

India has been a land of spirituality. It has produced not one but many religions, many holy scriptures and many systems of worship. Every time a group of people start deviating from the path of Truth, a new "Saint" brings a breath of fresh air to revive their faith and practice in "Truth, God, Purpose of Life, Liberation".

Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji born in the year 1469AD was one such luminary who taught people "Ik Onkar, Satnaam, Karta Purukh ...". This Mool Mantra affirms that there is only one God who is Onkar (Om - aakar) and who embodies truth. His teachings or Nanak's words are collected in the holy text of Guru Granth Sahib that begins with the Mool Mantra.

Some of the main prayers in Guru Granth Sahib are Japji Sahib, Asa di Var and Sidh-Gosht. Like other saints of Bhakti movement during his time, Guru Nanak preached using the local language so his message could reach the masses. Thirteen Hindu bhagats (poet saints of Bhakti movement) whose hymns/teachings are included in the holy text are Ramananda, Namdev, Pipa, Ravidas, Beni, Bhikhan, Dhanna, Jayadeva, Parmanand, Sadhana, Sain, Surdas, Trilochan, while the two Muslim bhagats are Kabir and Sufi saint Farid.

Faith and meditation on the name of the one creator, unity of all humankind, engaging in selfless service, striving for social justice for the benefit and prosperity of all, honest conduct and livelihood while living a householder's life are the pillars of Guru Nanak's teachings to his disciples. The goal of man, as taught by Guru Nanak, is to end all dualities of "self and other, I and not-I", attain the "attendant balance of separation-fusion, self-other, action-inaction, attachment-detachment, in the course of daily life".

Guru Nanak's teaching is practiced in three ways:

- *Vand Chakkō*: Sharing with others, helping those with less who are in need
- *Kirat Karō*: Earning/making a living honestly, without exploitation or fraud
- *Naam Japna*: Meditating on God's name to control the five weaknesses of the human personality.

Guru Nanak, a Bhakti Saint, emphasized Nam Japna (or Naam Simran) on a Nirguna God, that is repetition of God's name and attributes, as a means to feel God's presence. He offered an alternative to rituals or ascetic monk-like lifestyle for Moksha to an individualistic loving relationship with God.

Today, followers of Guru Nanak Dev Ji are found in Sindh (Pakistan), Punjab, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh in India in addition to Sikh and Hindu Sindhi diaspora in UK, USA and Canada. In addition to Sikhs, many Hindus in Sindh, Punjab and all over India revere Guru Nanak Dev Ji and worship him.

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