king’s men came to take Guru ji to Delhi. The disciples cautioned Guru ji against the barbarous Muslim rulers. Guru ji told them that he would tackle them like a teacher and Chandu would also reap the fruits of his actions.

Guru Har Gobind went to Delhi and met the king. The king was very pleased and ordered that Guru ji should be made comfortable and his camp be put up in the garden. After seeing all this Chandu was very disturbed. He incited the astrologers to tell the king that the planetary position for him was very unfavourable. If Guru Har Gobind would meditate in Gwalior fort for forty days, it would be good for the king. The king thus came to Guru ji’s camp and requested him to go to Gwalior and meditate there for forty days. After this period, he would call him back.

Guru ji thus went to Gwalior where Bhai Haridas came to meet him. Guru ji told him that his love and devotion had pulled him to Gwalior.

Chandu then bribed the officers of the fort to keep Guru ji under difficult conditions. But the king had written that Guru ji should be made as comfortable as possible. So Guru ji was kept comfortably and he used to go for hunting
daily. Bhai Haridas would send twenty *maunds* of wheat flour, five *maunds* of *ghee* and five *maunds* of sugar and other types of food etc for all the residents in the fort. (One *maund* is equal to 37 kilogram or 40 *seers* in weight). All the prisoners in the fort were very happy.

At the end of forty days Bhai Jetha appeared as tiger in the king’s dream and frightened him. The king asked the astrologers about the nightmare. Bhai Jetha dressed as an astrologer told the king that unless he sends for Guru Har Gobind from Gwalior fort, his nightmares would continue. The king therefore requested Guru ji to come back to Delhi. But Guru ji said that there were 52 innocent Hindu rulers imprisoned in the fort. Unless all of them were released he would not leave. So the king ordered the release of all the 52 rulers and they left the fort with Guru ji, holding on to his garment. Guru ji also brought Bhai Haridas along with him.

In Delhi, Guru ji gave a very precious pearl to the king. The king took it to his palace and gave it to his queen. The queen asked for another pearl like it. When the king requested for another pearl, Guru ji told him that when Guru Arjun Dev had left his body in the house of Chandu, he had a rosary of 108 such pearls with him. The king should question Chandu about the pearl rosary. When the king inquired, Chandu denied about having any such pearl rosary. Then Guru ji asked for the custody of Chandu since he was the murderer of his father and also promised to recover the pearl rosary.

Chandu was then brought to Guru ji’s camp where he was beaten with shoes and he died. He was cut up in pieces and thrown in the dirty drain. The precious pearls were also recovered and were handed over to the king.

At night a lion came in the king’s camp. After killing the guards, the lion reached the king’s tent. Guru ji killed the lion with his arrow. The king was highly pleased and requested Guru ji to ask for anything. Guru ji asked for leave to go back to Amritsar.
Guru ji sent back Bhai Haridas to Gwalior with instructions to serve the Guru’s disciples.

**Characteristics of a Saint**

**7.11 Bhai Dhiro Ujaini**

Bhai Dhiro was a resident of Ujain (in Madhya Pradesh). During the day he would hear the spiritual discourses. In the evenings, after the meals, he would perform *kirtan* for three hours. He would get up three hours before sunrise, take bath and recite *Gurbani*. Every six months he would visit Guru ji to pay his respects.

One day he requested Guru ji to enlighten him about the characteristics of a saint. Guru ji said that there are six essential characteristics of a saint. They are:

1. The secret of being a saint was total devotion to the Lord’s Name. The saints considered the Lord to be present in all the beings, big or small, as ‘Atma’.
2. Pain, pleasure and knowledge were the same for them. They were never angry or overcome by sorrow. All good and bad happenings were considered to be ordained by the Lord as a result of their past actions.
3. They preached the Lord’s Name to their friends and foes alike. Their mind was full of devotion to the Lord and they desired that the same should be acquired by everybody.
4. They were kind to all beings. They were always absorbed in recitation of the Holy Name, *kirtan* or holy discourses.
5. In the matter of wealth they were totally detached. They considered wealth as transient or perishable. They had renounced the five evil qualities like anger, lust, pride, jealousy and greed etc.
6. They neither criticized nor heard criticism of others. Those who had these qualities were the saints. If one had these qualities, it was very good. If not, one should
keep company with a person who had these qualities. One would then be an ideal disciple and all these qualities would be acquired by him.

Renounce Your Ego Before Spiritual Journey

7.12 Bhai Bhagwan Das, Kataru Etc.

Residents of Burhanpur, Bhai Bhagwan Das, Bodla Mallik, Kataru, Prithimal, Jarandi etc were disciples of Guru ji. Bhai Bhagat Chhura, Dallu Rahan, Sundar Das Wadhwan along with earlier named disciples came to see Guru Har Gobind, prostrated and prayed for their salvation.

Guruiji advised them to build a Dharamshala in their town where they should have discourses on Gurbani. They should close the prayer service with ‘Arati’ and ‘Waak’ from Granth Sahib. In the evenings, they should recite ‘Rahras’ and perform kirtan for three hours. They should recite ‘Kirtan Sohila’ before sleep. In the morning, three hours before sunrise, they should take bath and recite Gurbani from memory. They should also help the disciples in need of food, clothing etc. On special occasions like first day of the month, new moon, Deepawali, Baisakhi and other Guru’s days, they should collect money, Prepare ‘karah prasad’ and have spiritual discourses etc. All this should be done very humbly.

Then Guru ji gave an example. He said that a man had a well in his house. A cat once fell into it and drowned. The water in the well was polluted. The man went to the Pundit for advice. The Pundit told him to take out the dead cat and then draw one thousand buckets of water. The water in the well would be purified. The man forgot to take out the dead cat out first and drew a thousand buckets of water. Since the water was not yet purified, he went to the Pundit who told him to remove one lakh (one hundred thousand) buckets of water. The man drew one lakh buckets of water but the dead cat was still visible. The Pundit then told him that unless the cat was removed, the water in the well would never be clean.
Similarly, as long as the ego was not removed from the mind, no virtuous act was beneficial. Thus, they should first renounce their ego and then only would they be liberated.

Learn to Live as Per the Will of the Lord

7.13 Bhai Bhikari Bhabra

Bhai Bhikari Bhabra was a resident of Gujarat city (now in Pakistan). He used to serve the Guru’s disciples and other saints, discuss spiritual matters and recite Gurbani. One day a disciple prayed to Guru Har Gobind to meet a perfect disciple. Guru ji asked him to go to Gujarat.

The disciple went there and met Bhai Bhikari who took him to his residence and looked after him with great hospitality. The disciple found that Bhai Bhikari’s son’s marriage was to take place the next day. There was a lot of festivities and music in the house. New ornaments were being made and costly clothes were being stitched. Then the disciple found a bier made of sandalwood (a frame to carry the dead body) and other necessary items needed in cremation ceremony. The disciple inquired about the things needed in a cremation ceremony when the preparations of his son’s marriage were in progress. Bhai Bhikari said that he would answer the question the next day.

At night the marriage ceremony of Bhai Bhikari’s son was performed. A lot of charity was given and the bride was brought home. After the marriage Bhai Bhikari’s son suffered an acute pain in his abdomen and died. All the people who were singing auspicious songs started mourning. Bhai Bhikari was very calm. He took out the sandalwood bier and performed the cremation of his son.

After all this, the disciple inquired that if Bhai Bhikari was aware of his son’s death, why did he perform the marriage? Bhai Bhikari said that his son was a sage in his last birth and the daughter-in-law was a prostitute. One day she brought offerings for the sage. They were both attracted towards each other. After some time both died.
The sage took birth as his son. Bhai Bhikari knew all this because he was blessed with Divine Knowledge. He said that the daughter-in-law would serve the saints in his house, listen to Gurbani and thus be liberated in this life.

Then the disciple asked Bhai Bhikari that if he had this much of knowledge, why did he not request Guru ji to extend the life of his son? He said that there was no use in asking for false objects from Guru ji. The foremost duty of a disciple was to remain happy in the will of Guru ji.

Desireless Worship Leads to Liberation

7.14 Bhai Maia Lumb

Bhai Maia Lumb was a resident of Sohinda and used to serve the disciples with great devotion. He used to attend the assembly of devotees both in the morning and evening and perform kirtan. One day he asked Guru Har Gobind that there were some disciples who attended Guru’s assembly to fulfil their desires of worldly objects. There were some other disciples who made an honest living and shared their earnings with the needy disciples and performed kirtan in the assembly of saints simply to please Guru ji. What was the fruit of these two types of devotion? What was the fruit to those who were absolutely detached from the worldly desires?

‘Guru ji explained the fruit of various types of devotion as under:

1. Those who performed kirtan with worldly desires; they after leaving the body go to the land of celestial musicians. (Gandharab loke)
2. Those who had Divine Knowledge were aware that all pleasures and objects were perishable. They performed kirtan without any desire. They accepted all offerings as a gift of the Lord and shared it with others. (They were Jiwan Muktas).
3. Those who performed kirtan to attain their liberation and were satisfied with whatever little they got also
attained the state of detachment as above.

4. Those who performed kirtan without any desires and greed would go to the land of the celestial musicians after leaving their human body. Having passed a pleasurable time there, they would again be born as human beings and get the worldly objects.

Therefore, Guru ji advised Bhai Lumb to perform kirtan without any desire and thus he would be liberated.

Essentials of Discipleship

7.15 Bhai Chuhar Chaujhar

Bhai Chuhar Chaujhar was a resident of Lucknow. All the 24 hours, he was busy in reciting the Name of ‘Waheguru’. He likened the qualities of a disciple to a tree and asked Guru Har Gobind Sahib, “O True Emperor, kindly enlighten me to what is the root of discipleship?” Guru ji replied, “Humility and service to the disciples and the saints.” Then he asked, “What are the leaves of discipleship?” Guru ji replied, “Attending the assembly of saints.” Then he asked, “What is the fruit of discipleship?” Guru ji replied that understanding of Gurbani is the fruit of discipleship. One who has understood the world as false and perishable and ‘Atma’ as permanent was a true disciple or a Sikh.

Continuous Recital of the Lord’s Name Gives Freedom

7.16 Bhai Bhana

Bhai Bhana was a very devoted disciple and a resident of Allahabad. He came to Guru Har Gobind and prayed for his liberation. Guru ji advised him to recite the Name of ‘Waheguru’ continuously and make an honest living. Bhai Bhana said that some persons were arguing that if one calls somebody continuously, that person gets irritated. So, if he recites ‘Waheguru’ continuously, would the Lord not
get angry?

Guru ji advised that if someone was being troubled by his enemies and he being helpless calls for the king, most probably the enemies would let him go. Otherwise, king’s men on hearing the king’s name being called would help free him or take him to the king who would free him from the tormentors. Similarly, if a person troubled by the five evils like desire, anger, lust, jealousy and greed etc, recited the Lord’s Name, the sins would leave him. Otherwise, such a person would be blessed with the company of saints who would instill in him faith in the Lord’s Name and the five evils would release him. On account of the disciple’s faith in the Name of the Lord, such a person was liberated.

The disciple should not leave recitation of the Lord’s Name on advice of critics and sophists. A fruit that remains attached to the tree ripens and becomes sweet but the fruit that falls off the tree due to the wind, rots. Similarly, the disciple who recited and listened to Gurbani and the Lord’s Name daily became firm in the Divine Knowledge and sweet in nature. The persons who left the practice under the influence of slanderers were destined to repeated births and deaths.

Virtuous Austerity and Recitation of the Lord’s Name

7.17 Bhai Jatta Tapa

Bhai Jatta tapa was a resident of Sujanpur. He came to Guru Har Gobind Sahib and prayed for his liberation. Guru ji advised him to practice virtuous austerities and recite Ram Naam. Bhai Jatta said that some people were of the view that no one can attain liberation without following the path of knowledge. (Gyan Marg)

Guru ji explained that by recitation of the Lord’s Name one could enter all the four gates of ‘Waheguru’ like the
four doors of Hari mandir Sahib (golden temple at Amritsar). From whichever door one entered, it was beneficial to him. The main benefits were:

1. One renounced evil actions or sins.
2. One attained dispassion towards objects of the world.
3. With one pointed recitation of the Name, one attained fruits of yogic practices.
4. When one walked to the Gurudwara, one attained the fruit of ‘Ashwamedha Yagna’ or the horse sacrifice. Hearing Gurbani made one humble.

These were the attainments of the recitation of the Lord’s Name. One who wakes up early in the morning, practices virtuous austerity (tapa). One would understand that one is not the body that one had thought earlier. The body is left here in this world itself. One is the form of consciousness that witnesses creation and destruction of the body. All this knowledge is gained with blessings of ‘Waheguru’.

Types of Devotees

7.18 Bhai Navala and Nihala

Bhai Navala and Nihala were residents of Patna. They always spoke the truth and acted in truth. They served the disciples engaged in devotion and meditation. One day they prayed to Guru Har Gobind to advise them what to do to achieve liberation. Guru ji advised them to practice devotion to the Lord’s Name. They said that some people believed that worship leads to duality. The followers of the path of knowledge considered themselves to be ‘Braham’ or the Supreme Being. So whom should they worship?

Guru ji told them that there were four types of devotees

1) The devotees with desires. They worship the Lord and serve the saints with some specific desire in their minds. ‘Waheguru’ fulfills their desires and also creates love for Himself in their hearts.

2) The distressed devotees. These were the persons who
were suffering because of some physical disease or the fear of the enemies. They recite the Lord’s Name to relieve themselves from these problems. Their diseases and difficulties were also removed and their faith was enhanced.

3) **The devoted disciples.** They were known as Sikhs. They considered ‘Waheguru’ as the Lord, Master and Creator. They recite His Name and are blessed with Divine Knowledge.

4) **The devotees who know the truth.** They know that ‘Waheguru’ is everywhere and in every being like ether that is present in every thing. When they meditate on the Lord’s Name with this conviction, their knowledge of the truth becomes firm. They are blessed with Divine Knowledge

Thus, Guru ji advised these disciples to recite the Lord’s name, serve the saints and remain humble. They would then be liberated.

**Devotion Must Accompany Knowledge**

**7.19 Bhai Jaita Seth**

Bhai Jaita Seth was a resident of the Guru’s house and would serve the disciples and saints. One day he asked Guru Har Gobind that some people say that if one has the knowledge, he need not practice devotion or ‘Bhakti’. Is only knowledge enough for one’s liberation?

Guru ji replied that knowledge does not have any glory without devotion. It is handicapped or disabled. Take the example of ghee (clarified butter). It lubricates the body as well as the container. But if one takes ghee by itself, it is tasteless. If one is suffering from excess of gall, ghee may cause loose motions. If a person has a tendency for phlegm, it will cause cough and heaviness in the chest. Thus, ghee has these disadvantages. But if the ghee is consumed with a lump of sugar, it tastes sweet and does not cause cough
or loose motions or heaviness in the chest.

Similarly, if a strict follower of the path of knowledge says he is ‘Brahm’ or the Supreme Being, it is wrong. He knows that the hell and heaven are false. If such a person is used to taking intoxicants, he will indulge in sin. These actions are like suffering from loose motions.

If the knowledge of such a person is not yet firm, his ego destroys his other virtuous actions. Such a person becomes so proud that he does not consider anybody equal to him. This is like having heaviness in the chest.

But if the follower of the path of knowledge also practices devotion, it is like taking ghee with lump of sugar. There are then no adverse effects and there is continuous advancement in spiritual progress. Such a person is finally liberated.

Lord’s Name is the Crown Jewel

7.20  Bhai Bhanu Behl

Bhai Bhanu Behl was working in the king’s palace. He used to serve the Guru’s disciples and recite the Lord’s Name. One day he asked Guru Har Gobind, “Some scriptures were of the view that austerities and visits to holy pilgrimage centers were beneficial. Some other said that fasting and ritual worship was beneficial, and some others said that knowledge and meditation was beneficial. But Guru ji has advised that the Lord’s Name is supreme. Was there any proof of this to strengthen the people’s belief in it?

Guru ji explained this with an example and said, “When the Lord created all beings and objects, He asked all beings to take whatever they desired. The worldly asked for kingdoms and wealth. Those who knew the Truth asked for knowledge, the yogis asked for deep meditation stage, the ascetics asked for austerities, the residents of holy pilgrimage centers asked for holy places and the Brahmins asked for ritual worship. The Lord kept the crown jewel of ‘His Name’ in an old rag i.e. humility. When his humble devotees
meditated on His Name, His Name asked whether all the objects detailed above be made available to them? The devotees said that they only wanted the Lord. So the Lord’s Name advised them to maintain humility to attain Him”.

Humility Wins Everybody

7.21 Bhai Badli Sodhi and Seth Gopal

Bhai Badli Sodhi and Seth Gopal used to serve in the house of Guru Har Gobind. One day they prayed to Guru ji to explain as to what kind of devotion they should practice? Guru ji advised them to be humble towards everybody. The water of a fountain splashes higher if it falls deep. The earth, which was below everybody’s feet covers all (after death). Rings were worn on the little finger even though it was the smallest finger. Bawan sandalwood tree was small but gave its fragrance to all the nearby trees. Thus, they should always remain humble towards all.

If somebody wanted to win over the Guru’s disciples, he would lose and he who lost to them would win them. It is like the magical stairs. One who thinks is climbing up is in fact going down and he who is climbing down is going up.

Thus, the ones who think they are winning are in fact the losers and those who lose are the winners. So always be humble in the assembly of devotees. The devotees who lose in front of the saints win the world.

Guru Nanak Dev is the Supreme Guru

7.22 Bhai Sunder Chadda

Bhai Sunder Chadda was a resident of Agra and used to serve the devotees in all dharamshalas in Agra and elsewhere. Once he requested Guru ji to explain how the Satgurus salvage the disciples.

Guru Har Gobind said that there are four types of gurus
but Guru Nanak Dev is the supreme and glorifies all the four types.

1) Some gurus are like an insect. This insect brings an ant to its hole and itself sits at the entrance. With its continuous gaze at the ant, it becomes an insect. But these insects can change only one type of ants into insects.

2) Some gurus are like the philosopher’s stone that can convert metal into gold by touch. But a philosopher’s stone cannot make another philosopher’s stone out of the metal.

3) Some gurus are like bawan sandalwood tree that can convert all the nearby trees into sandalwood but only in the proper season.

4) Some gurus are like a lamp. They can light up all the lamps but for all the lamps, oil and wick is needed.

But Guru Nanak Devji is such a guru who salvages anybody who listens to holy ‘Gurbani’ daily. Such persons are blessed with Divine Knowledge and thus become the form of Unmanifested Lord Himself. Such persons can bless others with Divine Knowledge. Association with the assembly of such devotees is enough for liberation. No other austerities are thus necessary.

Path of His Name is Easier and Faster

7.23 Bhai Mohan

Bhai Mohan was a resident of Dhaka (capital of Bangladesh). He came to Guru Har Gobind, prostrated and prayed for his liberation.

Guru ji asked Bhai Mohan, “Are you your own spy?” Bhai Mohan replied that everybody was his own spy. Then Guru ji asked him, “What do you think of yourself?” Bhai Mohan said that he was Guru ji’s disciple.

Guru ji then explained that the physical body of the disciple and the Guru is made up of five elements. Therefore,
the body does not become the disciple or the guru. The Supreme Being neither dies nor is born. It is all a mystery to our mind. Guru’s mind is pure and the disciples mind is impure. Guru’s mind is ‘Gurbani’ and the Guru purifies the disciples mind with Gurbani. The disciple then becomes aware of his real form.

The characteristics of ‘Ishwar’ and human beings is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss but their expressions are different. The expression of a human being is ignorance and that of ‘Ishwar’ is knowledge. It is like the reflection of the sun in the pond. In a clean pond, the reflection is clear but in the dirty pond it appears muddy. Similarly, the reflection of the Supreme Being in ‘Maya’ is Ishwar and in ignorance it is a human being.

‘Maya’ has six qualities and ignorance has six faults. The disciples asked Guru ji about the qualities and flaws. Guru ji explained that the six qualities are:

1. Spiritualism or righteousness
2. Glory
3. Knowledge
4. Dispassion
5. Creation
6. Equal vision for all

The six flaws are:

1. Desire
2. Thirst
3. Anger
4. Sorrow
5. Birth
6. Death

The Supreme Being is beyond all objects and knowing the Supreme Being as such is the basis for liberation.

Then the disciples said that Guru ji had also said that knowledge leads to liberation and now he says that the Supreme Being’s Name is most beneficial for liberation. How is it?

Guru ji explained that some people cross a river with
their physical strength by swimming. But crossing a river in a boat is easier and more comfortable. This is the difference between attaining liberation through knowledge and through the Lord’s Name.

Guru ji further explained that a roasted grain does not germinate (rebirth). A roasted grain coated with sugar also does not germinate. But the sugar coated roasted grain is tastier to eat. Thus, liberation can be attained through knowledge but liberation through Name is more enjoyable.
Appeal

Sewak kau sewa ban ayee..
hukam boojh param pad payee..

In the healthy environment of Gurdwara Dehra Sahib Lahore and in the light of the teachings of Gurbani, the work of selfless service which was started by Bhagat Puran Singh at Lahore was implemented after arriving at Amritsar. At the time of partition of the country; on reaching the refugee camp at the Khalsa College, Amritsar on 18-08-1947, Bhagat Puran Singh started the service of suffering humanity with full vigour, which had become need of the hour due to the outbreak of cholera epidemic. After this, he never looked back and for giving the present shape to the Pingalwara, its founder had to struggle very hard, round the clock.

At this time (on 31.03.2009 A.D.) Pingalwara has about 1370 inmates which are being looked after without any discrimination of religion, caste, creed or colour. They include destitutes, cripples, sick and insane men, women, children and the aged. Some of them are suffering from incurable diseases.

In addition to this, a lot of literature is printed and distributed free of cost, free education is given to the poor children, free artificial limbs are provided to the handicapped, and to save and improve the environment, free tree plantation is done in government and common lands, etc. etc.

The daily expenditure of Pingalwara is over Rs. 2,75,000/- (Rs. Two lacs seventy five thousand) which is being incurred out of the donations and help received from the donors and well-wishers.

Donors are humbly requested to send donations through money-orders, bank drafts, cheques, etc., so that the good work of selfless service is kept going.

Dr. Inderjit Kaur
President

All India Pingalwara Charitable Society (Regd.) Amritsar.
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