



RELEVANCE OF GURU NANAK DEV JI'S TEACHINGS IN PRESENT SCENARIO

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Abstract:

Guru Nanak has been called "one of the greatest religious innovators of all time". He travelled far and wide teaching people the message of one God who dwells in every one of His creations and constitutes the eternal Truth. He set up a unique spiritual, social, and political platform based on equality, fraternal love, goodness, and virtue. Guru Nanak's words are registered in the form of 974 poetic hymns in the holy text of Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib, with some of the major prayers being the Japji Sahib, the Asa di Var and the Sidh-Ghost. It is part of Sikh religious belief that the spirit of Guru Nanak's sanctity, divinity and religious authority descended upon each of the nine subsequent Gurus when the Guruship was devolved on to them. The paper summaries teachings of Guru Nanak Dev ji , Relevance of guru nanak dev ji's teachings in present time.

INTRODUCTION

Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism and the first of the eleven Gurus of the Sikhs, was born in the village of Talwandi. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born on 15th April 1469. However, Sikhs now celebrate this auspicious event each year on the full moon day in November. Thus the date changes from one year to the next. He was born into a Bedi Kshatriya family in the village of Rai Bhoi di Talwandi. It's now called Nankana Sahib. These days there is Gurdwara Janam Asthan at this place. Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born to mother Tripta Devi and father Mehta Kalu. Guru Nanak's father was a patwari working for Rai Bular Bhatti. His full name was Mehta Kalyan Das Bedi. Guru Nanak Dev Ji had one elder sister called Bebe Nanaki. She was the first to recognise Nanak as an enlightened Soul. Guru Nanak from an early age seemed to have acquired a questioning and enquiring mind. He refused as a child to wear sacred thread called Janeu, saying instead that he would wear the true name of God in his heart for his protection. He reasoned that the thread could be

broken, soiled, burnt or lost and could not offer any security at all. At age seven, his father, Kalu Mehta, enrolled him at the village school. As a child Guru Nanak astonished his teacher by describing the implicit symbolism of the first letter of the alphabet. In Persian or Arabic it is a straight stroke, resembling the mathematical version of one. He described it as denoting the unity or oneness of God.

TEACHINGS OF GURU NANAK DEV JI

1. Submission to the Will of God (WAHEGURU)

Guru Nanak Dev ji gave the message of “Hukam Rajayee Chalna Nanak Likheya Naal“. Guru Nanak Dev ji says that everything happens by God’s Grace, so Rest assured that God knows better what is right or wrong for us. We should, therefore, accept His decisions without any grudge or question.

2. There is One God

Guru Nanak Dev ji said, ” I am neither Hindu Nor Muslim, I am a follower of god”, which actually spoke about his belief in one god. In Sikhism, the god is omnipresent, shapeless, timeless, and sightless. (Nirankar, akar, alakh). Sikhism stress that, before creation there was God, and because of His will (Hukam), the Illusion (maya of attachment and enticement) came into being. The God in Sikhism is not male/female, and can only be seen through inward eye. Guru Nanak Dev ji explained one thing clearly that there is only One who gives to everyone and we should not forget to Him. The Guru stressed that full knowledge of god is impossible in human form.

3. Goodwill for all – SARBAT DAA BHALAA

Guru Nanak dev ji passed the message of Universal brotherhood. He said that religion is not mere consistence of words but actually looks all men and women equally. Universal brotherhood is a strong theme in Gurbani written by Guru Nanak Dev ji. In our prayer, we say this line towards the end of daily Ardaas – “Nanak Naam Chardi Kala Tere Bhane Sarbat da bhala”, which can be translated as “Nanak asks for ‘Naam’ (name of God) with which comes wellbeing, happiness and positive spirit and with your blessings, Lord may everyone in the world prosper and be in peace“ or can be broken down as:

Nanak, With Naam comes Chardi Kala and with your blessings, may there be peace for all. We request Him for the welfare of the whole humanity and not just of our community or our family alone.

4. SACH SUNAISI SACH KEE BELA – (to speak the truth)

Guru Nanak Dev Ji told in front of King Babar “You are not Babar but JABAR”. We should always speak the truth without any fear. According to the Guru’s doctrine, the victory of truth is not dependent on ending or suppressing falsehood but in standing firmly by truth. That is why Guru Nanak Dev ji exhorts that to stick to truth and to remain on the side of truth when it is necessary is very essential –

SACH KI BANI NANAK AAKHAI SACH SUNAISI SACH KI BELA

I HAVE RELATED THE TRUE WORD OF THE TRUE LORD AS PER HIS WILL.

5. SEWA AND SIMRAN

Guru Nanak says that no one can save anybody else. It is only Guru who guides us to safety, and to be saved, one have to follow the right path of SEWA and SIMRAN told by him. Further the Guru is not to be found in big palaces, he lives with poor. Let us love the poor, God will bless us. If we recite Gurbani with love, we will find the Guru is speaking to us. We have been reminded of his observations many times in our life. When we barely make both ends meet, we are usually sincerely devoted to GURBANI and the Sikh way of life. But when we have excess money to spend on worldly pleasures we follow vices and ignore the real mission of human life. DHARAM is usually the first casualty when we become rich. About SEWA Gurbani explains: (In the midst of this world, do SEWA and you shall be given a place of honour in the Court of the Lord)

6. THE THREE PRINCIPALS

Vand Chako: Sharing with others, helping those with less who are in need

Kirat Karo: Earning/making a living honestly, without exploitation or fraud

Naam Japna: Chanting the Holy Name and thus remembering God at all times (ceaseless devotion to God)

7. SHUN FIVE EVILS

Guru Nanak Dev Ji asked his followers to shun five evils which leads to illusion (maya) which eventually acts as roadblock towards attainment of salvation. The five evils are-Ego, Anger, Greed, Attachment and Lust.

8. IMPORTANCE OF GURU

Guru Nanak Dev ji lay great emphasis on having the importance of Guru in one's life. He put forward the thought that salvation occurs not from pilgrimage or rites etc, but through heart, spirit and soul. For this to happen continuous seeking of knowledge must take place which is dependent on one's guru. Guru according to him is the voice of the god, the true source of knowledge and salvation.

9. NO DISCRIMINATION

Guru Nanak Dev ji was strongly against all artificially created divisions and all discrimination, both in word and deed. He said that the caste of a person is based on what he does. His idea of a caste-free society transpired also in his concepts of Sangat and Pangat.

10. AGAINST RITUALS/SUPERSTITIONS

Guru Nanak Dev Ji preached against superstitions, false rituals, worship of demi-gods and goddesses. He stressed that only One God, the Formless, is to be glorified. In this way, he showed the path of truth and enlightenment.

Relevance of Guru Nanak Dev ji's teachings in present time

Five centuries after the passing of Guru Nanak, his words still resonate with his followers. Let's take a look at 10 of his teachings that make sense presently.

- ❖ Never forget the poor.-This mantra was relevant in 1500 when there was no concept of poverty alleviation, and is just as relevant now, when poverty hasn't left the world. When Nanak was 12, his father gave him Rs. 20 to set up a business. Nanak bought food worth Rs. 20 and gave it away. When his father asked him about this investment, Nanak told

him it was a "true business". Today, a Gurudwara named Sacha Sauda (true business) exists, where Guru Nanak fed the poor.

- ❖ There is only one god -Using religion to segregate people into categories is awful. In the Guru's own words, "There is neither Hindu nor Muslim." On his visit to Hardiwar, he saw people offering the water of the Ganges towards the sun in the east, as an offering to their ancestors in heaven. He began to throw water towards the West. When others ridiculed him, he said: "If Ganges water will reach your ancestors in heaven, why should the water I throw not reach my fields in the Punjab, which are far less distant?"
- ❖ Women are equal-At a time when other Indian religions wanted quiet, demure women in the temple and no women in the mosque, he permitted women to join religious gatherings and openly sing their praises of God.
- ❖ Running away to a forest won't give you enlightenment. -The essence of religion/ Is meekness and sympathy/ But a life of goodness and purity/ Amid the world's temptations..." (Guru Nanak) Maybe one could achieve enlightenment in forests centuries ago, but we're not capable of that today. And Guru Nanak doesn't even require you to do that. He believed that living as a householder was better than going away for a divine truth. Nanak himself was a farmer even after achieving enlightenment.
- ❖ These five evils are probably ruining your life. a. Ego b. Anger c. Greed d. Attachment and e. Lust.

Most, if not all, suffering of big city life comes from these five evils.

- ❖ Be selfless The Punjab Golden Temple feeds over a 100,000 people of all religions every single day. Not because there is some divine gain, but because it is a sacred duty. For Nanak, the concept of selfless service was a way of life.
- ❖ Fight superstition of any kind. - Nanak devoted his life to attacking formal rituals, caste, and practices that didn't make any sense. This is the simplest way you can find meaning and purpose in your own life – cutting out the clutter of what society dictates you should do.

- ❖ Simplicity is beautiful.-Simplicity of human nature can enhance humanity. For humanity, everybody should be free from artificial beauty. To give enrichment of the soul man should follow bridging humanity.

CONCLUSION

In present time guru ji's teaching are applicable in every field of life. Guru Nanak, emphasized Bhakti, and taught that the spiritual life and secular householder life are intertwined. In Sikh worldview, the everyday world is part of the Infinite Reality, increased spiritual awareness leads to increased and vibrant participation in the everyday world. Guru Nanak, states Sonali Marwaha, described living an "active, creative, and practical life" of "truthfulness, fidelity, self-control and purity" as being higher than the metaphysical truth.

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