

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SEMINAR POTHI PARMESAR KA THAAN

PREAMBLE

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The *Aad Guru Granth Sahib* (AGGS) was named as *Pothi* (Granth, book) as is evident in the index of the original *Pothi*: ਸੰਮਤ 1661 ਮਿਤੀ ਭਾਦੋਂ ਵਦੀ ਏਕਮ

(1) ਪੇਥੀ ਲਿਖਿ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ। (*Samat 1661 miti Bhadoo vidi akam (1) pothi likh pohnchai*). The writing of *Pothi* was completed on first *Bhadoo* of second fortnight (dark half of Moon) of *Samat* 1661, which corresponds to August 16, 1604 according to the Nanakshahi Calendar. However, it was installed (*parkash*) in the *Drabar Sahib*, Amritsar on September 1, 1604 after its binding done at Lahore. The manuscript prepared by Guru Arjan is believed to be by most accounts the volume (called *Bir* in Punjabi) that is presently in the possession of the Sodhi family of Kartarpur (near Jalandhar). Guru Arjan, before completing the compilation of this *Pothi*, declared ਪੇਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ ॥ (*Pothi Parmeshar ka Thaan*).

Faridkot Vala Teeka interprets that this *Pothi* (Holy Scriptures) is a place of God. However, Prof Sahib Singh suggests that *Gurbani* is a place to meet God. Most English scholars interpret the (*Aad*) *Granth* as the abode (dwelling) of God. With these interpretations, the Sikh theologians and scholars have ignored the characteristics ofੴ, One and Only That is Infinite, which prevails

everywhere but not at any particular place.ੴ captures Guru Nanak's vision of the God.

On the other hand, during the course of responding to the questions posed by the Siddhas, Guru Nanak has provided us with clear insights on God and Guru. For example, when asked by the Siddhas, who is your Guru? Guru Nanak answered:

ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

Sabd gurū suraṭ dhun chelā.
AGGS, M 1, p 943.

Most authors interpret ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ (Sabd Guru) either as ‘*Sabd is the Guru*’ or ‘*God is the Guru*’, ignoring the fact that Guru Nanak has described a process to coin the word, *SABD*, in stanza (*Pouri*) # 38 of *Jap bani*, which conveys different meanings.

After Guru Nanak, the fourth Guru, Guru Ramdas, states:

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ

ਸਾਰੇ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਰੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ

ਪਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥੫॥

Baṇī gurū gurū hai baṇī vich baṇī amrit sāre.

Gur baṇī kahi sevak jan mānai partakh gurū nistāre. ॥5॥
AGGS, M 4, p 982.

Almost every theologian interprets

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ (*Baṇī gurū gurū hai baṇī*) as “*The bani is the Guru and*

the Guru is the bani” without clearly defining the ‘*bani*’ and the ‘*Guru*’.

The scholars are also silent about, “Who is that Guru, who says

‘*Bani*’ (ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਰੈ - *Gur baṇī kahi*).”

Finally, according to Giani Gian Singh in his ‘*Panth Parkash*’ the *Damdami Bir* (which is based on ‘*Kartarpuri Bir*’ in which the *bani* of Guru Teg Bahdur was added) was declared as the ‘*Guru*’ of the Sikhs on October 20, 1708

according to Nanakshahi Calendar:

ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨਓ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾ ਕੀ ਦੇਹਿ ।

(*Guru Granth ji maneo pargat guran ki deh.*)

The general impression among many Sikh theologians is that all the above four views convey the same meanings.

Some experts in various fields, especially in *Gurbani* and various sciences, presented their views about ਪੇਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ ॥ (*Pothi*

Parmeshar ka Thaan), at the seminar held on September 13, 2015 at the Library of Gurdwara Sahib Greater Montreal, DDO, Quebec, Canada. They revisited this subject objective of developing a better understanding this important topic.

