

# MISINTERPRETATION OF THE WORD ਸੋਧ (*soDh*)

SHORT NOTE

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The correct meaning of the word ਸੋਧ (*soDh*) according to various English-Punjabi dictionaries and its everyday official usage is ‘to amend, to correct, to revise, to reform or to purify’. But the word ਸੋਧ (*soDh*) used as

ਸੋਧੇ (*soDhay*), ਸੋਧਤ (*soDhat*)

ਸੋਧਾ (*soDhaa*), ਸੋਧਹੁ (*soDhhu*),

ਸੋਧਨੀ (*soDhnee*), ਸੋਧਿ (*soDhi*) or

ਸੋਧਹਿ (*soDheh*) in various verses

(*Sabds*) of *Gurbani* has been misinterpreted by various scholars as ‘Go and study’, ‘Go and read’, ‘read’ ‘Go and thoroughly study’, ‘Gone through’, ‘Learned study’, ‘Deliberated’, ‘Searched’ and ‘Scrutinized’.

Since the word ਸੋਧ (*soDh*) [used as

ਸੋਧੇ (*soDhay*), ਸੋਧਤ (*soDhat*),

ਸੋਧਾ (*soDhaa*), ਸੋਧਹੁ (*soDhhu*),

ਸੋਧਨੀ (*soDhnee*), ਸੋਧਿ (*soDhi*) and

ਸੋਧਹਿ (*soDheh*)] has been used in

various verses (*Sabd*) by the Sikh Gurus mainly with reference to the philosophies promulgated by the ancient Hindu scriptures- the *Vedas*, the *Shastras*, the *Simrities* and the *Puranas* - its misinterpretation as ‘go

and read, study, reflect or scrutinize’ - *Vedas*, the *Shastras*, the *Simrities* and the *Puranas* – by various scholars implies that the Gurus have asked their followers, the Sikhs, to verify their teachings by ‘reading, studying, searching, deliberating or reflecting’ on these ancient scriptures; thus giving an impression that the faith preached by the Sikh Gurus is neither a revealed faith nor ‘original’, but based upon the philosophy propounded in these ancient Hindu scriptures. This interpretation is not only incorrect as per its meaning in various English-Punjabi dictionaries and its everyday official usage in Punjab government offices, but also contradicts the various verses (*sabd*) of *Aad Guru Granth Sahib* (AGGS) wherein the Sikh Gurus have explicitly criticized the philosophies and the belief systems promulgated in the *Vedas*, the *Shastras*, the *Simrities* and the *Puranas*. This casual and contradictory approach of interpreting *Gurbani* has created confusion not

only in the minds of its readers but also in defining the position of these ancient Hindu scriptures in the philosophy of *Aad Guru Granth Sahib* (AGGS).

Besides referring to the *Vedas*, the *Shastras*, the *Simrities* and the *Puranas*, the Sikh Gurus have also used the words ਸੋਧੇ (*soDhay*),

ਸੋਧਤ (*soDhat*), ਸੋਧਾ (*soDhaa*),

ਸੋਧਹੁ (*soDhhu*), ਸੋਧਨੀ (*soDhnee*),

ਸੋਧਿ (*soDhi*) and ਸੋਧਹਿ (*soDheh*) for reaching out to all sections of the society. On analyzing *Gurbani* of the AGGS, we find that the Sikh Gurus have had no appreciation for any prevalent belief system or philosophy. In verses after verses, they have advised all sections of society to leave / forsake all prevalent beliefs and practices and adopt their philosophy – the philosophy of the True Gurus.

ਮਾਨੁ<sup>1</sup> ਕਰਉ<sup>2</sup> ਤੁਧੁ<sup>3</sup> ਉਪਰੇ<sup>4</sup> ਮੇਰੇ<sup>5</sup> ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ<sup>6</sup> ਪਿਆਰੇ<sup>7</sup> ॥

ਹਮ<sup>8</sup> ਅਪਰਾਧੀ<sup>9</sup> ਸਦ<sup>10</sup> ਭੂਲਤੇ<sup>11</sup> ਤੁਮ੍ਹਰੇ<sup>12</sup> ਬਖਸਨਹਾਰੇ<sup>13</sup> ॥੧॥

ਰਹਾਉ<sup>14</sup> ॥

*maanuu kara-o tudhu oopray mayray pareetam pi-aaray.  
ham apraaDhee sad bhooltay tumH bakhsanhaaray. ॥1॥  
rahaa-o.*

*I take<sup>2</sup> pride<sup>1</sup> in<sup>4</sup> you<sup>3</sup>, O my<sup>5</sup> darling<sup>7</sup> Beloved<sup>6</sup>,  
I<sup>8</sup> am sinner<sup>9</sup>, ever<sup>10</sup> making mistakes<sup>11</sup>, You<sup>12</sup> are the for-  
giving<sup>13</sup> Lord.Pause<sup>14</sup> AGGS, M 5, p 809.*

In this paper an attempt has been made to interpret Gurbani of *Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS)* in its true perspective by interpreting the word **ਸੋਧ** (*soDh*) used as **ਸੋਧੇ** (*soDhay*), **ਸੋਧਤ** (*soDhat*) **ਸੋਧਾ** (*soDhaa*), **ਸੋਧੁ** (*soDhhu*), **ਸੋਧੀ** (*soDhnee*), **ਸੋਧਿ** (*soDhi*) or **ਸੋਧਿ** (*soDheh*) in various verses (*sabd*) as per its meaning in various English-Punjabi dictionaries and its everyday official usage.

**Note by the author:** My endeavor of doing this exercise is not to hurt anybody's feelings by ridiculing / criticizing the Hindu scriptures but to interpret *Gurbani* in what I think is its true perceptive.

**Note by the Editor:** *This paper was ਸੋਧੀਆ (sodhia – corrected/edited many times and proper guidance was given to the author by the editor for making it suitable for publication in Understanding Sikhism: The Research Journal. In spite of that fact the author decided to withdraw at the eleventh hour of posting on line.*

