

# NAAM JAPNA

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## ABSTRACT

*The 'Naam Japna' in Nanakian Philosophy is controlling the mind, and focusing it on the Sabd/ Absolute Principle/Lord. Mind can only be controlled by the Grace of 'Akal Purkh', which only is obtained by performing service to the Guru, which in itself requires a good moral character with inner piety.*

## INTRODUCTION

What does *Naam* stand for in Sikhism?

Is it just the name or more than that?

These are usual questions being asked by fellow Sikhs and answers to these questions are not easy and straight forward. It is very easy to make a statement on '*Naam Japna*', which could be:

1. Mechanical recitation of God's Name (of your choice) in silence or aloud.
2. Recitation of *Naam* with various methods:
  - a) Sitting in a chair.
  - b) Sitting in a particular posture.
  - c) Using the technique of '*Irrha Pingla Ur Sukhmana*' (Yogic technique).
  - d) *Parnayama-hath* yoga system.
  - e) Any other method.

The most important part of '*Naam Japna*' is controlling the mind, which is like an aimlessly flying bird or a wild elephant.

## DISCUSSION

'*Naam Japna*' is not merely reciting the Name of the lord but focusing on Name of one's own understanding with eradication of the ego. God is formless so is the Name. Any Name for the individual to focus is acceptable.

nwau qyrw inrMkwru hY]

AGGS, M 1, p, 465

Your Name is formless.

kQnI bdnI n pweIAY haumY ivchu jwie ]

AGGS, M 3, p 32.

*It is not obtained by mouthing mere words, but by rooting out ego from within.*

It is explained by Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas, and Guru Arjan in the following hymns that it can only be achieved by the Grace of God. *Naam* purges the subconscious errors of thinking and inclines the heart towards spiritual wisdom, takes away the self centeredness of the ego, lifts it above the realm of morality and cleansed to the spiritual values by individual action:

nwnk ijn@ kau ndir kry hir scw sy nwim rhy ilv lwie ]

AGGS, M 3, p 850

*O Nanak, those who are blessed by the Lord's Glance of Grace, remains lovingly attuned to the Name of the True Lord.*

ijs no ik@pw krih iqin nwm rqnu pwieAw ]

AGGS, M 4, p 11.

*He, upon whom You shower Your mercy, obtains the jewel of the Name.*

mnu bis AwvY nwnkw jy pUrn ikrpw hoie ]

AGGS, M 5, p 298 [1].

*God's Grace only can control mind.*

*God's Grace is an expression of DIVINE benevolence and is a cardinal doctrine in Sikhism. It occurs as karam, nader, mehr, bakhshish, parsad, daya, or kirpa.*

*It is sought through prayer, development of virtues by performing good deeds and devotion. Its descent is the ultimate Divine mystery, and no amount of austerities, no amount of intellectual search or performance or ritual or yogic praxis or any such devices can force it out of God's hand. Liberation, while earned through devotion and good deeds, comes ultimately through Divine Grace. The fullness of God's grace is beyond human appreciation, comprehension or full knowledge.*

*The riches of his goodness cannot be expressed in words or by mortal tongue. We can admire the beauty of DIVINE GRACE but cannot really explore its depths.*

*The depth of the riches of his wisdom and knowledge are unreachable. Grace is governed by the Universal, eternal laws of nature, which do not show any partiality.*

krim imlY qw pweIAY hor ihkmiq hukmu KuAwru ]

AGGS, M 1, p 465

*When the God bestows His Grace, then alone it is received; other tricks and orders are useless.*

ivxu krmw ikCu pweIAY nwhI jy bhuqyrw DwvY ]

AGGS, M 1, p 722.

*Without virtuous deeds, man cannot gain any thing useful in spite of his running around.*

ijs no ik@pw krih iqin nwm rqnu pwieAw ]

AGGS, M, 4, p, 11 & 365

*He, upon whom You shower Your mercy, obtains the jewel of the Name.*

**Sikh Gurus have given GOD the name of SAT (Truth).**

AwKix AauKw swcw nwau ] swcy nwm kI lwgY BUK ]  
iqqu BUKY Kwie cIIAih dUK ]

AGGS, M 1, p, 9 & 349.

*It is difficult to utter the True Name. If there is a hunger of True Name, such hunger consumes pain.*

It is the Truth, which existed before, exists now, and will exist hereafter. It is living the Truth, which is the 'Naam Japna' and search for spiritual wisdom by performing good deeds - as I understand.

To find the truth about 'Naam Japna', on an individual basis at present and to reproduce the findings in a precise provable, infallible, unalterable, and irrevocable manner seems impossible to me. Any truth which cannot be made personal by all humans and realized by each in their own minds cannot be a universal truth. Truth is not established by our speculation however cogent, but the realities of experience through service.

In the inner world of mind there is chaos, confusion and utter discord, which does not tally with and correspond to the laws of nature and truths of life with the individuals like and dislikes, opinions, fancies, prejudices, partialities are held by him as truths in the name of his respective 'Religion'. The lives of such believers private and public are down right sham. These individuals are not inwardly at accord and peace with themselves and are frustrated. These things are self inflicted in ignorance and the only cure is his own self knowledge by making him conscious of his infinite worth to spiritual progress through meditation in action, which is the other name of 'Naam Japna'.

rwm rwm sBu ko khY kihAY rwmu n hoie ]  
gur prswdI rwmu min vsY qw Plu pwvY koie ]  
AGGS, M 3, p 491.

*Everyone chants the Lord's Name, Ram, Ram... but by such chanting, the Lord is not obtained.*

*By Guru's Grace, the Lord comes to dwell in the mind, and then, the fruits are obtained.*

jpu qp sMjm vrg kry pUjw mnmuk rogu n jweI ]  
AGGS, M 4, p 732.

*The self-willed may perform chants, meditations, austere self-discipline, fasts and devotional worship, but his sickness does not go away.*

ਕਬੀਰ ਰਾਮ ਕਹਨ ਮਹਿ ਭੇਦੁ ਹੈ ਤਾ ਮਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਬਿਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਸੋਈ ਰਾਮੁ ਸਭੈ ਕਹਹਿ ਸੋਈ ਕਉਤਕਹਾਰ ॥

ਕਬੀਰ ਰਾਮੈ ਰਾਮ ਕਹੁ ਕਹਿਬੇ ਮਾਹਿ ਬਿਬੇਕ ॥

ਏਕੁ ਅਨੇਕਹਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਗਇਆ ਏਕ ਸਮਾਨਾ ਏਕ ॥

AGGS, Kabir, p 1374 [1].

*O, Kabir, there is distinction, how you chant the Lord's Name, 'Ram'. This is something to consider.*

*All call the incarnation Rama, which is also the name of the Divine worker of wonders.*

*Kabir, use the word 'Ram', only to speak of the All-pervading Lord. You must make that distinction.*

*One 'Ram' is pervading everywhere, while the other is contained only in him.*

AwKix AauKw swcw nwau ] swcy nwm kI lwgY BUK ]  
auqu BUKY Kwie cIIAih dUK ]

AGGS, M 1, p 9 & 349

*It is difficult to utter the True Name. If there is a hunger of True Name, such hunger consumes pain.*

jpu qpu kir kir sMjm QwkI hiT ingRih nhI pweIAY ]  
AGGS, M 1, p 436

*By practicing recitation and self-disciplining, people have grown weary; even after stubbornly practicing these rituals, they still have not been able to control evil wishes.*

**How to Obtain Naam?**

ਨਾਵੈ ਨੋ ਸਭ ਲੋਚਦੀ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 789

*Everyone longs for the Name, but it is only found through the Guru's Teachings.*

Bniq nwnku kry vlcwru ] swcI bwXI isau Dry ipAwru ]  
qw ko pwvY moK duAwru ] jpu qpu sBu iehu sbdu hY  
swru ]

AGGS, M 1, p 661.

*One gets salvation by contemplating/deliberating with love on the True Bani (Sabd). (Therefore), the deliberation on Sabd is the real recitation and austerity.*

ਸੋ ਪੜਿਆ ਸੋ ਪੰਡਿਤੁ ਬੀਨਾ ਜਿਨੀ ਕਮਾਣਾ ਨਾਉ ॥

AGGS, M 1, p 1288

*He alone is learned and wise, and he alone is a scholar, who practices the Name.*

It is the right action on the teachings which carries the weight for spiritual growth and not visiting, reading or looking at the religious places or books leads to become a better human being.

ਸੇਵਕ ਸਿਖ ਪੂਜਣ ਸਭਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਉਤਮ  
ਬਾਨੀ ॥ ਗਾਵਿਆ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਹਰਿ ਥਾਇ ਪਾਵੈ ਜਿਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ  
ਆਗਿਆ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨੀ ॥ AGGS, M 4, p 669.

*All the Sikhs and servants come to worship and adore You; they sing the sublime Bani of the Lord, Har, Har. Their singing and listening is approved by the Lord; they accept the Order of the True Guru as True, totally True.*

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨੋ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਜੇਤਾ ਜਗਤੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥

ਡਿਠੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜਿਚਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਅਘਘਸ, ੩, ਪ ੫੯੪.

*One is not liberated by merely seeing Him, unless one*

contemplates the Word of His Sabd.

ਜਿਨਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਜਾਣੈ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ਭਉ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੈ ॥  
ਅਘਘਸ਼, ੧, ਪ ੧੩੪੨.

*The One who created this, He alone understands. Contemplating the Word of the Shabad, one is carried across the terrifying world-ocean.*

koit jau qIrQ krY qnu jau ihvwly gwrY rwm nwm sir  
qaU n pUjY ]AGGS, Namdev, p, 973 [1].

*Individual may make millions of pilgrimages to sacred shrines, or freeze his body in the Himalayas; still, none of these is equal to the worship of the Lord's Name (Meditation in action).*

### CONCLUSIONS

1. It is not as easy to be blessed to receive the gift of *Naam* (Divine Wisdom) as thought by individuals. It is individual active action on the teachings of Sikh Gurus as incorporated in AGGS. It does not come by mere sitting and mechanically repeating the *Naam*.  
igAwnu n glleI FUFIAAY kQnw krVw swru ]  
krim imlY qw pweIAY hor ihkmiq hukmu KuAwru ]  
AGGS, M 1, p 465.

*Divine knowledge is not sought by mere words, to explain it is hard like iron. If one becomes the recipient of the Grace of God than alone he receives it, other devices and orders are ruinous.*

2. If one is so fortunate it is inscribed on his forehead or blessed with His Grace/Mercy or one is made to serve the Sat Guru by virtuous deeds with rigorous honesty
3. It is given to those who follow the *Hukam* of the Guru in spirit and with devotion.
4. Finally the most important of all the discussion is the action on the message in the Sabd than just verbally repeating it. Sabd has to be contemplated, deliberated and than reflected with devotion in one's daily affairs is called '*Naam Japna*' as I understand by performing, selfless service of humanity, which indirectly is the service of the Guru.

### REFERENCES

1. AGGS = Aad Guru Granth Sahib. 1983 (reprint). Publishers: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. (M = Mahla, i.e., succession number of the Sikh Gurus to the House of Nanak, p = Page of the AGGS. M is replaced with the name of Bhagat or Bhatt with their Bani.)