

SIKHISM (SIKHI)

A RELIGION THAT GOES BEYOND RELIGION

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ABSTRACT

It is often said that different religions in this world are only different ways people take to reach the same destination. It is like saying that God is sitting in some central place and people of different religions are heading towards It from different directions taking different routs. Is this true or false? Do people invariably have to take different routs to reach their destination? Guru Nanak challenged this concept and said that there is only one way leading towards God, and we are all required to walk this way irrespective of the religion we belong to or not. What is that one way? An attempt has been made in the following lines to explain and understand the unique religion or way revealed by Guru Nanak. It is the way that transcends all religions.

DISCUSSION NAME

Let us knock at the door and start with the name. Sikhism is unique in its name. Its name tells a lot about it. One just has to ponder about and compare it with the names of other religions of the world. Sikhism is the common but inappropriate translation of the Punjabi word *Sikhi*. While the word Sikhism connotes a set of philosophical principles that Sikhs follow, the Punjabi word *Sikhi* emphasizes more on the process of learning those principles and becoming a Sikh. Now compare this name with the names of other major world religions. Christianity is named after Jesus Christ. Christ means messiah or prophet. Buddhism is named after Gautam Buddha. Buddha means the enlightened. Both Christ and Buddha were not the original names of Jesus and Gautam, respectively, but these are the titles showered upon them by their followers. Hazrat Mahammad named his religion as Islam. Islam means to resign to the will of God. The word Hinduism does not tell anything about the Hindu religion. It is more geographical than philosophical as it is derived from the name of the river Indus [2]. Sikhism is the only religion that derives its name from its followers and not from its originators or the place where it originated. It is the only religion whose name lays more emphases on the process of ‘becoming’ than on ‘being’. The name ‘Sikhism’ or ‘*Sikhi*’ is suggestive of the underlying philosophy of the religion revealed by Guru Nanak. Sikh means a student or pupil and *Sikhi* means the state of being a Sikh or student. The name suggests that Sikhism as a religion is not merely focusing on the destination but gives due importance to the way as well. This is fundamental to the understanding of Sikhism.

But as Shakespeare has said what is there in the name of a

rose, what matters at the end of the day is the smell of the rose. Does Sikhism have the smell or fragrance that matches and justifies its name? To find out an answer to this question, we shall have to dig deep into the philosophy and history of Sikhism.

CONCEPT OF ONENESS

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion but with a difference. It carries the theory of oneness to its logical conclusions. Christianity and Islam are also monotheistic religions, but they have limited this monotheism to oneness of God only. In contrast to this Sikhism carries this concept to much greater and logical conclusions. Guru Nanak explains his concept in detail in the following verse.

ਦਰਸਨ ਕੀ ਪਿਆਸ ਜਿਸੁ ਨਰ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਏਕਤੁ ਰਾਚੈ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਦੋਇ ॥
ਦੂਰਿ ਦਰਦੁ ਮਥਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਖਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੂਝੈ ਏਕ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਤੇਰੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਕਉ ਕੇਤੀ ਬਿਲਲਾਇ ॥ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਕੇ ਚੀਨਸਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ
ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਬੇਦ ਵਖਾਣਿ ਕਹਹਿ ਇਕੁ ਕਹੀਐ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਬੇਅੰਤੁ ਅੰਤੁ ਕਿਨਿ ਲਹੀਐ ॥
ਏਕੋ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗੁ ਕੀਆ ॥ ਬਾਝੁ ਕਲਾ ਧਰਿ ਗਗਨੁ
ਧਰੀਆ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਏਕੋ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਧੁਨਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ ਏਕੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥
ਏਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚਾ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਜਾਣੁ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸੋਈ ॥
ਅਨਹਦਿ ਰਾਤਾ ਏਕ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਵੈ ਅਲਖ
ਅਪਾਰ ॥ ੪ ॥
ਏਕੋ ਤਖਤੁ ਏਕੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ॥ ਸਰਬੀ ਥਾਈ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੁ ॥
ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਅਗਮੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ ॥ ੫ ॥
ਏਕਾ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਿਬੜੈ ਸਾਚੁ ਨਿਆਉ ॥
ਸਾਚੀ ਕਰਣੀ ਪਤਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥ ਸਾਚੀ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਾਵੈ ਮਾਣੁ ॥ ੬ ॥
ਏਕਾ ਭਗਤਿ ਏਕੋ ਹੈ ਭਾਉ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਭੈ ਭਗਤੀ ਆਵਉ ਜਾਉ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਸਮਝਿ ਰਹੈ ਮਿਹਮਾਣੁ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਰਸਿ ਰਾਤਾ ਜਨੁ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥ ੭ ॥

ਇਤ ਉਤ ਦੇਖਉ ਸਹਜੇ ਰਾਵਉ ॥ ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਭਾਵਉ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹਉਮੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਦਰਸੁ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ॥ ੮ ॥ ੩ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੧੧੮੮

Millions seek the truth but only those who imbibe wisdom of the revealed word get it. The seeker if driven by the thirst for the vision of Truth should abdicate duality and become absorbed in the One supreme Lord. This results in elimination of all pains of duality. Religious books say God is one, who is limitless and unknowable. There is only One God who creates and sustains this universe. There is only One philosophy pertaining to God and it is enshrined in the revealed word that comes from the Guru. There is only one religion or way that is/was required to be followed in all times. A person, who with the help of the Guru, gets in tuned for every moment of his life, to the reality of One God, realizes the infiniteness of the One supreme lord. There is only One supreme Kingdom and one Supreme King who rules everywhere and judges us all on the same criterion. His creation is his only One pictures and his name is true. There is only One way, the love of God, which breaks the cycle of birth and death. The person who follows the wisdom of the Guru, lives like a guest in this world, gets rid of his/her ego, and worships only One God.

AGGS, M 1, p 1188. [1]

From the above verse it is clear that in Sikhism the concept of One God has been extended to its logical conclusions. It has been extended to humanity. It has been extended to Guru. It has been extended to knowledge. It has been extended to religion. The thread of logic runs like this. God is One who is fearless, has no hostility towards any one; and It creates and sustains this cosmos. This means that all of us are Its children and are equal in all rights and duties. Further given that the God is one and is fearless and have no enmity or malice towards any one, there can not be more than one criterion by which It judges us all. This means there can not be more than one philosophy or knowledge pertaining to God. And if there is only one philosophy, there will be only one Guru who carries the flame of this knowledge. Now if Guru is one, then it can not be a person, it has to be a Sabd, the revealed word, the divine knowledge. All this trickles down to the conclusion that there can not be more than one religion in this world.

It will be in order here to quote some more verses from the AGGS to substantiate this concept of oneness preached by the Sikh Gurus. This will also show that above verse is not a just one off example, but the entire AGGS is full of verses that corroborate this concept. Sikhism is so loud and clear about the oneness of God that AGGS starts with digit one as adjective for God and it has been repeatedly reiterated in the ensuing 1428 pages. Some examples are

given below.

ਹਰਿ ਇਕੋ ਦਾਤਾ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਦੂਜਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੩, ਪ - ੩੬.

There is no one else but God alone who pervades every where and looks after us.

AGGS, M 3, p 36.

ਇਕੁ ਪਛਾਣੂ ਜੀਅ ਕਾ ਇਕੋ ਰਖਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ਪ - ੪੫.

The One Lord knows us all and is the only one Savior for us all.

AGGS, M 5, p 45.

ਤੂੰ ਸਾਝਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਬਾਪੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਤੇਰੈ ਅਖੁਟ ਭੰਡਾਰਾ ॥

ਜਿਸੁ ਤੂੰ ਦੇਹਿ ਸੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਅਘਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਭਗਤੁ ਤੁਮਾਰਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ ੨ ॥

ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਆਸੈ ਤੇਰੀ ਬੈਠਾ ॥ ਘਟ ਘਟ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਵੁਠਾ ॥

ਸਭੇ ਸਾਝੀਵਾਲ ਸਦਾਇਨਿ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦਿਸਹਿ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ ੩ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ਪ - ੯੭.

O God you are our Father and you have inexhaustible treasures, but only those of us get, to whom you give. Every one has hopes on You and You dwell in all hearts. We are all shareholders and no one is an outsider.

AGGS, M 5, p 97.

And the entire humanity is required to take guidance from the Sabd Guru. During his debate with the Sidhs, Guru Nanak was asked the question who is his Guru. This question and his answer are recorded in his famous verse on Sidh Ghost:

ਕਵਣ ਮੂਲੁ ਕਵਣ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੯੪੨.

The Sidhs ask Guru Nanak, what is the root that sustains life and what is this life meant for? Who is your Guru that you follow as disciple.

AGGS, M 1, p 942.

ਪਵਨ ਅਰੰਭੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੯੪੩.

Guru Nanak replies air sustains this life and this life is an opportunity to follow the teachings of the True Guru. The revealed Word, the Sabd, is my Guru and focused attention is the disciple.

AGGS, M 1, p 943.

It is important to note that Guru Nanak has also explained who the disciple in his answer to the Sidh is. It is attentive mind who follows the teaching of the Guru. That is reason he chose the name Sikh (which means the pupil or the student) for his followers. This concept of Sabd Guru as declared by Guru Nanak has been further strengthened by Guru Amardas as follows:

ਇਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਇਕੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥

ਸਚਾ ਸਉਦਾ ਹਟੁ ਸਚੁ ਰਤਨੀ ਭਰੇ ਭੰਡਾਰ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੩, ਪ - ੬੪੬.

There is only One Guru and same thought or philosophy emanates from the revealed word full of jewels of wisdom.

AGGS, M 3, p 646.

Now the logical question that follows is that if the entire humanity is to follow the same religion then what is that religion?

Is it Sikhism?

My answer to this question is both yes and no. The answer is yes if you look at the theory and practice of Sikhism during the times of Sikh Gurus and a few decades after that. Roughly this period will stretch from 1469 (the birth year of Guru Nanak, the first Guru in Sikhism) to early eighteenth century. The answer is no if you look at the way Sikhism is preached and practiced today by majority of the well established but unauthorized (scripturally) priestly class that has captured the centre stage in Sikhism. I must add here that this One religion is not the monopoly of followers of any particular religion of this world. This will become more lucid and clear as we advance further in our discussion. Sikhism does explain in detail what this religion is. How do we get attached to this religion? What is this religion?

THE ONE RELIGION

Let us go through some of the verses of the AGGS to get an answer to the questions we have raised above. Guru Nanak tells us that the first and foremost thing to do to get attached to this religion is to listen, accept and adopt wisdom of Guru as a way of our life. Guru Nanak explains it in Jap, the first verse in the AGGS, which is universally considered to be the quintessence of the AGGS.

ਮੰਨੈ ਮਗੁ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਪੰਥੁ ॥ ਮੰਨੈ ਧਰਮ ਸੇਤੀ ਸਨਬੰਧੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੩.

If you accept and follow the wisdom of the Guru, you do not go astray on to different paths, but get attached to religion.

AGGS, M 1, p 3.

What should we accept and follow has been made clearer by Guru Amardas, the third Sikh Guru, in his following verse.

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਰੁ ॥ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਪਰਵਾਰੈ ਸਾਧਾਰੁ ॥ ੮ ॥ ੧ ॥ ੩ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੩, ਪ - ੮੩੩.

Acceptance and adoption of wisdom of Guru as your

way of life is the essence of everything and it opens the door of salvation.

AGGS, M 3, p 833.

In Jap Guru Nanak describes five stages of the spiritual development of a person. It is worth noting that religion is the first stage and is followed by Knowledge, Hard work, Blessing and Truth. A person becomes religious and gains knowledge about the reality of life by accepting the wisdom of his Guru; works hard and applies this knowledge in every fields of his life; which entitles him to the blessings of God and he/she gets the vision of ultimate Truth.

Given below are ten more quotes from the AGGS on this subject. After going through these quotes it will be easy for us to capture an idea of the One religion that Guru Nanak refers to in the quote from page 1188 of the AGGS given in the earlier part of this write up:

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਰੁਖੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਫੁਲੁ ਫਲੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥

ਰਸਿ ਰਸਿਆ ਹਰਿਆ ਸਦਾ ਪਕੈ ਕਰਮਿ ਧਿਆਨਿ ॥

ਪਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਾਦ ਖਾਦਾ ਲਹੈ ਦਾਨਾ ਕੈ ਸਿਰਿ ਦਾਨੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੧੪੭.

Guru is the tree of contentment; religion is its flower that matures into the fruit of knowledge. This tree is evergreen as it is irrigated by love of God; the good deeds ripen the fruits. To eat this fruit is the greatest gift of life.

AGGS, M 1, p 147.

ਅਉਖਧ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਤੰਤੁ ਸਭਿ ਛਾਰੁ ॥ ਕਰਣੈਹਾਰੁ ਰਿਦੇ ਮਹਿ ਧਾਰੁ ॥ ੩ ॥

ਤਜਿ ਸਭਿ ਭਰਮ ਭਜਿਓ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਟਲ ਇਹੁ ਧਰਮੁ ॥ ੪ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ਪ - ੧੯੬.

Remember God, the creator, in your heart; abdicate recitation of Mantras and rituals of Tantriks. Do not be in doubt, meditate on God. This is the eternal and everlasting religion.

AGGS, M 5, p 196.

ਇਸੁ ਜੁਗ ਕਾ ਧਰਮੁ ਪੜਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਪੂਰੈ ਗੁਰਿ ਸਭ ਸੋਝੀ ਪਾਈ ॥

ਐਥੈ ਅਗੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਖਾਈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਾਮ ਪੜਹੁ ਮਨਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਮੈਲੁ ਉਤਾਰੁ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਵਾਦਿ ਵਿਰੋਧਿ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਫੀਕਾ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ ੨ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੩, ਪ - ੨੩੦.

Learn the religion of your time from the true Guru. It helps you everywhere. Peruse and deliberate on the name of God. It will cleanse your heart. You can not learn this religion by indulging in useless discussions. Instead it will harm your mind and body. Absorb you mind in the name of God, through the words of the Guru.

AGGS, M 3, p 230.

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥
ਸਗਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਮਹਿ ਊਤਮ ਕਿਰਿਆ ॥
ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਲੁ ਹਿਰਿਆ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ਪ - ੨੬੬.

The best amongst all religion is to remember God and be honest in deeds. The best thing we can do is to cleanse our heart by keeping the company of good people.

AGGS, M 5, p 266.

ਇਹੁ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਸਭੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਚੇ ਕੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੋਤਿ ॥
ਗੁਰਜ ਰਤਨ ਵਿਚਿ ਲੁਕਿ ਰਹੇ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਕਵੈ ਖੋਤਿ ॥
ਸਭੁ ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮੁ ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਇਕੁ ਰਵਿਆ ਇਕੋ ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ॥
ਇਕੁ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਇਕੁ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਇਕੋ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਸੁਣ ਸਰੋਤਿ ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਲਾਹਿ ਤੂ ਸਚੁ ਸਚੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਹੋਤਿ ॥ ੧੬ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੪, ਪ - ੩੦੯.

This body is the arena of religion and has the light of God in it. The priceless jewels hidden in it are discovered by a person who takes advice from the Guru and realizes that God pervades everywhere. That person now sees, listens to and accepts the existence of One God everywhere.

AGGS, M 4, p 309.

ਧਰਮੁ ਭੂਮਿ ਸਤੁ ਬੀਜੁ ਕਰਿ ਐਸੀ ਕਿਰਸ ਕਮਾਵਹੁ ॥
ਤਾਂ ਵਾਪਾਰੀ ਜਾਣੀਅਹੁ ਲਾਹਾ ਲੈ ਜਾਵਹੁ ॥ ੮ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੪੧੮.

If you plant the seeds of truth in the soil of religion and reap the harvest, only then you make the true profit.

AGGS, M 1, p 418.

ਕਉਨੁ ਕਰਮ ਬਿਦਿਆ ਕਹੁ ਕੈਸੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਕਉਨੁ ਫੁਨਿ ਕਰਈ ॥
ਕਉਨੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਗੁਰ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰੈ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰ ਕਉ ਤਰਈ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਕਲ ਮੈ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਿਧਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਜਪੈ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥
ਅਉਰ ਧਰਮ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਸਮ ਨਾਹਨਿ ਇਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਬੇਦੁ ਬਤਾਵੈ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੯, ਪ - ੬੩੨.

What education should I take? What deeds should I do to achieve the goal of my life? To cherish the remembrance of God in my heart is the answer that is given in the religious books.

AGGS, M 9, p 632.

ਊਠਤ ਬੈਠਤ ਹਰਿ ਜਾਪੁ ॥ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਤਾਪੁ ॥
ਬੈਰੀ ਸਭਿ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਮੀਤ ॥ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਚੀਤ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਸਭ ਤੇ ਊਤਮ ਇਹੁ ਕਰਮੁ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਨਿ ਤੇਰਾ ਹੋਇ ਉਧਾਰੁ ॥
ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਕਾ ਉਤਰੈ ਭਾਰੁ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੫, ਪ - ੮੯੫.

Remember God while doing your daily chores of life. All agonies will vanish from your life. Your mind will

become pure and clear, no one will be an enemy any more. This is the best deed one can do and this is the best religion. Remember God all the time and this will cleanse your mind from the dirt collected for ages.

AGGS, M 5, p 895.

ਕਰਮ ਪੇਡੁ ਸਾਖਾ ਹਰੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਫੁਲੁ ਫਲੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥
ਪਤ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਛਾਵ ਘਣੀ ਚੂਕਾ ਮਨ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੧੧੬੮.

Your deeds are the tree that blossoms into flowers of religion that matures into fruits of knowledge. It has a dense cooling shade as it gets us rid of the heat of ego.

AGGS, M 1, p 1168.

ਨਿਰਮਲ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮ ਬਹੁ ਕੀਨੇ ਨਿਤ ਸਾਖਾ ਹਰੀ ਜੜੀਜੈ ॥
ਧਰਮੁ ਫੁਲੁ ਫਲੁ ਗੁਰਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ਬਹਕਾਰ ਬਾਸੁ ਜਗਿ
ਦੀਜੈ ॥ ੫ ॥
ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਏਕੋ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਸਭ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਇਕੁ ਕੀਜੈ ॥
ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮੁ ਸਭ ਏਕੈ ਹੈ ਪਸਰੇ ਸਭ ਚਰਨ ਤਲੇ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ॥ ੬ ॥
ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੪, ਪ - ੧੩੨੫.

The pure unselfish deeds make the tree sprout into green branches. It blossoms into the flowers of religion and gives fruit of knowledge.

AGGS, M 4, p 1325.

From the above quotations we can deduce some of the attributes of the One religion we are talking about. Religion has been described as blossom of a tree. This tree is the advice of True Guru and it is planted in the soil of human body. Once this tree is nourished carefully, the blossoms ripen into fruits of knowledge. To nourish this tree, we are required to believe in One God and remember him all the time by following the wisdom/advice of the Guru. Further the fruit of knowledge from this tree is the best possible diet for our spiritual health. How do we eat this fruit? When we apply and follow this knowledge in our daily life we eat this fruit. The above may sound very vague and poetic. But Sikhism has given this theory a very practical shape in the form of three cardinal principles of Sikh way of life. These are *Nam Japo* (Remember God), *Kirat Karo* (Work honestly) and *Vand Shako* (share your earnings with the needy). This is the most comprehensive and simple philosophy of life ever given. The three components of this philosophy go together and if applied separately are vulnerable for distortion and misuse. The true way of life is to work honestly while nourishing love for God in your mind, being socially active and sharing your earnings with those who are unlucky and need your help.

A couple of things are worth noting before we advance to the next step of this discussion. Religion is the sum of actions of a human being while living in this world. An

action that is done in isolation, far from this world hiding somewhere in the caves, does not qualify to be a religious act in Sikhism. It is for this reason that human body has been called a rare gift and a rare opportunity. Religion of a person is what he or she does while living as a human being on this earth. It is not any ritual performed by any one on behalf of us. Human body is the playground of our actions and only our actions determine what we achieve in this life. Guru Ramdas makes it clearer in the following verse:

ਇਹੁ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਕਰਮ ਕੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਥਿ ਮਥਿ ਤਤੁ ਕਵਈਆ ॥

ਲਾਲੁ ਜਵੇਹਰ ਨਾਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸਿਆ ਭਾਂਡੈ ਭਾਉ ਪਵੈ ਤਿਤੁ ਅਈਆ ॥ ੨ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੪, ਪ - ੮੩੪.

Human body is the field where a person who follows advice of his/Guru works hard to obtain the priceless jewels of Name of God.

AGGS, M 4, p 834.

“Working hard” means to do good deeds while living in this world. Guru Nanak has explained it in very simple words in this verse:

ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਹ ਲੁਡਾਈਐ ॥ ੪ ॥ ੩੩ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੨੬.

Do good deeds here in this world and be happy in the court of God.

AGGS, M 1, p 26.

Guru Amardas advises the Yogi to search for truth in city of his body instead of wandering about in jungles and caves:

ਕਾਇਆ ਨਗਰੀ ਮਹਿ ਮੰਗਣਿ ਚੜਹਿ ਜੋਗੀ ਤਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਲੈ ਪਾਈ ॥ ੩ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੩, ਪ - ੯੦੯.

Hey Yogi! You will find God if you go the city of your body.

AGGS, M 3, p 909.

Secondly religion is not the end product; it is only a means to an end. It is the blossom not the fruit. It is up to God to bless these flowers to mature into fruits. God is the ultimate judge of whatever we do. Religion is only the first step of your journey towards God. There are miles and miles to go before we earn to enjoy the sleep of eternal bliss. Since God is the ultimate judge, it ensures that no ritual passes as religious act or good deed. There is a major difference between rituals and good deeds. Good deeds are selfless acts while rituals are acts with motives. Besides, rituals are performed to force God to grant personal favors. It is for this reason that it has been stated in AGGS that even if a person becomes religious for a selfish reason, he/she ends up as a loser.

ਧਰਮੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਗਾਵਾਵਹਿ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ ੧, ਪ - ੪੬੯.

The religious person loses everything if he/she performs religious acts for a motive.

AGGS, M 1, p 469.

God is the supreme judge who is fearless, without hatred or malice towards anyone, and judges all our deeds without any prejudice or favor. It permeates everywhere and Its command runs over every nook and corner of this world. Religion is not just what we do within the four walls of a church, a mosque, a temple, a Gurdwara or any other religious place. Wherever and whatever we do in our life on this earth is part of our religion and we will be judged upon this. That is reason Guru Nanak called the whole earth a Dharmsal (a place for learning religion) while describing the first stage (religion) in the development of a person’s spiritual life mentioned in the earlier part of this write up.

Now the question is do we have to become a Sikh to adopt this One religion. You don’t have to become a Sikh, a Christian, a Muslim or any other religion to practice this One religion. You can practice this religion while being a member of any or none of these. However, once a person starts practicing this religion he or she becomes a unique personality. He or she will no longer be an ordinary Christian, Muslim, Hindu or Sikh. Sikhism has captured this uniqueness as a philosophy.

CONCLUSIONS

- There is only one God and all of us are Its children and have equal rights and duties.
- There is only One Guru in this world and it is the Sabd or Knowledge
- All of us are will be judged in the Court of Justice (God) according to what we do in our life.
- So the only way to be rewarded in the Court of Justice (God) is to work honestly, remember God all the time and share virtues (wisdom/knowledge and wealth) with those who are unlucky.
- This is the only religion in this world, which has universally acceptable principles by the humanity of the Modern Science Age, to be adopted and adhered to.

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