

BIOGRAPHY

PANTH RATAN

GIANI SANT SINGH JI MASKIN



GIANI BALWINDER SINGH JHOUR

Page 1

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GLIMPSES OF HIS LIFE

by

Giani Balwinder Singh Jhour

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© Publisher

Price : Rs. 200/-, \$ 7, £ 4

First Print : 2007

Second print : 2008

Publishers : **Gur jyoti Enterprises**
Road No.2 Alwar, Rajasthan (India)
Mobile : 9829215353

E-mail : gurjyoti@sancharnet.in
bsingh8963@rediffmail.com

Typesetting : Harsimran Graphics, Delhi-51

Printers : Shilalekh Associates, Delhi-110032

BIOGRAPHY

Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin
(Glimpses of his life)

Giani Balwinder Singh Jhour

Gur Jyoti Enterprises, Alwar.

ABOUT THE BOOK

It is gratifying to note that an American Gursikh Lady has translated the Biography and personal Glimpses of the life of the Panth Ratan Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin's book (Jeewan Jhalkian written in Punjabi by Giani Balwinder Singh Ji Jhour, resident of Canada) in the English language. Since Giani ji has been an international personality who has been propagating the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and every devotee Sikh living in any country was benefitting from the tours of Giani Ji to all countries wherever Gursikhs were living. In view of this it was an overdue that Biography and Glimpses of the life of Giani Ji should also be available to the English knowing Gursikhs residing in foreign countries. It will greatly benefit those English speaking Gursikhs and also encourage the second generation Gursikhs who have been born and brought up and settled in their adopted countries. This book will bring them closer to Gurmat and make them proud and devoted Gursikhs.

In view of the foregoing the efforts made by Gursikh Bibi are worth appreciating. I humbly pray to 'Waheguru' to sprinkle his Love and benevolence on her and keep her near His Divine Feet so that she may practice and propagate the ethics of Gurmat.

Those who know that apart from being a leading and renowned Kathakar, Maskin ji was a poet par-excellence as well. His Rubaaeyan and couplets have also been translated into the English language by Sardar Harjap Singh ji of U.S.A. As we know a translator should be well-versed in both the languages. However to translate poetry/couplets is an extremely difficult job because in the first place the translator himself should be a poet. He should also be conversant with the thoughts and life style of the poet whose words are to be translated. Keeping these in mind, we have seen that the poetry and couplets translated by Sardar Harjap Singh ji of Maryland, Washington D.C. are of a very high order. He has put in a lot of effort and hard work to accomplish this task. We pray to

Waheguru to shower his benison on him so that he may continue to servê the Sadh Sangat through his talents.

I, alongwith my close Sat-Sangi Sardar Jaswant Singh ji of Dasuya(Punjab) now residing in Delhi have gone through the proof-reading of the typed matter and have taken the liberty to make corrections, wherever considered appropriate. I am thankful to him also for co-operating with me for this cause. In this exercise, if we have made some mistakes, those may be forgiven. In the end I am very thankful to another respected Bibi ji who has encôuraged all of us and taken the full responsibility for publishing this English Biography of noble soul 'Maskin Ji'.

Humble servant of Sadh Sangat

31-05-2007

Harjit Singh Jhour

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FOREWORD

Of the many literary forms 'Biography' has its own distinct place. Through this form reader gets a detail spectrum of an individuals' life and personality. The lives of great and pious personalities have always been a source of continuous inspiration in society. Hence it's all the more important to preserve them in a written form for posterity. In this world real life protagonists have in course of their life been successful to carve a special and unique place for themselves. In this book Bhai Balwinder Singh Jhour has shown us glimpses of great personality in Sikh Literary history whose name today has become an institution in itself. I extend my sincere thanks to Bhai Balwinder Singh Jhour for his efforts to present the life of Maskin Ji to the Sangat. I also hope that Satguru Ji will continue to take Giani Sant Singh Maskin Ji's seva in this noble task.

11.03.2003

Joginder Singh
- Jathedar
Sri Akal Takhat Sahib
Sri Amritsar

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥
੧-OANKAAR SATGUR PARSAAD
Biography
GIANI SANT SINGHI JI MASKIN

To write about a pious and devoted soul is as difficult as attempting to hold the Ocean in a container. The lives of saints and fakirs are beyond the grasp of the *Vedas* and *Katebas* [revered books].

ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਬੇਦ ਨ ਜਾਨਹਿ ॥

(ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ)

Sādh kī mahimā Baid na Jāneh

[Sukhmani Sahib]

*Even the Vedas do not know (fully)
the greatness of a saint.*

As a writer of this book I have no claims to any special qualities that could make me attempt to write on the life of a great spiritual person and spokesman of his time. In the last few years during my tours abroad (America, Canada, England and European Countries) in the company of the blessed soul, the repeated requests of Sikh Sangat has inspired me to work on it. I am here making humble attempts to write about *shanne quam* [the pride of the Sikhs], Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin whose life was spent enlightening Gurmat philosophy and the life-teachings of Guru Nanak to Sikh Sangat all over the world. By writing this book I am following the wishes of Sadh Sangat. Thus I started my humble endeavour on 1st March 2001, on Thursday during the great Annual Gurmat Celebrations at Alwar started by the Blessed soul Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin.

I began collecting facts from Kaviraj Shugal ji and other

Gurmukh souls. I started writing them in Sis Ganj Gurudwara after praying and asking the blessings from Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. At Gurudwara Sis Ganj (Chandni Chowk, Delhi), I formally started writing on the life of this noble soul.

All the details and incidents relating to Giani Ji's life narrated by him or his near ones are presented as is in a very simple and unpretentious way to the Sangat. The last section of the book is devoted to his all time favourite *Rubaaeeyan* and *Couplets* that he often loved to recite in Punjabi and Urdu. Reading them we get glimpses of a poetic heart and yearning soul. These poetic expressions are reflections of his deep felt personal truth. They also inspire a sense of mysticism and bestow on the renowned spiritual preacher the title of a "Poet".

By Guru's grace and Maskin Ji's blessing my nephew S.Harjit Singh, Parwana Road, Delhi-51, (resident of Jamunapar) has volunteered to translate Giani Ji's books in Hindi. He has also supported and assisted me in writing and editing this book. May the Guru's blessing always assist him in this endeavor! In the end I ask my readers to forgive me for any lapses in my writings.

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Canada

Humble Servant of Sadh Sangat
[Giani.Balwinder Singh Jhour]

FROM THE WRITER'S PEN

I was posted at Red Fort, Delhi for thirty years out of my service in the army. During this period I used to go to Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's place of martyrdom, Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib along with my wife. We either listened to spiritual discourses or participated in the *Langar* service. My office was inside the Red Fort. When I heard Maskin Ji for the very first time at Sis Ganj Sahib 'my mind was very impressed'. Hearing him filled me with yearning for the Lord. As Satguru recites in the *Bani*:-

ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਬੈਰਾਗੁ ਭਇਆ ਜੀਉ.....॥

(ਅੰਗ ੨੪੭)

Mairay man bairaag bhaiaa jeeo.....

[S.G.G.S Page 247]

My mind has become sad and depressed.....

Tears flowed down my cheeks hearing him speak. Even today I find it difficult to sit in the front and hear him. Listening to him wisdom dawns on oneself and one yearns. This is the reason why I always to this date sit behind him. After this, he and his family frequently visited us at Red Fort.

I migrated to Canada in 1983. There in Vancouver I had the chance to serve as the Head Priest (*Granthi*) of the first Gurudwara built in North America on Ross Street. In keeping with the Lord's wishes I served in that position for five years from 1990 to 1994. Maskin Ji visited the area in 1992, 93, 94. During his visits he used to stay with me for one and a half month and the Canadian Sangat had the fortune to hear him.

Thereafter, I took leave from Gurudwara and accompanied Maskin Ji to Winnipeg, Calligary, Toronto, and England. My wife accompanied us in our tours. We toured parts of Europe: Neth-

erlands, Germany and France. I expressed to Maskin Ji that my desire is to give up my present job of Gurudwara Sahib. Maskin Ji's reply was that the Sikh Sangat loves you. Consider yourself fortunate for you are in the presence of *Waheguru* and in his service from dawn to dusk. He advised me against giving up my job and asked me the reason for the same. To this I answered that I wanted to meditate on His Name. He pointed do you think the whole time you spend in the presence of the Lord is not His meditation. Give up your thoughts of quitting. But my yearning for the Lord grew so intense that in 1994, I tendered my resignation and decided to spend as much time as possible in Maskin Ji's company. I met Gaini Ji in Winnipeg and told him that I had resigned. Maskin Ji inquired what my plans were. I expressed my desire to tour with him. Initially, Gaini Ji was silent to this proposal but from 1996 onwards I started accompanying him in his trips to America and England.

It was during this time that I met *Brahm Gaini* "Baba Darshan Singh Ji" from Ghanapur Kalai (Amritsar). He told me that Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin loves you a lot and respects you. On your part do not go against his wishes or refuse him anything. Always respect his wishes (*Sat Bachan Kehna*). He asked me to spend the money I received in offerings among the needy and watch how true and righteous (*ucha-sucha*) your living becomes. This will make Maskin Ji happy too. He told me Giani Ji was a liberated (*mukt-atma*) soul. Guru Nanak Sahib wished him to go back to the world and through *Gurubani* take the message of the Lord to the people. He said I have scattered your food all over the world. Seek it and unite the people's soul with *Shabad-Guru*. Baba Darshan Singh ji is no more but his words will for ever remain fresh in my memory. I felt greatly enriched in Maskin Ji's company. There was always a feeling of eternal bliss with him. I travelled from Canada every year to attend the *Annual Samagam* at Alwar and stayed with him in programmes at Kanpur and Lucknow.

Once at Los Angeles (America) I was writing a letter in Punjabi. Observing my handwriting Maskin Ji commented that it was very beautiful and asked me if I would like to take up the *seva* of writing books. The very thought that my name would find a place in the books of this great and noble soul filled me with great joy. Thus the *seva* of writing Maskin Ji's books started. Initially, he

dictated them to me and I would write down as he would speak. Later he suggested that he would use a tape recorder, so that I could write them at my convenience. This saved me from writing it twice. Now Maskin Ji records the *Brahm words* he wants to convey through his books in a tape for me to write. If I am not able to do it on my tours I finish it on returning to Canada. I mail all my writings to him for editing, printing and publishing.

In 1997 his book “ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਯੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ”(Shabad Guru Surat Dhun Chella) was written. His second one was *Desh Videsh de Gurudwarian da Parbandaki Dhancha te Pracharak Shraini* (about how Gurudwaras are managed in India and abroad). His third was *Panj Vekar te Char Yug*; the fourth one written was *Ratnagar* and another fifth one written was *Ras Dhara*. The name of his book released in 2003 was *Rehas te Ramaj*. During my tours with Maskin Ji in the country and abroad Sangat would always request me to write a book on the life of this great soul who now is an institution in himself.

First of all the contribution of ‘Kaviraj’ Jai Singh Ji “Shugal” from Kanpur in this was immense. He had been Maskin Ji’s companion for thirty five years. I also made similar request to others. I requested Jathedar of Shri Akal Takht Sahib, Giani Joginder Singh Ji *Vedantee*, to contribute his thoughts. Respected Gaini Anoop Singh Ji (U.K.) who happens to be related to Maskin Ji has also contributed his writings. Maskin Ji himself also narrated his Biography and was tape recorded by him in his voice.

Maskin Ji’s residence is in Alwar (India). From time to time he travels to all the major cities across the country like Amritsar, Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Patna Sahib, Calcutta, Indore, Mumbai and Aligarh to spread Gurmat Vichar from stages on Guru-purabs and Samagams. In the last few years he has visited Afghanistan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, England, Canada, America, Australia, New Zealand and Europe responding to the calls of the Sangat all over the world to save the youth from the trap of the false Gurus and bring them back to true *Sikhi*. In his talks he reflected on the higher practical aspect of Gurmat Philosophy even when invited to speak on stages of people of other religions

Kindness is a special trait of Maskin Ji’s personality. Due to his these efforts there is a Guru Nanak Public High School and

Sri Guru Harkrishan Secondary School in Alwar. He has extended financial help to many orphans, widows and other needy to make them self reliant. Today Maskin Ji is not just a person but an institution. Many speakers have succeeded in preaching after listening to him and taking notes from his talks.

Maskin Ji has a very unique style of speaking. His talks reflect a new, visionary and scientific approach to a subject. During the course of his talks, his audience remains silent and peaceful. His voice has a special power that attunes the listeners with its soothing sweetness. His explanations have similar appeal to both educated and uneducated. No listener can escape its marvellous appeal. We see all the fourteen qualities of a good orator mentioned in books in him. His most special quality observed in him as a speaker was his ability to rip the mask off the faces of so called saints, sadhus, men of position in Gurudwaras and their politics. He pointed out their flaws, drawbacks, and weakness in their presence. Only a man of exceptional courage could do this.

Maskin Ji did not believe in flattery nor was he in awe of people in power and position. He never asked for any kind of compensation or gratuity for his services though it was totally different matter that what the Sangat gave him may exceed his own needs.

In his book *Shabad Guru Surat Dhun Chela* he not only exposed the traps set by self proclaimed human Gurus but have also stressed the concept of *Shabad Guru*. He also made special efforts to explain everyone the need to recognize that all Gurus were one and the same universal Soul was enlightening them. Apart from all his great books – *Guru Chintan*, *Guru Jyoti*, *Teeja Naiter*, *Chotha Padh*, *Panch Parvan*, *Khaat Darshan*, *Prabhu Simran*, *Gurudwarian da Prabhandi Dhanca*, *Panj Vikar te Char Jug*, *Ratnagar*, *Ras Dhara* and *Rehas Ramaj*- all these have stressed the need to follow Gurmat principles and have shown the way to many ignorant beings. He showed us the way to be with all powerful God and always encouraged new emerging preachers to give examples based on Gurmat in their talks.

1-2-2005

Giani Balwinder Singh Jhour

MASKIN JI'S LIFE EXPERIENCES IN HIS OWN WORDS

Waheguru Waheguru Waheguru!

The Frontier Province had six Jilas (Districts): Hazara, Mardhan, Peshawar, Kuhat, Ismile khan and Banu. I was born in 1934 in District Banu, Tehsil Lakki Marvat. My mother Ram Kaur Ji was a simple and uneducated devoted lady and my father was Sardar Kartar Singh Ji who belonged to the Narula family.

My childhood for most part was spent in a Primary School, but from a very early age God had bestowed me with a yearning heart. Poetry and remnants of poetic couplets were forever present in my heart. These always came out when I expressed my thoughts in a poetic way, my playmates would hear them and felt inspired.

The province of Frontier was full of religious people. Therefore visiting the Gurudwara twice a day was an essential routine there. Spiritualism was ingrained in the soil of the land and a child who did not attend Gurudwara twice was also not approved by the society. In keeping with the existing Maryada, the Rehras Sahib (ਰਹਿਰਾਸ ਸਾਹਿਬ) was recited by one shabad per person or one line per person at a time. I too joined the group and started reciting Rehras Sahib Paath. I did Nitnem every morning and thus my life was spent in playing, studying and doing Nitnem.

After graduating the fourth grade I joined the High School. The Khalsa School's classes went up to the Primary Level. I joined the Government High School of the area and I continued to excel in my studies here. I was told to sit in the front rows and was loved and encouraged by all my teachers and headmaster in every school I attended.

In the same time partition of India and Pakistan occurred and we were four of us in the family; my mother, father and my

sister Sujjan Kaur, who was two years elder to me. I had a younger brother who died of smallpox two years before the partition. Thus during the time of the partition I was around twelve years of age. Though the separation of Pakistan had not been formally announced, yet riots, killings and lootings were on the rise both in the Frontier

Afterwards when everybody left and Giani ji was by him-Province and other parts of the country.

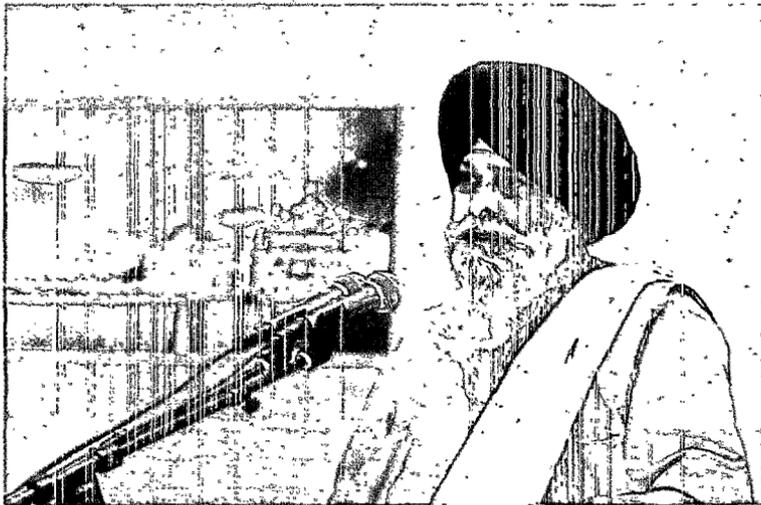
This was a racial division in the name of Religion. My attachment to the land was not only because it was my homeland but also I used to bathe in a stream named "Gambhila" every morning. It had two names; at where it start, it was known as "Tochi". By the time it reached our town it was referred to as "Gambhila" and this stream joined the river Sindh in the end at Marhi Indas. After taking bath I used to sit on the banks of the stream and recite a part of my Nitnem. I still remember those days, houses used to have hand pumps for water and if the need exceeded then donkeys and bullock carts were used to fetch water from the streams. Normally after bathing I would have my breakfast with tea and get my satchel and then would visit the Gurudwara to bow and do the rest of my Nitnem before heading to the Khalsa Primary School. The headmaster of the school was Respected Bhai Pairha Singh Ji. He was a very spiritual man, his loving heart continues to be my inspiration even today. The love I received from high school became a part of me and always encouraged me. Now all this stopped and we had to leave the country. At that time we felt we will return to our homeland, which never happened and coming back was not possible. After three to four days we reached Delhi and from there we were sent to Alwar by train.

Thoughts of the future worried my parents; I too was very much disturbed by them. I had been very fond of studies and the medium of instruction in Alwar was Hindi, while all my education at Frontier Province was in Urdu and Persian which was the medium there. So here I was seated with the First Grades to learn Hindi. "How Could I, a twelve year old, feel comfortable with five and six years old?" I was heart broken. I had gone to school for hardly ten to twelve days. Thoughts of future started disturbing me. When I did not go to school for several days, my mother got worried and asked me about my plans for future. My father who was well aware of my interest in education had tears in his eyes.

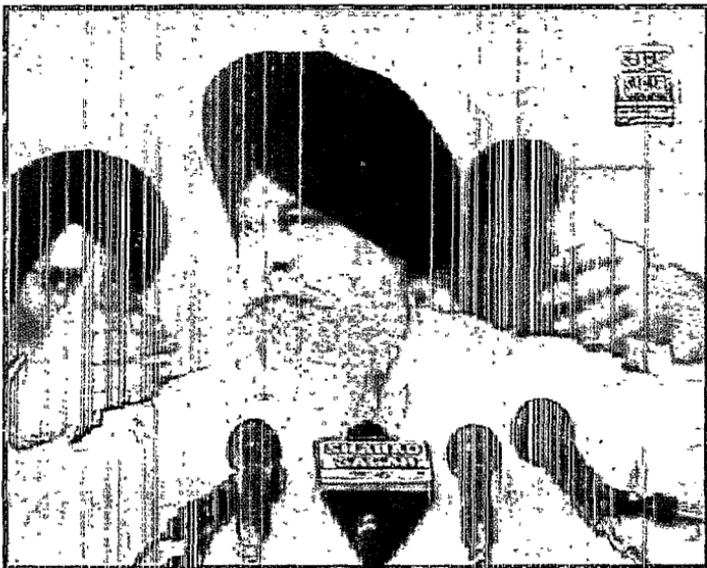
He observed that these schools here were not to my interest and the language Hindi was new to me. The situation was a cause of concern for him and he asked me if I will not study then what I will do in future. In reply I told him, "Father, does not God give livelihood to the ones, who are illiterate"? His eyes filled up with tears. He said I don't want to say something that breaks your heart. Being their only son I was the centre of their life and love. Then poverty had become a part of our lives. Father started working in a ration depot and at that time kerosene oil and other provisions were given out by Ration-cards. His salary was fixed at thirty rupees per month.

After days of roaming around I found a job in a factory of glazed crockery and cups. They were recruiting children for packing; I too went and was hired with a monthly salary of twenty rupees. The next day I had to be at work by eight in the morning. I got ready at seven and asked my mother to pack me two rotis (Indian bread) and some fried vegetables to take along with me to work. My mother could not control herself and asked me "What? You are going to work?" I said, "Yes mother, I am going to work". She as well as my father held me very close and my sister Sujaa Kaur had tears in her eyes. They wrapped two rotis and some left over fried lady's finger in a hanky and I left for the factory which was a mile away. All the workers used to go by foot and a few in high positions owned a bicycle; rest of us would walk to factory. I started working but my mind was not in it. My hands worked and my heart was not there in it. My longing eyes were seeking an answer, "Lord! What would be my future? Will I spend a whole life in packing pottery? I had never worked like this before. Watching other refugee children work I felt encouraged that I am not alone. There were about forty or fifty children who had lost everything like me and their parents could not afford enough. I could work there for three months only. My mind was not in it. I received twenty rupees in a month and I gave those to my mother.

Another office declared vacancies. After partition, the children of the refugees were given priority in new offices. They inquired about my qualification and I told them that I had not completed tenth grade. In that case they told me I could not be a clerk. You are still young and because you are a refugee we cannot turn you away. We have instructions from the Centre not to refuse jobs









to refugees even if they are less qualified. We will hire you as a peon. All you will have to do is to be seated at the door. I worked there for few months. While physically I was seated at the gate but my mind would be seeking the door that would lead me to my goals in life and I quit this job too. There were vacancies in the railways department. My father advised me that I had not completed my high school and the job I will get may not be to my expectations. There would be a possibility that I may quit again. Railways were recruiting and a person had to undergo a five year training to be Engine Driver and I was interested. There was a possibility that I might like the job and spend the rest of my life in it. I decided and joined the railways.

There was a small shunting engine with seven to eight water tanks attached to it. It started from Kota to Modak and vice versa. It used to drop water tanks at the seven to eight small stations on the way and would take back the empty tankers of the previous day. We would thus start early in the morning and return at around seven to eight, sometimes even after ten or eleven in the evening. The driver was a Jewish man. One fireman was from Rajasthan and the second fireman was from the state of U.P. All the three were concerned about me, when they heard that we came from Pakistan having lost everything we owned. The Jewish driver having no child of his own used to love me as his son. He taught me everything about the engine. Sometimes he would let me sit at the driver's seat. I would then drive for about eight to ten miles. You had to raise the accelerator once and then engine moves on its own. It was a small engine with five to seven tankers behind it.

Sometimes I got very exhausted. We used to leave early in the morning and returned late in the evening. Driver and both the firemen brought their lunch boxes with them. They had families who cooked for them. I had no such arrangements. A small space was given me to live and I had never cooked before.

In 1947 there were no Hotels or Restaurants on the stations like these we get to see today. I used to go to a hotel in the town to buy myself four rotis and some Dal. If I had any leftover bread I used to take with me to work. The driver or the firemen used to give me Dal and vegetable to eat with the rotis. Next evening again I would return tired from work, wash up and proceed towards the Gurudwara and then to a hotel to eat my food in the

evening and take some for the next day. This was my daily routine. There also I could not stay for more than five to six months. My heart was not in peace. With deep and hurt feelings I would often start worrying about my future. Without resigning or informing anyone at the job I came back to Alwar.

My father was upset and told me he had warned me that I would not cope with the work. I told him that they never made me do heavy work. I was trained lovingly but my mind was not in it. I was at home for about five to ten days. One day my father was a little upset and asked me very sternly whether my plans were now to graze goats and donkeys. I had given up a decent job in the Railways and was not inclined in continuing my education. My father had never spoken to me like this before. Being the only son I had been the centre of their attention. That night I could not sleep. I cried and my heart wept too. One day at midnight after bowing at the feet of my sleeping parents in one room and my sister in another I left home which we had received in claim. I knew they will be hurt, what could I do? I was hurt and sad too. This immense mental agony at a very young age had drained me. I was aware that my father, who showered his affections on me, would be very hurt. My mother, who can sacrifice for me, would be inconsolable and my sister who was proud to have me as her only brother would be heart broken.

Again and again I was comparing my parent's grief and suffering with my own pain and suffering, I was realizing my pains are more because I have to find peace of mind. So, I left them sleeping. There was a train that left for Delhi early in the morning. I took that passenger train and reached Delhi in six to seven hours. I paid my homage to Guru Tegh Bahadur at Sis Ganj Gurudwara. I opened my heart and expressed my grief in front of the Guru. Besides twelve rupees in my pocket I had nothing else with me. I purchased a ticket for Bharatpur for three rupees and went to the Gurudwara there. The Granthi (Head Priest) was a pious old man, who was always meditating on the Lord's name. I touched his feet to pay my respect and also took his permission for staying for three-four days. It was getting dark. A brief Satsang was held. That Granthi could recite Gurbani. He read one Shabad. Did Sukh-Aasan(ਸੁਖ ਆਸਨ) of Guru Granth Sahib. The Satsang came to a

close after reciting Kirtan Sohila. Before going home, Granthi Ji asked me if I had taken food. I replied in the negative. To his inquiry I replied that I have come from Delhi. After looking at my face and lips, he said, "It seems you have not taken any thing since morning". I agreed. In that Gurudwara if any passenger came, langar was prepared, otherwise not. On that day no other passenger came and the langari did not notice my presence.

Baba ji had kept four breads (rotis) and he stayed alone. He give me two with some vegetable. I ate and slept. I got up early in the morning, took bath and prayed before Guru ji, "What is my future, O Lord, what is my future? I should get a suitable job". But I knew that what I am asking for, is wrong. I will not be at peace any where. I prayed, "O Lord! Keep me at your feet." After my three day's stay, Baba ji told me that travellers can stay here for three days only and if you want to stay for some more days, take permission from the president of the Gurudwara when he comes in the evening. I told Baba ji that there is no need to ask him. Instead I will go. At my departure I was surprised to see tears in his eyes. Perhaps there were relations of bye-gone times. Although I am 68 years old now, but I still have reflections of those tearful eyes.

I reached the Railway Station and took a train to Bombay without ticket. Escaping the eyes of the ticket checker I crossed the gates and reached the Dadar Railway Station and proceeded to Gurudwara by foot. After bathing under a cold tap I did my Nitnem but felt hungry. I asked the Head Priest if there was Langar seva in the Gurudwara. He told me that there was no Langar seva in this Gurudwara but it was served in V.T Gurudwara which was a bigger branch of Sri Guru Singh Sabha. He also told me that Kohlivada is nearby which had two to three Gurudwaras and one of them had Langar service. I took a train to Bombay V.T. After reaching there I did receive Langar. It was clearly written that nobody can get Langar after three days. Well, I started roaming the streets in the mornings and in the evenings, sat in the Gurudwara and always be on time for the Langar. The man in charge of the kitchen in a stern voice reminded me that it was my third day and after this I had to be on my own. I used to travel without tickets in the electric trains. I reached Kohlivada. I had learnt some tricks; how to get away travelling in a train without a ticket, how to hide from the T.T: Here also after my third day I was told to make other arrangements as it was a Gurudwara and not an orphanage.

At a short distance there was a Guru Nanak Darbar at Sai Sindhi Colony. There was Kirtan done by the renowned Sindhi Bibi Tilli Bai. There was a huge gathering. I too went and it was crowded. The Granthi there was Giani Gurdial Singh who recited a shabad in a classical style. I really liked it as music and poetry was imbibed in my blood and soul. As the function came to an end my worries started where I would go next?.

Afterwards when everybody left and Giani ji was by himself, I requested if I could stay there for some days. He inquired where I was from. I told him I was there for quite some days staying for three days in various Gurudwaras and now I am here. I had a small bundle which had two sets of Kurta Pyjama, underwear and a towel. He told me I can stay. Though I got a place, I was worried as I had only one rupee left with me. I very reluctantly spent one or two annas (name of the coin of that time) a day but there were days that I didn't spend any. I had small sheet which I spread on the floor in the Gurudwara and slept letting my bundle serve as the pillow. Giani ji inquired whether I ate anything. I told him that I had no home and the Gurudwaras had served as a home to me and I had not eaten. He used to prepare his own Langar in the afternoon and used to save a part of it for the evening. He had saved two rotis and some fried vegetables for himself. He said let us share it and I refused saying one will not be enough for him. He was well built and was around fifty to fifty-five years of age. But he insisted and so I ate one roti (though it did not fulfill my hunger), I thanked Waheguru and went to sleep.

I woke up at three in the morning, bathed and sat down to recite Sukhmani Sahib Bani in a very attuned manner. Two or three devotees used to come to the Gurudwara in the morning. The practice of Evening Diwan was prevalent in the Sindhi Gurudwara. Hearing me recite Giani ji said that you are blessed with Raag (music). I asked him to teach me music, he allowed me to sit with him and in next eight to ten days he taught me to play the Tanpura and the Tabla. He also taught me to sing some shabads on Harmonium. I learnt all this in ten to twelve days. I used to sit and sing along with him. He was very happy but my clothes were very dirty, I did not have the money to buy soap also. Giani ji realized this

and gave me the soap, oil, paste etc. I washed my clothes and sat with him wearing a clean set.

Then it so happened, one day an elderly lady heard me reciting the paath (ਪਾਠ) in the morning. She brought others with her and thus eight to ten people started to assemble in the morning. Giani ji was happy as it was a personal Gurudwara of Bhai Gopal Singh Advocate. There was no big committee to run the Gurudwara. The whole Gurudwara was basically run by Giani Gurdayal Singh. Once in a while I received some offering of money or clothes from the Sangat. This took care of some of my basic needs. I was good at reading Gurbani Paath(ਪਾਠ). Once in a while Giani ji let me participate in the Akhand Paath (ਅਖੰਡਪਾਠ). I used to get ten to twelve rupees for it and with those some days of mine would pass with ease. But this happened only for six months; I started losing peace of mind there also. I received so much love and nobody had said me anything. Giani ji used to take care of my food and living. I helped Giani ji with more than half of his duties. I could do Rehras Sahib Paath(ਰਹਿਰਾਸ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਾਠ) and the Ardas (ਅਰਦਾਸ) too. I used to also attend visitors to the Gurudwara and they were happy. But one day I told Giani ji that I do not see my future here also. He asked me what I wanted to be. I replied that I was not sure *but inside me is a pain which does not let me settle anywhere.*

One day after saying my prayers and taking Giani ji's permission, I left the place. I had some money with me. I reached Nasik, visited the ancient temple Panchvati and reached the Gurudwara in the afternoon. As there was no one there I returned after paying my respects.

I have heard that there is Tapoban on the bank of River Godavari. Holy men resided here in small shelters and spent their time in meditation. I headed towards it. In the centre was a huge Ashram. Seeing a crowd I too went and found that everybody was served food there in the afternoons and I took a seat. They were serving two rotis with some cooked vegetables on it. I thanked God for the meal. I asked the location of Tapoban to a man dressed in orange. He told me that from this hut to a long distance, all these huts are Tapoban. There were many different huts and shelters. I saw many Sadhus in them and I kept walking. They were from different parts of the country. They were in different kinds of or-

ange robes. All of them could understand Hindi. I spoke with a holy man who had renounced the world. I asked him if I could stay there and meditate. The holy man said he was leaving for Haridwar the next day and asked me to keep walking and I could find a vacant hut. I expressed my pain to the Sadhu there and my desire to stay in the region and meditate. He told me there was a small shelter in the corner where I could stay.

The trustees of the Tapoban had made arrangements to give two rotis and some cooked vegetables for the holy men in each shelter at afternoon. I stayed there for three months. Here I meditated on the Naam “Waheguru (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ)” and used to read Gurubani from the Sundar Gutka whole of the day. After Nitnem I would read Gurubani Bavan Akhri (ਬਾਵਨ ਅਖਰੀ), sloke (ਸਲੋਕ) of the Ninth Guru, Sidh Gosit (ਸਿਧ ਗੋਸਟਿ) and Barah Maha (ਬਾਰਹ ਮਾਹ). My inner pain did not allow me to stay there too, I left the place and I went to the Nasik Railway Station. Sitting there I started wondering what to do and where to go next as I had no goals. All of a sudden a Maharastrian Hindu approached me and addressed me as “Swami ji”. I did not understand why he addressed me like that. I was wearing a long white robe and pajamas and had a rosary too in my hand. He asked if I would come and have lunch at his house. Since morning I was sitting at the station not having decided on my destination. It was past noon now. I do not know what power it was that made me stand up against my will and go with him. I was served meal cooked in Maharastrian style. The bread had gram flour in it. There was bean soup and cooked gourd (pumpkin). I had my meal and thanked God for it. They brought a new born baby about eight to ten days old and asked me to read his palm. I told them I did not have any knowledge of Palmistry. I placed my hand on his head, prayed to God to bless the child and got up and left. The Hindu brother placed two rupees and fifty paisa on my feet. Accepting the offering I left the place.

I came back to the station and took a train to Jhansi. My entire journey to Jhansi was without ticket. From there I reached the Gurudwara by foot. The Gurudwara there was made by a Hindu who came from Gujrat. People used to call him “Lala ji”. He had also built a Dharamsala for staying and I got a room there. My entire day was spent doing paath (ਪਾਠ) in the presence of the holy

Granth Sahib. I also thought a lot about my future: where to go and what to do. An elderly lady served as a Granthi(ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ) in the Gurúdwara. I asked her if I could get sometime to address the Sangat and the lady looked at me. I was very young and was just starting to have moustache. She asked me about my studies, to which I replied, that I had no formal study but had studied and experienced on my own. I had read a lot of holy books and used to sit and do Kirtan alongside a Granthi. I also had some personal experience and if I get time I would like to discourse. The daily Diwan of the Gurudwara included the five Banis, Sukhmani Sahib Paath (ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਾਠ) followed by Ardas and giving away Parsad. When Lala ji came the lady told him that this young man wants time to address to the Sangat. He asked me what I could talk about. I told him Kathas are always of the Waheguru and I will speak whatever Guru wished me to. In that case you can speak for five minutes after the Paath is over. Do not exceed your time and thus for the first time in my life I sat on a stage to address a Sangat. I spoke for five minutes. Later Lala ji asked me if I wanted to stay for some more days. I said I would like to if I will be given time to speak. He said you can stay here for as long as it pleases you but at least for fifteen days you should stay here.

I started speaking everyday for half an hour. The Sangat used to bless me and wish me well. They wished me happiness but in those days no such practice of offering money to speakers on stage was in tradition. Whatever I had was spent on my daily needs. My pocket was empty and clothes were dirty. I did not have enough money to buy soap to wash my clothes. Lady (Granthi) gave money for soap etc. Fifteen days passed and my Katha (ਕਥਾ/sermon) came to an end. I received no money either from the Sangat or from Lala ji. I considered it as a Lord's way of testing me. Though it was yet to be my profession, it was related to my needs and personal interest. I gathered my belongings and the thought of where to go next. I could not think of anything and I had no money with me. Twice a day a meal of rotis and Dal was cooked and served to the Sadhus and the needy. I used to eat it too. When I got up after eating to leave, Mata ji told me it seemed I had no money with me and I said she was right. She placed one rupee and a quarter in my palm and said this was all she had and asked me to spend it on your way. I

took a train and reached Bina and here too I stayed and addressed the Sangat for four to five days. One gentleman gave me two rupees. From there I boarded a train and reached Katni and visited Bilaspur, Raipur and reached Sambalpur in Orissa. I spoke in the Gurudwara for a week and the Sangat gave me some money.

At a distance of nine miles was Burla Town where a dam named Hirakund was under construction and I reached there. The next day I addressed the Sangat of the area. They all requested me to stay and start a series of continuing Gurmat talks. I stayed there for ten months and also went in deep study of Guru's Bani. The Mahanadi River was flowing in the region and there was a mountain besides it. After addressing the Sangat in the morning (around eight o'clock) I used to rest for half an hour as I wake up every day early in the morning. At nine a Sindhi gentleman Lok Nath by name who visited the Gurudwara used to bring for me two rotis and some cooked vegetables from his house. This was his daily routine. Taking this meal with me I used to head towards the mountains. It used to take me about an hour to climb up. I spend my entire day there pleading to God and meditating on his name. There were times when my heart would be restless and full of grief. I returned in the evening and again addressed the Sangat for half an hour in the evening. Hindu brothers also started coming to listen frequently; they loved my talks about God and gave me a lot of love.

It must be around nine months of my stay there when an elderly man started spreading tales and raising questions all around. You are giving too much money and respect to a young boy. How can you trust him? Who is he? Where is he from? Where is his family? In the atmosphere that he had created, staying there seemed a criminal act on my part. He took every opportunity to insult me and started influencing a couple of others too. I used to serve the wandering ascetics who frequently visited the place. I gave them place to stay and with money I took care of their needs. The gentleman spread a word around that as I do entertain loafers, they eat, drink and create nuisance. One day he confronted me asking who I was and where I was from. With hands folded I told him I can tell you where I am going, tomorrow I will leave for Patna Sahib.

Next day I packed my belongings and taking permission from the Sangat left the place. I reached Patna Sahib and stayed

there for a week. It was a blissful experience. I asked the manager if he would give me some time to do "Katha". Time was granted but I spoke for three days only because my presence annoyed an elderly Kathakar who was a paid employee there. He often was rude to me. I had seen such jealousy amongst learned men in Guru Nanak Darbar at Bombay too. It surprised me to see an old learned man of the age of my grandfather so jealous and annoyed. It was beyond my comprehension. Well, I stayed there for a week, addressed the Sangat and left for Ranchi.

From there I went straight to Banaras where I met *Baba Balwant Singh ji of Nirmalai Panth*, who had come from Kankhal, Haridwar and used to teach the young scholars. I requested him to teach me too. He asked me to wait for a few days. One day he called me to begin my lessons. Opening the holy book he said let us start with Japji Sahib Paath. I told him I knew the Paath and had memorized it. He said in that case let us start with Jaap Sahib. I told him I had memorized that too. He said he would initiate (Charni lagna) me reading the Guru Granth Sahib, so I could do the Paath. I said Babaji I can do the Akhand Paath too and read the holy writings. He asked me if I wanted to learn the meanings and explanations. I told him not just the meanings but tell me about the Prime Light, the Supreme Bliss and joy that Gurbani talks about. Placing his hands on his forehead, then folding them and looking up he sighed and exclaimed, "O Waheguru you have introduced me to another yearning heart (sick in your love)". I have prayed for the company of fortunate saints to show me the path but you have sent me another sick man in love for you. Controlling his tears he told me, "Child I cannot teach you that, but you can learn the meanings of Gurbani from me". I told Baba ji, let me study the meanings then. To be in your holy presence is enough for me.

In this manner I learnt the meanings of Sanskrit Sloks, Bhattan de Savaiye, Jaitsari di Var and the Sidh Goshit from him. I started travelling with him from place to place. At some places I used to speak first and he later and in some places he spoke in the morning and I in the evening. Thus I gained experience in speaking. I also got the opportunity to meet and listen to enlightened soul and his spiritual discourses. I also experienced a bliss and closeness to God in Baba Balwant Singh Ji's company.

The yearnings and a deep pain continued in my life. I worried about my future (my ultimate goal). I had got a glimpse of it at Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar in Mumbai with Giani Gurdalay Singh. Once in the early ambrosial hour after reciting Sukhmani Sahib I came and sat in the garden. I had barely sat and closed my eyes when I don't know how it happened, but I experienced showers of supreme bliss. I was in a blissful union. I was in this state for two months. During that phase the whole world seemed nothing but a toy and the feeling of supreme bliss and eternal happiness was there. I had this glimpse at Mumbai. After a month my deep pain and worries of future engulfed me. That blissful state gradually left and was lost when I left the place. I got glimpses of those on the mountains of Burla on the banks of Mahanadi. But those experiences lasted at times for half a day, at times for a day, never for a longer period.

While thus touring we reached Kankhal and sitting on the banks of river Ganga, the thoughts of future started troubling me once again. That day I missed my mother a lot. I missed the arms that used to always lovingly welcome and embraced me. I also missed my sister who used to take pride in me and lovingly address me as 'veera veera' (brother). I also missed my father, who used to regard me as his support and I was his everything. How I missed them! Each day the remembrances gained in strength and my longings for the Lord decreased in comparison. The bliss I experienced while reciting Gurbani started to recede.

One day after observing me disturbed Baba Balwant Singh ji asked, "Son, tell me truth. Why are you so restless"? I told him that the supreme Bliss that I had experienced in my life now seems like a dream and my mind is upset. He held my hand and asked me to tell him truthfully where I came from and about my family. I spoke the truth and I did not have the courage to hide anything today. I told him I was from Alwar and I had a mother, father and a sister back home. I also admitted that their memories were upsetting my entire being. Baba Balwant Singh ji asked me to make preparations to leave tomorrow. He said you have been away from home for a long time. Their thoughts, waves and yearnings are clashing with your mind. If I want to see the kind of Bliss I was

talking about and experience it again, then go, wipe the tears of my grieving mother and meet my father and sister.

I sent a telegram home to inform them about the train that I was taking to Delhi. At Delhi, my childhood friend Bihari Lal, a native of Alwar had come to receive me. I learnt from him that my father had left for his heavenly abode. My sister got married. I couldn't hold back my tears and gave out a cry. Bihari Lal held me in a close hug. He wiped my tears and told me that my mother was still waiting for me. Her entire day at home is spent in crying in your remembrance. The harvest from 16 Bigha land they had, helped her run her livelihood. Not a single day, my mother passed without crying for me.

I went to Sis Ganj Gurudwara and bowed my head in reverence to the Guru. I sat there for sometime and left for Alwar. Reaching home I paid my respect to my mother. She held me very close. Her heart was so overwhelmed that she could not speak for a while. I spent some days at home but thoughts of my future again came back. Mother had called my sister and was talking about getting me married. My sister lived in the nearby village of Bahadurpur. Mother felt that I needed to be tied this time in a marriage bond so that I would not run away again. She left home for three days perhaps to look for a match for me. She told me to stay home and my paternal aunt would come to take care of me. I told her that was not needed as I had to go for a work in Ajmer and be away for a week. I never told her about the nature of my work: that I do Katha (Gurmat Talks) in Gurudwaras. I convinced her that I would be back in seven days. Thus I left for Ajmer and my mother left for Bahadurpur.

Reaching there I stayed at Sri Guru Singh Sabha at Hathi Batta. I told the Granthi Sahib that I needed time to address the Sangat. He asked me to talk to the management when they came. They came in the evening. Both Giani ji and I made the request. They gave me permission to speak in the morning. In the morning I was expounding on Gurbani in my address, my own heart was filled with love for the Lord and feelings of Bliss. The Sangat was pleased. They asked the committee members to hold me for a few more days. Taking my permission an announcement for fifteen days was made. I was very happy as this was my first chance to speak inde-

pendently and in a dedicated manner. I was a little hesitant at Jhansi and not yet confident. By now I had been through ups and downs of it. Moreover in the company of the learned souls and my talks in Burla and nearby places had thus added to my experience. I sent a telegram back home that I would be returning in fifteen days. In those fifteen days I earned the love and pleasure of the Sangat there. In terms of money they gave me more than needed and thus honoured me.

Returning home I gave the money to my mother and told her I am a "Kathakar". She was happy. She said it is all right because you are remembering the Lord. To some extent the condition of the home improved with the money. I told my mother this being my means of livelihood; I would be away from home for longer periods of time. I made arrangements to leave again. I went to Ratlam, won the pleasure of the Sangat there and then at Indore got immense love from the Sangat. After that I went to Khandwa, Burhanpur and the neighbouring small towns and addressed the Sangat there. When I returned home, mother had made arrangements to get me engaged.

My marriage was finalized with the niece of my paternal uncle, who finalized the match. The girl was the daughter of Sardar Harnam Singh Ji Ahuja, who was also a resident of district Banu. Arrangements were made and the Anand Karaj (marriage) took place in Vaisakh of 1957. Bhai Sahib Bhai Vir Singh ji "Siahposh", whose acquaintance I had gained during my talks attended my marriage. He was much older to me in age and always dressed in black. That was his nature. He was a very renowned Gurmat Speaker of his time and had served for a long time. I was relatively new in this line. On a meeting at Saharanpur I had requested Bhai Vir Singh ji to attend my marriage and he had assured me he would and did come. The Barat left from Alwar to Delhi, where the marriage took place. Thus under the supervision of Bhai Sahib Bhai Vir Singh "Siahposh", the marriage was conducted. Bhai Kirat Singh, a renowned Ragi of the time who was blind, recited the Shabad Kirtan on the occasion. With the marriage came the responsibilities of a family man. I was only a Preacher of Gurbani. I choose this path because of my inner desire and love for God. But I had never thought that this would be my means of livelihood. But what pleased the Guru (Dhan Guru Nanak Devji Maharaj) happened.

Besides the desire to earn my living, I pleaded with Waheguru to give me his love and remembrance. I went to Ajmer, Indore, Khandwa, Saharanpur, Aligarh, Kanpur and other neighbouring towns to do Katha. During this time, I often had differences with Prabhandak Committees in charge of the Gurudwara due to my nature to keep the principles of Gurmat ahead than their askings. One such incident happened in Nainital. Rooms of the Gurudwara were given on rent and tenants used to gamble, play cards and even indulge in drinking alcohol. I spoke against this. This was a Gurudwara and not a hotel. I raised the matter in the Sangat. The members of the Committee stopped coming to the Gurudwara. I left that place after two weeks.

I visited Haldwani, Haldarpur and other towns during that time. In Kanpur while addressing the Sangat some of my utterances were taken personally. During this period an incident occurred and I was stopped from speaking in Kanpur. A Sikh of the area, Akali Gurcharan Singh Ji made temporary arrangements for me to address the Sangat and continue my Katha. He later bought the land and built a Dharamsala which became popular as Akali ji's Dharamsala. I have been going to Kanpur from 1962 till today in 2003. For two weeks every year in the month of February I do Katha and thus serve the Sangat there.

I also visit Indore every year. The Sangat there loves me. Once during my visit there, I went to see Oankar, a pilgrim centre forty five miles from Indore. Sant Prakash Singh Ji (Nirmale) was with me. He showed me a site close to the ancient temple and told me that this was the place where Guru Nanak Sahib Ji had uttered Bani Ramkali Dakhani (ਬਾਣੀ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਦਖਣੀ). The land belonged to a priest, who resided in Ujjain.

This place of pilgrimage was approximately four thousand years old. It was in the shape of an island, surrounded by water on all sides. Two rivers Narmada and Tapti flow here. These rivers meet at a place where there is a mountain. They diverge again where the range finishes to re-unite again. The region thus formed is an island. It is a small area, which is shaped as Om (ॐ). The ancient temple built here is famous as "Oankar". A fair is held here on every full moon day of the lunar month. Even on a regular day hundreds of pilgrims visit the temple. They usually stay there

for a few days and offer flowers of devotion. There is activity and life herè all the year around. This place is famous as “Onkareshwar”. The town and its railway stations are also called Oankar. The region on the other side of Narmada is called “Maandhaata”. It’s named after a king, who it is believed to have done rigorous meditation sitting on the banks of the river (Narmada). The Bhattas have made a mention of it in their composition.

ਮਾਂਧਾਤਾ ਗੁਣ ਰਵੈ ਜੇਨ ਚਕ੍ਰਵੈ ਕਹਾਇਓ ॥

(ਸਵਈਏ ਭਟਾਂ ਦੇ ਅੰਕ ੧੩੯੦)

Mandhaataa gun ravai jayn chakarvai kahaaiio.

[savvaiyie bhattan de pg.1390, S.G.G.S.]

*Maandhaataa, who called himself ruler
of all the world, sings His Praises.*

In the Savvaiyie sang in the glory of Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj there is also a mention of king Maandhata.

During Guru Nanak’s fourth tour to the South, Guru Nanak Dev Ji stopped at this pilgrimage, and stayed at the famous Takshial (educational centre). At the Takshial the Head Priests used to give Brahmin scholars lessons of Sashtras. It is here that my Lord addressing the Chief Priests uttered his compositions in Ramkali Dakhani.

ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਉਤਪਤਿ ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ ਕੀਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਚਿਤਿ ॥

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਸੈਲ ਜੁਗ ਭਏ ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਬੇਦ ਨਿਰਮਏ ॥

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਉਪਰੇ ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਤਰੇ ॥

ਓਨਮ ਅਖਰ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਓਨਮ ਅਖਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣਾਂ ਸਾਰੁ ॥੧॥

ਸੁਣਿ ਪਾਡੇ ਕਿਆ ਲਿਖਹੁ ਜੰਜਾਲਾ ॥

ਲਿਖੁ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

(ਅੰਕ ੯੨੯-੯੩੦)

Ramkali, First Mahala, Dakhaneer Onkaar:

Ik-Onkaar Satgur Parsaad

The creator of all is one.

He is realized by the Grace of the true Guru.

O-ankaar barahmaa utpat.

Brahma was created through God.

O-ankaar keeaa jin chit.

He Cherish O-ankaar in his mind.

O-ankaar sail jug bha-ay.

From Onkaar the universe and the ages started.

O-ankaar baid nirma-ay.

Lord created the Vedas.

O-ankaar sabad udhray.

It is the God who saves the world through his words.

O-ankaar gurmukh taray.

God saves the Gurmukhs from wordly sin.

Onam akhar sunhu beechar.

Listen to the Message of the Universal,

Imperishable Creator Lord.

Onam akhar tribhavan saar.

The universal, Imperishable Creator

Lord is the essence of the three worlds.

Sun paanday ki-aa likhahu janjaalaa.

Listen, O pandit, O religious scholar,

why are you writing about worldly matters?

Likh raam naam gurmukh Gopaalaa, rahaa-o.

[S.G.G.S. Pg.929-930]

Write only the Name of the Lord, the Lord of the world.

Feel the presence of God and write his name in your mind and hear.

Hearing his compositions the priests and scholars were so impressed that they all said: Dhan Guru Nanak, Dhan Guru Nanak. When I visited the spot I had an inner voice to make this place a sacred spot of Dhan Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Being poor, and without support and honour, how I would be able to undertake this great task, who hardly could support his family. I made a request at the Gurudwara of Imli Sahib in Indore that I would donate my entire earnings from offerings for building the Gurudwara. Every year in

the month of Savan (ਸ਼ਵਣ) I used to do Katha there. If the Sangat (congregation) co-operated fully and donated liberally then making it would be possible. At that time a sikh, Sardar Parmeshwara Singh, Forest Contractor, who was a satsangi supported my cause. He offered to donate Rs 40,000/- for it right away. It was a huge sum of money in those days. A good amount came from the Sangat too. I formed a committee of five which had representatives one from Khandwa, one from Barhwa and two three from Indore. Sardar Parmeshwara Singh was made treasurer. The land for the Gurudwara and a Dharamsala was bought. Sardar Parmeshwara Singh took the entire responsibility of designing the building and thus the work on it began. The task was not an easy one as bricks and iron rods had to be loaded on boats and taken across to the island. In a way the expenditure on building was doubled. Today, with Guruji's grace we have a bridge there. At that time there was no bridge and all materials had to be taken across in boats.

I started my visits to Khandwa, Jharnia, Snawat, Barhwa, Khargoo, Berhanpur, and the neighbouring towns to raise money for the same. The offerings I received and the money raised in the Gurudwara was all handed over to Parmeshwara Singh Ji. He offered his jeep and driver for touring the regions. In this way I spent around two to three weeks in Indore and a month's time touring the rest of the towns. Thus my earnings for two months and money raised by other Gurudwaras was added in the Gurudwara Fund. With time the building was becoming an aesthetically pleasing sight. I felt an inner desire to have an Annual Samagam in this place. The walls of the Gurudwara had just been completed. To keep up the enthusiasm of the Sangat and to encourage visitors a huge Samagam was held. Sangat from Ratlam, Indore, Ujjain, Berhanpur, Khandwa, Sanawat, Barhwa and the nearby villages came in large numbers. This increased my enthusiasm. The task started with Waheguru's blessings was completed in six to seven years and the Gurudwara was ready. The inaugural celebrations were scheduled on 1-2-3-4th of April. Brochures were printed and circulated to spread the word around. This event was attended by a huge gathering.

But then a Gursikh gentleman in Indore started propaganda against me. He spread the word that Maskin Ji has made this Gurudwara as his own Dera (base). He argued that it is true that

Maskin Ji has contributed his Katha offerings but most of the money had been raised from the Sangat. He has created a place for himself. It is his Base. It is true that the place is historical but Maskin Ji owns it. The fact was that when we began I had the land and the building registered in the name of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Indore. Perhaps this gentleman was not aware of this. The very next day I handed over the land registry papers and other related documents to the President of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Sardar Pardhan Singh Ji and Sardar Dharam Singh Ji. I said that I am giving back everything to where it belonged. The Gurudwara was ready now and registered in the name of Sri Guru Singh Sabha. There was still some work pending which Sri Guru Singh Sabha would have to take care of. My own plans were to complete the upper level of the building also and then hand over the registry to the Singh Sabha. Sardar Parmeshwara Singh and others were happy about it and had no objections to it. They requested me to organize an Annual Samagam in the new Gurudwara and promised they will co-operate with me fully. Since then there has been an annual Samagam there and the whole environment turns into a spiritual atmosphere in those days. Thus that historical place is build in the memory of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. There stands a beautiful Dharamsala which is now complete and provides the place for visitors to stay. The Sikh Sangat travelling in buses to Hazoor Sahib on their way stop here to pay homage and then proceed via Berhanpur.

During this phase I did Katha at several places and earned the blessings and happiness of the Sangat there. This boosted my confidence. But even in those days I missed those days of the love of Waheguru whose glimpses I had in Bombay and Burla and were lost now. The memory of it at times agonizes me. In 1961 I made a decision to donate two months of my earning to Oankarshwar and if possible even more. I considered it to be my daswandh (दसहण्ड) (1/10th of my earning). Even now when I do Katha there I donate eight to ten days of what I receive and keep the rest with me.

In 1961 a decision was made to have a Gurmat Samagam in Alwar also in my house. We were planning to have only one Samagam at that time. In this way I wanted to spend money on Gurmat Prachar, Gurmat Samagam and for Sangat Sewa. The first Samagam was held in a small plot in front of my humble residence.

The function was attended by Sangat of Alwar and the neighbouring towns. A couple of Ragi jathas and Gurmat Speakers graced the occasion. The attending Sangat expressed the need to have such Samagams every year and a decision to have an Annual Samagam in Alwar was made. Renowned Kirtani Jathas and Gurmat speakers of the time Giani Ranjit Singh Paras, Giani Mann Singh Jhour, Giani Nahar Singh used to come. Sant Baba Balwant Singh, for whom I had utmost respect used to come too. With the grace of Dhan Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the Samagam progressed well and so did the Sangat's love and enthusiasm.

Sometimes it used to so happen, in fact, not sometimes but every year the expenses would exceed. My pockets would be completely empty so much so that the Langar needs for the Samagam were usually borrowed from the market as it was not possible for me to pay them right away. At times I used to worry over the fact that the Samagam was getting too huge. The Sangat attending from outside had tremendously increased and so had the number of Ragi jathas and speakers. My pockets were getting empty taking care of the attending Sangat and meeting the needs of the Langar and the debt on me from the market was growing. But still I did not let this affect my enthusiasm. I prayed, O Guru! Don't make my pockets so miserable that I loose the spirit of such wonderful event. My prayers were heard and the Samagam continued. As the Sangat was increasing the arrangements for their stay was done by booking in advance in different Dharamsalas but the seating space for the Diwan was not enough. More land was bought. Sardar Parmeshwara Singh loaned me one Lakh rupees for it. This I repaid to him in small amounts with the money I made from my tours abroad. He also accompanied me in one trip. In this manner I was able to pay off my debt to him in a period of two to four years.

I had also taken a loan of one lakh rupees from The Punjab and Sindh Bank. The manager Sardar Inderjeet Singh Ji, a pious soul did not charge any interest on it. With time I was able to pay that amount. Sardar Parmeshwara Singh ji took up the entire responsibility of constructing the new building.

He had lot of experience in this line. Besides his own he had constructed many other buildings. He had devoted a lot of time in planning of Oankareshwar Gurudwara and gave full coopera-

tion. All this helped him in constructing the building at Alwar. Eventually a day came when the building was complete. The place was ready in 1970 and in the same year the first Samagam was held there. Sangat came from outside Alwar in large numbers. Among those who attended were also Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji and Singh Sahib Giani Sadhu Singh Ji, Jathedar of Akal Takhat . They blessed me and showered me with their love. The seating and living arrangements for the Sangat got better and in due course the name of the Gurmat Samagam spread world-wide. Sangat from different parts of the country and abroad started coming. Thus the Samagam got bigger and the expenses of conducting it increased with time. By the grace and blessing of Dhan Guru Nanak Dev Ji everything had been going on smoothly in a successful manner uptill now. With His blessings the Samagam runs in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement. Sangat that comes here experiences a spiritual bliss and looks forward for coming back again the following year. Many of them attend it every year. This is all due to Dhan Guru Nanak Ji's blessing to me and all the programmes were successfully performed and this Samagam by the grace of Guru ji is being performed with full passion. Sangat(ਸੰਗਤ) used to come from far and wide places and enjoy spiritual bliss. They also long and wait for the next year to attend the Samagam here. Most of the Sangat comes every year without break. Dhan Guru Nanak Dev ji had bestowed me with this gift.

I continued my tours of preaching of Gurmat. But meanwhile I longed for the two blissful experiences I had earlier experienced in my life. The memories kept agonizing me and often making me plead and cry before God. Following about seven to eight years passed in this manner. The blissful play and glimpses I had were not coming back. I felt sad and disheartened and started wondering if that was all an illusion. I can still recall the joy and bliss I experienced in those moments. I felt a little discouraged and also experienced a decline in me. My mind would sometimes be filled with depressive feelings and heart broken. In this state I always prayed to God to protect me from the influence of avarice, anger, greed, passion and ego and keep me on the divine path. By the grace of the Lord and blessings of the Satguru I was saved from all these and Waheguru Ji protected me from ups and downs and any

sins and kept me pure. I continued doing Katha both in the country and abroad and was loved by the Sangat.

The tragic incidents of 84 that occurred around this time broke my heart further. Why did this happen? Without thinking of the cause I had a strong immediate feeling that whatever happened at Darbar Sahib was not right. It was a mistake. I was at Simla on that day. While doing katha I could not help weeping and I was unable to do katha. I couldn't do it the next day too. I concluded it and returned to Delhi. During my katha in Punjabi Bagh I gave vent to my feelings on it. The Sangat agreed with me. Samagams started in different Gurudwaras all over and I expressed that there were other ways to solve the situation. For instance, by cutting of the supply of water, electricity and food they could have arrested those who were inside. By resorting to this wrong means, it was clear that there was a feeling of enmity behind the whole act. Cases were immediately made against me and a warrant of arrest was issued against me. Next day morning I had to do katha (discourse) in Model town in Delhi. There was a huge gathering. Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji sent me a hand written grief filled letter of six pages in which he had given a first hand account narrated with tears flowing.

I read out the entire letter to the Sangat at Model Town Gurudwara but as it was six pages, after reading three pages my voice choked and I gave up. The rest of the letter was read by my companion Giani Kalyan Singh Ji (Renowned Ragiji). This filled the Sangat with great grief. I don't remember who took the letter away from my hands. Almost around the fourth day the photo copies of the letter were pasted on the notice boards of the Gurudwaras across the country and abroad.

Government could not make a case against me of being anti national as I had never spoken anything against the Government. I had spoken against the operations of the existing Government. Instead of attacking Darbar Sahib they should have thought of some other means. And many Hindu brothers had also expressed objections to this act both verbally and in written form. But an arrest warrant was issued only in my name. On the same day I learnt that police had reached the Gurudwara at Model Town to arrest me. A gentleman Sardar Pardhan Singh, who is now no more, es-

corted me to the railway station. He was a very sincere friend and cared for me. He took me to his house in Etawah. I stayed there for a while and left for Aurangabad. I had a couple of close friends there who on earlier occasions had invited me and had cared for me but had now turned away after hearing the news about my arrest. I left for Hazoor Sahib. From there I went to Bidar and then finally to Raipur. For six months I wandered from place to place. At some places I did katha but the Gurudwara Committees in some places were hesitant in giving me time. Then I reached Delhi again because I could not support my family financially and my children were worried. For six months I had no contact with them. Sant Longowal Ji advised me over the phone to hand myself over to the authorities as running away will not solve my problems.

I went to Gurudwara Rakab Ganj Sahib to pay my respects there. After bowing to Satguru as soon as I stepped out of the gate Sardar Baljeet Singh of the Parliament Street Police Station, immediately came with police force and arrested me. He took me to Parliament Police Station and later to Patiala House court. But fortunately, Sarna Sahib and other gentlemen from Delhi committee arrived there in large numbers. I was let out on bail. But the cases on me continued and I had to appear in the court often. One day I received a visa from the Sangat in Kuwait and also an air ticket for that country. I reached the airport to leave for Kuwait. Sardar Baljeet Singh Ji arrived at the airport to arrest me and brought me back as I was not allowed to go abroad. I was not aware of this. In this manner I was again arrested and some more new cases were made against me. In fact I had not done this intentionally. All the cases against me were ordinary ones but as they had piled up I had to visit the court every second or third day.

At Baba Deep Singh's place of martyrdom in Amritsar a huge Sikh conference was held. The military had still control over Darbar Sahib. I was also banned from entering Punjab. But in spite of it I managed to reach Amritsar in disguise. At the railway station I was received by Giani Chet Singh's son, who took me to his home. After meals, I reached Baba Deep Singh Ji's place where the conference was held and attended it. There was a huge gathering of the Sangat. On that day the army had encircled and the premises covered from all the sides. I attended the conference. The gather-

ing was huge. The army had all around covered the area so that the people from outside could not come. This chain was broken by the women who brought *langar*. When the army stopped them they threw buckets full of *dal* (lentil stew) on them. Swords were mounted and guns positioned but there was no firing. There were orders from the top not to fire. In this way the chain of the army was broken. The leaders of the conference were worried about *langar* arrangements for the attending Sangat but by Guru's grace once the chain formed by the army broke up, so much *langar* came in that there was more than enough for all till night.

At the conference after kirtan I had to do katha for an hour. It started raining during the katha. People started leaving; Nawab Maler Kotla had also come there too. He stood up on the stage and addressing the gathering said that I had heard that Singhs do not run away against the rain of bullets but you are running away from mere rain-drops. Those who were leaving stopped and sat down again and the diwan continued till the evening in a very nice manner. The leaders of the Panth enlightened the Sangat on the facts of the existing situation

After some days, the Darbar Sahib was handed over to Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandak Committee officially. Then on the first day I did my Katha. I was staying at building of the old office of Akali Dal. There was blood all over the rooms. A couple of beddings drench in blood were lying there. The rooms got washed. Electricity and water were not there, so Hand-Pumps were used. We spent the night by the candle light. The next day all arrangements were made. Looking at the sight I was agonized and my heart cried out. This agony I expressed to the Sangat in my talks. Every day new cases were made against me. During this time when I reached Kanpur, the S.P handed a notice to me asking me to leave Kanpur in 24 hours. I collected half burnt holy books (Dhan Guru Granth Sahib) from the surrounding areas. These were disrespected and burnt in the Gurudwaras by rioters. Then in keeping to Gurmat tradition a furnace fire was lit in the terrace of the Gurudwara and last rites performed. The police expressed that this would increase anger. I asked them did they ever think about the rioters who disrespected and burnt them; did their act not arouse feelings? I was only taking care of the situation which they have created.

During this time I decided to go to Kashmir on the invitation of the Sangat there. I also wanted to rest for some days at Pehalgam as my body was tired and mind exhausted. On my way to Kashmir while crossing river Ravi I was stopped by the police, who told me that I was banned from entering Kashmir. The orders were to arrest me if I proceeded but I could return. I thought it was wise to return.

During this time, as a result of speaking a lot in every place and being on move continuously I experienced heart trouble and got busy in its treatment. I had a heart attack in Hyderabad. I was not aware of it. In the morning when it was time to get up, I experienced heaviness in my chest. I thought this related to indigestion problem. I drank two-three glasses of water but the chest remained heavy as before. I wanted to start the geyser but it didn't work. In that condition I took bath with cold water and did Nitnem too. But my weakness continued and the heaviness increased. Around five o' clock the heaviness stopped on its own. I had my tea. Around six thirty the Prabhandaks arrived to take me to do katha in the Gurudwara at seven o'clock . There kirtan was recited by the Guru's *Kirtaanias*. I sat for half an hour listening to kirtan but my body felt lifeless as I was experiencing extreme weakness. I sat on the stage and did katha for an hour. The secretary of the Gurudwara Sardar Kesar Singh Ji, an elderly man's son and daughter-in-law were doctors (they had their own nursing home). They noticed my condition and asked if I was not feeling well. I agreed and said I was experiencing heaviness since last night. After doing an E.C.G it was found out that I had experienced a heart attack. I was admitted in the hospital. Then they took me home where I was under the supervision of the doctor. My flight for Dehli had been booked in advance for the next day. They advised me not go for ten to fifteen days. I insisted on leaving the next morning as scheduled. I told them I was feeling fine. They discussed my physical condition with my doctor and then allowed me to leave on one condition that a doctor will be there at Delhi airport to receive me. I had made arrangements for the same.

At Delhi airport Sardar Sardool Singh a physician and his family were there to receive me. The Air-Hostess at Hyderabad airport was given an injection and medicines with instructions to

administer if needed. By Guru's grace I reached safe and sound. Sardar Sardool Singh drove me straight to the Hospital. His living quarters were in the hospital premises. I stayed there under his observation for next ten to fifteen days. My family and children arrived and in fifteen days I was almost normal and returned home.

It was the time of birth celebrations of Dhan Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji at Takht Sri Patna Sahib. I had never missed the occasion. This time too I made up my mind to go though everybody warned me for health reasons as I had a recent heart attack. But my family and Doctor had to give in as I was firm on it. I left for Patna Sahib. As usual I stayed and served there three days. At Darbar Sahib, Sis Ganj Sahib and Patna Sahib I never took Katha-money. Taking money at these places was not agreeable to my inner soul. This was my own faith and dedication. The Sangat in the neighbouring areas used to take care of me. My livelihood was taken care of and I never took any *bhaita ਭੈਣਾ* (monetary offerings) from the funds of the Gurudwara Sis Ganj, Darbar Sahib, Takht Sri Patna Sahib and Hazoor Sahib. I have done this seva without taking any *bhaita ਭੈਣਾ* and will continue to do so. As a devotee it pleases me to serve so.

I returned from Patna Sahib safe and sound. I was definitely a little weak but otherwise I was doing well. My physical state gradually progressed. I started doing katha once again and during this time court summons started due to pending cases on me because the government in power did not approve of my talks. I only expressed the wounds of my heart but never once said any word that was anti-national. Everyday I expressed my opinion to prove that whatever happened could have been avoided. Because of summons at Patiala Court every other day, I could not move out to do katha. I noticed a change in the attitude of the *prabhandaks* (organizers) of Delhi Gurudwaras. Watching me being summoned to court every second or third day, looking at number of cases on me they were scared that they may get involved in it too. They started avoiding me. I watched that many good and faithful friends had stopped greeting me.

Once observing me waiting under a tree outside the court a wealthy passer-by asked me, "Giani Ji, what is the difference between you and us now. We have all kinds of cases on us and we

come here when summoned. There are all kinds of cases against you too". I said it was true. I have cases on me. Though he was there for resolving business related issues but he spoke to me in a manner which was satirical. It was here that Prof. Darshan Singh Ji used to be brought from Ambala to attend summons and I was called every second or third day. I had two lawyers Mehta and Dhaliwal to fight my case. Usually in these sessions no questions were asked and a next summon date used to be issued. I could see that the government was dragging cases to keep me in Delhi though I had not committed any real crime as such. Their plan was to keep me busy in court summons and to restrict my movements and my speaking. I stayed at Gurudwara Sis Ganj and ate from the *langar*. I did katha whenever I got a chance. Once in a while I got a chance to have a programme in the nearby area. This helped me to meet my expenses. I used to go either alone to court dates or my nephew Abinashi Singh (Maheshi) who was with me from his childhood, always accompanied me. We waited there all day long. He used to get *langar* from Bangla Sahib and we used to sit there and eat. When I recall those moments I remember the slok of Dhan Guru Tegh Bahadur ji Maharaj:-

ਸੰਗ ਸਖਾ ਸਭਿ ਤਜਿ ਗਏ ਕੋਊ ਨ ਨਿਬਹਿਓ ਸਾਥਿ ॥
Sang sakhaa sabh taj gaiae ko-oo na nib-hi-o saath.

*My associates and companions
have all deserted me;
no one remains with me.*

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਬਿਪਤਿ ਮੈ ਟੇਕ ਏਕ ਰਘੁਨਾਥ ॥੫੫॥
(ਅੰਕ ੧੪੨੯)

kaho Naanak ih bipat mai taik aik Raghunath.
[Slok Mahala 9 Pg.1429 S.G.G.S]

Says Nanak, in the tragedy, the Lord you alone is my support.

My cases continued. My passport was seized too. I was stopped from travelling abroad. Inside the country too I could not go on long tours as I had to stay at Delhi to be present due to summons every second or third day. I could not go anywhere. Invi-

tations had decreased too. Those people who used to plead for giving them time earlier stopped contacting me. I used to do Katha (spiritual discourses) at different Gurudwaras in Delhi to meet the expenses of my lawyers. During those days I was shocked to see that some individuals who were arrested and for whom the government had to spend crores of rupees were in fact released at once. The cases on them were dropped too. It surprised me that though the government arrested me without much trouble from Gurudwara Rakab Ganj and the Airport my cases were not dropped. After my arrest at the Airport it was mandatory for me to show up at the Parliament Police Station in the evenings. Now if a person were to show up at the Police Station every evening how could he go anywhere?

I was very much surprised to be so humiliated in my life! Some righteous gentlemen did refer my case to Sardar Buta Singh, who was the home minister after Arun Nehru and approached him to drop my cases. But neither Arun Nehru nor Buta Singh could be of any help in these cases. The cases continued. I was amazed to see that all the cases against me were false. There was no real substance in them but still they were not dropped. Cases on individuals for as serious crimes as being anti-national (traitor) and carrying illegal weapons were dismissed! My logical brain could not figure out why it was so. When a person like me visited Dhan Guru Ramdas Ji's Darbar Sahib (Amritsar) to do Katha at that time even a big *kirpan* was objected and my car was thoroughly searched. Though I was banned from entering Punjab I still went there on Dhan Guru Ramdas Ji's Gurupurab without absence. Everyday new cases were made against me but my love and devotion for the place forced me to go and do Katha there.

So far as the politics of the Punjab is concerned, whenever a coalition government of Akali Dal and Jan Sangh was formed, it was dismissed. This was not liked by the opponents that the congress will never be able to form the Government. How would they be able to give birth to the division between Hindus and Sikhs.

When the Hindi agitation was started in the Punjab it was initiated by the congress. Whereas it should have been started in Assam, Bengal, Gujrat and Tamil Nadu. No newspaper is available in the Hindi Language in Karnatak. However, now it is avail-

able. No body speaks Hindi in Tamil Nadu whereas nearly everyone understands Hindi in the Punjab. By propagating hatred against Punjabi language and by starting Hindi agitation, a distance was created between the Hindus and Sikhs. Then by conspiring on a very large scale and by creating a rift between the Hindus and the Sikhs, Congress got the votes of the Hindus and was able to form a Government in the Punjab. Only then I realized that our people were utilized to create political disturbance. In all this many innocent and precious lives were sacrificed and many deeply religious and innocent people died. I changed my speaking during religious discourses and started speaking on Gurbani interpretation and stopped speaking on this cruel politics.

All types of contrivances had been used to win political power and tried to declare a patriot *quam* (ਕੌਮ) as anti national by political manoeuvres. Thousands of sacrifices made for getting independence for the country have been washed away and forgotten, simply to gather votes and form the Government. I was observing all this. But it is saddening that the young men of the Punjab became bold but they were not seeing these manoeuvres. I tried to make them understand this in hints. But it was said that Maskin is afraid and has retraced his steps. But who would tell them that Maskin is making them attentive. I am not afraid but you have been used. The youth have been destroyed. The sacrifices made for the independence of the country have been wasted.

It is said that petrol is needed to drive a car. But to avoid over-heating of the engine, there should be water in the radiator. These young men were having petrol in their cars but there was no water in the radiators. They could cover a short distance only and became corrupt. They stopped and evil thoughts settled in their head and hearts. They began to interfere with the interpretation of Gurbani whereas they knew nothing in connection with the Gurbani. With this there was a lot of loss to the religious propagation.

In 1991 when for the first time, the Janta Dal came to power after the fall of the Congress Government, the cases against me were withdrawn. My confiscated passport was returned to me. After the expiry of the date, Sardar Gurcharan Singh, who was brother of my friend Sardar Dalip Singh Dardi, also helped me in getting a new passport. He was a high level officer at Delhi at that

time. After the receipt of new passport and the withdrawal of cases, I felt relieved because I was also tired of going to courts after every alternate day. Financially also I was tight. With great difficulty I was able to make both ends meet. During that period I went to the embassies of U.K., U.S.A. and Canada to obtain Visa. I got visas, I took my Books and Tapes with me and based on these, visas were issued to me. I did not face difficulty of any type to obtain visa. After gathering money from here and there, I purchased air ticket and visited England, America and Canada. I served the Sangat in these countries by giving Gurbani interpretation in the form of religious discourse (Katha) according to the intellect bestowed on me by God and I made it my routine to continue this Katha in the country and abroad.

Although I am not politician, even then I kept myself away from them. I severed all ties with politics. Why? People who are in it are the ones who are capable of changing colours like a chameleon. I also advised a few responsible discourses (speakers) that it was for these people to participate in political aspects. Our job was to spread 'Dharam' (ਧਰਮ) and Gurbani (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ). Politics is only about ups and downs, cunning moves and falsity. I believed in spreading the message of Gurus and God and thus keep the youth and Sikh Sangat always on the righteous path of Dharam. Since then I have kept myself away from politics though I was never a politician even before. Only I had started to express my feelings on the harm done by politics. After that I resumed my original tradition of discoursing on pure Gurbani and spreading religion/spiritualism.

All my life I have cherished a love for Lord in my heart. Guru Nanak Dev Ji has blessed me with his devotion. I had two great glimpses in my life, but in those ten years of my life experience I lost a lot and was demoralized. After this I started uplifting my spirits by the grace of Guru and by Guru Nanak Dev Ji's grace my enthusiasm, love and devotion were on the rise again. In regard to those two glimpses my inner self continued to cherish, love and yearn for it. ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੋਹਿ ਕਬ ਗਲਿ ਲਾਵਹਿਗੇ, ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੋਹਿ ਕਬ ਗਲਿ ਲਾਵਹਿਗੇ *Prabh mohe kab gal la-vay-gay, prabh mohe kab gal la-vay-gay.* O God when will you embrace me again! But it seems I am not yet ready for it. This reminds me of Baba Balwant Singh Ji's words. He used to say if you put a crying child to a mother to give

milk, he becomes quiet. If you experience the same bliss you will stop giving discourses. You will be silent. Guru wants you to do Katha and you should live in his will and stay happy with this. In this way I have come to convince myself and go from place to place to spread the message of the Guru. I want the Sangat to know this fact.

In my life I have received love from my Hindu brothers too. I have done Katha at the Gita Bhavan in Indore and Jammu and at Swami Ram Kishan Mission of Aligarh. At England a Muslim priest expressed his desire to accompany me for a month and a half and listen to discourses on Gurbani and said that he experienced bliss in doing so. He had one day by chance walked in the East Hemp Gurudwara, U.K. One day I told him he could accompany me with pleasure. He stayed with me in England and Canada for three months. He eventually became a true devotee of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He said that his children and family are in Rawalpindi (Pakistan), his mind was showing a different path but there are these family restrictions. And I did understand. Even now whenever he meets, tears start flowing. Once he said that he also wanted to attend the Samagam at Alwar. I even sent him sponsorship on my part but he couldn't get a visa. He couldn't make it.

Seeing him other Muslim brothers started coming to Brahmputan Gurudwara at Toronto, Canada. And they also started coming to listen to the discourses. One day a Muslim brother came to my room and said that I have observed many Sikh devotees take you home for meals. He said I too want to know if you could come to my home for a meal. Seeing his feelings and love I answered in affirmative. I am well aware a very great part of our community is orthodox, narrow minded and ignorant. This is the reason that preaching of Gurbani on a large scale has not been possible. Otherwise Dhan Guru Nanak Dev ji had travelled to many Muslim countries, Afghanistan, Iran, and all Arab countries and also Muslim regions of Russia like Turkmenistan, Kazakistan, Tajikistan and stayed with many Sufi saints who use to cook meals themselves and feed Guru ji. I always repeat a line:-

ਵੇਦੀਨਾ ਕੀ ਦੇਸਤੀ ਵੇਦੀਨਾ ਕਾ ਖਾਣੂ॥ "Vaydeena kee Dostee, Vaydena ka khan" but whom do we call vaydeena over here. Vaydeena is he who does not believe in God. It is another matter if

he prays in different way or follows the same path. Everybody has the same experience of hunger, though the food may not be same. It differs but all kinds of food satisfy hunger. It is not that if someone prays in our way is correct and the one who doesn't, is Vaydeena. Then what about Baba Farid? Below this line is another line explaining it.

ਵੇਦੀਨਾ ਕੀ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਵੇਦੀਨਾ ਕਾ ਖਾਣੁ ॥

Vaydeena kee dostee vaydeenaa kaa khan .

*Be friends with the unrighteous,
and eat with the unrighteous.*

ਸਿਫਤੀ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਨੀ ਸਦਾ ਵਸੈ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ ॥

siftee saar na jaanee sadaa vasai saitaan.

[S.G.G.S pg 790]

*They do not know the value of the Lord's praises
And Satan is always with them.*

Only a person who does not praise the Lord, is Vaydeena. Well, I agreed to the invitation. Giani Balwinder Singh Ji of Surry (Canada) and other Singhs who were with me all went to the Muslim brother's who lived in an apartment. He had invited five-seven other Muslim friends to his house. He told me all the utensils have been cleaned and purified over the fire by his wife and himself and also that the food was cooked with great care in very clean and hygienic manner and asked us not to hesitate. I told him if I had any reservations, I would not be here. I am here and to share your happiness. He recited two or three *nagmas*, from which I could know that he meditated and had touched some depth in it. I had thoughts if only we could take Gurbani beyond the four walls of Gurudwara and focus on ways to spread Gurbani thoughts. We should translate it in all possible languages. We could print and distribute literature and Gurbani. Unfortunately in the Gurudwara management the reigns to both politics and preaching is in hands of people who are largely ignorant and subordinate. They are failing in their primary task of spreading the Guru's message to every home.

Now that at the insistence of the Sangat everything is being written down, I would also like to share the visions I had experienced at some point in my life.

The first experience was in a garden in Guru Nanak Darbar at Bombay [Mumbai]. Sitting there in the ambrosial hour of the day I experienced an unparalleled bliss. The cosmic play enacted made every aspect of the religious or ritualistic world appear meaningless and trivial. This state of wondrous joy and ecstasy remained with me for around six months. I could not bear to hold it for long as I was then away from home and yearnings of my parents and sister for me in a way clashed with it. Besides I had to struggle hard to survive. I would often lose my equilibrium and could not hold the experience for long.

I next experienced it at Sambalpur, Burla in Orissa. It stayed with me for over two months only. My third experience was at Haldwani, which is well established now, was in fact a small town at that time. A river flowed on the outskirts of the town. There was very little water in it. Often in the evening I would go on a stroll across it and at times I used to do that after my discourse in the morning. One day it must be around nine or ten O' clock in the morning when I was sitting on the banks on the other side of the river. I started reciting this shabad in the form of a prayer ਅਪਨੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੋਉ ਕਬਹੁ ਨ ਬਿਸਾਰਹੁ ॥ “Apne sevak ko kabhu na bisaro” *Never forget Your servant, O Lord.* By Guru's grace a cosmic play was enacted. Suddenly I experienced a state where meaningless desires felt like a burden and my heart was free from all desires. During my stay there I developed friendship with Giani Arjun Singh, a very spiritual gentleman, who was a motor mechanic by profession and hailed from Rawalpindi. Seeking me he reached the spot where I was sitting and put forth his apologies for disturbing me saying his love for me brought him there. I invited him to sit and shared my experience with him. All desires in my heart have ceased. Perhaps this is what Satguru means when he says ਸਭੇ ਇਛਾ ਪੂਰੀਆ ਜਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥ “sabhe ichha पूरीया जा पाया अगम अपारा”. *All desires are fulfilled, when one has a glimpse of Inaccessible and Infinite Lord.* Every time I sit down at the ambrosial hour to recite my Nitnem I recall those moments of bliss I had in Bombay, Burla and Haldwani. My heart aches and I plead

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੋਹਿ ਕਬ ਗਲਿ ਲਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੋਹਿ ਕਬ ਗਲਿ ਲਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥ “prabh mohe kab gal laveyge”. *O God, when will you take me in Your Embrace.* During my katha (discourse) I often referred about and shared these experiences. Those in the Sangat, who regularly meditate on His Name, can definitely identify with it but orthodox individuals do not understand it. Keeping this in mind I sometimes hesitate. God has blessed me with a universal vision. Whether it's a bell ringing in a temple or the *namaz* (ਨਮਾਜ਼) time in mosque my heart and head always bows in respect. But if I have a companion I hesitate. I pay my respect in my heart for I feel that the sound of the temple bell is his voice too. That is his message, his message “come on”. In this context I remember a couplet from a great poet.

ਤਾਮੀਜ਼ ਮਿਟ ਚੁਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੁਫਰੋ ਇਮਾ,
ਸਦਾ ਨਾਕੁਸ ਕੀ ਆਤੀ ਹੈ ਅਜਾਨ ਬਨਕੇ।

*Tameez mit chukī hai kyfro ima,
Sada nakūso kī atti hai ajan banke.*

The poet here states that he sees no difference between the awakening calls of a mosque or the bells of a temple. It is becoming difficult for him to differentiate them. It seems it is difficult. I have been touring and giving Gurmat discourses for the last forty eight to forty nine years. I always prefer to stay in Gurudwaras for a reason. I have a habit of reciting my morning Nitnem aloud which may disturb the owners in their homes. This is one reason for me to hesitate and the second reason is my own yearnings of heart at times lead me to a state which may be a cause of alarm for the household members or there is a possibility that I may get disturbed in any attained spiritual state. The other reason is, Once while touring with Sant Nehchal Singh Ji we reached a town. We were a group of twenty to twenty five. We stayed in the huge house of a factory owner. When I woke up to bathe at 3.00 AM, I saw the owner of the house and his children sleeping in the verandah [corridor] covered with sheets and light blankets. It was the month of December and extremely cold. Everybody was cold because all the beddings in the house were taken by us. At that time I thought no matter how well off a person is, there is a limit to his

household possessions. In the morning I packed my belongings and left for the Gurudwara without informing Sant Nehchal Singh Ji. The Granthi Sahib of the Gurudwara was a friend of mine who immediately opened a room for me. When Sant Nehchal Singh Ji inquired, I respectfully told him that by nature I feel more comfortable in a Gurudwara.

After this incident I tried to avoid touring with any holy man and if I have to, I told him that I will not stay with you in any house. I let them know my desire to reside in a Gurudwara. But at rare times where a Gurudwara did not have staying arrangements I stayed in a hotel or in someone's home. This was only when it was absolutely necessary. Because of my reticence nature or for some other cause I experience an obstruction during my daily Nitnem. The ecstasy that I normally experience is inaccessible to me when I stay over in homes. This is the reason that whenever I travel in India or abroad I reside in Gurudwaras. As a result of this some Gurudwaras in India which did not have staying arrangements have now constructed two to three rooms thus providing comfort to travellers and visitors.

In the course of my life I had the fortune to meet individuals who were in an advance spiritual state. Among them were two who used to come to hear my discourses. One of them was a taxi driver from Bombay who originally hailed from Hoshiarpur (Punjab). He used to come to hear Asa-di-var and discourses in the ambrosial hour and leave for work. Next year when I visited Bombay, I met Giani Ram Singh Ji who did katha of Suraj Prakash. It had been a Satsang wave in the evening with a gathering of ten to twelve individuals. He told me that the young man who was now around thirty-two years of age, had touched spiritual heights and had reached a transcendental state. I expressed my desire to meet him and went to meet him in building one where he was living. I was amazed to see him in a state of spiritual union and bliss.

One day he came to me and told me that since I am interested, he wanted to show me another enlightened soul compared to whom his own state was nothing. I agreed but we were surprised when he told me, he would come at 12 o'clock at night to take me. I decided to go when he convinced me that he was an enlightened soul and wanted me to see him. He took me in his taxi to Warden

Road near Church Gate and we sat on one of the benches on the sea-shore. He told me that at one O' clock a Mohammedan man, who was short in height and a tailor by profession, comes here and stays in a state of Samadhi till six o'clock in the morning. He owned a small tailoring shop. He really did arrive at one. A few Mohammedans were already there to get a glimpse of him. He bowed and greeted them in his Muslim tradition. At the shores he spread a small sheet on a flat rock and sat down. He had a cap on his head. We watched him for an hour or so. The Gursikh gentleman informed me how he comes there everyday when no body is around and stays in that enlightened state till six in the morning. It occurred to me that a rose bush, no matter where it is planted, will thrive and will refuse fragrance to none. This soul too was coloured in God's love. The third enlightened soul was Sardar Bahadur Singh ji of Kanpur, now residing in Ludhian(Punjab). He came from Gujarat which is now in Pakistan. He also used to listen to my discourses in Kanpur but now he has such heights in meditation that he remains in Samadhi and Pure Bliss twenty four hours a day. The sight of these enlightened souls though encourages my soul, yet it also fills me with envy. Those who were listening to the discourses have reached the higher level and I, the one who has been giving these talks, am still on my way. I have also come across some women who have reached spiritual heights both in India and abroad.

If I am not mistaken, one such youth was S. Ajit Singh from Mandsoor(Now residing in Delhi), who was a telephone operator and around thirty two years of age. His mother told me that this boy has absorbed in himself listening to the spiritual discourses. In this state he does not attend his work for days and is not marked absent at work either. In fact the whole staff addressed him as "Waheguru Singh" and not by his name. One day Bibi Jagir Kaur's brother-in-law and his wife came to me and told me about her daughter who was a school teacher in Delhi. She was around twenty nine years of age and would forget herself drenched in God's love reading the Gurbani. She taught in the school for five to six hours and stayed in that state for the rest of the day. It was difficult to find a match for a simple girl like her who was in such a state. Modern young people do not like such a simple girl absorbed in His name and reciter of Gurbani and call her insane. I told them that

there was a youth in Mandsoor of a similar temperament. He was a telephone operator and a match could be possible as Ajit Singh's mother had similar fears. Her son was now thirty two years of age and seeing his carefree temperament nobody was ready to give their daughter in marriage. Truly, it is easy to pay tribute to a saint but difficult to regard him as a match for someone.

Another very important fact of life is that we tend to worship the saints, those who are really not, and fail to understand the real ones. In life they often go unrecognized. Thus a meeting of the two was arranged in Delhi. I did the *ardas* (ਅਰਦਾਸ) and they were engaged and then married but there was a problem. The girl taught in Delhi and the boy was a telephone operator in Mandsoor. I approached Sardar Surjit Singh Barnala who was in the Central Government as the Agricultural Minister and urged him over the phone and also wrote to him asking to get the boy transferred to some part of Delhi so that the couple could stay together. He helped this happen and I thanked him for this. Since then both the souls reside in Delhi. Both of them are coloured in God's love and seeing them so makes me happy. Even now, wherever there is Gurmat Samagam they always take off from work and do seva (ਸੇਵਾ) untiringly. They are living symbols of Meditation and tireless Service.

Right from the very beginning it has so happened that someone or the other has accompanied me as a student, disciple and friend or in the form of a sevadar. Out of those who accompanied me as students, around fifteen of them are great speakers giving discourses in a beautiful manner in both India and abroad. But I am amazed to see that more than half of them turned rude. I taught them archery and they aimed their arrows on my chest. Once Shivji had granted a boon to his disciple on his request that on whosoever's head he placed his hand, would turn to ash. As Shivji needed ash everyday to apply on his body, he agreed. His disciple had his eye on his wife Parvati and he wanted to turn Shivji himself to ash. I have seen similar people in the form of Bhasmasur (ਭਸਮਾਸੁਰ) in my own life. Three amongst these turned out to be good and capable speakers. They earned both name and money. Their ego too is at its height and all the three of them have placed thorns and rocks in my path in every place and town they have visited. I taught them to use the arrow and at every place they made me their tar-

get. I often think on this, how come the outcome of a good deed is so bad. I had always treated them as my children. I always looked into their needs. I used to buy them clothes and even took care of their travelling expenses. And in return I received such behavior. One day I was reading Sheikh Saadi's *Gulistan* (ਗੁਲਿਸਤਾਂ). He writes stories with morals. In one story he writes of a man standing on the edge of a pond which is muddy and full of quicksand. Another man comes along and pushes him into the quicksand, thus trapping him there. Struggling with all his might, using his hands and feet he manages to come ashore. He calls out to the man who had pushed him to let him know before he leaves, what good deed he had done to deserve this. The story ends here. This *sufi* fakir of Iran informs a very essential fact of life. When a relation is formed based on a good deed you have done, 99% of times you do not get good results in return. Most of the time, we don't get it. The fakir rightly says *naiki kun bachcha andhakh* (ਨੇਕੀ ਕੁਨ ਬਚਾ ਅੰਦਾਖ ਭਾਵ ਭਲਾ ਕਰ ਔਰ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਫਲ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਹ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਟ ਦੇ) – Do a good deed and do not expect fruits [returns of the deed]. In short do not expect any good deeds, you will not get it. I have seen this in my life. What faithfulness could I expect from them? In fact they acted so rude: new accusations were made everyday and threats were made to stop me for ever. But Guru was always with me, otherwise till today I have not been harmed so much by my enemies as by these students. I used to write speeches and poetic lines for them on different subjects and mailed them to different towns. I wrote hundreds of line for Gurupurabs and like elder brother guided their path and kept them with me but they turned out to be my worst enemies. Having failed in their intentions in most of the places they are silent now and in fact their efforts have boomeranged. In many places they are no longer treated with respect. Some say when they were not true to their guide and teacher, how they could be sincere to anyone else. But in keeping with my nature, I continue to have students with me even today. I encourage them to walk on this path and serve the Sangat. There were a few good ones too and because of them I have not lost hope. Whatever Seva Satguru has assigned me and all that I have learnt in my life I want to pass on. For this reason even today when I go on tours in India and abroad, I always have a couple of students or companions with me. Ragi Jathas accom-

pany me too. But if I have students or beginners with me I always give them a chance to speak ten to fifteen minutes first. So that they can put into practice what they have learnt and their personal experience in public speaking improve. At some places due to restrictions of time I usually cut down on my discourse to give them a chance to speak. This gives them a nice platform to start their career. As mentioned I have had bad experiences but this has not bothered me as some of them have proven sincere to their learning and are serving the Sangat today. May Satguru keep on taking this seva from me.

Among the sevadars who accompanied me I saw some who were of evil nature. In my tours I often had to visit homes. They betrayed my trust at every occasion and would resort to stealing. I explained and gave them a chance to change their behavior but seeing no improvement politely asked them to leave. I felt they were like rotten leaves in standing water. Their stay in Gurudwaras instead of making them more sincere had in fact made them loose faith. Satsang and discourses and hymns were jokes to them. I was amazed at the bareness in their hearts. It was a new experience for me to observe that a large majority of individuals residing in Gurudwaras, planning and executing religious programs were usually devoid of devotion, cruel and non-believers at hearts. They remind me of the deeds of the Brahmins and Muslim Priests of bygone days. In many Gurudwaras today we observe the same. Based on my personal observations of sevadars I have realized that very often those who appear close to divinity are in fact far from God.

I have a very great regret and sorrow in my life that I could not comfort and give happiness to my father when he needed me. He who gave me lot of affection and worldly comforts with an open heart, was no longer around when it was my turn to take care of him. This one regret at times stays on my mind and heart. In a similar way I could not pay off the debt of my mother and give her worldly comforts because by the time I was financially independent and family life was smooth, she had left me too. I do conduct a small Samagam in their name every year in November and through *katha*, *kirtan*, *langar* and other religious means to try to pay off their debt on me. But still parents are truly great. One understands the truth of this fact only after their departure.

During my tours Sangat all over has encouraged and requested me to give my Gurbani discourses and *kathas* in a written form. Roughly upto this time I have written fourteen books and upon request am getting them translated in Hindi too. Under the guidance of the *Satguru* I will continue these contributions.

My opinion as regard to promoting religion is that we do not have a right organizational frame-work for this purpose. I have presented this in the form of a book *The Preaching Class and the Prabandhki frame-work of Gurudwara in our country and abroad*. I do not see any hope of the frame-work improving in my lifetime. The reason is that all our religious centers are run by people devoid of devotion, who are using religious means for personal and political ambitions. Those who become M.Ps., MLAs and Ministers, use religion for political moves to fulfill their own selfish and egoistical needs. The present Preachers and *Ragis* work under these leaders. Enlightened Preachers, intelligent and mature *Ragis*, spiritual discourses and other talented people today avoid working under these leaders in Gurudwaras for this reason. People who were in need of jobs and had no other options, started filling in and their position is that of a fourth class workers. They have become blind followers or mere puppets. That the world or the Sangat would be benefited by them, cannot be expected. The saints in their *Deras* (bases) except for a few are all busy proclaiming themselves Gurus. The presence of Guru Granth Sahib here is a mere appearance. They are promoting themselves as Gurus and the innocent Sangat follow them blindly. Thus I feel that the noble task of spreading the enlightened teachings and beliefs of great Guru Nanak Dev Ji has come to a standstill. This can only be possible if retired, enlightened people free from personal ambitions and responsibilities handle the management of the Gurudwaras and knowledgeable and literate and experienced preachers and *Ragis* would have been successful in spreading the word of Guru Nanak Dev Ji to the whole world. But we have failed at it even in our tiny state of Punjab.

All this is happening because all these politically motivated people are in Gurudwara positions. They do not visit Gurudwara for long periods of time but will definitely attend functions, not to see the Guru but to show themselves up. That these people will

pass on the message of Guru Nanak, we have no such expectations. The atmosphere abroad is more alarming. Though I have already expressed my thoughts in the form of a book; I still feel the need to repeat them here. I hope somebody may usher the dawn and the suggestions expressed by me in the book may change the existing situation. Right now I personally find it very depressing. Mohammedan religious heads and Mohammedan rulers spread Islam to far-off and distant countries. Where ever Mohammedan traders went they took Islam with them and multiplied in numbers. Where ever Christians went Christianity grew. Through *Bodh Bikhsus*, Mahatma *Budh* became the light of Asia. Buddhism became the biggest religion in Asia. Following them, even Hinduism is on the increase, thanks to the efforts of *sadhus*, who are spreading the knowledge of Gita and the Upanishads. Though the process is slow but the numbers are increasing. Unfortunately, where ever the Sikhs went, where ever he reached, the first thing they did was to give up their identity. Due to this reason Sikh religion has not increased in numbers, rather it is decreasing. The main reason behind this is that the *Ragis* and the Preachers are working under these politically ambitious and egoistical people and have become weak and ineffectual. Their state is similar to that of a fourth level employees. This is one reason why Sikh religion is not spreading. There is a strong desire in me and a hope that Satguru will show us the way to set off a wave of improvement.

I have completed sixty eight years of my life and now from the last four to five years my yearnings and agony for Lord has reached its peak. My interest on giving discourses has declined and is increasing for meditating on His Name. My inner prayer to my Guru before addressing the *Sangat* is always, "O Guru! Make my discourses my prayers". Let me come closer to you and the *Sangat* too. The day my mind is in the discourse I experience some bliss. On other days if my mind is not, no matter how philosophical my talks are or how much the congregation may experience a joy from it, my own heart feels empty. My longings for the Guru are increasing every day. I wonder if these waves will ever meet its shore. I wonder if my living desire will ever reach the Supreme Ocean. I wonder if this traveller will make it to his home or not. This dilemma always exists and at all times burdens my heart and mind.

I must have met around three such *Sidhs* belonging to the *Sanatam Dharam*, Hindu religion. A couple of them accompanied me for a while but when I realized that their preaching were based on *Sidhi* (performing miracles) I started avoiding them and they too left me. During this phase of my life, in 1980, I met one such elderly man in Ludhiana, who told me that he had come to talk with me on a very important matter confidentially. He wanted me to ask others to leave the room. On his insistence I closed the doors of the room but even then he let Bhai Jai Singh Darvesh who was a Ragi and used to travel with me, to stay with me. He told me to have the Treasury of Darbar Sahib transferred to Delhi. I told him though I was a member of the Dharam Prachar Committee for a few months then, this task was beyond my capability. He professed that the Treasury would be destroyed. He wanted me to have the Reference Library and most of the historic scriptures move either to Anandpur Sahib or Delhi. I told him I could not do much about it myself but would definitely talk to my senior Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji, the ex-Head Granthi. He talked about some other things too and nearly all these incidents eventually happened. And he talked about these in 1980. He told me that there would be streams of blood in Darbar Sahib and for some time it will not be under the Sikh control. Though in those days there was no clue that this could have happened. Peace and harmony prevailed. In a matter of time every thing he had mentioned, eventually happened. He had told me that I too would become a victim to all this and would undergo hardship for sometime. And true enough from 1984 till 1991, I had all kinds of charges framed against me. I would often recall the words of the old man during my court summons. He had talked about all this in my room at Kalgidhar Singh Sabha in Ludhiana where I was doing Katha at that time. He left after his talks. Afterwards I felt the urge to know more from him and started looking for him but could not find him. About ninety percent of what he had told occurred but he had talked about something more terrifying than that, which never happened. May Guru protect us and avoid it.

I met another elderly man, who resided in a village Thatha Tibba at Sant Kartar Singh Ji's place. This village is on the Kapurthala- Sultanpur Road, close to Govindwal Sahib. Another village Soojo Kalia is also nearby. Every year Sant Kartar Singh ji

organizes an annual Samagam here in the month of May and I stay there for three days respecting his wishes. Sant Kartar Singh Ji is an essence of humility and simplicity. Sant ji had taken the *seva* of many Gurudwara buildings. Some of these were Govindwal Sahib, *Babe dee ber* Sultanpur, Patna Sahib, Gurudwara Hat Sahib, and Baibai Nanakee's place. He took the *seva* of building many Gurudwaras but like others never made a *Dera* for himself. Thatha-Tiba is also under Shiromani Committee today. Thus all his life he was a living example of simplicity and sacrifice. It was here in one of the *Samagams* that I met an elderly man there. As the *Samagam* was in the month of May, it was summer and always found him sitting under the shade of a banyan tree on the terrace. I noticed that he never once came down for the *langar* nor any one took *langar* for him upstairs. It was an open terrace and he used to sit under the shade of a huge tree and my room was upstairs too. One day I gave my companion a plate of *langar* and asked him to take it for the old man as I had never seen him coming down. But he refused it saying that he was not hungry and would eat when he would feel hungry. I don't know why he chose to talk to me and brought to my knowledge some very prophetic events. He was one of the few spiritual people I had met in my life.

From then on I saw him every year and would often sit and converse with him about his life experiences and also some divinely destined incidents that he could foresee. He spoke to me about the future of our Nation. One day I was at Patna Sahib at Dhan Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji's Gurburab. Sant Kartar Singh Ji used to stay at Patna Sahib from the 7th of Poh until the month of February. He used to return after Baba Bhag Singh's anniversary which was on the 26th of Magh. I expressed my desire to accompany Kartar Singh ji to Thatha Tiba as I was experiencing an urge to go there and converse with the Baba ji there. Sant Ji informed that Baba ji had left for his heavenly abode and that he had performed his last rites before coming to Patna Sahib. I felt very sorry as there were some matters in my heart which I still wanted to discuss with him but he was gone. I realized this meeting was not in my destiny and I found solace in accepting God's Will.

I met a Sikh devotee in Jammu who told me that when he takes the *Hukamnama* from Guru Granth Sahib which he was

keeping in his home, the holy pages appeared drenched in blood. He did not know what these events foretell. It was a matter of time that it was followed by happenings at Darbar Sahib. Here at Jammu I was amazed to see a young lady and a mother of two children, who would go in deep *Samadhi* for a couple of hours at a stretch. I met a couple of such devotees at Srinagar too. Every time I met one, I would pray to God to always keep me in the company of holy souls in life. I would like to make a request to the Sangat. Whatever I speak when I address you, is based mostly on my personal experiences. I have made an effort to put forth to the Sangat experiences that Guru has bestowed me with. There is a deep desire that listeners may experience it too. But I have had my own sad and unhappy experiences of life too. There was a phase in my life for a year and half somewhere between the year 1990 to 1995 when I was heart broken and I felt that doing Katha had become merely a means of livelihood for me. I used to regret it. I had experienced what Baba Fareed Ji explains in his lines:-

ਜਾਂ ਕੁਆਰੀ ਤਾ ਚਾਉ ਵੀਵਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਮਾਮਲੇ ॥

Jaan kuaaree taan chaao veevaahee taan maamlay.

*When she was a virgin,
she was full of desire;
but when married,
then her real life begins with ups and downs.*

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਏਹੋ ਪਛੋਤਾਉ ਵਤਿ ਕੁਆਰੀ ਨ ਥੀਐ ॥

Fareedaa ayho pachhotaa-o vat ku-aaree na thee-ai

[S.G.G.S.pg.1381]

*Fareed, she has one regret,
that she cannot be a virgin again.*

Just as it is difficult for a young virgin who gets married to retrace her steps, so was it for me. I was surrounded by a feeling of sheer helplessness. I couldn't do Nitnem for days at that time, for which I greatly regret now but after a year and half or so my mental state improved. I realized that this too had to happen. That is why would Guru Arjan Dev ji explain:-

ਭਈ ਨਿਰਾਸੀ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਦਿਨ ਲਾਗੇ ॥

Bha-ee niraasee bahut din laagay.

*I have lost hope, so many days have
passed in waiting.*

ਦੇਸ ਦਿਸੰਤਰ ਮੈ ਸਗਲੇ ਝਾਗੇ ॥

Des disantar mai saglay jhaagay

[Sri.G.G.S.Pg.737]

*I have travelled through all the lands
and the countries, in search of God.*

I pray to Satguru to have mercy so that no one has to experience this state of hopelessness towards God. The reason why I have written about the weaker aspects of my life is that the readers would learn from these experiences and get moral support. To conclude, the rest of my life is very similar to the rest of any worldly life. Whatever ups and downs I have faced in my life as a *Kathakar* I have narrated and given it a written form. But here I should make one thing very clear: the first and final support of life is God. Life without Him or life without His remembrance is like Hell and is worthless. Hell is not a name of a place. Living a life without His remembrance is Hell. On the other side, Heaven is not a special designated place. To live a life of remembrance is Heaven and to experience special bliss is great comfort and Heaven. May God shower his blessings on all! I was blessed with a poetic heart and have presented some of my poetic creations in this book. These words express my feelings during my life and I want my readers to know them. To conclude, May Satguru grace all readers with His divine love so that their lives become blessed. Thanks and pardon my mistakes.

*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa
Waheguru ji ki Fateh*

Maskin ji

[60]

GLIMPSES OF HIS LIFE – I

By Giani Anoop Singh Ji [U.K.]

Giani Sant Singh Maskin Ji was born in the hilly region of the Frontier Province, now in Pakistan in a town where most of the residents were Hindus, Sikhs, ਸਹਜਧਾਰੀ (*Sahejdhari*) brothers and Arora families. He was born here at the residence of S. Kartar Singh Ji. Maskin Ji's father had three brothers. From what we have heard from our elders, S. Kartar Singh Ji accepted Sikhism in the company of saints. This region was blessed with two holy souls whose presence brought to it a spiritual fervour and godly bliss. They were Sant Bhagat Singh Ji, a resident of Banu, who was a complete saint and was without sight and Sant Bhagat Jodha Ram Singh Ji. They both were considered the pillars of righteousness in the region. They felt that residing Gursikh families should become Singhs and recite Gurbani and *Nitnem* (ਨਿਤਨੇਮ). Sant Bhagat Jodha Ram Singh Ji was the son of S. Kartar Singh Ji's maternal aunt. They were related as their mothers were real sisters. They were completely immersed in Gurbani and at all times recited Sukhmani Sahib Paath. S. Kartar Singh was born in this family and grew up to be a *puran* (ਪੁਰਨ) Gursikh. He also served at the Gurudwara. The name of the village was Purawal.

From his very childhood, Maskin ji had a deep love for Gurbani as his father had become a Sikh at his birth. Maskin ji had a sister called Sujan Kaur. According to my father "S. Atma Singh" Ji, Maskin Ji's love for spiritual discourses is because of his previous ties. Our elders said that Sardar Kartar Singh did not have any issue and Sant Singh Maskin Ji was born after many prayers and pleadings. In those days, a holy soul drenched in the love of God used to do katha in that region. He was a very enlightened *sāhejdhāri*, Babā Tharu. They say that he was reborn as Maskin ji. I am passing on to you what I have heard from my elders. He

was a man who worked for his livelihood and had a disposition for discourses. In those days Gurbani education was imparted in Dharamsalas (Gurudwaras). Here Bhai Peda Singh taught the children *Paath*. He was particular about *Sodar Paath* (ਸੋਦਰ ਪਾਠ) in the evening. He would seat the children for the *Paath* and Maskin Ji would recite it in a very melodious voice. *Bani* had made home in his heart from the very beginning.

He was about twelve years old when he reached Kurukshethar in India for the first time at the time of the Partition (1947). Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made two divisions of the refugees that came from Pakistan. Some went to Faridabad and some to Alwar. Maskin Ji's family reached the village of Bahadurpur (District Alwar, Rajasthan). His father was a worker but did some farming too. Maskin Ji had some education. At the age of eighteen he had a very unworldly disposition and had to work because of the poor living condition of his family. He helped his father in his work. His only sister was married. He got the training of a driver in the Railways. He left the job in two months without informing anyone due to his reserved nature and lack of interest in world and he went to Bombay. Here he visited the Gurudwara at Kohlivada in the evenings. The Granthi of the Gurudwara Bhai Ram Singh Ji used to do katha from Suraj Prakash and Maskin Ji used to recite the *Bani* from the *Guru granth Sahib*. He went to the Sindhi Gurudwara in Bombay and recited *Sukhmani Sahib* there in the mornings. Then he used to leave for work. Here he came in contact with Baba Balwant Singh Ji of the 'Nirmalai Panth', who was a learned scholar well educated in Gurbani grammar. He explained the meanings of Gurbani in such a manner that it made home in the heart of the listeners. Maskin Ji accompanied him to Sambalpur in Orissa, where the Hirakund Dam was under construction. He was the Head Priest of the Gurudwara Sahib there and also served holy men with deep devotion. From his childhood he had this inclination to invite saints, he came across for meals. In Baba Ji's company he studied many Holy Scriptures and also gave discourses.

He was well versed with Krishana Avatar and Rama Avatar from the Dasam Granth and many times used to discourse at the Hindu temple in Sambalpur. Many Sikh residents objected to this, why he goes to the temple when he is the Head Priest of a

Gurudwara. For him both the places were abode of God and he used to discourse in a state of *vairag* reciting the lines. Due to the resentment of some of the resident Sikhs of the area, Maskin ji resigned from the post of the *Granthi*. When he was at Sambalpur, his father had left for his heavenly abode. From there he first went to Jhansi and gave talks there but the Sikh Sangat was yet to be aware of his knowledge. Then he went to Lalitpur, Gwalior and some other places.

After this he was married to Bibi Sundar Kaur Ji, (who belonged to a family who were residents from Banu) at Kingsway Camp in Delhi. His family thought that marriage would bring a change in him and he will stop going out of town. His close friends were Bhai Gurdas Singh and a Sahejdhari brother Bihari Lal. From here he left for Patna Sahib to do Katha and contacting the committee members managed to get some time to speak. Maskin Ji himself mentioned the fact that he had recited a *shabad* here and was accompanied on the stage by Gurbachan Singh Ji, a companion of *Hazuri Ragi* S. Joginder Singh Ji. The next day he was given ten minutes to discourse. From there he reached Indore. As his manner of explaining was different from that of the olden days, it had a great impact on all.

From here he reached Bhai Mohan Ji's Gurudwara at Kanpur. Here he spoke at the place where Baba Sundar Singh Ji of Alibaigh resided. It was here that Maskin Ji met Akali Gurbachan Singh Ji. For some reasons he had to construct a Dharamsala there. Maskin ji used to discourse here every year for a month. From here he reached Bombay and at Baba Joga Singh Ji's Gurudwara and met Bhai Jaimal Singh Ji. He was a knowledgeable man and had served as a *Granthi* at Baba Joga Singh Ji's Gurudwara in Pakistan. He was a great devotee. It is here that Maskin ji studied Gurbani and also got to listen to the renowned *kirtaniya* Bhai Surjan Singh and Sant Sujan Singh Ji. The Sindhi ladies recognized him now because Maskin Ji had stayed there earlier.

His discourses in Kohlivada, Khar, Dadar, Bandra and Ulhasnagar in Bombay had a great impact on the Sangat. From here he reached Sis Ganj Gurudwara in Delhi in 1969-70. In those days, Giani Gurdeep Singh was the *Granthi* and Jathedhar Santhok Singh served as the secretary of the committee. He was greatly

impressed by Maskin Ji. Just as Bhai Jaimal Singh Ji from Bombay had taken a promise from Maskin ji to attend the *prakash utsav* of Guru Nanak Dev ji, in a similar manner Jathedhar Santhok Singh Ji took a promise from him to visit Delhi on the martyrdom Gurupurab of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and has been keeping the promise till date. From the year 1961-62 he continued to make a profound impact on the Sangat through his discourses and from then on Bhai Sahib Inder Singh ji Gujranwale, Bhai Sahib Dharam Singh ji Zakhmi and other groups started to accompany him on his tours. In this manner Maskin Ji met Bhai Sahib Bhai Jai Singh Ji, an enlightened soul in Kanpur and Bhai Sahib Kalyan Singh Ji and Bhai Sahib Amar Singh Ji, a renowned *kirtaniye*. I remember in 1968 when we reached Jamuna Nagar at the Dera of Sant Jabbi-wale. I accompanied Bhai Sahib Harbans Singh Ji 'Hira' on harmonium. There Bhai Sahib told me that let me introduce you to a brother. When we all sat for *langar* together, he told me that he (Maskin ji) is your respected brother. We kept looking at each other. Later we went to Jammu and Kashmir, where the Gurupurab of Shri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji used to be celebrated. We went to Baramulla and other places. We also went and discoursed at the Gurudwara, close to Raghunath Mandir in Jammu. I was with him from 1968 onwards. I remember in Bombay, at the marriage of the daughter of Bhai Jaimal Singh Ji, many people came. Amongst them was the renowned personality Giani Chet Singh Ji. Nice arrangements had been made for everybody's stay. But Maskin Ji insisted that as always, he would stay in the Gurudwara. Giani Chet Singh was very impressed when he heard this. There whenever there was a discourse, I read the *Hukamnama* and Maskin Ji explained it. Here Singh Sahib Ji asked Maskin Ji if he has been to Amritsar (Darbar sahib). Maskin Ji naturally addressed him as father and replied that he had a chance to go there on his way to Jammu and Kashmir. Singh Sahib Ji invited him to Sri Darbar Sahib and set up a programme for his discourses there. Thus from 1971 onwards a programme was made for discourses at Manji Sahib in Darbar Sahib where Bhai Gurdas Ji used to address the Sangat. The hall was very small in comparison to the size of the Sangat. In those days Singh Sahib Sadhu Singh Ji Bhoura was the *Jathedar* of Shri Akal Takht Sahib and Tohra Sahib was the President of Shiromani Com-

mittee. Everybody was impressed and Abinashi Singh who was secretary to Tohra Sahib was called. Everybody took a promise from Maskin Ji to visit Shri Darbar Sahib on its *Prakash Utsav* (birth celebration of Sri Guru Ram Dass Ji). The space at Manji Sahib was not enough for the Sangat. To solve the problem Baba Bishen Singh Ji and Baba Kartar Singh Ji of Thatta-Tibba started the *Seva* and to cover the expenses a pot for donating money was placed. Huge wealth flowed in as donations and the *Seva* of Manji Sahib was thus completed.

I remember the pandits of Oankareshwar had old records of who visited the temple and when. In brief they even had old records of Guru Nanak Sahib's visit there. When Onkar Gurudwara was constructed the *seva* was taken first by Baba Amar Singh Ji and later by Baba Mathura Singh Ji. Even today on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd April a huge *diwan* is set up every year and the Sangat of Indore is in possession of the Gurudwara. Maskin Ji did not put his name anywhere.

During his initial days Maskin Ji came in contact with Bhai Inder Singh Ji Gujranwale, Bhai Dharam Singh Ji Zakhmi, Bhai Chatar Singh Ji, Bhai Gopal Singh Ji and Gaini Dalip Singh Ji Dardi from Jalandhar. Maskin Ji used to spend in his home at Alwar 25 to 30 days in a year, these included marriage functions of the family.

Maskin Ji used to drive his Ambassador car himself and everybody used to call it "Panthak Gaddi" (ਪੰਥਕ ਗੱਡੀ). Once we went to Shri Darbar Sahib in it and the secretary S. Mahendra Singh Ji was amazed to see 13 passengers including children come down from the car. What I mean to say is that Maskin Ji took utmost care of the *kirtanias*. He not only thought of their transportation but drove the car himself. Usually they returned late around 11 or 12:00 at night as the programme was followed by *langar* at a sangat's place but he would wake everybody up at 4:00 AM in the morning. He treated everybody as equal and cared a lot for his companions. He never treated them as his juniors or servants. Once he made tea and offered me too and I laughed and asked him that he had made for me too. To this he replied if I don't make tea for you how I was going to walk straight.

3. We used to go to the Dera of saints in Jamuna Nagar frequently : sometimes at Sant Jabbi-wale or at Sant Pandit Nehchal

Singh's Dera. At one time quite a number of saints started a discussion that Maskin Ji did not hold the Saints in high esteem and in his talks often spoke in excess about them. The group brought this matter to Sant Pandit Nehchal Singh Ji. His reply to them was one who loves the truth will always speak so, as truth is dear to him. Those who are not real saints are bound to feel bad about it but the real Saints rejoice on this. Sant Pandit Nehchal Singh Ji invited Maskin Ji to visit him. I was also with him. Sant Ji had become quite weak physically and at that time Bhai Jai Dayal Singh Ji used to do *seva* with him. He offered Maskin Ji the *seva* and charge of his Dera. Before him the *seva* was given to Sant Garib Singh Ji who was unable to do it. Maskin Ji replied that I am happy that you gave me love and respect me but he said "a lion eats his own prey". I heard this and my eyes were tearful and I thought "lions do not eat the dead". The man who lives on his earnings is a lion. Maskin Ji refused the offer. It was a huge Dera with hospital and college. A common man like me would have grabbed the offer and sat in the Dera. Sant Pandit Nehchal Singh Ji knew that Maskin Ji was a learned man of high order and under him the Dera would be in good care.

4. Maskin Ji used to frequently visit Harmander Sahib. At that time the Jathedar Bhaura Sahib of Akal Takhat Sahib was nearing retirement and the president of the Shrimoni Committee, Tohra Sahib and other chief officials wanted to offer Maskin Ji the *seva* of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib. He told Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji to request Maskin Ji to accept the *seva*. Initially, Maskin Ji hesitated because it was a matter of great joy to be offered the *seva* of a place of such high acclaim of Shri Guru Ram Dass Ji. It was not easy, but after thinking over it, he refused it saying that he will increase his visits and discourses at Darbar Sahib but cannot accept the *seva* of the *Head Granthi*. He spoke not from pride or ego but in all humility. He expressed that he did not consider himself worthy of it. Whatever *seva* he was doing with Satguru's blessing, was fine. He was so learned and humble. There was another aspect to this. The *Head Granthi* is very well respected job but the Shiromani Committee on some occasions thinks that the *Head Granthi* is nominated or appointed by us and thus works under us. It did not seem right to Maskin Ji

that they consider the *Head Granthi* as subordinate. He once expressed that water if kept in one place starts to stink. It should flow or it gets dirty.

Whereas Maskin Ji studied Gurbani and Gurmat, he also studied Urdu, Persian, and thoughts related to Gurmat like those of Sheikh Saadi, Sammash Tabrej, Dr. Iqbal and thoughts of other poets like Bahadur Shah Jaffar and other Sufi saints and often quoted them in his talks. Like Guru Nanak he used many regional languages besides Punjabi to convey his thoughts. Maskin Ji often expressed that the religion of Guru Nanak is a very broad one and his thoughts are clear. That is the reason that he could express his thoughts freely and without any restrictions.

5. Maskin Ji's first tour abroad was to Singapore. Then he came in contact with the Sangat in Malaysia. Later in 1970, he visited Kuwait and the Middle East countries. There were no Gurudwaras in Kuwait as the Government there does not allow any public place of worship besides the Mosque. For this reason the programmes were always in the private homes of the Sangat. After this visit Maskin Ji's tours to Iran and Kabul started. In Iran he met all-in-all Singh, the organizer Bhai Makhhan Singh Ji, who was the *Head Granthi* of the Gurudwara there. He was very much impressed by Maskin Ji and asked him to write and explain the works of Bhai Nand Lal Ji which were in Persian. This was because Maskin Ji often quoted Bhai Nand Lal Ji in his talks. People in that region were familiar with the language. Master Nihal Singh from Delhi, who accompanied Maskin Ji in this tour, was of a great help in this task. Thus Maskin Ji always had close ties with the Sangat in Iran. Later, when he visited Kabul, I too had an opportunity to accompany him. At that time the Jathedhar of Akal Takhat Bhoura Sahib, Singh Sahib Gaini Chet Singh Ji, *Head Granthi* of Darbar Sahib went with him too. There they did *Amrit Sanchar* and took some locals with them to villages in and around Kabul and Jalalabad. The local residents of Kabul were devotees of the Guru. It is said that if one wants to experience the Gurusikhi hospitality and love, they have to visit the Sikh Sangat of Kabul once. I have researched and found that the mention of Sikh Sangat of Kabul in history comes from the time of Guru Arjun Sahib. Bhai Gurdas Ji had also gone there. There is a Gurudwara of Baba Sri Chand Ji

and one of Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji. I visited these. All those residing there, are true and complete Gurusikhs. I also observed that most of the Sikh Sangat who followed Gursikhi in real spirit belonged to the Arora families. According to the tradition there, their names were followed by Khurana, Chug, Chawla or Narula. All of them were spread out in Frontier, Banu, Sargodha and other places. These Gursikhs who were very devoted and loving, were found in large numbers in Pakistan (before partition), Dehra Ismaeel Khan, Banu upto Peshawar.

6. Maskin Ji later made a long tour to New York in America. On his return he reached England for the first time on 27th July 1977. I was there at that time, as Maskin Ji had sent me from Kabul to Iran and from Iran to England. Usually *Dhaadi* Groups frequently visited here as majority of the Sikhs were people who came to England from the villages of Punjab. Thus for this reason, the Gurudwara usually had *Dhaadi* performances.

Kirtan and Katha were not so much a part of the Gurudwara programme there. When Maskin Ji went there, he met Giani Gian Singh Ji "Surjit" whom he knew from the days of Alwar Samagan in 1961. He sat down with Maskin Ji and planned his programme. His first discourse was in East-Ham Gurudwara and later in Southall Gurudwara, where Giani Gurdeep Singh Ji from Sis Ganj Gurudwara in Delhi had spoken before him. In this way he discoursed in about four Gurudwaras and returned to India. Around this time a new wave had started there and discourses were growing popular. The Sikh Sangat now were aware that a very learned man and an excellent Gurmukh orator was in their nation. This fact was of a great help in his next tour to England. Bhai Chatar Singh ji and Bhai Kalyan Singh Ji, the *kirtaniyes* of the Gurus also reached there. During this time I received a call from a man, who said that he had bought Maskin Ji's tapes on his trip to Amritsar and that he had experienced a great transformation in himself listening to them. Before I used to cut my hair and drink too, but listening to his talks my life has changed. He was not the only one, the lives of many changed hearing Maskin Ji's talk. I reached U.K. in 1976 when *Dhaadi* tradition was still popular there and *Amrit Prachar* was unknown. Sangat who were in contact with Sant Baba Puran Singh ji, had come from Kenya and had taken Amrit before. When Maskin

Ji started his visits, for the first time *Amrit Sanchar* was done on a huge scale. His tours to U.K. continued. Afterwards, Maskin Ji started touring America. Here he went to New York, Los Angeles, New Jersey and later to Toronto in Canada. A *Granthi* who earlier had done kirtan with Maskin Ji, invited him to Vancouver. In this way Maskin Ji reached Vancouver and met an old friend of ours, Bhai Balwinder Singh, who used to reside in Delhi when Maskin Ji used to discourse at Sis Ganj Gurudwara in Delhi. Once a week, Giani Balwinder Singh Ji used to make it a point to invite him over to Red Fort for tea or langar seva. He worked for the Army and was posted at Red Fort at that time. Later, by God's grace he moved to Canada. He got busy in the Seva of the Gurudwara there. When he met Maskin Ji again at Toronto, and decided to be with him always because they shared deep ties that dated back to their days at Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib.

Listening to Maskin Ji speak, Giani Balwinder Singh Ji started feeling the urge to discourse too. It is very fortunate that he was also a writer. He is also writing Maskin Ji's books. Earlier, Maskin Ji used to request me to start writing but I was hesitant. Sangat also wanted to avail Maskin Ji's knowledge through his writings. Maskin Ji during his stay in Baramulla (Kashmir), used to find time to write his thoughts. His first work was a book named Guru Chintan (ਗੁਰੂ ਚਿੰਤਨ). Prior to this, Dr. Anokh Singh Ji had published a written form of some of his discourses he had taped in Singapore under the title "Lectures of Maskin Ji". Maskin Ji spent most of his time in discoursing and never got time to write. By God's grace he had got a companion Giani Balwinder Singh Ji who became a great help in his writings.

In the editing his initial books, Maskin Ji got a lot of help from some gentleman in Amritsar. So far, fourteen of his books have been published and as of today (03-03-2003), another book named Rehas Ramaj (ਰਹਿਸ ਰਮਜ) is being released. For your information Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin had not long ago written a book that symbolized truth (Sach di Prateek). The name of the book was "The Gurudwara's Organizational committee and the Preaching class in India and abroad." Usually, it is a fact that preachers are hesitant to write candidly against the organizers or Prabandaks but Maskin Ji in his book spared none. He personally had 50,000 copies

made of it to distribute at no cost. The Sangat of Kabul also had 10,000 copies published and distributed. Another gentleman, a resident of Manchester in U.K. named "Sahni ji" who knew Maskin Ji from Kuwait also had 10,000 books printed and distributed.

In 1978, he had a meeting with the Pope of England on this. They discussed about the difference in Preaching in Church and the Sikh way of preaching. Views and thoughts on it were exchanged. I knew the priest of that place very well. We told him that the Management of the Gurudwara and in fact even that of Golden Temple, Harmander Sahib, was under the hold of political powers. The Pope told us that the Church was under the control of the traders in the beginning, then it went in the hands of the political leaders but now it is in the hands of Religious people. The nomination or election of a Pope is primarily based on his capabilities. Though the Mayor and the elected politicians are also present in the gathering along with the local residents, they have no say in this matter. The Pope we choose, is same for all. In this way religious people make a decision as Religion can be propagated by religious people only. The Head Priest of Canterbury felt that things change with time. Keeping these talks in mind Maskin Ji has conveyed a message to the Sikh Sangat through this book. God, himself will help in this means of change.

Maskin Ji started going to Singapore. Many people believed that we should also have miracles in Sikh religion. Baba Harnam Singh ji of "Kilai-wale" was also visiting the country. A youth had died. He asked the Sangat not to cremate his body and that he would bring him alive in a matter of few days. Maskin Ji spoke against it arguing that giving and taking away life is in God's hand. Such talks of miracles are not beneficial to anyone. The aim should be to bring the public closer to God through *Simran*. Many said that Maskin Ji was against the saints. The truth was that Maskin Ji was very candid in his talks. His life was a clean slate. He also went to Dubai, Thailand, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Australia. There is a great soul, Giani Mohan Singh Ji living here who keeps reminding Maskin Ji to take out time for these countries.

Giani Anup Singh ji

[70]

GLIMPSES OF HIS LIFE-II

As narrated by the great poet Jai Singh Ji Shugal
[Resident of Kanpur]

Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji ki Fateh

These are the talks of a great man, who was in unison with the Guru in his love, devotion and single minded in his faith. He was one with Him and had come to unite everyone with one God to spread the message and belief of the One. For this purpose he stayed away from his home and family for months in the country and abroad spreading the message of God in all his tours. He sprinkled the nectar of Naam, wherever he went.

Yes, once in a while he came home to his children, like a visitor arriving in the morning and leaving the same day. Occasionally, if he had time he would spend a couple of nights at home as a guest. Today, I feel a little hesitant to talk about this great man.

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੇ ਕਿਨੇਹਿਆ ॥

Jinaa na visurai Naam se kinaehaiaa

What are they like - those who do not forget the Naam, the Name of the Lord?

ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਮੂਲਿ ਸਾਂਈ ਜੋਹਿਆ ॥੧॥

(ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ ਅੰਗ ੩੯੭)

Bhaedh n jaanuhu mool saanee jaehiaa

[S.G.G.S.Page397]

*Know that there is the Lord.
absolutely no difference; they are exactly like*

Maskin Ji had immense faith in God, which he was blessed with

and is the main cause for his greatness. No wonder the sole purpose of his life was to make efforts and bring everyone closer to God. A renowned *kathakar*, Khem Singh Ji, who was blind from birth, was visiting Kanpur. He would listen to the ਸਬਦ *Shabad* from Guru Granth Sahib ji and explained the meaning the next day. He was thus addressing the congregation in Kanpur for about two months.

It was the morning of March 3rd 1957. He was to discourse on the ਸੰਗਰਾਮ *Sangrand* (first day) of the month of ਚੈਤ *Chet*. This was to be his last address at Kanpur. I was seated next to him to read out my poem. All of a sudden, Bhai Dhyani Singh Ji, who was serving at the place of Baba Mohan Singh Ji, announced that a great personality has come to meet you, and I saw Maskin Ji walk into the room. As Khem Singh Ji could not see. I welcomed him. But when Khem Singh Ji heard Maskin Ji's voice, he got up in such a hurry and excitement that his foot almost slipped. He was about to fall in the process of getting up from his bed when Maskin Ji came forward to support him and seated him back on the bed. Maskin Ji asked him to be careful as he was there to meet him. At this point a sevadar came in to tell him his room was ready and so were some tea and refreshments. When Maskin Ji left the room, I asked Giani Khem Singh Ji about him. He told me it was not possible on his part to speak about this man and added that he had seen many *Kathakars* but he was a practical man of words and actions.

Commonly it is seen that people can speak well but their actions are opposite. Though I can speak well but he is the one who lives it in his deeds. I asked him how he knew Maskin Ji, to which he narrated that quite some time back when he was visiting Lucknow Singh Sabha for the first time, after putting away his belongings he wanted to use the bathroom. The courtyard was very big and there were some drains in it. He did not know any one there and was trying to figure out his way by trying to take some steps with his stick in one way and a few on the other, wondering how he would make it and relieve himself. It was very uncomfortable when all of a sudden someone came and holding his hand inquired where he wanted to go. Giani Khem Singh Ji said that I narrated my dilemma to him. He took me to the bathroom and first filled up the bucket with water and cleaned the area and then in-

vited me to use it. His room was close to the bathroom and when I came back he seated me in his room and brought my belongings there too. Then from a small tin of his he took out all ingredients needed for tea. His tin was in a way his world. There were two bottles of kerosene oil, a small stove, a small saucepan, a packet of tea leaves, a jar of sugar, a jar of milk and four cups. These were his belongings. He made tea, served me and had some himself. He accommodated me in his room. He would wake up at 3:00 A.M. in the morning and bathed. He helped me with washing up and brought me back to the room and served tea. I came to know, that he was the great man who would address the congregation in the morning. His name is Giani Sant Singh ji Maskin. I had heard about him but never met him before. I could not see but have experienced him in deed. I was overwhelmed by all this. Who would have helped me so in this new place and personally assist me in washing up.

Giani Khem Singh Ji narrated that in the morning when he went in the presence of the Sangat, Maskin Ji respectfully addressed him and invited him to do katha. The Sangat wanted to hear him as I was new to the place and was there for the first time. The Sangat had shown up in large number and from the noises it seemed that the hall was packed with people and some were even sitting outside. I experienced his large heartedness. When he started his talk, paused when he was half way and invited me to the stage to do katha. He is that great man. That's the reason I was so excited to hear his voice that I missed my step on the floor. When Maskin Ji returned he asked Maskin Ji to do katha to which Maskin Ji replied that tomorrow is your concluding day, you do katha and I will listen. Maskin Ji insisted on this again and left. I was extremely surprised; to find out that Giani Khem Singh Ji left at 11'0 clock the same night leaving a message with the watchman that he would not speak in the presence of such a great man. He asked forgiveness from Baba ji for this. It was like someone leaving behind his harvest as he never got money from the committee.

For the next two months, the morning katha was to be done by this learned young man. When I arrived in the morning I was surprised to see the same Giani, the same youth wearing a long *sherwani*. He had a little beard and his head was covered with a black turban. In his appearance he appeared an ordinary but

hearing him speak from the stage, he seemed a very learned man of qualities. I was surprised as today was his to bid Giani Khem Singh Ji farewell. When I heard him speak I felt bliss fill my body and soul. I had heard great kathakar's speak: Giani Ranjit Singh Ji Paras, Principal Bhagat Singh Ji Heera, Giani Bhag Singh Ji, Giani Mann Singh Ji Jhour, Sant Baba Balwant Singh ji Nirmalai. I had heard all these renowned speakers but how was I to know that this young man had a style and mannerism of speaking that was unique and that his devotion to God was so different from the world. Later after the programme, I heard about Giani Khem Singh Ji leaving a day earlier in his honour and Maskin ji stayed in Kanpur at that time. The proof of his devotion also laid in the fact that while the rest of the worldly *kathakars* usually want to know in advance how much they will be offered in terms of money for their discourse, but this great soul left all the offerings on the stage itself and never picked it. The sevadar would pick it up and give it to him in his room. After a few days, Baba ji requested Giani Ji to do an *ardas* for the money offered. I remember Giani Ji's reply to this. He said, "Oh learned man have we ever thanked God for our life-giving breaths or have we thanked him for this precious life? We need to thank him for all this too. This is the reason I do not do *ardas* for the offerings." To this Baba ji questioned what kind of *kathakar* are you. *Kathakars* come and ask us money and look forward to the offerings and you leave it away. Maskin Ji did not give a reply to this. His first shabad was:-

ਦੁਇ ਦੀਵੇ ਚਉਦਹ ਹਟਨਾਲੇ ॥

Duay deevay chaodah hatnaalay.

*The two lamps(Sun and Moon)
light the fourteen markets of universe.*

ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਤੇ ਵਣਜਾਰੇ ॥

Jaytey jee taytay vanjaaray

There are just as many traders as there are living beings.

ਖੁਲੇ ਹਟ ਹੋਆ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ ॥

Khulhay hat ho-aa vaapaar

The shops are open, and trading is going on;

ਜੋ ਪਹੁੰਚੈ ਸੋ ਚਲਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

(ਸ੍ਰੀ.ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸਾ ਅੰਕ ੭੮੯)

Jo pahunchai so chalanhaar

[S.G.G.S.Page789]

Whoever arrives they are bound to depart.

The katha of the above shabad continued for about twenty-seven days. With shops open trade flourish. What is *Kaljug*? Who is Guru? What is the purpose of life? The Sangat was spell-bound. The doors of the Gurudwara used to close at 7 O'clock. The galleries of the Gurudwara, which were quite spacious, used to be filled with Sangat. Even though the doors of the Gurudwara closed at 7:00 O'clock, people used to pay their respect, sit cross legged and listen to the katha from outside. We at Kanpur had never seen a Sangat of this size or devotion like this. After about two months, when it was time for Maskin Ji to leave, my mind started bothering me. How was I to survive without him as I had got so attached? Let me also tell you one way in which he was different from others. Every morning at four O'clock, he would arrive at my door and ask me to accompany him along with my harmonium.

In Kanpur we had a Moti Jheel (lake) for a walk, whose gates opened at 5 O'clock in the morning. We used to cross over a wall to get into the garden and Maskin ji would sit and do kirtan very melodiously. Malkounce and Darbari were his favorite *Raags*.

ਨਹੀ ਛੋਡਉ ਰੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ॥

nahee chhodoo rae baabaa raam naam

O Sir, I will not forsake the Name of the Lord.

ਮੇਰੇ ਅਉਰ ਪੜਨ ਸਿਉ ਨਹੀ ਕਾਮੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

(ਸ੍ਰੀ.ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸਾ. ਅੰਕ ੧੧੯੪)

Mayro a-or parhhan si-o nahee kaam

[S.G.G.S.page 1194]

I have no concern with any other study.

He would recite this shabad daily, and his manner of singing was great. He would thus do kirtan for an hour, drop me home and return to his room. I had never seen a *Kathakar* living such an exemplary life: to do Kirtan at four in the morning before he did katha. I asked him how he managed to make a living. His answer was, "Waheguru never lets poverty exist; he manages to flow away the scarcity".

3. I have been with him from 1957 until now. I have seen the large heartedness he had for the needy. For needy, he gave up the clothes on his body. If anybody asked for money, he would give whatever he had in his pockets. If someone needed shoes, he would buy it for them. If there was a need for clothes, he would personally go to buy the cloth and got it stitched for them. If someone was hungry, he would take him to a hotel and feed him. He was a pious saint and a devoted soul. Only the very rare are blessed with such virtues. What I saw in him in my lifetime on different occasions related to reverend Maskin Ji, I expressed this to my respectable friend Giani Balwinder Singh of Vancouver in Canada. I mentioned him that I wanted to write something on Maskin Ji's life but I cannot see.

I wanted to give all the incidents related with Giani Sant Singh Maskin Ji's life a written form. I met a sadhu named Baba Lachhman Singh at the time when Maskin Ji visited Kanpur for the first time. This sadhu had travelled with sadhu Sant Attar Singh Ji Maharaj, stayed with Baba Nand Singh Ji, lived with Baba Sundar Singh Ji of Alibegh for years, also travelled with Baba Bishen Singh Ji Mauralewale. He had also stayed with Brahm Giani Baba Jawala Singh Ji of Harkhowall and travelled with sant Gurbachan Singh ji Bhindrawale from village to village. He seemed to be quite astonishing saint. This sadhu came to Kanpur. He was in his middle age at this time. We all were invited to somebody's house for *langar*. Maskin Ji's nature was to eat less, he took two *chapattis*. Maskin Ji finished his food but Baba Lachhman Singh was still sitting. It was their first meeting. Maskin Ji wanted to do *ardas* but Baba ji frankly told Maskin Ji that "a moment of unashamedness and a day long rest". If you have taken meals, you may leave. My stomach is not filled and I will eat more. These words in their first meeting brought Maskin Ji closer to him. He had met such a carefree Baba

for the first time. Maskin ji sat down again and asked him to take his time to finish. He did *ardas* after Baba ji had finished.

4. Maskin Ji wanted to name his child. He had got so attached to me that he invited me with my *jatha* (group) to come over and name him. He also invited Baba ji. He said he would come but he would take a *looe* (big shawl) in return. He used to address Maskin Ji as "tu" (you). Maskin Ji told him everything belongs to you. So it was finalized.

We were all sitting in the courtyard, when Maskin Ji's sister, very devoted Bibi Sujan Kaur who addressed her dear brother as Sant Singh came in quickly. She said there was a Baba ji outside who seems to be a great saint. When Maskin Ji went to check, it was Baba Lachhman Singh ji standing there. Maskin Ji welcomed him. Baba ji who hailed from Fiazabad (U.P.) spoke in Hindi "give me my *shawl*". Maskin Ji replied I will present it to you in the morning as "*Siropa*". To this he replied I am going back as you are not true to your words. Maskin Ji brought out a very expensive *shawl* which he had got from the Sangat of Kanpur four days ago and placed it around Baba Ji's shoulders. Babaj i stepped in hailing aloud. He invited Baba ji to come to the *diwan* (ਦੀਵਾਨ) the next morning wearing the *Looe*. He brought it once and then resumed wearing his old *Looe*. When Maskin Ji inquired about the *Looe* he answered why are you worried?

In the evening when we were going to the Company Bagh, we saw a rickshaw-puller wearing the same *Looe*. Maskin Ji stopped him and asked from where he got the *Looe*. He said yesterday a Baba ji sat on my rickshaw, seeing me shivering with cold he took out his *Looe* and wrapped it around me. May God bless this great soul: what great saints the Sikhs have, who give up their own coverings to the needy? Maskin Ji heard this and his eyes welled up with tears. This Baba ji addressed Maskin Ji as "tu" and whenever he met Maskin Ji he would ask for 100 rupees and Maskin Ji used to hand him ten instead. To this he asked Maskin Ji if he was starving, then Maskin Ji would give him 100 rupees. At that time 100 rupees had a great value. On receiving it Baba ji would hail aloud and leave. By nature he was a Baba ji loved to take and enjoyed hundred times more in giving others. He asked Maskin Ji to give money to everyone who was sitting there. He gave money

to all *Raagis* and *kathakars* present. Whenever he was in his mood, he would give handful of rupees from his bag. Maskin Ji knew the value of these saints. Who can honour those who love God? What kind of hearts these saints have?

Last year, after completing hundred and twenty-five years of life, Babaji left for heavenly abode. Later, his condition had become such that he had to be admitted in the Leprosy Hospital of Mother Teresa, in 2001. When Maskin Ji found that Baba ji was admitted in a leprosy hospital 125 miles from Lucknow, he went to meet him. Baba ji inquired if Shugal had come too. Maskin Ji asked if Baba ji needed anything. He said get me a Limca. Maskin Ji sent his car to the market but couldn't get Limca. He got another brand which Baba ji refused. When Maskin Ji was about to leave he asked if he could do anything else for him. He said you are to perform my last rites. As per his wishes, Maskin Ji conducted *Akhand Paath* (ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ). All the *Paathi* (ਪਾਠੀ) Singhs were given a lot of money and clothes. The expense of the langar of two to three thousand Sangat was incurred by Maskin Ji himself. Only a saint can know a saint. Maskin Ji was a saint too.

ਹੈਨਿ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਨਾਹੀ ਘਣੇ.....॥੧੨॥
(ਸ੍ਰੀ.ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸਾ. ਅੰਕ ੧੪੧੧)

Hain viralay naahee ghanay

[S.G.G.S.page 1410]

The Saints are few and far between; everything else in the world is just a pompous show. ||12||

Though Maskin Ji is a family man, I still remember his words in this context. He said that I and all the ten Guru Sahibs had family life. Except for Guru Harkishan ji, who left for heavenly abode in his childhood, rest all the Gurus were family men. Though I definitely am married and have family yet I am not entangled in family ties. Only a saint can utter such words.

I remember once while travelling with him we met a man who was asking money for two rotis (bread). Maskin Ji gave him four annas (coins) for it. At that time the cost of a *roti* was one anna. That man brought two rotis from Naanbai and returned rest

of the amount of two annas to Maskin Ji. Maskin Ji told him to keep the money for tomorrow. To this the fakir retorted will God die tomorrow. The One who has sent you today will also send someone tomorrow. Either take your two annas or keep the rotis too. Maskin Ji laughed at this and sought his forgiveness. He told him that you have solved me an important problem of life that I had failed to understand earlier.

He loved everyone and was loved by everyone. He saw God in all. He was a saint, a family man and a great seer. I was hoping to find someone whom I could dictate the incidents in his life and who would give it a written form.

6. I remember once when we had gone to Model Town in Karnal on the occasion of *Poh sudi satvi*/ਪੋਹ ਸੁਦੀ ਸਤਵੀ (Guru Gobind Singh's parkash utsav) I could recite *shabads*. They bade us a very emotional farewell and placed some money in Maskin Ji's pocket. At that time the trend of offering money in envelopes was not yet prevalent. The cost of the ticket from Karnal to Delhi was one rupee and thirty paise. They put five-rupees in my pocket too. At the bus station Maskin Ji took out the money and asked me to get two tickets. When Maskin Ji took his money out it was twenty-one rupees. I told him that was a lot of money. He lowered his head and said "O God! I was not worthy of this". I did not deserve this; you have sent this immense wealth and blessed me so. This showed how content in life he was.

Three years ago, we received an invitation from Karnal after twenty-nine years. The Gurudwara has an income of over One lakh rupees a month from the shops it rents. They kept Maskin Ji for three days for katha. They gave two hundred one rupees to Bhai Kalyan Singh Ji and three hundred to Maskin Ji. Maskin Ji used to add more from his pocket and distribute it among his other needy companions.

7. The *Jathas* of Inder Singh ji Gujranwale, Bhai Chattar Singh ji, Bhai Samsher Singh ji Zakhmi and the late Principal Bhagat Singh Ji Heera all went with the Maskin Ji to Gurdwara Maiee Than in Agra where they were invited. Whatever money they offered him, Maskin Ji added his own sum of three hundred rupees and divided it among all the above four. Heera Singh Ji noticed this and inquired from Giani Ji where his share was, to which Maskin Ji

replied I have received mine in advance. Thus to the money offered he added three hundred more from his pocket and gave away saying I have got a lot from them. This was the real Maskin Ji! God's grace on him was so immense. He used to say that Shugal Ji, My Lord is so kind that all my needs flow away in his blessings and I have never felt any shortage. This was his trust, his faith in his Lord! It was for the first time in my life I was seeing a man so content and thankful to God. ਜਾ ਕੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਵਸਿਆ ਤੂ ਕਰਤੇ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਤੈ ਆਸ ਪੁਜਾਏ॥Jaakai hirdai vasia too karte taa kee tun aas pujaae.

O Creator Lord, You fulfill the desires of those, within whose heart You abide.

His faith in his Guru was deep and he never wavered from his path. He used to ask all to be the disciples of the truth, for how is one to benefit from the falsity (of the uncertain world).

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਚੜਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਤੋੜਿ ਢੂਢਿ ਸਜਣ ਸੰਤ ਪਕਿਆ ॥
(ਸ੍ਰੀ.ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸਾ. ਅੰਕ ੧੧੦੨)

Naanak kachrhi-aa si-on torh dhoodh sajan sant paki-aa
[S.G.G.S Page 1102]

O Nanak, break away from the unfaithful, and seek out the Saints, your true friends.

That was the reason why Babaji (Guru Nanak Dev Ji) said look out for a saint, one such beloved who is true, and who inspires you to be one with the Truth. Maskin Sahib was one such person. I remember at times he used to empty out his pocket for a needy. He used to address him as friend and ask him to open his bag and would empty his pocket into it. Once I was a witness to this and questioned him. His reply was, "Lord, the Giver" is taking care of us. Meanwhile, someone came and gave to Maskin Ji ten times more than what he had given. To this Maskin Ji laughed and said "Did you see my Guru never keeps a debt." My Guru always returns right away. I hardly gave, but He has returned right away. I remember the words of a seer in this context: a saint in Sindh whose faith in Guru Granth Sahib was absolute. He was going to some place with his wife. He reached the bus stand of his village. Mean-

while, a beggar woman came there. She called Baba Thara Singh and told him to look at the clothes on her body. I am a woman and the clothes on my body are torn at many places. How will I cover my body? Baba ji told his wife you have taken the ambrosial nectar of Guru Gobind Singh ji, you are his chosen child. Baba ji asked the ticket man who sold tickets to bring out a stool and give them the room for a short while. He removed the sheet from his body and giving it to his wife, asked her to wrap it around and give away her clothes to the woman. He said I will go home and get you another set of your clothes and we will take the next bus. He was such a saint who gave away even the clothes on his own body. They said that his wife handed her clothes to the woman and as she was stepping out of the room, a Gursikh came looking for Baba ji. He went to their home and discovered that they were at the bus stand on their way to another village. He did not stop there and came hurrying to the bus stop. He greeted them with folded hands and told Maharaj that he has brought these set of clothes for you and your wife. The sadhu baba bowed his head in reverence and said O Guru how kind you are! You gave new for the old, You never keep any debt. He told his wife to take the clothes and hail the Guru who has sent you a set of new clothes to replace an old set you gave. Wear them and come out. I had some memories and incidents seen in the life with Baba Sundar Singh Alibegh, which were so similar to those in Maskin Ji's life.

8. In 1958, Bhai Jagat Singh Ji was the one who encouraged Maskin ji to come to Kanpur from Bareilly (we are indebted to Jagat Singh Ji for this) he came along to Sarai Alamgir, which was eight miles from Alibegh. Bhai Jagat Singh Ji, who was the chief *sevdar* and *kirtaniya* of Baba Sundar Singh Ji, brought Baba Sundar Singh Ji to Sarai Alamgir. They were travelling through the city when we came across a farmer selling sugarcanes. Baba Sundar Singh Ji was above worldly tastes and pleasures. He pulled one sugarcane from the bundle and asked the farmer to chop it into five pieces. Babaji never kept any money with him. The money used to be in Bhai Jagat Singh Ji's towel. He called Bhai Jagat Singh and asked him to pay the price for the sugarcane. He was paid one rupee, the man hesitated in taking it and said I don't want to invite God's curse on me. Baba ji consoled him saying it was an offering.

for his hard work. Then he asked Bhai Jagat Singh Ji to get two tickets for Gujarat. We took the train to Gujarat. I'm giving this example to throw light on Maskin Ji's life because it seems as though he was meditating for ages. These souls were one with God after meditating for ages. They come to the world to unite us with the Guru. That Baba ji's was called 'karam Ilahi'" and he was from Gujarat. Common man addressed him as *Kavanwala Sadhu* (Saint of the crows). This was because when he walked, hundreds of crows formed an umbrella over him. Sometimes while he was walking, they would sit on his shoulder too. An old lady was standing at the door of the yogi's house. Babaji asked Bhai Sahib to open the bundle that had money. He took a five rupees note and gave it to the woman saying she had to give some offering since she was standing at the doors of a great saint. The money was given to the lady. The woman started walking towards the place where the *Yogi* was eating his meal. The *Yogi* told the woman that you have got the offering and I have to go and meet them. She came running back to Baba Sundar Singh Ji and told him that today I will be cursed. Saying this she placed a rupee five bill on Baba ji's feet. Babaji reassured her that no harm will befall and to hold on to the money as it was Guru's wealth. The *Yogi*, who ate once in eight to ten days, was coming towards them. His face and hands were smeared with rice and lentil stew. This was one of those rare meetings of friends who meet in various ages at different points of time. *Yogi* came; Babaji took the bundle with sugarcane pieces in his hand and gave it to the *Yogi*. Their eyes met. He received the bundle and returned to his cottage and Babaji came to the station. Such was the manner of their meetings! Their one common God was Love.

Kalgidhar's words were enshrined in their hearts.

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕੋਊ ਰਾਫ਼ਜੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸ਼ਾਫੀ
Hindu Turk kouu rafjee imam shafee

Whether a saint is a Mohammedan or Hindu.

ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਰਚਾਨਬੋ॥

Manas ki jaat sabhe akke pehachanboo.

(Kabit Tav Prasad, page 87 Dasam Granth)

Treat everybody equally.

9. Maskin Sahib is also one such saint! I have been with him for years now. I remember in Onkareshwar, he used to visit the sadhus and give them ration and other clothes because they did not accept any money. He used to care for all their needs even though soap and other worldly items were of no use to them. They only needed cloth to cover their body and food and cereals. At times Bhai Parmeshwara Singh used to go to these sadhus residing in caves and huts on the bank of river Narmada in the absence of Maskin Ji and take care of their needs. Bhai Parmeshwara Singh was a millionaire. Though he was shy by nature he gave Maskin Ji 40,000 rupees which was needed for the construction of Gurudwara at Onkareshwar. Bhai Parmeshwara Singh was one of the close friends of Maskin Ji. It was Maskin Ji's nature to give away to the needy and thank God for it. Once when he was travelling abroad, he wrote me a letter in Urdu from there, saying Shugal Ji, I am visiting such a country which God has abandoned. God has left and even his foot-prints have faded away. This country is America but my God is so great and still He continues to care for them and provide them.

10. This incident dates back to 1974-75 when Maskin Ji was approached by Jalandhar Radio (at that time there was no tradition of giving discourses on radio. Cassettes were yet to appear). Director Bhai Jodh Singh Ji who was a friend of Bhagat Singh Hira requested Maskin Ji to record his discourses for them. For the first time Maskin Ji went to Radio Station to have his *katha* recorded. The recording was for seven days. The next day he got *Barah Maha Majh Mehala five* recorded, which is being relayed every month at 7 AM till today. It seems to have opened up a new means to spread Guru's message.

Maskin Ji used to give away food to countless widows, and clothes, even books to their children.

Maskin Ji's biography, which is being written by his close friend, Giani Balwinder Singh Ji of Canada is in fact a biography of

his Life. When I visited Alwar for the first time, I heard that Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin in his early teens went to a place to be trained as a driver in the Railways. He was very young then. To apply brakes on the engine you need a lot of strength. You need strength to run an engine and in stopping it too. He was being trained by an English Jew, who often said that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent to us young children: We don't know when five years will roll by and these children will finish their training and be drivers. After some time this great man Maskin Ji left the job because God had chosen a different path for him. This was just like creating a milestone for memories.

Even today when we travel from Kota to Ratlam we come across a station Modak. It was here that the great saint used to take the train with water tankers up to Ramgarh Mandi or drive back to Kota. O'God! Your enactments are strange. He was an only son of his parents, who at the will of God left his home to become a yogi and be one with the Lord. He had such a deep communion with God that he could bring those deviating from God and showed them the path too. When he started on his path, after a few days in the process of seeking knowledge he met a great sadhu, a pure soul rinsed in the love of God. I am referring to his meeting with Baba Balwant Singh Ji Nirmalai. Baba Balwant Singh ji took a liking for this soul and Maskin Ji liked this learned seer rinsed in the God's love. It was like a union of a child with his father and they set off together on the path of truth. Baba ji used to discourse and Maskin Ji sat at his feet and listened.

There was a time when Baba ji was residing at the colony near Hirakund Dam constructed by the government. His discourses were so appealing that the listeners were beside themselves as his talks had the bliss of life in them. He was one with God and his inspirations were immersed in it. He used to say that when there are listeners there is no discourse, when he gives discourse there are no listeners to whom he wants to address. Maskin Ji used to say that Baba Balwant Singh Ji was a great yogi, sadhu and spiritual discourses. Maskin Ji narrated this incident. He said Baba Ji stayed at Cuttack for a month during the monsoon. Sangat used to love him. Baba ji did *Katha* for an hour. They say once when Baba ji started his discourse in the morning, great dark clouds had gathered. Maskin Ji had gone to the market on an errand and when he

returned he saw Baba Ji sitting close to Guru Granth Sahib Ji continuing his discourse. There was not a single listener in the hall. When Baba Ji returned to his room after the discourse Maskin Ji asked him Baba Ji you were speaking in such a blissful spirit as though the hall was full with Sangat. He inquired who was listening to *Katha* today to which he replied, “Maskineya, today I was talking to the One about whom the discourses are. Today the One who makes me give discourse was in front of me. It’s my duty that I sit near the Guru and do *Katha* I never look at the listeners for: ਆਪਿ ਕਬੈ ਆਪਿ ਸੁਨਨੈਹਾਰੁ॥ *Aap kathai aap sunnaihār* “He speaks and He himself is the listener”. It was as though Maskin Ji was receiving another lesson in patience and faithfulness from the great soul.

It is said that Baba Ji came to ‘Burla’ and started doing *katha* and Maskin Ji was with him. At that time Maskin Ji’s mind was so absorbed in Divine love that there was a mountain close by and he used to go there. He used to take religious books and all day used to read, ponder, reflect on it and it was very blissful. After staying for ten to fifteen days Baba Ji said come Maskineya let us go. Maskin Ji said, “Maharaj you go ahead, I will stay here.” He started discoursing. Sangat gave him lot of love. The *katha* so continued and people came from temples, non- Sikh and Hindus attended. They used to come with folded hands request and invited him to the Temple. They told him that he speaks of one common God. Maskin Ji spoke in the morning at the Gurudwara and in the evening at the Temple. The same Sangat would come there too. At times he went to Muslim brothers. Very often Muslim brothers would visit Gurudwara and offer him money saying you are a Godly man, pray for us that we keep him in our remembrance. They were so engrossed that he became the beloved of the entire ‘Burla’. There was a person who was not particularly happy with this fact that so much was offered to him. Also it bothered him that Sadhus stayed there and their needs were fulfilled and on their return, he also gave eleven- twelve rupees to them. At the time that was considered a big amount. This man, used to say that there is lot of money being offered, so there is a need to have a committee to keep a record of the amounts.

There was a yogi who stayed on the mountain and rarely came down. Maskin Ji used to make two rotis in the morning and

used to take them for him. He used to stay there the whole day and came down in the evening to the Gurudwara and recite *Sodar paath* (ਸੋਦਰ ਪਾਠ). Sangat used to assemble and depending whatever offering God sent, he would buy food stuff and cook *Guru Ka Langar*. He stayed there for many months but the voice of this man, who was opposing grew louder (even though the Sangat was not in his favour). O brother why you bothered, Sangat was the giver and the offerings were spent by the beloved of Guru on the needy. What did you lose? Finally one day Maskin Ji left the town and came to Patna Sahib. He requested for some time to discourse. That was a time when Maskin Ji had to ask time to speak in the Gurudwara. Today it is so, that the entire Sikh world requests him time to discourse on the Master. Sangat requests with folded hands for time so that they can hear him at least once. He does not disappoint anybody. I also remember the time when Maskin Ji requested for time at Patna Sahib, the *Head Kirtanya* there became his opponent. He used to call him an astrologer because there was a mention of astrology in the Bani of Bhai Gurdas Ji. He started accusing him for talking on the science of astrology. On the second and third day there was a similar topic of discussion. As per the existing rule, all the offerings given to the speaker by the Sangat went to Langar. Maskin Ji ate his two rotis from the *Langar*. He had no money on him even to drink tea from the market. Wah God!

ਦਰਵੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੇ ਲੋੜੀਐ ਰੁਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਜੀਰਾਂਦਿ ॥੬੦॥

(ਅੰਕ ੧੩੮੧)

darvaesaan no loreesai rukhaan dee jeeraand.

[page 1381 S.G.G.S.]

*The dervaishes, the humble devotees,
have the patient endurance of trees.*

He had such a heart that even if somebody cut and took away from him what belonged to him, like a tree that does not complain, no matter how one plucks its fruit, so was the life of Maskin Ji. He had a Sainly-Heart! One day at Patna Sahib, right in the front street of the Harmandir, a Gursikh tailor invited Maskin Ji for tea. Maskin Ji went for tea. He was asked to do *Ardas* and was offered five

rupees. At that time the cost of one glass of tea was 2 annas. That great soul thanked Kalgidhar that with his kindness, arrangements had been made for his tea and Langar in Gurudwara and also got a chance to attend and speak. After staying for a few days in Patna Sahib he took a ticket to Ranchi. Sangat heard him speak. There was one Sikh Bhai Fulail Singh, who gave Maskin Ji 51 rupees. He got money from the Singh Sabha, and the Sangat also gave him some money. At that time Maskin Ji laughed and said that he had become rich. Guru ji has poured unlimited wealth in my pocket but Maskin Ji's heart used to give away to everybody. It seemed as though Bhai Gurdas Ji's sacred words where enshrined in his heart.

ਮਿਠਾ ਬੋਲਣ ਨਿਵ ਚਲਣੁ ਹਥੁ ਦੇ ਕੈ ਭਲਾ ਮਨਾਇ॥

Mitha bollan niv chalan, haath-oo dai kay bhalla manaye

(War 28 Paudi 15 Bhai Gurdas Ji)

*To speak with love, walk humbly
and derive pleasure in giving.*

These three great virtues of Sikhism are a part of Maskin Ji's life. He never spoke in anger even with his opponents. He spoke in love and was always in engrossed state in the respect of his Lord. He was full of humility, soul always bowing in respect. The three qualities that made him feel happy in seeing others happy, as expressed by Bhai Gurdas Ji were all present in Maskin Ji.

Maskin Ji used to say that he left Ranchi and reached Jhansi. Everybody heard the discourse but no one made any offerings of money. They said that it was not their tradition to offer money. He received two rupees with which he got a ticket for Bina. He did Katha in Bina but it was similar situation there too. He wanted to proceed to Sagar. Having no money on him, this yogi set off his journey by foot. Thus walking he reached Sagar. From Sagar he went to Damoh and from there to Katni. This was his *yatra* (tour) of travelling and discoursing on his Divine Master. Then he met Baba Balwant Singh Ji and from there he went to Nasik, where *Sarupnakha's nose was damaged by someone (i.e. Laxman brother of Sri Ram Ji)* who had prided that he had his passions in control. Close by, is a *Tapovan*, where yogis resided. This yogi

(Maskin Ji) went to the *Tapovan* with Baba ji. Baba ji and Maskin Ji stayed there for some days. Here Birla, a billionaire had made arrangements for their mid-day meal. Once a day, two rotis and some vegetables were served. Maskin Ji said he used to feel satiated and happy after eating one roti. The yogis staying at the *Tapovan* would also receive some clothing from Birla Seth. Maskin Ji stayed in *Tapovan* for six months. From there he started travelling and reached Bombay. This great Yogi's (Maskin Ji's) work also had taken varied forms.

He also spent some days at Alwar in the cottage of the watchman of the king of Alwar. In his job with Railways, he also spent some days staying at the stations. The king in Alwar had a factory where cups and saucers of china clay were made. He worked there for some days and learnt that skill too. But his mind was not into it. How could it be for his yearnings were of a different kind? Someone whose mind is into praising the Lord, cannot stay on (other) work for long.

Finally he reached Bombay and stayed in a Gurudwara. There a Guru's beloved Sikh, used to discourse on Guru Granth Sahib and Gurpratap Suraj Prakash and Maskin Ji used to read the lines from the holy book. Then by chance he met Baba Balwant Singh Ji, who stayed at Bhai Joga Singh Ji's Gurudwara, whose president was Bhai Jaimal Singh Ji. He held Baba Balwant Singh Ji in high esteem. Baba ji left Bombay after doing 'katha'. At that time Maskin Ji looked different. He wore a long shirt, Bata chapals in his feet, long *kachhera*, and an ordinary turban. This was yogi Maskin Ji and it was all he had in this world. One day while he was eating *Langar*, a narrow minded sevadar commented that you have been eating here *langar* for the last twenty days; you are not supposed to eat here for so long. Maskin Ji said that he was there to listen to the kirtan of Bhai Surjan Singh Ji which was very blissful. They were to do kirtan for a month. He told that I will stay here for 10 more days to listen to their kirtan. But don't worry, I will eat *Langar* at another Gurudwara. A month passed and he started from there and reached Nagpur. When he did *katha* at Nagpur, Sangat loved it and he also received some money. From there he went to Doongar-Garh and after discoursing there he went to Gondya and then reached Katni and once again he met the great soul (Baba

Balwant Singh Ji) and then travelling with him, he reached the *Dera* of the great soul at Haridwar.

Here he was sitting at the *Dera* and listening to Katha. His mind was very upset. It was very agitated. Maskin Ji said that he told Baba ji that my mind was very disturbed. I had not been able to concentrate since morning. Baba ji placed his hand on my head and asked Maskineya who was in your family. I told him I had a mother and an elder sister. It is possible that father was no longer in this world. Then Baba ji asked so you have abandoned your old parents and chosen this path. You must leave today, for their yearning hearts were reaching out agitating you. You will find peace only there. I was thinking that I had no money in my pocket. Maskin ji says he gave me around five to seven hundred rupees and a lot of clothes. He gave me a warm *looe* (ਲੋਏ) and sent me home. I reached my home at Alwar. My sister had gone to a village and mother was overjoyed on my arrival. The next day my sister arrived too. My sister had a great desire to sing his marriage songs. To get him married so that they would never separate. Many said who would give their daughter to him, who knows he is here today and may leave tomorrow. Who would take care of the girl? Maskin Ji says I left for the village where we had land. Even though the entire village was of *Sahejdhari* Sikhs I did katha there. The villagers heard my *katha* and many were ready to get their daughter married to me. The Maskin Ji's father's paternal uncle Kala Singh, a Gurmukh Sikh who approached the family of his relative for a girl in Delhi, to be Maskin Ji's life partner (Sundar Kaur Ji). When they were married his mother-in-law would often say, "Whom have I married my daughter." She said you heard of Sita being in exile for going with her husband but my daughter is also living in exile and he does not earn enough either. How innocent was that mother, she did not know that her daughter would be the life partner of a great saint, before whom the entire Sikh world would bow in reverence? He would sing the praises of the Gurus. Material comfort would be his slave. She did not know that there would be abundance of wealth for her daughter? In a short time her misgivings on this were cleared when her daughter told her that she had no shortage of money.

The mother, woman who gave birth to Maskin Ji has done us a

great service (Mata Ram Kaur Ji). Whatever Maskin Ji received in offerings of his *katha* he would place it in his mother's lap. Mother would say, "Son why are you giving this to me. Give this to your wife." She was so good natured that she would give away all to her daughter-in-law to take care saying, of what use was this money to me. All I needed were a couple of breads in a meal. His mother was a very contented and generous lady. Maskin Ji's own generosity was a gift from his mother. Maskin Ji always kept enough change(coin/currency) under his mother's pillow because she rejoiced in helping out the needy. He also used to bring a basket full of fruits for her. The lady would give out money and fruits to everyone who came to meet her. She used to distribute the goods throughout the day. Her yogi son came home once in a while and made her moments blissful. She also would say that when she would leave this world, her son would not be at home.

Maskin Ji was in Lucknow for sometime, bringing the Sangat closer to the Guru through the Shabad Guru. There was a huge gathering of the Sangat. One day came when he got a call that his mother had left for heavenly abode. Maskin Ji had his own car. Bhai Anoop Singh and Giani Harinder Singh were among his first student-scholars. Amrik Singh, who was the son of his sister-in law and I went along with him to Alwar. In Kanpur there was Akali Ji's Dharamsala and Maskin Ji used to discourse there for a week. Akali Ji had built it at his own expense. Today at this dharamsala in Kanpur I met Maskin Ji's beloved friend, Bhai Balwinder Singh who used to specially come from Canada every year with his love for Maskin Ji to attend the Gurmat Samagam and thus earn his happiness. Today, he was very kind to visit our town with his nephew Harjit Singh of Delhi to meet the beloved Gurmukh soul rinsed in God's love, Sardar Bahadur Singh. I had a long desire but my eyes had failed me. I used to think if it was possible that the special moments spent with Maskin Ji, those pure pious memories to enshrine them in a written form so that these would forever be available for the benefit of the Sikh Sangat. These scenes and events would take shape and come alive in words so that the Sangat could get inspiration from the life of such a yogi.

I expressed my desire to Balwinder Singh Ji on this matter. He at once got ready for the task. Whatever I remembered on the

life of this great soul, I am giving him in the form of words through cassettes he is going to give them a written form. I remember that Gurudwara was completed in 1973 in Kanpur and Maskin Ji started visiting Kanpur again. From 1973 till today 2003 he never missed it. It's a year round wait for the Sangat before the great soul comes and showers Naam on them. When will they be fortunate enough to hear discourses from the pious soul that filled their hearts with blissful peace? ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਚਨ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ/ "Amrit Bachan Sadh Ki Bani". I remember that at one of the birth anniversary of Guru ji, a Kirtan Jatha due to some reasons could not reach on time to do *Arti* ਆਚੜੀ and for the first time I saw Maskin Ji doing *Arti* on the harmonium. By the time he was reciting the Sawaye ਸਵੈਯਾ: ਯਾਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਭਏ ਹੈ ਮਹਾਂ ਮੁਨਿ "Yaa te Persan Bhai haen Maha Muin", he was totally engrossed in devotion, and there were continuous showers of flowers on the holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Maskin Ji used to say to talk about the truth and not about falsity. What could one achieve from the latter?

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਚੜਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਤੋੜਿ ਢੂਢਿ ਸਜਣ ਸੰਤ ਪਕਿਆ ॥

(ਸਲੋਕ ਡਖਣੇ ਮ: ੫ ਅੰਕ ੧੧੦੨)

Naanak kachrhiaan sio torh dhoodh sajan sant pakiaa

[Slok DakhneMohalla: 5, page 1102, S.G.G.S]

*O Nanak break away from the false ones
and seek out the Saints, who are your true friends.*

Be in the look out for such a saintly person, who is true himself and inspires you to be one with the truth. Maskin Ji was such a soul! I recall he used to empty the contents of his pocket for a needy friend and give away everything. I asked him once about this and he replied "The Guru Lord will take care of my needs". A gentleman came by and offered him double the amount given away and Maskin Ji commented with laughter that my lord never keeps a debt. He deals in straight cash. I received as soon as I gave away.

11. Maskin Ji's life is a marvel. He started a Gurmat Samagam in 1961 which has continued till today with increasing fervour. It started in 1960, at the naming ceremony of his child. The

child was named Amarjit Singh. I was asked to do an *Ardas* that child's birthday be celebrated the coming year too but Waheguru destined it otherwise. It so happened that I said in the *Ardas* that there will be a Gurmat Samagam in the coming year. This was hailed by everyone. Maskin Ji was so happy that it would in fact be a Samagam. Thus the first birthday and this first samagam were held in 1961. In the Samagam of 1962, three other kirtani Jathas were present, viz., Bhai Dharam Singh Ji, Bhai Didar Singh Ji of Hoshiarpur and my Jatha and Giani Ranjit Singh Paras was the *kathakar*. In the morning after *Asa Di Var*, there used to be a half an hour discourse on the Hukam Nama of Guru Granth Sahib Ji for the day. Sangat came in large numbers and the entire Alwar would show up. This was followed by *Langar*. I recall it was the fourth Samagam and the Sangat came in large numbers. It was midnight and there was no bed left for Maskin Ji and me. Maskin Ji called me. We lay down on the carpets that were spread out for the Sangat. We slept on half and covered ourselves with the rest of it. Thus we were fortunate to be on the dusts of the Sangat's feet. That day I realized that he was a true devotee of Guru, a saintly soul who did not care for himself and could sleep on the carpet. At that time the Sangat did not know that the best of worldly comforts would compete for his honour. The Samagam thus started have continued till today. The Sangat comes not only from the country but also from abroad. Sangat came from different parts of the world: America, Canada, England, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Dubai, Kuwait to listen to kirtan and Katha and stay in that blissful state for three days. The Sangat waits eagerly all the year around for 28th February to attend the Annual Samagam and for 29th February to attend the Samagam held once in every four years. I remember four years ago a couple had come from Canada. They went to the grandest hotel at Alwar for accommodation. They found out that the entire hotel was booked by Maskin Ji for the Gurmat Samagam as an arrangement for Sangat to stay. When they informed that they had come from Canada to attend the Samagam, the Manager opened a room for them, brought in their luggage but did not accept any advance from them. This was because the entire hotel was booked by Maskin Ji and they were his guests. Maskin Ji was informed about this. Maskin Ji noticed that the couple would either

be listening in the Sangat or doing seva of washing dishes through out their stay. They had left their luggage in the hotel on the first day and picked it up after the Samagam on leaving. Such was Maskin Ji's love and devotion for the Samagam! He used to do the *Prakash* and *Sukhasan* of Satguru ji himself. I asked him when there were so many Sikh devotees around, why did he stay awake and sit for so long. Sometimes it would be two thirty or three o'clock in the morning for *Sukhasan* and during the day it would be four thirty or five o'clock. He answered it was a year long wait for him. I get *Rumalla Sahibs* made for the occasions and they are to be changed six times and often they are not found to be arranged in the right way. That was one reason why he personally did the seva. Four years ago, on the same occasion when Maskin Ji was busy attending some visitors the person who did the *Prakash*, placed the *Rumalla Sahib* the wrong way up. It was then that Maskin Ji felt that he had to do the *seva* himself. He would be on the stage and if he noticed any new-comers, he would make arrangements for their stay. Simplicity of nature was the essence of this great soul.

His love for his Guru, his devotion, his feelings and deep faith are similar to those great souls travelling on the path shown by the Guru. One such soul was Baba Darshan Singh Ji, from Ghannupur Kale, (Amritsar), a Brahm-Gaini, who spent many years of his life in close communion with the Lord! Another is saint Baba Sundar Singh Ji, from Alibeg, there is not a soul in the world that does not love the saint. He spent years with him and addressed him Bedi Sahib and he had a great faith that "Guru first", and "Maskin Sahib" next.

At Darbar Sahib, Amritsar every year on the Prakash Utsav of Dhan Guru Ramdas Ji until Diwali, this great soul used to do *katha* of the *Mukhvak* (order of the day) at Manji Sahib. During those days the breakfast that came for Maskin Ji was shared amongst 400 to 500 people. Langar came in two trucks from Baba Darshan Singh Ji's place. This Langar always came for Maskin Ji even though Baba Darshan Singh would be away in England or Canada. Fried rice, sweet Palau, wheat porridge, and other such savouries were sent as a part of the breakfast. Baba Darshan Singh Ji of Ghannupur Kale, a Brahm-Giani himself addressed Maskin Ji as "Sache Patshah". Sant Kartar Singh Ji of Thatha-Tiba (Sultanpur

wale) is no longer around but it was he, who did the *seva* of Takht Patna Sahib. The *seva* of Manji Sahib of Sri Darbar Sahib in Amritsar was also the result of his love and devotion. I remember when we used to visit Darbar Sahib early in the morning, the great soul (Sant Kartar Singh Ji) would send a bucket of curd lassi, a bucket of vegetables, chapattis smeared with butter and a basket of sweets every morning as breakfast for Maskin Ji and his companions.

You can imagine that Sant Kartar Singh Ji, who was revered as a saint by the Sangat, would himself come to Maskin Ji to pay his respects. Maskin Ji was a true devotee and his heart was filled with love for the Guru. Saints would personally come to bid him farewell when it was time for him to leave. At Takht Patna Sahib, Maskin Ji usually stayed on the fourth floor. Despite his old age Baba Kartar Singh Ji would climb the stairs slowly to reach Maskin Ji's room. Maskin Ji, with folded hands would say, "You should have sent me a message and I would be in your presence". To this he said I wished to have a glimpse of you. He would come to Maskin Ji to say him farewell too.

There had been a great soul, about whom I would like to mention. Almost thirty three years ago, Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji, Head Granthi of Sri Darbar Sahib, was specially invited by the Gurudwara Committee to Kanpur. The first time I heard him, I was mesmerized by his thoughts. Then he visited Kanpur two-three times and inquired if I knew any great philosopher or speaker then and I told him about Giani Maskin Ji. That year he went to Bombay to attend a marriage in Bhai Jaimal Singh's family and Maskin Ji was also invited for the wedding. They met and he asked Maskin Ji if he visited Sri Darbar Sahib. Maskin Ji told him that he had been there on his way to Kashmir and on his way back. He invited Maskin Ji to Darbar Sahib. Now for the last thirty three years Maskin Ji has been visiting Sri Darbar Sahib without fail to do Katha. He would go there a couple of days before Guru Ramdas Sahib Ji's *Prakash Utsav* and returned two to three days after Diwali.

For the last four to five years Maskin Ji has been appointed the Chairman of the World Sikh Missionary Sabha. Maskin ji was in Canada when this *seva* was bestowed on him by Akal Takht. He was not aware of his nomination nor was he consulted about it. He

stayed away from this kind of glory and wanted to serve as a sevadar. He never yearned for titles of secretary or President but this was an order from Akal Takht. He accepted the seva for three years. When he started the seva this institution did not have any finances. He had to run a huge institution whose budget ran in crores of rupees with no money. In order to run it, for two years he gave his katha *bheta* (offerings) and also raised donations from the Sangat.

He was such a person who never did Ardas for money offered. He never discussed money matters, asked anyone for money or settled a sum for his services. He believed in destiny and was forever thankful to God. He always encouraged others to do honest work and live in God's will. Satguru takes care of everyone's needs, then how can he neglect a person making a truthful living or walking on the path of Truth? But people around him sometimes wavered in their belief. Many times he would not receive any money offerings for 29 days but on the 30th so much offerings flowed in that it always made up for it. Satguru makes up for all past and present needs. For three years this soul gave away his offerings to the missionary institution. In connection with the 300th centenary celebrations of Khalsa he toured the entire country for Amrit Sanchar with other philosophers, kirtani jathas, poets, kathakars, and Jathadars of Takhts. He moved from one town to another and through Amrit Sanchar brought many close to the Guru. With the money he received, a bank account was opened in the name of World Sikh Missionary Sabha and the money deposited was used to run it smoothly from the interest on the bank deposit. Now the sabha has so much money that there is no need to collect anymore.

Whenever Maskin Ji does katha in Darbar Sahib during the Prakash Utsav he never took the offering rather he donated it to the money box. Maskin Ji believes firmly that he gets the strength for life from Guru Ram Das Ji and so he doesn't take money. Every year Sri Darbar Sahib offers him a Saropa. He believed that the life strength he receives in those 10-15 days sustains him throughout the year. By being in good standing with the Guru Ram Das Ji whatever offerings he received here in life (37,000 Rs last year, 48,000 Rs this year) he placed in the money box and only took the Saropa. Maskin Ji says that the Sangat always took care of his needs.

This goes back to the year 1977-78 when the authority of the ruling Monarchy was overturned in Kabul. The Sikh Sangat there had made a special request for *Amrit Sanchar*. They had asked for the five beloved (*Panj Pyare*) from the Akal Takhat and the Head Granthi of the Darbar Sahib for it. At that time the Jathedar of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib was Singh Sahib Sadhu Singh ji Bhoura, Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji, Head Granthi Sri Darbar Sahib Ji also went with Maskin Ji. If one has to give an example of Gursikhi in Sikh history then it goes to the Gursikhi as prevailing in Kabul.

On the final day at the conclusion of katha at Darbar Sahib, Maskin Ji is presented with a *Saroppa* by the Jathedar of Akal Takhat himself. It has been the tradition. Once while the Jathedar Singh Sahib Sadhu Singh Bhoura Sahib before giving away the *Saroppa* to Maskin ji addressed the Sangat which came in huge numbers and narrated the incident which had occurred in Kabul when he had also gone there in connection with the *Amrit Sanchar*. At the Gurudwara Sahib in Kabul a huge water tank was made for the convenience of the Sangat. The tank was filled by a pipe coming from the hills but due to great pressure the tank burst and the *sevadar* died as a consequence. Bhoura Sahib told that it seems Maskin Ji knew *mantar sidhi* through meditation. Wherever you may go there were not more than 5-10 people, but in Gurudwara to hear the katha of this great soul (Maskin Ji), Sangat of the entire town would show up. There would be no place left to sit. This can be explained that with the God's grace he has won over his senses and ego. If one wants to learn the art of reciting Nitnem then he has to hear Maskin Ji do Nitnem early at *Amrit wela*. He would recite Japji Sahib while taking his bath, for the rest of the *Nitnem* he would sit down and recite very melodiously. The *sevadar* who died due to the bursting of the tank, was a young man with two children. His wife was young too.

The next day, the Sangat of Kabul were to bid farewell to Maskin Ji. Maskin Ji started his katha and according to Bhoura Sahib, the Jathedar of Akal Takth, the Sangat showered him with immense money. There was abundance of it. Maskin Ji during his address to the Sangat reminded them that it was Vaisakhi, the day of their creation. Today, you are very elated and are expressing your thanks to the Guru. It was today, that the Guru gave us this

form. On this day of happiness there are tears in the eyes of a young lady who lost her husband. Today, let all of us contribute for this cause. Hearing this, Sangat donated more and more and there was now huge sum of money thus raised. Bhoura Ji said the total amount was Rs. 82,000. He offered all of it to the young lady and promised to raise more for her from the Sangat if need arose. If a Gurudwara building was under construction or for other charitable cause he would often request for *katha bheta* (contribution). He would ask the Sangat to empty their pockets for the cause and keep back only the amount needed for the fare to return to their homes. The collection would be in thousands. To this he would add his offerings and donate for the cause. Last week, he gave all the money offered in Lucknow to the earthquake victims affected in Gujarat. Such was his love for the people! He would reach out to help those in sorrow and the needy. He was totally convinced that his master (God) was with him. He gives me more than enough for my children. Guru has given me much more than my needs. All I long for, is his Name.

Maskin Ji used to do his Nitnem with lot of love reciting the Jaap Sahib, a couple of Svaeeyas of each Bhat, 15-20 hymns pleading with Guru followed by 25 minutes to half an hour of Naam Simran. He would do it so melodiously that any listener would be mesmerized. Thus his Nitnem would melt even a heart made of stone. This was followed by an expression of thanks to the Almighty Lord. This was his sidhi and greatness.

ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਸੁਭੁ ਮੋਹੁ ਹੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ ॥ (ਅੰਕ ੫੯੩)

ridh sidh subh mohu hai naam n vasai man aae

[S.G.G.S. page 593]

Riches and the supernatural spiritual powers of the siddhas are all emotional attachments; through them, the Naam, the Name of the Lord, does not come to dwell in the mind.

Thus supernatural power and knowledge are all in vain and insipid without the Name of Lord.

But Satguru Ji says:

ਨਵ ਨਿਧੀ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਸਿਧੀ ਪਿਛੈ ਲਗੀਆ ਫਿਰਹਿ
ਜੋ ਹਰਿ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸਦਾ ਵਸਾਇ ॥

(ਸਲੋਕ ਮ:੩ ਅੰਕ ੬੪੯)

nav nidhee athaareh sidhee pichhai lageeaa fireh jo har
hirdai sadaa vasaee

[slok mohalla 3 S.G.G.S.page 649]

The nine treasures and the eighteen spiritual powers of the Siddhas follow him, who keeps the Lord enshrined in his heart.

Guru Amar Das Ji says that the nine treasures and the eighteen miraculous powers follow him, who keeps the Lord within his heart and mind, and worldly comforts follow him. Maskin Ji was one such living example. To find a great saint like him is very difficult. Sainthood is not the name of an attire.

ਸਾਧ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਕਰਮ ॥

(ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅੰਕ ੨੯੬)

saadh naam nirmal taa kae karam

[Sukhmani Sahib page 296]

*He is called a Holy person; whose actions are
immaculate and pure.*

The great soul who dressed in a black turban, whose life itself is based on the thinking of the Gurus as though he had become one with Him.

ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਮਤਿ ਤੂੰ ਲੇਹਿ ਇਆਨੇ ॥

gur kee mat toon laehi eiaanae

Take the Guru's advice, you ignorant fool;

ਭਗਤਿ ਬਿਨਾ ਬਹੁ ਡੂਬੇ ਸਿਆਨੇ ॥

(ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅੰਕ ੨੮੮)

Bhagat binaa bahu doobae siaanae

(S.G.G.S.page 288)

*without devotion, even the clever
have drowned.*

Last year, he had to do Katha for twenty days at Sri Darbar

Sahib. There was too much pain in his knees and he could hardly sit. A doctor always accompanied him. The doctor would request him not to do katha in that condition. To this Maskin Ji would reply with folded hands that Sangat came in thousands to hear the katha and it is their blessings that would give me life force. Katha is my life and attending Sangat is the purpose of my life.

12. When Maskin Ji went to Gurudwara Imli Sahib at Indore for the first time and requested time for katha. Some members of Prabhandak committee felt that he was very young and what katha could he do. (At that time he was in his early youth). Someone said let us give a little time and judge him. If he speaks well he will continue otherwise we can stop him. Thus on the request of few elders he got permission to speak for fifteen minutes at Guru Nanak Dev Ji's sacred place in Gurudwara Imli Sahib. When Maskin Ji spoke every one was taken aback. This lad on the threshold of youth was much ahead than well versed *kathakars*. They, who gave him 15 minutes after a lot of thought made him stay there for a month and a half. The entire Sangat requested him with lot of endearing love to come back to do katha during the monsoon season when all the contractors of the area get a break from their work and come home for longer stay. From Indore he went to Onkareshwar Pilgrimage (Tirath) where Guru Nanak Dev Ji had advised the pandits which is written on page 938 of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji under the heading of Onkar Ramkali Dakhni. Maskin Ji went to that place where Gurudwara Onkar sahib stands today. Here he met "a saint Jhulai Walai Saen (saint in swing) who always sat in his swing. He was a very knowledgeable fakir and a Brahmin. When he saw Maskin Ji wandering at this pious pilgrimage, he sensed him to be an extraordinary person.

He met Maskin Ji and told him that he could hear the sound of Guru Nanak Ji's Bani in this area. I feel there should be a Gurudwara in this place but no Sikh ever comes here. Maskin Ji sensed that the words of this holy sadhu sitting in the jhulla pointed to an ever lasting truth. He asked the sadhu where the kirtan was heard. He said he heard Baba Nanak's Bani at a small distance from here. He asked aren't you aware that this was Guru Nanak Dev Ji's *vidyashala*? Here he used to sit amidst the pandits and give spiritual discourses. I had heard that it was here that Guru

Nanak Dev Ji had uttered some Bani in the form of advice to the pandits. Maskin Ji recalled that Guru ji had recited Ramkali Dakhani Oankar at this pilgrimage of Oankareshwar.

Maskin Ji told the holy baba that you were the blessed one as you could hear the Bani. The Sikhs residing in Indore never heard it. The Sikhs residing at Khandhwa and Badwah didn't get the message till today. By good fortune a great soul Sant Prakasha Singh belonging to the Nirmalaya Sect, whose affection with Maskin Ji was of a Gursikhi one, expressed to Maskin Ji that it would be nice if we could commemorate the memory of Guru Nanak Dev ji at this spot. Thereafter Maskin Ji started to do katha in the neighbouring areas for the cause. He stayed there for two months. Bhai Jai Singh Darvesh used to drive the vehicle. Maskin Ji would sit besides him. Bhai Sahib Singh used to do kirtan and Maskin Ji used to do katha. People used to offer sacks of rice, grains, wheat as an offering. This would be loaded on their vehicle and sold at the market in Badwah. Money was thus raised. The place, where the Gurudwara named Oankar was constructed, was bought from a Brahmin. He asked 20,000 Rupees for the place. This dates back to 1962-63. Maskin Ji told him to accept 18,000 rupees that they had. They would pay the remaining 2000 Rupees later. He agreed to accept Rs 18,000 for the land and it was bought.

Maskin Ji began his *Yatra* (travels around). In 1971, after 9 years of devoted labour, the sacred place was completed. He had bought 2-3 boats for the purpose. All these had saffron colour flags on them. On these materials for construction iron, wood, bricks, cement and other raw materials were loaded on one side of Narmada River and brought over to the other. He used to pay the boatman himself. In 1973, I visited the place for the first time with Maskin Ji and my heart was overjoyed. Maskin Ji took me towards the mountains. He told me come, let me take you to the yogis where they stay in the caves on the bank of river Krishna. Reaching the place of meeting of Narmada and Krishna rivers he pointed me to the other side of Narmada River where the great yogis lived in caves but my legs were shaking and my vision was blurred. Maskin Ji for the first time realized that I was losing my sight. I told him that I can't see anything. He stopped there for some time and with a heavy heart brought me back to the Gurudwara. Next day he

bought ration, cloth, fruits etc. set off to give these to the yogis. The spot where both the rivers meet, is a desolated place. They stay in the interiors of a deep jungle. They welcomed Maskin Ji as “yogi raj”. I heard it for the first time that they addressed him as the yogi raj. Though we were the ones who had gone to visit the yogis but on seeing him they said you are yogi from many births. We are trying to settle down as one in this life. Maskin Ji gave away the ration that he had bought for them. They said you come after a year but the stuff you bring for us lasts us for months. We went to another yogi, who used to be a 1st class magistrate and had given up all the worldly comforts, home and hearth and became a yogi. He was filled with devotion. Seeing him brought bliss to my mind and body. He was sitting in meditation. When Maskin Ji went to him, his eyes opened after some time and he stood up to greet saying that I keep waiting for you throughout the year. This yogi hailed from Bengal and Maskin Ji had taken stuff for him too. We went to two more yogis who were brothers. They were very well educated men who had come from Madhya Pradesh. He gave ration to them. After the morning *diwan* he used to go and meet them.

This incident dates back to 1974 when the Gurudwara Sahib built in the memory of Guru Nanak Dev Ji at holy Oankareshwar was finally ready. The Head Priest (*Granthi*) of Sri Darbar Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji arrived along with the (five beloveds) ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਰੇ *Panj Pyares*.

The Gurudwara Sahib was formally inaugurated and Sikh Sangat came in large numbers. To the great surprise of all, the entire plan to construct a bridge on the Narmada River was sanctioned. The great soul standing there joined hands in Ardaas to the Almighty “Hey Gurdev” how nice it would be if the bridge was to be constructed near the gate of the Gurudwara Sahib. O the Jagat Guru of *kaljug*. The Giver! Have mercy on us.

When the bridge was finally sanctioned it seemed as though Nature had heard the great saint’s prayer. The other end of the bridge was right next to the Gurudwara. Pandits (Hindu Priests) resisted this move and wanted this bridge near the temple. As a result of this opposition, the project was delayed for 3 years. For three years they continued their efforts to have it near the temple.

At the end when the bridge was finally ready it turned out near the Gurudwara. The great soul had prayed to the Almighty for this.

Every year Maskin Ji's Gurmat Caravan, which included seven to eight *Ragis* groups, five to six discourses, three to four poets reached Indore in a bus and two cars from Ratlam to Indore. For the Sangat there, it is a year long wait. The entire caravan is welcomed with immense respect and good arrangements were made by the management (prabhandaks) for their stay at the Gurudwara Imli Sahib. Two *Diwans* were conducted at Indore. Maskin Ji never asked any money from the management. Usually whatever offered, was accepted with grace but on this occasion at both these *diwans* Maskin Ji would ask the Sangat for offerings. He would say that today I am going to the holy shrine of my father, the Gurudwara Sahib at Oankar Sahib. All my companions and learned men had come here for Guru's blessings. He would ask the Sangat to donate all the money they had on them holding back only enough for return fare. He would ask them to empty their pockets and there would soon be heaps of offerings. All this he would distribute among his learned friends. For himself he would buy return ticket from his home town.

The Sangat from Khandwa, Badwah, Sanawad, Indore and the neighboring regions would flock in large numbers. When Maskin Ji would start his journey, from the other side to Gurudwara Sahib he would fill his hands with money which he would distribute among the poor and beggars sitting on the bridge. He would give away five to each. The beggars would sing praises of Guru Nanak. They wait year long for this day when somebody gave so liberally from his pockets. He would give money to group of tens asking them to distribute it among themselves. At the end of the programmes at the Gurudwara Sahib at Oankarshwar, there used to be a huge kirtan Darbar at Gurudwara Imli Sahib on April 4th. All reciting *jathas* are given a formal farewell. Two stages facing each other are set up. Around 14-15 *jathas* participate in this programme. A devotee at Indore S. Jaimal Singh, who had great regards for Maskin Ji would also donate liberally. He was the president of the Gurudwara Imli Sahib for three years. Every year he would take the list of visiting Jathas and Maskin Ji and would book their return tickets. The amount of which went as high as 10,000 Rupees. He would

also invite them home for *langar* and gave money, liberally to all. He would do all this to please Maskin Ji. Another devotee of Maskin Ji in Indore was Sardar Parmeshwara Singh, a timber merchant who would welcome and serve Maskin Ji and others with an open heart.

When Oankarshwar Gurudwara was being constructed, there was not enough funds and the in charge constructor asked for 40,000 rupees to pay off wages to the working labourers. His daughter's marriage was nearing too. He needed money immediately or the work of Gurudwara Sahib could not go on. Maskin Ji was not able to raise enough money. He could only raise 4,000/- Rupees while they needed 40,000/-. This noble soul though elder to Maskin Ji, held him in high esteem and addressed him as "Bhai Sahib". Parmeshwara Singh, who was with Maskin Ji offered him Rs.40,000/- saying all this money is in fact given to me by Guru ji. He said he would consider himself fortunate if the money would be used in constructing the holy shrine. I remember this noble soul too. This well-off business man would wait eagerly on Maskin Ji.

I remember the time of 8th or 9th Gurmat Samagam at Alwar. Sangat arrived there in such large numbers that the space was not enough for all to sit. Bhai Jaimal Singh and Parmeshwara Singh Ji, who attended the Samagam every year along with Sangat from Indore, took Maskin Ji to buy new land for this purpose. A plot of 1800 sq yard was selected on Road No. 2, where the Gurmat Samagam is now being conducted every year. This locality was still not so populated. Maskin Ji said he didn't have enough money to buy the land and he didn't want to take a loan either. The land was bought. Bhai Jaimal Singh and Bhai Parmeshwara Singh together paid it off and bought the land. Sardar Inderjeet Singh, Chairman of Punjab and Sind Bank approved a loan without any interest on it for the construction on the newly acquired land for the Samagam.

Maskin Ji wanted to pay off the loan. He made a tour to America and Canada along with Parmeshwara Singh and sent him back with money to pay off the fourth instalment of the loan. He also returned the money of Bhai Parmeshwara Singh.

This place of Gurmat Samagam is now not big enough because around sixty to seventy thousand Sangat arrives. At that time

we never realized that public will come in such numbers and the gathering would be so huge. The number that was initially hundred is now way over thousands. Many devotees reach by buses and cars at this occasion.

Now the need was for a bigger space. A huge plot of land outside the town has been purchased. We expect that the next Gurmat Samagam of 2004 would be held in this new place so that the arriving Sangat will not have to face any space problems. These lines of Gurbani befit the occasion.

ਅਚਿੰਤ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਿਆਰਾ ॥
(ਅੰਕ ੬੩੮)

achint kamm karaih prabh tin kae
jin har kaa naam pjaaraa
[S.G.G.S.page 638]

*God automatically does the work of those
who love the Name of the Lord.*

Maskin Ji wondered from where the money for all this would come. This gurmat place was to be used for the Sangat to stay. Opposite to this, a building of 18 rooms with attached bathrooms have been made for Sangat's convenience where 18 families could stay. Maskin Ji had concerns for visiting Sangats and made every effort in arranging for their comfortable stay. The ground water of the entire town is salty but during the construction of the building, the spot where the noble soul dug, the water of the well was sweet. The terrace of the building has a tank which take care of the water requirements of the Sangat, of the Samagam as well as those who live in the building. This is Maskin Ji's devotion, feelings and his complete faith in God. He would always remember this.

ਸਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਸੰਗੇ ਅਭੰਗੰ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ॥੧੧੧॥
(ਜਾਪ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

Sada ang sange abhangang bibhute
[Jaap Sahib, Dasam Granth]

*God is always with you
and His existence is everlasting.*

He would very often recite these lines. His belief that his

Guru is with him and his faith in this is so deep. This was the reason that the Annual Gurmat Samagam at Alwar is of unique kind. Nobody feels the need to be invited to the Samagam. Anyone who visits once comes back every year. Everybody looks forward to it and around sixty five ragi jathas arrive at the Samagam uninvited. On the first day the ragi jathas get 15 minutes and spiritual discourses get 10 minutes each. On the second day kirtan jathas get 10 minutes and on the third day each get 5 minutes time. On rare occasion some visiting groups have not got time and Maskin Ji had to ask pardon on such times and honoured them with *saropa* and offerings. The visiting *jathas* feel honoured to be part of the Gurmat Samagam. On one occasion, after the Samagam there was not enough money to pay off the loud speaker and tent services. Having thought over it, he did not want to take it from anyone. Nobody sits there with a receipt book to raise money. So no money is raised. No appeal has been ever made for donation or funds. There is only the deep residing faith in Waheguru. Maskin Ji asked them to count Guru's money box. I remember Singh Sahib Chet Singh and others started the count. After paying off the loud speaker and the tent people, there was remaining balance of Rs.256/- . At this he bowed his head in reverence and uttered O God' You are so merciful. You have yourself started your Samagams and took care of them. From this you can judge how deep Maskin Ji's faith in God was. An ordinary man would think of investing his earnings for his own children. Maskin Ji said his children had an abundant treasure. His whole family served in the Samagam as one possessed. His wife would start making arrangements for cleaning a month in advance. Wheat grain, lentils, spices, rice etc. would all be cleaned. Tea worth thousand rupees is bought. The glory is great. I sincerely wish for those who have not been here to come and experience everything for themselves. Other than katha kirtan there is nothing but the glory of the Word 'Naam'.

ਨਾਨਕ ਕੈ ਘਰਿ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮੁ ॥੪॥੪॥

(ਅੰਕ ੧੧੩੬)

nanak kai ghar kaeval naam

[S.G.G.S.page 1136]

His home (path) is filled only with the Name,

*and God has given Nanak the gift of
His sole Remembrance.*

He sits on the stage in simplicity and very often people ask which one is Maskin Ji. This noble soul had a black turban, grey beard, impressive visage, a glowing forehead and bright sparkle in his eyes. He had on him God's blessing and this can be visibly experienced at the annual Gurmat Samagam.

When we travel to Indore with Maskin Ji we are all in a different spirit and recite the Sodar Rehras Prayer in group like we do it during the three Samagam days. Bhai Sahib Balwinder Singh and Maskin Sahib Ji also join us in this. Sometimes, the Head Priest of Sri Darbar Sahib would also join us. Everyone recited the Sodar Paath in unison. This is a blessed moment, which only fortunate ones get to experience and visualize. Of the Sangat who were listening to kirtan and katha since morning reassemble in great numbers at 6:00 pm to listen to the recital of the Sodar Paath. This is how Maskin ji's life has influenced all. All the yearning souls, who seek union with the beloved Lord, come together.

ਕੋਈ ਐਸਾ ਸਜਣ ਲੋੜਿ ਲਹੁ ਮੈ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮੁ ਦੇਇ ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥
(ਅੰਕ ੭੫੮)

koee aisaa sajan lorh lahu
main preetam daee milaae
[S.G.G.S.page 758]

*Oh my mind searches for such a Friend,
who may unite me with my Beloved.*

He himself is in union with the beloved and unites others too.

ਕੋਈ ਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਦੇਵੈ ਜੋਰਿ ॥
(ਅੰਕ ੭੦੧)
koee jan har sio daevai jor
[S.G.G.S.page 701]

May someone unite me with the Lord.

There are many incidents from this great saint's life that I recall. I

wonder when my life may end. I wished someone could take notes or should give a written form to the numerous memories my heart has of this noble soul. The world today is after imposters. He is a diamond but very few people in the Sikh world realize this fact:-

ਹੀਰਾ ਲਾਲ ਅਮੋਲਕੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਰੀ ਬਿਨੁ ਗਾਹਕ ਮੀਕਾ ਕਾਖਾ ॥

(ਅੰਕ ੬੯੬)

Heeraa laal amolak hai bhaaree bin gaahak meekaa
kaakhaa

[S.G.G.S.page 696]

A jewel or a diamond may be very invaluable and heavy, but without a purchaser, it is worth only straw.

13.Maskin Ji's life is a unique one. In the year 1975 Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji's 300th year martyrdom was celebrated all over the world with devotion. Other communities also joined to participate and seek Guru's blessing on this occasion.

Mazaffarpur in Bihar is a nice city. Sikhs here were also celebrating the occasion on a large scale. With special efforts of Sant Kartar Singh Ji of Patna Sahib three renowned figures of Sikh World, Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji, Head Granthi Sri Darbar Sahib, revered Maskin Sahib Ji, and Giani Ranjit Singh Ji Paras were invited on this occasion. Some renowned Ragi jathas were invited and discourses given. The Sangat of the area expressed the need to have a very exclusive and special *Amrit Sanchar* Programme to mark the event. This incident was before 1984, when Sikhs resided there in large numbers. There was a huge gathering. Paras Sahib had himself narrated this incident in one of the Samagams at Alwar. He was the same Paras Sahib who used to oppose Maskin Ji a lot, because he could not stand his truth, his grace, and the offerings of money Maskin Ji received. Then a day came when he became Maskin Ji's ardent admirer

Paras Ji said that his duty on the great occasion in Mazaffarpur was to inspire the people to participate in *Amrit Sanchar*. He said when I appealed to the congregation, 29 women and men decided to go for it. The Sangat numbered in thousands. After me Sant Kartar Singh Ji asked Singh Sahib Giani Chet Singh Ji to appeal to the Sangat to partake *amrit* as he was the Head

Granthi of Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and renowned figure in the Sikh world. When he appealed the number went to 46.

Then Sant Kartar Singh Ji himself stood up and appealed and the number reached 69. The entire Sangat was surprised that in spite of the appeal of three renowned figures to the Sangat again and again and also narrated related incidents but the figure stuck to 69. After this Sant Kartar Singh invited Maskin ji to put his thoughts on this before the Sangat and to inspire them to partake Amrit. This incident was narrated by Paras Ji himself to the Sangat. He said when this great soul, Maskin Ji came on stage before the Sangat, I do not know in which love and depth his words were immersed in for soon long lines of people started forming to partake Amrit. It seemed as though the entire Sangat was standing to give in their names. Six hundred and sixty-five sisters and brothers got ready to take Amrit. I remember only the words of a great person can hold so much power.

Recently, on the occasion of 300th Centenary celebrations of the birth of *Khalsa*, we under Maskin Ji's leadership toured the entire country (this include reverend Maskin ji, Jathedar Sahib of Takhats, Head Granti of Darbar Sahib, and 10 kirtani jathas) for Amrit Sanchar. We went to Ghauhati, Calcutta, Raipur and other places for Amrit Sanchar and reached Allahabad. The Sangat of this area was very enthusiastic. About seven hundred sisters and brothers were ready to partake Amrit and among these; more than 200 were *sahejdhari* and Hindu brothers. Among these were Bhagat Kabir Ji's followers. Those individuals who took Amrit expressed the desire that Maskin Ji tie the turban on their head. Among these, the number of Hindu brothers was around 200 and it was difficult for Maskin Ji to do it alone. So, Jathedar of Akal Takhat, Jathedar Sri Keshgarh Sahib, Jathedar Sri Damdama Sahib Ji, all joined to tie the turbans of these brothers. For all the Singhs who partook Amrit, Sardar Joginder Singh (of Allahabad) enthusiastically brought yards and yards of cloth for turbans for all to tie.

14. I remember in 1961 some children living in Alwar had inquired as to who was going to teach them Punjabi. We will forget our mother tongue. Maskin Ji thought over this. He had a sister-in-law by faith, Bibi Balwant Kaur. He told her let us take a room in the Gurudwara for this purpose. Thus they started to teach Punjabi

to a few children. Soon the number of children learning Punjabi increased. The number increased to 300. Amongst them were lot of local Rajasthani children and most of them were poor. A plot was purchased and rooms were constructed and later a high school was constructed with classes upto 10th, which is still running successfully. Hundreds of poor children are receiving free education in this school. Maksin Ji also gives free books and uniforms to them. Some poor children who did not have sweaters to wear for them, Maskin Ji personally went to the market and bought sweaters worth Rs.35,000/- and gave them. He bought uniform in hundreds from Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and distributed amongst them. He bought another bigger plot and started Sri Har Krishan Public School. To-day it is one of the renowned schools of the area with it owns three school buses for transportation and now even this has become a high school.

15. This happened recently when Maskin Ji was travelling from Alwar to Delhi with Amrik Singh. He was driving the car himself. On the way somebody waved his hand to stop the car and asked for a ride. Maskin Ji stopped the car and inquired where he wanted to go. He named the place and sat down. Maskin Ji and Amrik Singh were seated in the front seat and the stranger sat behind. It was evening. Maskin Ji said let us do Rehras Sahib Paath as it was his daily routine. Both Maskin Ji and Bhai Amrik Singh started reciting the Sodar Paath. He was listening from behind. Ardaas followed at the completion of the Paath. The man asked Maskin Ji to stop the car as he wanted to get down. Maskin Ji said the village you wanted to go has not come yet. He said I am not a resident of that village. I am a robber. I belong to a gang and am a robber. I sat in your car with the intention to rob you. I don't know what hymns (*kalam*) you recited, it has changed my mind. So please let me get down here. This is the influence of the company of the great soul. It can change the mind of even a robber. Believe me, the eyes of this noble soul sees no one as bad.

16. Once I was going to Ajitpur (UP) with Maskin Ji. We all reached Kanshipur. We were told buses will take us further from Kanshipur. But it so happened that on that day there was total strike in the entire state of UP and everything was closed including all buses and hotels. The grocery and food markets were closed

too. Maskin Ji had a habit of drinking tea. Feeling the urge for it he said let us go to Gurudwara and have tea. We were a group of twelve and the priest of the place was a very ordinary man. He passed us without even bothering to respond to our greetings. Maskin Sahib challenged Baba Kulwant Singh Ji to arrange tea for every one. Baba Kulwant Singh Ji replied let me make arrangements right away. He went to the residence of the priest. Addressing his wife as sister, he made request for 10-12 cups of tea.

He said even half a cup would suffice as they were only twelve.” of them. She replied, “brother I will make it immediately. Kulwant Singh returned. In a matter of a few minutes came with the priest’s wife, a teapot in her hand. She was followed by three children holding cups in their hands. Maskin Ji addressing us said, “Loved ones, Guru Nanak Dev Ji has sent you tea, so now take money out of your pockets and honour the children as they are the form of God”. Maskin Ji himself took out fifty rupees and others added five to ten rupees each and a sum of one hundred and sixty rupees was given to children and then he poured tea in his cup to drink. While the lady kept refusing the money saying there was no need for it, give us your blessings instead. She said we are simple people and their blessing would suffice.

When we were about to leave, we do not know what she must have told her husband, for he came to us in all humility. With folded hands he said he was a very ordinary man and asked for forgiveness.

The incident occurred in 23rd January 2001 when we were in Ahmedabad. From Gandhidham a youth came along with us to tour. This young man named Balbir Singh used to sell cassettes and there was Rs.9,000/- in his bag which was his collection from selling the cassettes. Balbir Singh forgot his bag when he went to take tea. This youth took the advantage of this and took the money bag out by sliding the mirror of the window and he disappeared for an hour. Soon the bag of Rs.9,800/- was found missing. Everybody was searched but all in vain. Maskin Ji was told about this. He said money should be kept safely and added do not worry, who so ever has taken it, will bring it back. By God’s grace the youth returned in the evening. When asked he refused, saying when did I take? For there is a proverb in Punjabi, that he is a thief and is clever also. A

thief acts smart. At last after many attempts he did admit the he has hidden the bag at a distance of six miles. The bag was found and Rs.7200/- were given. Rs.2400/- were missing. The man whose money was stolen was holding a stick to hit but the other Singhs urged him not to and took him to Maskin Ji. It was 1 'O' clock at night. Maskin Ji addressed him politely saying that you appear to be a Sikh of the Guru and yet say that you haven't taken Rs.2400/- and that Rs.7200/- was all that was in the bag. To this the youth replied I can't lie to you now. Let me tell you the truth. There were four others with me I have spent the money with them and they have taken some of it. I have spent it. I have returned Rs 7200/-. Maskin Ji said no one will touch this youth and told Bhai Inder Singh Ji not to utter a bad word to him. Take Rs.100/- for bus fare to Gandhidham and send him home. Thus Maskin ji's noble soul made a saint out of a thief with his kindness.

This happened recently in 2001. Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin along with five to six *ragi jathas*, kathakars and poets reached Bhavnagar and Ahmedabad (Gujarat). After a number of Gurmat Samagams at various places, Maskin Ji left for Bombay by air from Ahmedabad on January 25th2001, and the rest of his companions left by train. On the 26th January there was a severe earthquake in Ahmedabad and neighbouring areas with a great loss to both life and property. After reaching Jaipur Maskin Ji said I feel deeply for those who died in this earthquake but thanks to Waheguru, who has protected and saved you. He is great. We left on the 25th January and thus Maskin Ji's led a life that was real and not hollow. He neither flatters others nor depends on others. How can one praise these beloved of God. They live a very natural life without pretence. People pretending greatness move around with a group of flatterers but Maskin Ji never felt the need for them. His love was even more for the less fortunate. He always shared everything with everyone. He gave every one according to their needs. He saw to it that nobody was left out. In this world when people invite Kirtani Jathas, they pay handsome amount to each but the Jatha that travels with Maskin Ji, the amount paid to one is divided in as many as eight. Gurudwara Committees do not understand the needs of his group. How do we expect them to know the feeling and devotion that goes with a living saint like him?

as there was no bus behind them and the fact was that they were driving very fast. No bus had crossed us. So how did he make it there. The great soul said that he had wanted to travel with Maskin Ji and he left him behind. Maskin Ji invited him to join for the meal but he said he was full. After having our lunch we went to Jammu and saw him again standing at the door of Singh Sabha Gurudwara.

Maskin Ji was in shivers again and wondered "O lord! Who can this great soul be? Who was this soul in close communion with you". Baba I heard you can go where you want and your Sikhs are like you too. The soul left and sat as usual on the terrace. With trembling hands Maskin Ji himself took meal for him upstairs. On insisting hē took a chapati (Parshada) and some *dal* (stew) overtop it in hand and refused a plate. He travelled to Srinagar with us and wherever he went I found him standing in front of me as though he had been flying to these destinations. We did have glimpses of him in the way. Reaching Srinagar he disappeared saying that he was travelling with him till Srinagar on Guru's order and we will meet again. Saying this left. I saw him once again in Sis Ganj Gurudwara in Delhi. I have come again today and come with a request to have the Guru's belongings moved from Sri Darbar Sahib Amritsar to Anandpur Sahib. This happened in 1982. He said the Shrimoni Gurudwara Committee listens and respects you, so please have the Toshakhana moved to Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur. Otherwise he warned, it will be burnt. I said that I am ordinary person and that nobody will listen to me. It happened as predicted in 1984 when most items in Toshakhana were burnt. Maskin Ji was thus in communion with such devotees of God who were close to God like himself.

Once, when Maskin Ji had to travel to Ferozepur, Baba Makhan Singh ji of Sattowali Gali, Amritsar sent him his car and a driver for the journey. I and another kirtani Jatha were travelling with Maskin Ji at that time when the vehicle broke down seven miles before Ferozepur. The driver asked Maskin Ji what was to be done as it was getting dark in the outskirts. We left the car there and started on foot. After walking a mile and a half we reached a village. Seeing us approaching they decided to take us to the head of the village's house. While we were discussing, the headman arrived there. We were told that he was an alcoholic. He greeted

When a devotee achieves the state of sainthood, he is not affected by name, fame and honour. This state is above all desires. He continued but those who are after worldly powers, how are they to realize who I am. This holy man has the truth. At that time Maskin Ji had a sevadar with him who was a known robber of his time. This man from the mountains had been a murderer too. His name was 'Ratan'. He had accompanied Maskin Ji for some reason. Maskin ji knew everything about him. It was Maskin Ji who had domesticated him and brought him along. He was very angry and many times tempted to draw his long sword in fury. When he stood up in the gathering, people feared he might attack the local Sadh. But Maskin Ji warned him and he sat down. The next day the gathering was even bigger. On that day Maskin Ji's topic of discussion was:-

ਹਮਰੋ ਭਰਤਾ ਬੜੇ ਬਿਬੇਕੀ ਆਪੇ ਸੰਤੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ ॥

hamro bharta baddo bibaekke aapae sant kahaavai

My Husband is the Great One of discriminating wisdom; He alone is called a Saint.

ਓਹੁ ਹਮਾਰੈ ਮਾਥੈ ਕਾਇਮੁ ਅਉਰੁ ਹਮਾਰੈ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥੩॥

(ਅੰਕ ੪੭੬)

oh hamarae maathae kaeim

oar hamarai nikat n aavai

[S.G.G.S. page 476]

He stands by me,

and no one else comes near me. ||3||

When the discourse started, there was immense bliss and sweetness. He gave an example of Jaibulnisa. Addressing Nightingale Jaibulnisa says do not sing such sweet melodies, my father Aurangzeb's ear cannot stand them. If he hears you sing, he may put you to death too. There was a procession of some musicians outside the Red fort. Aurangzeb inquired where these musicians were heading to. The answer was to bury all the Raags (musical notes). To this he said make sure you bury them so deep that they never raise their head again and come back to the world. So dear bird, my father will not tolerate your melodious singing. Maskin Ji said the Nightingal's reply to Jaibulnisa was I will sing my song, if

not here, then in some other garden. I will sing my song and sing it as my Lord wishes me to. When Maskin Ji was about to leave, everyone was surprised and feared that he may not come back again.

He had been visiting Kanpur from 1958 to 1973; will he stop his visits now? For fifteen years he had been coming there for a month or two. Will he not come anymore? When he was about to leave a God loving person came and started asking Maskin Ji what did you say? You will not come? You will come for come you must. Maskin Ji replied "Where will I come and address you?" When God wishes I will come. The following year a God loving Sikh had decided to construct a Dharamshala with his children's money so that Maskin Ji will have a place for his annual visits and talks. Our wealth does not go with us. It is of no use. But the Sangat at Kanpur will definitely listen to Maskin Ji's talks. This man was Gurbachan Singh Akali who took the initiative and did the work. When the Gurudwara was completed he went to Alwar to invite Maskin Ji, as the stage was ready for him to speak. When Maskin Ji came to Kanpur and asked Akali ji how long he wanted the talks to be. The answer was now that the Dharamsala was completed as long as Maskin Ji wished. Maskin Ji inquired the place where Guru Granth Sahib Ji is. Will it be used later on for parties, meat and liquor. Akali ji said he had constructed the Dharamsala. Originally the purpose that it will be the center of Dharam (religion) with spiritual discourses and kirtan and katha. There will be no weddings and parties. Now the Sangat gets an opportunity to hear Maskin Ji for 5-7 days only. Sangat there requests him to increase it to a few more days. Now a time has come when the whole world yearns to hear Maskin Ji's discourses. No matter in which part of the world Guru Nanak's Sikhs reside today, they long and yearn to hear Maskin Ji's talks even if it is for a single day. This speaks of Maskin Ji's greatness. Many opponents came and opposed him but ultimately truth has always won.

21. Akali ji first and foremost holds Guru Granth Sahib ji in high esteem and next to it, is Maskin Ji. It is important for me to mention here another Gurmukh soul whose name is Bahadur Singh. Maskin Ji often used to mention him in his talks. At that time he used to ask the meaning of one line of Japji Sahib. He would memo-

rize it and accept it in its totality and return the next day and ask the next one and memorize it. Sangat have always come in large numbers to hear Maskin Ji but the great soul Bahadur Singh Ji was a true listener. He does not come to the Gurudwara these days as he has reached a state of enlightenment and wisdom. This noble soul rinsed in love of the Lord has given up his business running in millions and these days he is totally immersed in the Name of the Lord.

ਫਲ ਕਾਰਨ ਫੂਲੀ ਬਨਰਾਇ ॥
fal kaaran foolee bunuraae

Plants blossom forth to produce fruit.

ਫਲੁ ਲਾਗਾ ਤਬ ਫੂਲੁ ਬਿਲਾਇ ॥
fal laagaa tub fool bilaae

When the fruit appear, the flowers wither away.

ਗਿਆਨੈ ਕਾਰਨ ਕਰਮ ਅਭਿਆਸੁ ॥
giaanai kaaran karam abhiaas

*For the sake of enlightenment,
people act and practice rituals.*

ਗਿਆਨੁ ਭਇਆ ਤਹ ਕਰਮਹ ਨਾਸੁ ॥੩॥ (ਅੰਕ ੧੧੬੭)
giaan bhaeiaa theh karameh naas
[S.G.G.S.page 1167]

*When spiritual wisdom wells up,
then actions are left behind. ||3||*

The ultimate aim of the flowering of all vegetation is to fruit. The flower withers away when it becomes a fruit. There is no need for the flower now. The ultimate aim for all efforts is acquiring divine wisdom. When enlightenment dawns, the need for effort vanishes. Bhai Bahadur Singh Ji has the Prakash of Guru Granth Sahib ji in his own house. The day begins at 2:00 to 2:30 in the morning in the company of Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He sits in meditation till 7:00 in the morning. Then he joins his Satsangi friends in the park. Bhai

Bahadur Singh Ji who was at one time a wholesale dealer, now deals with prayers in his love of God (Satnam).

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੇ ਬਿਆਪਾਰੀ ॥
har kae naam kae biaapaaree

I am a trader in the Name of the Lord.

ਹੀਰਾ ਹਾਥਿ ਚੜਿਆ ਨਿਰਮੋਲਕੁ ਛੂਟਿ ਗਈ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
(ਅੰਕ ੧੧੨੩)

heeraa haath charriaa nirmolak chhoot ge
sunsaaareeII੧IIpauseII
[S.G.G.S. page 1123]

*The priceless diamond has come into my hands.
I have left the world behind. ||1||Pause||*

Whenever we meet he inquires about Maskin Ji because he reached this state under Maskin Ji's guidance. His soul is in a state of divine communion. My heart longs to be in his company forever. Maskin Ji used to say, "Here I am standing at the cross-roads showing the way but those who follow the shown path and reach their destination are the lucky ones. They are truly blessed."

ਸਚੀ ਬੈਸਕ ਤਿਨਾ ਸੰਗਿ ਜਿਨ ਸੰਗਿ ਜਪੀਐ ਨਾਉ ॥ (ਅੰਕ ੫੨੦)
sachee baisak tinaa sang jin sang japeeai naao
[S.G.G.S.page 520]

The true society is the company of those
who meditate on the Name of the Lord

MASKINJI & HIS FAMILY

Spiritual katha (discourses) of Maskin Ji on T.V. have now become an integral part of the Sikh Sangat's daily routine. His priceless words are enriching the life of many everyday. Listening to his discourses many have attained spiritual heights. It has changed the lives of many and will continue to enrich the lives of others in future. With time the Sangat's love for Maskin Ji has been increasing. It is not by any committee but the Sangat who honoured him with the title of "Panth Ratan" or "The priceless jewel of the Panth". His happiness lies in the happiness of the Sangat. Listening to him speak, Sangat felt as though he was sent by God to show the right path to the Sikh community who was deviating and had forgotten their purpose. The Sikh community and people of other Faiths believed that they had a great spiritual philosopher who could answer to all their questions in this era of Kaljug. His sudden leaving for heavenly abode after a continuing series of fiery and effective discourse has left the entire Sadh Sangat in a state of shock. This was a great shock beyond endurance for the entire world including his family. His family was eagerly awaiting his return home but was shocked and could not mentally reconcile to the fact that he will not be coming home now. Maskin Ji was never able to spend much time with his family. His family lived with this satisfaction that when Maskin Ji would grow old he would then rest at home with his family and everybody would have a chance to serve, share his talks and be happy with him but that will now never happen. Today, his family members gaze at his clothes and his other personal possessions with eyes filled with tears. Even today they can sense the presence of his dynamic personality around them. His family prays to Almighty Waheguru to shower them with his love and blessings. They also pray that the tradition of great Gurmat Samagam that he had started with lots of love and enthusiasm should continue. There

used to be year long preparations for it. Maskin Ji was always working towards making better arrangements for it.

Maskin Ji was married to Bibi Sundar Kaur, daughter of Sardar Harnam Singh Ji from Delhi in the year 1957. Bibi Sundar Kaur is a paragon of seva. They had five children: Three sons (Amarjit Singh, Amolak Singh and Bhupinder Singh) and two daughters Gurbachan Kaur and Manjot Kaur. Many a time Bibi Sundar Kaur along with the children toured with him. They were always accompanied by companions and student scholars. Bibi ji always took care of the entire *langar seva* all by herself. Once observing her deep devotion and seva in Nainital, Baba Balwant Singh Ji (Maskin Ji had done his Gurmat studies under him for a long time) had blessed her as Mata "Looee". Even today she takes care of the entire *langar seva* in the great annual Gurmat Samagan started by Maskin Ji.

During the summer vacations that lasted for about two months, Maskin Ji used to go with his family to Kashmir. He was also accompanied by companions and student scholars. This one and half to two months in the whole year was the only free time that his wife and children got to spend with him. After addressing in Jammu and Kashmir he would reach Pehalgam with his family where he gave talks only in the mornings. A few Sikh families resided there. Having a lot of free time in the midst of beautiful scenes of Nature he started to write his books *Guru Chintan* and *Guru Jyoti* here at the repeated requests of the Sangat. His family would eagerly look forward to this vacation time. Apart from this he used to visit home (Alwar) but never stayed for more than two or three days. Many times he would arrive in the morning, meet his family and leave on the same day. On these occasions of home coming the family was filled with blooming happiness. The place became alive with life and joy similar to one with marriage in the offing. But when it was time for him to leave, his wife would send the children out (when they were young) on some pretext. Not finding their father home on their return they would seek solace in their mother's or grandma's lap. The grand-mother loved her grand children a lot. She kept them busy and interested by narrating stories to them in their free time. The grandma waited for her son, the mother for her husband and the children look forward for the day of their Dad's

return. Whenever he came home he brought toys for his children and gave them so much love that his family would forget the long separation.

Now, his children have their families. His entire family including his grand children used to annually accompany him to Guru Ram Dass Ji's holy place of Amritsar on Guru Ram Dass Ji's Gurpurab. Maskin Ji stayed and gave discourses at Manji Sahib for fifteen to twenty days starting from the Gurupurab until Diwali every year. He never missed this occasion. His family also got a chance to stay with him here. His loving family, his friends and companion Ragis would also stay in the place made by him called "Maskin Kutiya". The whole place looked like a fair. There was always a crowd of people lined up to meet and talk to him. It was a great learning experience for all. Even today (though it has only been a short while that he has left us) Sangat goes to his place in Amritsar and can experience his presence there.

He was as rich in his actions as he was man of his words. Whatever he preached he practiced in his actual life. His eldest son S. Amarjit Singh got married to Bibi Rajni Kaur, daughter of Sardar Tirath Singh ji of Indore. They have a son Arshpreet Singh and a daughter Deepjyot Kaur. His grand daughter also got the opportunity to tour and did kirtan with him. She won the love and affection of her grand-father. His second son Amolak Singh married Bibi Jasbir Kaur, daughter of Sardar Balwant Singh ji of Patna. They have two daughters, Simrandeep Kaur and Amandeep Kaur. His youngest son Bhupinder Singh married Bibi Tejinder Kaur, daughter of S. Tarlochan Singh Ji of Lucknow. They have two sons, Jasmeet Singh and Devjot Singh. Younger to him is his daughter Gurbachan Kaur, married to S. Dharambir Singh, son of Sardar Narain Singh Ji of Delhi (Kabli). They have two children, daughter Jasleen Kaur and a son Savrandeep Singh. His youngest daughter Manjot Kaur got married about a year and half ago to Jagpreet Singh, son of Sardar Harbans Singh Ji of Delhi and have a son named Kabir Singh. Maskin Ji named all his grand children and all of them are blessed with a melodious voice. Today, his family thanks the Almighty Waheguru million times and consider that they are fortunate to be part of the family of such a great soul.

At the requests of the Sangat, whom he considered the

form of the Guru and never refused any of their wishes, he started to dictate his biography but unfortunately it could not be published in his life time. He spent his entire life in bringing people on the path of Gurmat. Not only the Sikh Sangat but also Hindus, Muslims Christians and people of other faiths loved him. The fact that he had a very broad vision and was secular is clearly reflected in his talks. He always participated and took great interest in Inter Faith Programs. The huge crowd on his funeral rites, attended by people from different faiths and from the country and abroad is a clear example of the love, people have for him.

The Gurmat Knowledge, which he had acquired after deep study of Guru Granth Sahib all his life was presented by the grace of Waheguru to the Sangat. The real tribute to respected Giani Sant Maskin Ji would be to walk on the path that he showed us

From his family

AIK JOT DOAE MOORTI

(One soul in Two Bodies)

ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਮੂਰਤੀ

The sacred Gurbani's Line, "*Aik Jot Doae Moorti, Dhan Pir Kaheai soae*" (The ideal husband and wife are like: One Soul in two bodies) was exemplary followed by respected Mata Sunder Kaur ji, the wife of Giani Sant Singh Ji Maskin-as she could not bear her separation from her worshipful husband and left for her heavenly abode on 17th Oct.2005 at 11.30 AM, thereby giving another jolt to her children who, after their separation from their father, were getting consolation from their dependence on the affection of their noble mother. Perhaps Maskin ji was waiting in the Heavens for this fondling mother who had always waited for the arrival of her husband from the religious tours and sermons; throughout her whole life. After passing away of Maskin ji, she passed eight months in the unbearable separation from him. She always remembered and recalled him. At the departure of Maskin ji, the whole world was bewailing. In view of this, it is very difficult to gauge the internal condition and grief of Mata Sunder Kaur Ji. On this day the entire family of Maskin ji prey to God from the depth of their hearts that He may keep him very close to His Feet and may enable the whole family to follow the path shown by him.

From his Family

YOU AND ME

ਤੁਸੀਂ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ

You are a blooming plant
I am the fallen bud.

With every breath you are coming near
And every moment I am going apart.

You spread happiness
I spoil the moments.

You keep on showering blessings
I go on being mean.

You love to share sorrow
I am being rude.

You lead the way
I keep on falling.

You are becoming bright
I am fading my colours.

You are a fragranced wrist
I am a glass bracelet.

You are filled with love
I am getting hollow.

You are spreading the light
I am leading the dark.

This poem was recited by Kāvi Raj Bhai Sahib Jai Singh Shugal ji at the Annual Gurmat Samagam on 3r March, 2003 at Alwar addressing Maskin ji (A True Saint). The poet has used it as a form of expression. He refers 'You' as a Saint sent by God to awaken 'me' (World) who has developed a habit of living in dark.

[Editor]

EPILOGUE

A light of the divine knowledge in the form of Sant Singh ji “Maskin”ji was born in the year 1934, to a devoted mother Sardani Ram Kaur ji and Sardar Kartar Singh ji at tehsil Lakki Marwat, in Banu district of Frontier Province. Maskin ji took the priceless jewels of wisdom from the sea of knowledge, Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji and carried forth the mission of Dhan Sri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji, who was an embodiment of Divine Light. With this mission he toured countries all over the world, sprinkling the nectar of the Holy Word(Naam) and bringing home those who had deviated or forgotten the path shown by the Guru. This mission was still in process when “the summon from the Lord came”. In accordance with this, on a Friday morning of 18--2-2005 at eight O’clock he left for his heavenly abode in Etawah, a township in the U.P. province of India. With his physical demise, the world in general and the Sikh community in particular experienced a deep loss, for his absence has created a vacuum that cannot be filled.

To my readers:

The finest word is ‘WAHEGURU’

The best poem is ‘SHABAD’

The world’s perfect encyclopaedia is Adi Guru
Granth Sahib.

The world’s best exercise is ‘SIMRAN’

May God enlighten you to the path of harmony
shown by Him.

[Editor.]

MASKIN JI'S NOTION ON RUBAIYAT

ਰੁਬਾਈਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰ

ਘਟਾਵਾਂ ਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਮੈਂ ਜ਼ਾਹਰ ਹਾਂ।

ਤਨਜ਼, ਤਰਕ, ਫਿਕਰ ਫਕੀਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਹਿਰ ਹਾਂ।

ਕੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਜੇ ਜ਼ਮਾਨੇ ਜ਼ਮੀਂ ਖਿਸਕਾਈ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਥਲੋਂ,

ਮੈਂ ਉਡ ਵੀ ਸਕਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸ਼ਾਇਰ ਹਾਂ।

Ghtavan kalian de wich main zahar han.

Tanaz tarak fikar fakiri wich mahir han.

Kee hoeaa je zamaney zamin khiskaeae pairan thallon.

Main udd vee sakda han kion ki shaear han.

I am manifest in the dark clouds.

Also an expert in sarcasm, arguments,
anxiety and life a recluse

What if the world has

pulled the ground beneath my feet,

Being a poet, I can fly.

During some of life's pensive and dejected moments when one's consciousness turns inward, the more depressed he is, the deeper his concentration gets. The truth is that during the moments of fun and frolic the concentration or attention of man is very shallow. From among the numerous gifts of Nature, it has blessed mankind with a priceless gift of sorrow (reasoning). But man has found an easy way and misused it, like the other gifts of Nature. Man's reflection during this phase goes so deep that the world becomes unbearable and appears worthless. This is a very precious phase. Musical composition and poetry flows when we couple this particular time with deep contemplation. If we go deep further divine

contemplation surges forth. It is a fact of life that we get the pearls of wisdom only when we dive into the deep sea of disappointment in life. It is from the dark depth of depression in life that we get rays of new hope.

ਹਰ ਸ਼ਾਖ ਰੰਗ ਅਮੇਜ਼ੀ
ਦਰ ਫਸਲੇ ਖਿਜ਼ਾਂ ਅੰਦਾਖ਼ਤਾਂ
Har sha-kh rang a-may-zee
Dar fas-lai khi-za an-dakh-ta

In the complete darkness of the night is born the bright light of wisdom. The seed always breaks open inside the darkness of the soil and then comes out as a seedling.

This same seedling grows to be a plant and blooms with flowers and bears fruit. In the darkness of the mother's womb the cell gets a new life and takes the shape of a beautiful body. A person who realizes that worldly comforts are useless and searches deep into the cause of coming on earth. Those are valuable moments of life when one searches for truth. It is at this point of time that poetry, art, music and religion start and blossom. In the shadow of sorrow new life starts.

From child-hood, my life has passed through the sad, gloomy valley of hardships. And whenever any particular hardship made me deeply sad, first it burst in the form of poetry and later it was followed by contemplation of the Divine. This pain has become a gift and has bloomed in my heart.

I was born and bred in the land of Pathans, where Persian and Pashto were spoken and Urdu poetry was a part of the culture. For this reason whenever poetry emerged from within, it was in Urdu language. I have at times said poetry in Punjabi and Brij Hindi but the deep stamp has been that of Urdu. Though Urdu is no longer prevailing as it used to, yet it is a very sweet and sophisticated language.

Being very inspired by some of my friends, I have named my collection "Khizaan-O-Bahaar" and present it for publishing. I will consider my humble effort successful; if my poetry helps in turning the readers attention (flow of thoughts) inward; thus removing their shallow thoughts and compelling them to take look deep within themselves.

ਇਸ ਭਰੀ ਝੋਲੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਫੁਲ ਡੁਲ ਕੇ ਜੋ ਮੇਰੇ ਹਥ ਆਏ,
ਮੈਂ ਕਲਮ ਦੇ ਧਾਗੇ ਨਾਲ ਪਰੋ ਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ।

*Is bha-ree jholi vich kuj phool
dhul kai jo mairae hatha-ay.
Main kalam dai dha-gai na-al
p-row ke paesh ki-tay han*

When from His abundance I received a few flowers,
with my pen I have threaded them and presented.

Maskin ji

KHIZAAN O BAHAAAR (ਖਿਜ਼ਾ-ਓ-ਬਹਾਰ)

The Fall and the Spring.
(Punjabi Rubaeean by Maskin Ji).

1. ਮੈਂ ਪ੍ਰੇਮੀ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ, ਪਰ ਗੁਨਾਹਗਾਰ ਵੀ ਹਾਂ
ਸਚ ਦਾ ਮੈਂ ਪੁਜਾਰੀ ਪਰ ਮੱਕਾਰ ਵੀ ਹਾਂ
ਉੱਝ ਤਾਂ ਦਿਸ਼ਾਂ, ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਚਾਨਣ
ਪਰ ਅਦਿਸ਼ ਵਿਚ, ਅੰਧ ਤੇ ਗੁਬਾਰ ਵੀ ਹਾਂ।

1. *Main premee guna da, par gunahgar ve han.*
Sach da mai puja-ree par makkaar ve han.
Unj tan disan, duniya da chanan,
Par adrish vich, andh te gubaar ve han.

I love the virtues, but am sinner inside.
I worship truth, but am crook inside.
Outside I look like an enlightened being,
But full of dust and darkness inside.

2. ਰਾਤ ਆਈ ਤਾਂ, ਦਿਨ ਨੂੰ ਉਡੀਕਿਆ
ਦਿਨ ਆਇਆ ਤਾਂ, ਉਡੀਕਾ ਰਾਤ ਦੀ
ਸੋਚਾਂ ਮੌਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ, ਸਮਾਂ ਲੰਘਿਆ
ਮੌਤ ਆਈ ਤਾਂ, ਮੰਗ ਹਯਾਤ ਦੀ।
ਸ਼ਾਲਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂ, ਕੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਕਿਥੋਂ ਹੈ
ਸਵਾਲ ਉਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ, ਮੇਰੀ ਵਾਤ ਤੇ
ਲੰਘੀ ਅਰਥੀ, ਤਾਂ ਪਹੁੰਚਾ ਮਰਘਟ ਤੇ
ਘਰ ਆਇਆ ਤਾਂ, ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਬਾਰਾਤ ਤੇ।

2. Raat aae tan , din nu udikiya

Din aeya tan , udika raat di.

Sochan mout deeyan vich, saman langhya,

Mout aae tan, mang hayat dee.

Shalla eh hai keyon, kee ha, te kethon hai

Sawaal uokarday rahe, mairae vaat te,

Laanghee arthee, tan pahoncha marghat te

Ghaar aeya tan, najran baraat te.

I long for daylight, when night falls;

And long for night, when daylight approached

My whole life is spent, pondering over death

Now I long for life when death approached.

Why, what and how? O dear,

Such trivial thoughts pop up in my mind.

I think of graveyard, when I see a funeral pass

Inside me, I again start dreaming of a wedding

procession.

3. ਉਡਾਰੀ ਚਾਹੇ ਹੋਵੇ, ਅਸਮਾਨ ਤੇ,

ਰਿਜ਼ਕ ਲਭਦੇ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੇ, ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਤੇ।

ਸਚ ਤਾਂ ਅਜ਼ਲ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਕੌੜਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ,

ਅੱਖੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਐਵੇ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਤੇ।

3. *Udaree chahai hovay, asmaan te*

Rijaak labhday ne saray, jameen te.

Sach tan ajal ton he koorhaa lagdaa reeha,

Oukhay hunnday ne a-vain 'Maskeen' te.

We may reach out to the sky,

We all find our sustenance on earth.

Truth has always tasted bitter,

Why grumble on meek on earth.

4. ਮੈਂ ਕੰਚਨ ਨਾ ਸਹੀ, ਕੱਚ ਤਾਂ ਹਾਂ

ਦੀਦ ਨਾ ਸਹੀ, ਤੇਰੀ ਅੱਖ ਤਾਂ ਹਾਂ

ਓਹਲੇ ਕਿਉਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਏ, ਤੂੰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ

ਆਖਿਰ ਮੈਂ ਇਕ, ਝੂਠਾ ਸੱਚ ਤਾਂ ਹਾਂ।

4. *Main kanchan na sahee, kach tan han*

Deed na sahee, teree akh tan han

*Ohlai keyon karna aen mainu najraan ton
aakhir main ek, jootha sach tan han.*

A piece of glass I am, I admit and not a nugget of gold.
I may not be your sight, but your eye, I am, for sure.
Why have you kept me away from your sight?
Still a truth I am, though encased in oversight.

5. ਮੇਰੀ ਅੱਖ ਥਕੀ, ਤੇਰਾ ਦਿਲ ਥਕਿਆ।

ਮੇਰੇ ਬੋਲ ਥਕੇ, ਤੇਰਾ ਕੰਨ ਥਕਿਆ।

Ee/ j ੲ, s/ ubfdnK bs Eeh

EfenK j fJnK t h nkyo BK wB Efen k

5. *Merri akh thakee, tera dil thakya.*

Mayray boal thakay, tera kan thakya.

Thak-ya haath te chal-di-an lat thakee

Tha-kee-yan hoya ve akhir na man thakya.

My looks got tired, your heart was tired
Tired was my tongue speaking,
and your ears of listening.
Tired got my hands and so did my legs walking,
But my mind though tired, never gave up.

6. ਵਹਿੰਦੇ ਵਹਿਣਾ ਨੇ, ਵਹਿਣ ਪਾਇ

ਰੋਇ ਚੰਦ ਤਾਰੇ, ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਤ ਤੇ।

ਦਿਨ ਲੰਘਿਆ, ਅੱਖਾਂ ਮੀਟਦਿਆਂ

ਰਾਤਾਂ ਲੰਘੀਆਂ, ਉਡੀਕ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤ ਤੇ।

ਰਾਸ ਆਈ ਨਾ, ਜਗ ਦੀ ਰਾਸ-ਲੀਲਾ

ਉਡੀਕ ਰਖੀ, ਅਣ-ਡਿਠੀ ਸੋਗਾਤ ਤੇ।

6: *Vahin-de vahina ne, vahin paay*

Roay chand taray, mairree jaat te,

*Din langhya, akhan meetdiyan .
Raatan langhyan, udeek parbhat te.
Raas aae na jug dee raas-leela
Udeek rakhee, un-di-thee sougaat te.*

The flooded streams shed tears and,
The stars cried watching my fate.
The day passed, longing for some rest,
And the night passed, waiting for day-break.

7. ਸਭ ਅਸਬਾਬ, ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਨੇ
ਜੋ ਦੀਦ ਸਨ ਦੀਦਿਆਂ ਦੀ, ਉਹ ਖੋ ਗਏ ਨੇ।
ਨਵੀਨਤਾ, ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਕੋਸੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ
ਅਰਮਾਂ ਦਿਵਾਨੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਨੇ।

7. *Sub usabab, puranee ho gaiy ne,
Jo deed sun deedian dee oh kho gaay ne,
Naveenta ajay vee kooson duur hai,
Armaan diwanay ho gaay ne.*

Old and charmless have become all my possessions,
But what my eyes longed for, exists no more
Freshness (modernity) still seems miles away
And the wild passions exist no more.

8. ਉਮਰ ਲੰਮੀ ਨਾਂ ਸਹੀ, ਲਮੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਜ਼ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ।
ਧਨ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਨਾ ਸਹੀ, ਉਚੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ।
ਨਾਂ ਸਹੀ ਸੁਹੱਪਣ, ਮਾਨ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁਤਾ।
'ਮਸਕੀਨੀ' ਤਾਂ ਹੈ, ਇਕ ਹਮਰਾਜ਼ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ।

8. *Umar lammee na sahee, lammee pravaj tan hai
Dhan bohutaa na sahee, uchee awaj tan hai.
Na sahee sohuppan maan te prabhuta,
'Maskeenee' tan hai, ek hamraj tan hai.*

My life may not be long, but thoughts are high,
 I may not possess wealth, but my voice is strong.
 May not possess beauty, honor or prestige,
 Yet I have my humility, for me to confide.

9. ਸੁਣੀ ਤੂੰ ਇਕ ਨਾ, ਆਖਿਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਕੰਨੀ
 ਰਹਿਉਂ ਇਨਕਾਰੀ ਤੂੰ, ਇਕ ਗਲ ਨਾ ਮੰਨੀ।
 ਮੈਂ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਚੋਰ, ਆਖਿਰ ਲਾਈ ਸੰਨੀ।
 ਤੇਰੀ ਤਕਰਾਰ ਦੀ, ਦੀਵਾਰ ਭੰਨੀ।
 ਮੈਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਵੇਖ, ਨਸ਼ਿਆਇਆਂ ਹਾਂ।
 ਕਿ ਆਪਾ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ, ਸ਼ਰਮਾਇਆ ਹਾਂ।

9. *Sunee tun ek na, akhir mairee kannee*
Rahion inkaree tun, ek gal na mannee.
Main ban kay chor, akhir layee sanee,
Tairee takraar de deevaar bhannee.
Main tainu vaikh, nashianian han
Ke appa vekh ke, sharmaeian han.

You did'nt pay any attention, to what I said
 Always answered in negative, and never agreed.
 I broke in like a thief and at last could,
 Shatter the wall of resistance.
 Beholding your vision, I became intoxicated,
 Or was I shy of my own self.

10. ਫੈਲਾਈ ਚਾਦਰ ਆਸਾਂ ਦੀ,
 ਬੰਨੀ ਪੋਟ ਨਿਰਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ।
 ਮੁਖ ਮੋੜਿਆ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਜੀਵਨ ਤੋਂ,
 ਕਿ ਜੀਵਨ ਇਕ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ।

10. *Fehlayee chadar aasaan de*
Bannee poat neeraasan de
Mukh morhial hai, is jeewan ton,
Ke jeewan ek tamashaa hai.

I spread the sheet of hope,
Tied my bag of disappointment,
Turning away from such a life,
I realized the real scope.

11. ਖਾਮੋਸ਼ੇ ਵੀਰਾਨਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ, ਇਹ ਕੋਣ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਹੈ
ਡੁਲਿਆ ਜੋ ਖੂਨ ਬੇਦੋਸ਼ਾਂ ਦਾ, ਇਹ ਕਿਸ ਨੇ ਡੋਲਿਆ ਹੈ।
ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ, ਇਕ ਮਕਰ ਧੋਖਾ ਤੇ ਫਰੋਬ।
ਇਹ ਭੇਦ ਆਖਿਰ, ਕਿਸ ਨੇ ਖੋਲਿਆ ਹੈ।

11. *Khamoshai veeranian vich eh kãun bolia hai*
Dulia jo khoon bedoshian da, eh kis ne dolia hai.
Rajneetee ek makker dhokha te fareb,
Eh bhed akhir, kis ne kholia hai.

Who has murmured in such quite wilderness?
Who has squirted the blood of innocent people?
Politics is crookedness, deceit and slander,
Who disclosed this open secret, I wonder.

12. ਜ਼ਖਮ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਖਾਧੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਛੁਪਾਏ ਹਨ।
ਰੋਇਆ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਹਾਂ, ਪਰ ਮੈਂ ਰੋਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਸਾਏ ਹਨ।
ਜ਼ਬਰ ਜ਼ੁਲਮ ਮਕਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਧੋਖਾ
ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਨੀਤੀ ਦੇ ਭੇਦ ਪਾਏ ਹਨ।

12. *Jakhham tan main ve khadey han, par chhupaay han*
Royaa main ve bohãt han, par main roonday hoay
hasaay han.

Jabar, julam, makari te dhokha,
Main es desh di neeti day bhed paay han.

I endured a number of wounds, but concealed them,
I have wept a lot too, but I have made weeping laugh too
Torture, oppression, deceit and fraud,
I have discovered the secret of this country.

13. ਲਿਆਂਦੇ ਨੇ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ, ਜ਼ਮੀਂ ਤੇ ਕੁਛ ਤਾਰੇ।
 ਖਿਆਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਫਲਾਂ ਨਾਲ, ਹਸਤੇ ਸੰਵਾਰੇ।
 ਹਿਮਾਲਾ ਦੀ ਕੁੱਖ ਵਿਚੋਂ, ਕੱਢੀ ਮੈਂ ਰੀਗਾ,
 ਡੁਬਦੇ ਭਗੀਰਥ ਮੇਂ, ਕਿਤਨੇ ਨੇ ਤਾਰੇ।
13. *Liande ne main vee zamin te kuchh taray*
Khayalan de phalan nal, rastay savaray.
Himalla de kukh vichon kadee main ganga
Dubday bhageerath main, kitnay ne taray.

Heavenly stars brought I, on earth too,
 Paved all the thoroughfares with fruitful thoughts, too
 From the heart of the Himalayas, carved I the sacred Ganga.
 Thus I ferried across drowning Bhagirath, through

14. ਦੂਰ ਤੋਂ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਹਾਂ, ਦੂਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ
 ਨੇੜੇ ਹੋ ਆਖਾਂ, ਅਪਣੀ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ।
 ਉੱਝ ਤਾਂ ਗਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਹੈਂ, ਮੈਂ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰ ਹਾਂ,
 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਸਮਝਾਵਾਂ ਕਿਵੇਂ, ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਰੂਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ।
14. *Duor ton vekhda han, dureean nu*
Naerhai ho aakhan, apneea majburee-an nu.
Unj tan gum nahee tu duor hain, main majboor han
'Maskeen' samjhavan kevay, ena sarooreean nu.

Far flung destiny I visualize, from afar
 And talk to my helplessness, from very close
 You are far away and I am helpless o' Maskeen
 There is no way to get over this intoxication.

15. ਮਨਾਇਆ, ਰਾਤ ਦਿਨ ਆਖਿਰ ਮੈਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ।
 ਰੁਲਾਇਆ, ਰਾਤ ਦਿਨ ਆਖਿਰ ਤੂੰ ਮੈਨੂੰ।
 ਦਸਤਕ ਦੇ ਕੇ, ਹਥ ਤੁੜਵਾਏ ਮੈਂ ਹਨ।
 ਹੱਸ ਹੱਸ ਕੇ, ਹੰਝੂ ਵਗਾਏ ਮੈਂ ਹਨ।
15. *Manaya raat din akhir main tainu*
Rulaya raat din akhir tun mainu.
Dastak day ke, hath turhvai main han
Has has ka, Hanju vagaai main han

I tried to please you day and night.
 All my efforts remained fruitless, every time.
 Knocking hard at your door, I got badly hurt.
 Still felt pleasure inside, shedding tears every time.

16. ਮੇਰੇ ਗੀਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਤੂੰ ਜ਼ਿੰਦ ਹੈ ਪਾਈ
 ਮੇਰੇ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਵਿਚ ਤੂੰ ਆ ਕੇ ਛਾਈ
 ਵਸਲ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਨ ਇਕ ਪਲ ਵੀ ਕਦੇ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ'
 ਰੋ ਰੋ ਕੇ ਐਵੇਂ ਉਮਰ ਗਵਾਈ।

16. *Mairay geetan vich tun jind hai pae*
Mairay sangeet vich tun aa ke chhaee.
Vasal milia na ek pal vee kaday 'Maskeen'
Ro ro ke aivain umar gavaae.

You did infuse life in all my songs.
 And in all my musical compositions:
 Never could I enjoy your embrace O Maskeen
 I spent my life in fruitless wailing.

17. ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਨਾਪੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਤਾਰੇ ਵੀ ਗਿਣੇ ਨੇ
 ਦਸ਼ਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਵੀ ਜਾਣੀ ਹੈ, ਗੁਨਾਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਵੀ ਮਿਣੇ ਨੇ
 ਮਸਕੀਨੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਵੀ ਵੇਖੀ ਹੈ,
 ਤੇ ਠਾਠ ਤੇਰਾ ਵੀ ਤਕਿਆ ਹੈ
 ਥਕ ਕੇ ਟੁਟ ਕੇ ਝੁਕ ਗਿਆ ਹਾਂ,
 ਹੁਣ ਗੁਣ ਜਿੰਨ੍ਹੇ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੀ ਗਿਣੇ ਨੇ।
 ਗਿਣੇ ਮੈਂ ਅਉਗਣ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ,
 ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਂ ਗਿਣੇ ਨੇ।

17. *Zameen main ve napee hai te taray ve ginay ne*
Dasha teri ve janee hai, gunaah apne ve minay ne
Maskeenee apnee ve vaykhi hai,
Te ta-ath tera ve tak-ya hai.

Thak kay tut kay jhuk gayya han,
Hun gun jinay ne apne he ginay ne.
Ginai main oogun dunia de,
Gun Tere na ginai ne.

I did traverse the land counted all the stars too.
 I did ponder on your benevolence,
 and counted my sins too
 I did look at my meekness,
 And saw your grandeur too,
 After vouching such, I bow before you
 still sticking to my virtues.
 I kept looking evil all around and never tried to visualize
 your virtues.

18. ਜਲਾਵੇਂ ਮਸ਼ਾਲਾਂ, ਤੇ ਭਟਕੇਂ ਹਨੇਰੇ।

ਹੰਸਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਲੇਂ, ਲੜਾਵੇਂ ਬਟੇਰੇ।

ਉਡਾਵੇਂ ਖਿਆਲਾਂ ਦੀ, ਗੁਡੀ ਅਕਾਸ਼ੀ।

ਕਦਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਟਿਕਦੇ, ਜ਼ਿਮੀ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਤੇਰੇ

18. *Jalaavain mashallan, te bhatken haneray.*

Hansa nu palain, larhavain batayray.

Udavain khiyanllan dee, guddi akasheen

Kadam nahi tikday, zameen te ve teray.

You make the lamps glow, still living in darkness,
 You harbour swans and make cocks fight.
 In thoughts you fly way up in sky.
 But your feet are not steadfast on land.

19 ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਹੈ ਜੀਨਾ, ਤੇ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਹੈ ਮਰਨਾ।

ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਸੋਚਾਂ, ਇਹ ਕਰਨਾ ਉਹ ਕਰਨਾ।

ਹਾਂੜੇ ਤੇ ਹੀਲੇ, ਹੁਜ਼ਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਠਗੀ,

ਕਰਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੋਲੂ, ਜੰਮਣਾ ਤੇ ਮਰਨਾ।

19. *Mushkal hai jeena, te mushkal hai marna.*

Phir ve eh sochan eh karna oh karna.

Harhai te heelai, huztan te thaggi.

Karma da kolu, jamana te marna.

It is really hard to know whether to live or to die
 Still I engage myself doing this, doing that.

Submissions and efforts, obstructions and deceit.
Make the cycle of birth and death manifest.

20. ਧਰਮ ਵੀ ਧੰਧਾ, ਤੇ ਧੰਧਾ ਵੀ ਧੰਧਾ।
ਕਰਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਾਲ, ਬਸ ਫੰਦਾ ਹੀ ਫੰਦਾ।
ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਜਿਸਨੂੰ, ਵੈਹਸ਼ੀ ਸ਼ੈਤਾਨੀ।
ਉਹ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਬੰਦਾ, ਉਹ ਹੈ ਇਹੀ ਬੰਦਾ।

20. *Dharam ve dhanda, te dhanda ve dhanda.*
Karma da jaal, bas phanda he phanda.
Kaihn-day ne jis nu vay shee shaitannee.
O hai eh banda, o hai eehi banda.

Business is business, religion turned into business too.
Net of rituals is but deadly noose.
What is called barbaric and satanic
Is such a man, devouring ritualistic booze.

21. ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਬੂੰਦ ਲਈ ਤਰਸਾਂ, ਤੂੰ ਸਾਗਰ ਉਮੜਾਏ।
ਮੈਂ ਮੰਗਿਆ ਇਕ ਫੁਲ, ਤੂੰ ਗੁਲਸਿਤਾਂ ਸਜਾਏ।
ਮੈਂ ਲਭਾਂ ਹਨੇਰੇ ਚੋਂ, ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਜੋਤੀ।
ਲਖਾਂ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਹਿਮਤ ਨੇ, ਦੀਵੇ ਜਗਾਏ।

21. *Main ek boond laee tarsan, tun sagar umrhaai.*
Main mangiya ek phool, tun gulistaan sajaay.
Main labhan haneyre chon, jeevan de jyoti
Lakhan teri rehemat ne, deevay jagai.

I thirst for a drop of water, oceans you created for me.
When asked for single flower, gardens you produced for me.
I still carve for a speck of life's light in dark
Though innumerable lamp posts you lit for me

22. ਮੈਂ ਮਜਨੂ ਨਹੀਂ, ਜੋ ਸਹਿਰਾ ਵਿਚ ਭਟਕਾਂ।
ਤੇ ਮਹੀਵਾਲ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ, ਝਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਟਕਾਂ।
ਹੀਰ ਤੇ ਰਾਂਝੇ ਦੇ, ਕਿੱਸੇ ਬਸ ਕਿੱਸੇ ਨੇ।
ਮਨਸੂਰ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ, ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਸੁਲੀ ਤੇ ਲਟਕਾਂ।

22. *Main majnu nahi, jo sahra vich bhatkan.
Te maheeval de taran, Jhanna vich attkan.
Heer te ranjhay de, kisay bas kisay ne.
Man-soor de taran, main-taan sooli te latkan*

I am not Majnu, who lost himself in desert,
Neither am I Mahinwal, who sacrificed his life in river
Jhanaa for his love.
The love story of Heer and Ranjha is famous but,
I prefer to sacrifice myself like Mansoor for thy love.

23. ਮਾਜ਼ੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਯਾਦਾਂ, ਬਸ ਸਾਗਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਛੱਲਾਂ।
ਭਵਿਖ ਦੀ ਚਿੰਤਾ, ਬਸ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਗੱਲਾਂ।
ਜੀਵਨ ਮੈਂ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ, ਅੱਜ ਦੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ।
ਅਜ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਾਂ, ਤੇ ਅਜੇ ਹੀ ਮਿਲਾਂ।
23. *Mazee dee-yan yaa-dhan, bas sagar deeyan challan,
Bhavish de chinta, baas gallan he gallan.
Jeevan main sikheya, aaj de kolon,
Aaj nu millan, te aaj he millan.*

The memories of the past are but waves in ocean.
Worries of the future, looking scary figures in the sky.
I have learnt the lesson of life from the present.
I re-joyce this moment and never let it fly.

24. ਇਹ ਸਾਗਰ ਮੇਰੀਆਂ ਅਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਲ ਹੈ,
ਹਿਰਦਾ ਹੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਇਹ ਮਾਰੂਥਲ ਹੈ।
ਦਿਲ ਹੀ ਦੀ ਅੱਗ ਇਹ ਸੂਰਜ ਦਾ ਗੋਲਾ,
ਖਾਮੋਸ਼ੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਇਹ ਵਾ-ਵਾਰੋਲਾ।
24. *Eh saagar mayreyan aakhan da jal hai.
Hirda he mera eh maaru-thal hai.
Dil he de aag aih, suraj da golla
Khamooshi meri eh va varolla.*

The ocean is the sum of all my tears.
And the desert resembles my perched up heart.

The sun is, but the fire contained in me.
And my quiet is mere a column of dust.

Note:-

This incident happened long time back. Once Maskin Ji and the renowned senior philosopher Prof. Ganga Singh ji in Haldwani(U.P) met at a Gurmat Samagan. Once while they were strolling together at the bank of a small stream, Maskin Ji chanced to ask Principal Sahib about the state of his mind. Prof. Ganga Singhji in reply uttered a Rubaiy given below:-

ਦਿਲ ਸਾਗਰ ਸਾਗਰ ਦੇ ਵਾਂਗਰ,
ਸੀ ਅੱਤ ਡੂੰਘਾ ਅੜਿਆ।
ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸਿਦਕ ਦੇ ਮੋਤੀ,
ਪਾ ਦਾਤਾ ਨੇ ਘੜਿਆ।

Dil saagar saagar de yangar,

See at dunghaa arhia.

Gyan vichar sidak de motti

Pa data ne gharhia.

My heart is like a sea,
And like the sea it has a depth.
The Lord has blessed it with,
Pearls of wisdom, divine knowledge and perseverance.

ਪਰ ਇਹ ਬਾਣ ਕੁਚੱਜੀ ਮੇਰੀ, ਬਾਹਰ ਬੋਲ ਲੁਟਾਇਆ।
ਜਪ ਤਪ ਦੀ ਖੱਟੀ ਨਾ ਖੱਟੀ,ਖਾਲੀ ਪਿਰ ਦਰ ਖੜਿਆ।
Par eh baan kuchajji meri, Bahar boal lootaia.
Jap tap de khatee na khatee, Khalee pir dar khadiya.

But with my shaft of undesirable habits,
I have spent it in outward talks.
I did not meditate or did penance (self control) and thus
with no profit
I stand empty handed at my Master's door.

This inspired Maskin Ji and he recited out a Rubae of his given below. At that time Maskin Ji was twenty-one years old and the age of Principal Sahib was eighty-four. Hearing this Principal Sahib took him in a loving embrace and said what I have come to realize in my old age, you have understood it in your youth. This is God's grace.

ਦਿਲ ਸੂਰਜ ਸੂਰਜ ਦੇ ਵਾਂਗਰ,ਸੀ ਪਿਆ ਲਿਸ਼ਕਾਂ ਮਾਰੇ।
ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸਿਦਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਿਰਨਾਂ,ਭਰੀਆਂ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੇ।
Dil suraj suraj de vangar, Se pia lishkan maray.
gyan vichar sidhak dian kirna bharian sirjan haray.

My heart is fashioned like a Sun,
And like the Sun it shines.
The Lord has blessed it with
Rays of wisdom, divine knowledge and perseverance.

ਪਰ ਅਫਸੋਸ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਇਸ ਤਾਈ,
ਲਗਿਆ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਖੁਦੀ ਦਾ।
ਬੋਲ ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਚਮਕ ਗਵਾਈ,
ਘਿਰਿਆ ਹੁਣ ਅੰਧਿਆਰੇ।
Par affsoas 'Maskin' es taaeen,
Lagiya grahan khudi da.
Boal, boal ke chamak gavai.
Gh-ri-ya hun andh-ya-re.

But alas! O Maskin
Eclipsed by deep rooted ego,
It has lost its lustre through boastful utterance
And has got engulfed in darkness.

(URDU RUBAEEAN)

ਉਰਦੂ ਰੁਬਾਈਆਂ

(Maskin Ji)

1. ਟੂਟੇ ਹੁਏ ਸਾਜ਼ ਮੇਂ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਬਾਕੀ ਹੈ।
ਪਰ ਸਿਕਸ਼ਤਾ ਮੇਂ ਅਭੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਜ਼ ਬਾਕੀ ਹੈ।
ਬੁਝ ਚੁਕੀ ਕਬ ਕੀ ਸ਼ਮਾਂ ਏ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ',
ਮਗਰ ਫਿਰ ਅਭੀ ਜਲਨੇ ਕਾ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ ਬਾਕੀ ਹੈ।
1. *Tootai huay saj main awaj bakee hai.*
Par sikashta main abhi prawaj bakee hai.
Bujh chuki kab ki shamma –a- 'maskeen',
Magar phir abhi jalne ka andaj bakee hai.

Music is still there in the harp, though its strings,
broken.

Mind's flight is still on, though its wings, broken.

The candle got extinguished long time ago O' Maskin
But still has a way to glow, though its wick, broken.

2. ਭਟਕਤਾ ਹੋਸ਼ ਮੁਰਦਾ ਜੋਸ਼, ਕਹਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੂੰ।
ਤਪਤੀ ਜ਼ਮੀ ਔਰ ਯਖ ਆਸਮਾਂ ਪੇ ਛਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੂੰ।
ਕੈਸੇ ਕਟੇਗੀ ਇਨ ਬੇ-ਚਿਰਾਗ ਮਜ਼ਾਰੋਂ ਪਰ,
ਫੂਲ ਹੂੰ ਬੀਆਬਾਂ ਕਾ, ਔਰ ਮੁਰਝਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੂੰ।
2. *Bhatakta hosh murda josh, kahan main aa gia hoon.*
Tapti zameen aur yakh aasmaan pe chha gia hoon.
Kaisae kataygi en be-charag mazaron par,
Pholl hun beeaaban ka aur murjha gia hoon.

Under the spell of translucent ambition and blind
passion, I know not where I am.

Though I fly over scorching fields and frozen space,
 I know not where I am.
 How to spend precious moments near unlit tombs,
 I know not.
 Like the flower of wilderness, withered I am.

3. ਯੇਹ ਸਾਗਰ ਕੀ ਖਾਮੋਸ਼ੀ, ਵ ਜ਼ਮੀਂ ਕੀ ਚਾਪਲੂਸੀ।
 ਟਿਮਟਿਮਾਤਾ ਖੁਰਸ਼ੀਦ ਔਰ ਕੋਹ ਕੀ ਸਰ-ਫਰੋਸ਼ੀ।
 ਅਬਰ ਕਾ ਯਿਹ ਗਰਜਨ, ਔਰ ਬਰਕ ਕਾ ਮੁਸਕਰਾਨਾ।
 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਨਾ ਰਾਸ ਆਈ, ਇਨ ਸਭ ਕੀ ਯੇਹ ਮਦਹੋਸ਼ੀ।
3. *Yeh saagar ki khamoshi, va zameen ke chapalucy.*
Timtimatta khurshid, aur koh ke sarfroschi.
Abbar ka yeh garjan, aur barak ka muskarana.
'Maskeen' na raas aae, in subh ke yeh madhosee.

Oceans calm and flattery of the world, I see.
 Sun's gleams and tallness on mounts, I see.
 Thunder of clouds and lightning's smile O' Maskin
 Appeases me none, such mesmerizing artifacts, I see.

4. ਬੋਲੁ ਤੋਂ ਬੋਲ ਨਹੀ, ਚੁਪ ਰਹੁ ਤੋਂ ਰਹੁ ਕੈਸੇ।
 ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਲਾਚਾਰ ਹੈ ਦੁਸ਼ਵਾਰ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਮਰੁ ਤੋਂ ਮਰੁ ਕੈਸੇ।
 ਯੇਹ ਬੇ-ਮੁਨਸਫੀ ਅਦਾਲਤ, ਯੇਹ ਬੇ-ਤਖਤ ਸ਼ਾਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹ
 ਯੇਹ ਦਸਤ-ਬਸਤਾ ਗੁਜ਼ਾਰਿਸ਼, ਅਬ ਕਰੁ ਤੋਂ ਕਰੁ ਕੈਸੇ।
4. *Boalun to boal nahi, chup rahhun to rahhun kaise.*
Zindagi lachar he dushvar he, par marrun to marrun
kaise.
Yeh be-munsafee adaalat, yeh be-takhat
shahinshah.
Yaeh dasat-bastia gujareesh, ab karoon to
karoon kaise.

I can't keep quiet, nor do I have words to speak.
 I am in Limbo between Life and Death, so to speak.
 Looking at the un-just court and the throne-less King,
 To whom I appeal with folded hands, I know not what speak.

5. ਉੜਤੇ ਹੂਏ ਪਰਿੰਦ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਜ਼ ਕੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਹੈ।
ਗ੍ਰੀਮ ਹੋ ਚੁਕੀ ਜੋ ਰੂਹ ਮੇਂ, ਉਸ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਕੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਹੈ।
ਤਾਰੀਕੀਓਂ ਮੇਂ ਬਰਕ ਔਰ ਸੰਜੀਦਗੀ ਤੂਫਾਨ ਮੇਂ,
ਬਜ ਰਹਾ ਜੋ ਅਜਲ ਸੇ, ਉਸ ਸਾਜ ਕੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਹੈ।

5. *Urhtay huae parind ke prāvaj ke talash hai.*
Gum ho chuki-joe rooh main, u-s aawaj ke talaash hai.
Tareekiyon main barak aur sanjeedgi
tofaan main.
Baj raha jo azal se, us saaj ke talaash hai.

I am on the look-out for the spirit of the flying bird,
And searching for my Soul's lost sound.
There is the lightening in the dark and calmness of
storm.
I am seeking the source of the Life's primal sound.

6. ਢੂੰਡਤਾ ਹੂੰ ਅਪਨੇ ਕੇ,
ਅਪਨਾਪਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਤਾ।
ਇਸ ਗੁੰਬਦ ਕੇ ਸਾਇਆ ਮੇਂ,
ਹਮਾ-ਤਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਤਾ।
ਗੁੰਜਾਨ ਭਰੀ ਇਨ ਦਰਸ-ਗਾਹੋਂ ਮੇਂ,
ਕੋਈ ਅਹਿਲੇ ਦਿਲ, ਵ ਅਹਿਲ ਚਲਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਤਾ।

6. *Dhoondta hun apne ko,*
Apnapan nahi milta,
es guband ke saeya main,
hama-tan nahi milta.
Gunjan bharee in daras-gahon main,
Koe ahlay dil, va ahil chalan nahi milta.

Dwelling deep inside, I fail to find my own self.
Under the Canopy of the sky, I find not the in-mate soul.
Lot of sound coming out of intellectual centre, I hear.
But I have not found a single loving clean hearted soul.

7. ਤਲਬ ਛੋੜ ਕੋਹ ਸਾਰੋ ਮੈਂ
 ਔਰ ਮਜ਼ਹਬ ਕੇ ਬਾਜ਼ਾਰੋ ਮੈਂ,
 ਵੋਹ ਤੇਰੇ ਜਿਗਰ ਮੇਂ ਹੈ,
 ਛੋੜ ਇਨ ਬੇ-ਜ਼ੋਕ ਬੇ-ਸ਼ੋਕ
 ਵਾਇਜ਼ ਵ ਤਲਾਵਤ ਕੋ।
 ਜਜ਼ਬਾ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਸੇ ਜੋ ਪਾਮਾਲ ਹੈ
 ਵੋਹ ਤੋਂ ਉਸਕੇ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਮੇਂ ਹੈ।
 ਤਲਖੀਆਂ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰੀਆਂ ਹਾਏ ਯਿਹ ਦਸਤੂਰ-ਏ ਜਹਾਂ
 ਛੋੜ ਯੇਹ ਸ਼ਿਕਵੇ ਗਿਲੇ, ਔਰ ਯੇਹ ਰੰਜੇ ਗ਼ੀਮ,
 ਬੇਫਿਕਰ ਹੋ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਵੋਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਫਿਕਰ ਮੇਂ ਹੈ।

7. *Talāb chod koh saaro main,
 Aur mazhab ke bazaaron main,
 Woh tere jigar main hai,
 Chod in bezok beshouk
 Vaaiz va talavat ko.
 Jazbaa ishaq se jo pamal hai
 Who to uskay zikar main hai.
 Talkheeyan majbooreean haai yeh dastoor-ae-jahan.
 Chod yeh shikvay gilay, aur yeh ranjo gum.
 Be fikar ho 'Maskin' woh teri fikar main hai.*

Search not in the mountains or in the monasteries.
 He is enshrined in your own heart.
 Forget the lifeless dry discourses and shallow preachings
 And look for the Beloved in the shallow blooming heart.
 Give up the bitterness, reservations, excuses and
 complaints.
 You are always under his care and he cares for you.

8. ਪੈਗਾਮ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਣ ਨਾ ਸਕਾ
 ਜਾਮਿ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਪੀ ਨਾ ਸਕਾ।
 ਲਲਕਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕੀ, ਦਸਤੂਰ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਾ
 ਜ਼ਹੂਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਾ, ਐਸੀ ਹਯਾਤ ਜੀ ਨਾ ਸਕਾ।
8. *Peigaam Nanak sun na sakka
 Jaame sahadat pee na sakka.*

*Lalkar Guru Gobind ke, dastoor Mani Singh ka,
Zahoor Guru Granth ka, aisee hayat jee na sakka.*

I listened not to Nanak's message,
Nor sacrificed myself on his altar.
I couldn't enliven the way shown by Guru Granth,
Even over the thunderous sermon of the Gobind
and supreme devotion of Mani Singh, the martyr.

9. ਮੈਂ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੂੰ ਕਿ ਤਲਾਸ਼ਿ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਛੋੜ ਦੀ
ਹੱਸ ਰਹਾ ਹੂੰ ਬੇਬਾਕ ਹੰਸੀ ਛੋੜ ਦੀ
ਹਾਲਾਤ ਕਾ ਤਕਾਜਾ ਮਾਹੋਲ ਕੀ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰੀ
ਕਿਆ ਕਰੂੰ, ਮੈਂ ਕਿਆ ਕਰੂੰ, ਐਸੀ ਕਹੀ ਛੋੜ ਦੀ।
9. *Main khush hun ki talashe khushi chod de
Hus raha hun bebak hansi chod de
Halat ka takaja mahol ki mazboori
Kiya karon, main kiya karon, aisi kahi chod di.*

I abandoned the search for happiness, happy I am,
I shunned the blustering laughter, laughing I am.
To circumstantial restrictions and worldly norms,
I respond, how I respond, I care not.

10. ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ ਕਾ ਮਹਿਲ ਹੈ, ਤੋ ਪਥਰ ਕਾ ਡਰ ਹੈ
ਲਹਿਰੋਂ ਸੇ ਭਾਰੂੰ, ਰੇਤ ਕਾ ਘਰ ਹੈ।
ਲੇ ਜਾਉਂ ਇਸ ਦਿਲ, ਕਮਲ ਕੇ ਕਹਾਂ
ਬਾਰੂਦੀ ਫੂਲੋਂ ਸੇ, ਸਜਾਇਆ ਘਰ ਹੈ।
10. *Shishay ka mahal hai, to pathar ka dar hai,
Laharoon say bhagoon, rait ka ghar hai:
Lay jaaun is dil, kamal ko kahan.
Baroodi phooloon say, sajaya ghar hai.*

Living in a palace of glass, I dread the stones,
Living in a castle of sand, I am scared of the waves.
Adorned in the flowers of explosive stuff, I know
There is no way to save my lotus hearted cave.

11. ਐਸੀ ਭੀ ਹੰਸੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਰੁਲਾਇਆ ਹੈ।
 ਕੁਛ ਐਸਾ ਭੀ ਰੋਨਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਨੇ ਹੰਸਾਇਆ ਹੈ।
 ਜਨੂੰ ਐਸੇ ਭੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਨ ਮੇਂ ਮੁਰਦਮੀ ਹੈ।
 ਮੋਤ ਐਸੀ ਭੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਨੇ ਜਗਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

11. *Aisi bhee hansai hai, jis ne roolaiya hai.*
Kuch aissa bhe roana hai, jis ne hansaya hai.
Janoon aise bhe hain, jin main murdamee hai.
Mout aisi bhe hai, jis ne jagaya hai.

Such laughter is there, which really makes you cry,
 And there is such wailing too, which make you really
 Laugh.
 Some passions are there, deadly virus they contain
 And there is such a death too, which awakens your self.

12. ਮੇਰੀ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਹਮਤ, ਤੁਮ੍ਹਾਰੀ ਅਸਮਤ ਹੈ
 ਮੇਰੀ ਰੁਸਵਾਈ, ਤੁਮ੍ਹਾਰੀ ਇਜ਼ਤ ਹੈ।
 ਮੈਂ ਗੁੰਮ ਹੂੰ ਗੁਮਨਾਮੀਓਂ ਮੇਂ,
 ਕਿਆ ਯਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਰੀ ਸ਼ੋਹਰਤ ਹੈ।

12. *Meri muzahmat tumhari asmat hai*
Meri rusvaaee, tumhari izzat hai.
Main goom hoon goomnaameyon main,
Kya yahi tumhari shohrat hai.

My passionate longing reflects your celibate state
 And in my condemnation lies your honour, I believe
 Lost I am in my solitude,
 Does that reflect your true glory? I can't believe.

13. ਯੇਹ ਆਸਮਾਂ ਕੀ ਬੁਲੰਦੀ, ਯੇਹ ਜ਼ਮੀਂ ਕਾ ਬਾਂਝਪਨ।
 ਯੇਹ ਚਮਕਤੇ ਸਿਤਾਰੇ, ਯੇਹ ਉੜਤਾ ਗੁਬਾਰ।
 ਯੇਹ ਮੋਤੀ ਚਟਕਤੇ, ਯੇਹ ਆਂਸੂ ਬਰਸਤੇ,
 ਮਿਲਾਉਂਦੇ ਇਨ ਦੋਨੋ ਕੇ ਕੈਸੇ ਓ ਯਾਰ।

13. *Yeh asmaan ki bulandi, yeh zameen ka banjhpan*
Yeh chamakney sitaray, yeh urhta gubaar.
Yeh motti chatktai, yeh ansu barastay.
Millaun in dono ko kaissay o yaar.

Loftiness of the sky and barrenness of the land,
 Twinkling of the stars and the murky winds are there,
 I realize.
 Blossoming of the pearls and the eyes shedding tears,
 O friend! Such diversities are hard to discriminate I realize.

14. ਮੈ ਚਲ ਕਰ ਦੇ ਕਦਮ, ਆਗੇ ਗਿਆ ਹੂੰ
 ਦਮੁ ਦਮੁ ਲੈ ਕੇ, ਆਖਿਰ ਸੇ ਗਿਆ ਹੂੰ।
 ਗੁਬਾਰੇ ਰਾਂਹੇ ਮੇਂ, ਐਸਾ ਕਟਾ ਸਫਰ।
 ਕਿ ਆਖਿਰ ਸਫਰ ਮੇਂ ਹੀ ਖੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੂੰ।

14. *Main chaal kar do kadam aagae gia hoon,*
Damm damm lai kai , aakhir so gia hoon.
Gu-bar-ay rahon main, aissa katta safar.
ki aakhir safar main he kho gyaa hun.

Fewsteps I hardly walked,
 and fell asleep time and again.
 Such was my travel through misty ways,
 I got lost in the journey, time and again.

15. ਤਾਰੀਕੀਓ ਕੋ ਚਿਰਾਗਾਂ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਤੇ ਹੈ।
 ਬੀਆਬਾਂ ਗੁਲਿਸਤਾਂ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਤੇ ਹੈ।
 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਕੌਨ ਜਲਾਏ ਮਜ਼ਾਰੋਂ ਪੇ ਦੀਏ।
 ਹਮ ਹਯਾਤ ਹੀ ਚਿਰਾਗਾਂ ਕੀਏ ਦੇਤੇ ਹੈ।

15. *Tareekeon ko chiraagan keei daitai hain.*
Beeaa-ban gulistaan kai daitai hain.
'Maskeen' kaun jaalai mazaaron pe dieh.
Ham hayat he chiaragan ke-ay day-tay hain.

Let us turn the darkness and ablaze it with light,
 And milderness into gardens, instead.

Why put lamps on the graves? O Maskin
Make your whole life enlightened, instead.

16. ਜਬ ਜਬ ਖੂਨ ਸੇ ਨਹਾਈ ਹੈ ਉੱਮੱਤ,
ਨਿਖਰ ਕਰ ਔਰ ਬਾਹਰ ਆਈ ਹੈ ਉੱਮੱਤ।
ਮਤ ਬਹਾ ਖੂਨ ਪੇ ਖੂਨ ਕੇ ਆਂਸੂ,
ਤੇਰੇ ਇਸ ਫੈਲ ਪੇ ਸ਼ਰਮਾਈ ਹੈ ਉੱਮੱਤ।

16. *Jab jab khoon se nahae hai ummat,
Nikhar kar aur bahar aae hai ummat.
Mat bahaa khoon pe khoon ke aansu,
Tere es fail pe sharamae hai ummat.*

Whenever a nation bathes in blood,
It emerges glowing ever more,
Shed not tears of blood on such
The nation will regret even more.

17. ਮੁੜ ਕੇ ਔਰ ਨ ਗਮਗੀਨ ਹੋਨੇ ਦੇ
ਦਿਲ ਕੇ ਕੁਛ ਤੋ ਤਸਕੀਨ ਹੋਨੇ ਦੇ।
ਲਾਖ ਬੇਗਾਨਾ ਸਹੀ ਤੇਰੀ ਮਹਿਫਲ ਮੇਂ
ਇਕ ਪਲ ਕੋ ਤੋਂ ਅਪਨਾ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਹੋਨੇ ਦੇ।

17. *Mujh ko aur na gum-geen honai de
Dil ko kuchh to taskeen honai de.
Laakh begana sahi teri mehfil main
Ek pal ko toe apna 'Maskeen' honai de.*

Make me not sorrowful even more
Let my mind feel a little solace.
I may be a total stranger to you,
O' Maskin, for a moment, let me feel your holy grace

18. ਗੁਨਾਹ ਵ ਸਵਾਬ ਸੇ ਨਾਤਾ ਛੋੜਾ
ਗੁਰੂਰ ਕੇ ਆਦਾਬ ਸੇ ਨਾਤਾ ਤੋੜਾ।
ਤਖਈਅਲ ਕੇ ਮਹਲਾਤ ਐਸੇ ਆਰਾਮ
ਅਬ ਤੋਂ ਇਸ ਖੁਵਾਬ ਸੇ ਨਾਤਾ ਛੋੜਾ।

18. *Gunah va savaab se natta chhorhaa*
Garoor ke aadab se nata torhaa.
Takheer ke mehlaat aisho aaram
Ab toe is khuaab se natta chhorhaa.

I became indifferent to evil and good,
 Untied myself from pride and salutations
 Aloof I became from thoughts of worldly pleasures,
 And shunned myself off such dreaming situations.

19. ਕੌਣ ਪੜ੍ਹੇਗਾ ਯੇਹ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਦਬੇ ਓ ਫਨ ਕੀ ਨਜ਼ਮੋਂ
 ਔਰ ਯੇਹ ਫਿਲਸਫਾ ਤਨਜ਼ ਹਕ ਕੀ ਰਾਜ਼ਲੋਂ।
 ਹੋਸ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਦੇਖੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਜ਼, ਏ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ'
 ਔਰ ਕਾਟੇ ਯੇਹ ਦੋਲਤ-ਏ ਜਾਵੇਦ ਕੀ ਫਸਲੋਂ।

19. *Kaun parhaega eh mere adbo o fan kee nazmain*
Aur yeh philsafa tanaz hak kee gazalain:
Hosh kise hai jo dekhey meri pravaz, ea 'Maskin'
Aur katte yeh dulate javed kee fasalain.

Who will go through my poems of literary art,
 And philosophical gazals of satirical truth.
 And, who is awake to envision my thoughts?
 O! Maskin, to reap the fruit of this eternal wealth.

20. ਬਾਗੇ ਬਹਾਰਾਂ ਪੈ ਲੁਟਾਇਆ ਹੈ, ਮੈਂ ਨੇ ਅਪਨਾ ਹੁਸਨ।
 ਤਬ ਕਹੀ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ, ਹਮ ਨੇ ਤੇਰਾ ਚਲਨ।
 ਬੈਹਰਿ ਗਿਲ ਸੇ ਕਹੀ ਮਿਲੇ ਹੈ ਨਾਯਾਬ ਮੋਤੀ।
 ਔਰ ਨੂਰ ਸੇ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਯੇਹ ਇਲਾਹੀ ਬਦਨ।

20. *Bagae baharan pe lootaya hai, main ne apna husan.*
Tab kahin ja ke paya hai, hum ne terra chalan.
Behar gil se kaheen milay hain nayab motti.
Aur noor se bharpoor yeh illahi badan.

Assimilating myself in the blooming beauty of Nature.
 I enabled myself to have your sublime vision O! dear,
 Nobody ever finds real pearls in a pool of clay,
 But this God gifted body is fashioned with all glowing
 O! dear.

21. ਕਿਉਂ ਮੁੜ ਸੇ ਨਾਲਾਂ ਹੈਂ ਦੋਸਤ,
 ਮੈਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਹਰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਤੁਝ ਪੇ ਲੁਟਾਈ ਹੈ।
 ਮੇਰੇ ਪਾਸ ਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਗ਼ਮੀ ਦੇਖ,
 ਕਿਉਂ ਛਲਕ ਕੇ ਆਖ ਭਰ ਆਈ ਹੈ।

21. *Ke-yon mujh se nalan hai doost,
 Mainay to har khushi tuz pe lootae hai.
 Mere paas aa meri gamee dekh,
 Kiyon chhlak ke ankh bhar aae hai.*

I have sacrificed all my pleasures for you, my friend
 I understand not, your uneasiness for me.
 Fill not your eyes with tears, O friend.
 To see my anguish, just come near me.

22. ਮੈਂ ਤੋਂ ਮਸ਼ਰੂਫ ਰਹਾ, ਸ਼ਬੋ ਰੋਜ਼ ਬੇ-ਨਾਗ਼ਾ,
 ਪ੍ਰਤਿਸ਼ ਮੇਂ ਤੇਰੀ, ਇਬਾਦਤ ਮੇਂ ਤੇਰੀ।
 ਆ ਦੇਖ ਮੁੜੇ, ਮੈਂ ਦੇਖੁ ਤੁੜੇ,
 ਤੇਰੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਭਰ ਆਈ ਹੈ, ਮੇਰੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਥਰਾਈ ਹੈ।

22. *Main toe mashroof raha, shabho roj be-naga,
 Partish main teri, eebadat main teri.
 Aa dekh mujhe, main dekhu tujhe,
 Teri awaj bhar aae hai, meri awaj tharayee hai.*

Busy I remained, worshipping and praying, day and
 night without fail.
 Look at me, so I have your glimpse,
 There is stutter in my speech,
 And heaviness in your murmur, I feel.

23. ਖਿਆਲਾਤ ਕੀ ਬੁਲੰਦੀ ਨ, ਜ਼ੀਸਤ ਕੀ ਪਸਤੀ
 ਫਿਲਸਫੀ ਕੀ ਹਯਾਤ ਕਾ ਦਸਤੂਰ ਹੈ।
 ਉਜ਼ਾਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਖਿਰਦ ਕੀ ਕੋਠਰੀ ਮੇਂ।
 ਮੁੱਦਤੋਂ ਸੇ ਯੇਹ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਬੇ-ਨੂਰ ਹੈ।

23. *Khialat ki bulandi na, zist kee pastee
 Philsafee kee hayat ka dastoor hai,*

*Ujalla nahi khirad kee kothree main,
Muddatoon se yeh 'Maskin' be-noor hai.*

It is the way to philosophical goal, to remain
Aloof from the supreme or lowest state of mind.
There is no light in the chamber of intellect O! Maskin
Since long, I'm experiencing such a state of mind.

24. ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਚਿਰਾਗ ਨੂਰ, ਕਮਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਤੇ ਹੈ
ਕਾਟ ਕੇ ਡਾਲ ਹਰੇ, ਸੁਜਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਤੇ ਹੈ।
ਕਿਆ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ ਜਹਾਂ ਸੇ ਫਰਾਰ ਹੋਕਰ,
ਹਕੀਕਤ ਸੇ ਬੇ-ਨਿਆਜ਼, ਮਕਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਤੇ ਹੈ।

24. *Torh ke chirag noor, kamar ki baat karte hain,
Kaat ke daal harai, suzar kee baat karte hain.
Kiya milayga jaha se frar ho kar,
Hakikat se be-neeaz, mukker kee baat karte hain.*

They talk about noon after decimating the lamps of light
And after shearing the green branches, they talk about
tree's life.

Deceitful they are, ignorant of reality,
What will they get? Escaping from life.

25. ਨਿਗਾਹੋਂ ਕਾ ਭਟਕਨ ਦਰ-ਬ-ਦਰ,
ਖਾਮੋਸ਼ ਆਂਹਿ ਹੈਂ ਕਿਧਰ।
ਪਾਕੀਜ਼ਗੀ ਮਾਸੂਮੀਅਤ ਸ਼ਰਮੇ ਹਯਾ ਵ ਬੰਦਗੀ,
ਹੈ ਕਬਰ, ਹੈ ਕਬਰ, ਹੈ ਕਬਰ, ਹੈ ਕਬਰ।

25. *Negahon ka bhatkan dar-b-dar,
Khamosh aahen hain kidhar.
Pakeezgi massumeeat sharmo hiya va bandagee,
Hai kabar, hai kabar, hai kabar, hai kabār.*

Where goes quiet sighs,
And stray wandering looks, O! dear,
Piety, innocence, modesty and worship
Everything goes to the grave, to the grave, O! dear.

26. ਜ਼ਖਮ ਅਬ ਮਤ ਕੁਰੇਦੋ, ਕਿ ਅਬ ਤੋਂ ਮਿਲ ਗਏ ਹੈ।
 ਦਾਸਤਾਂ ਫ਼ਰਕਤ ਨ ਸੁਨਾਂ, ਕਿ ਦਿਲ ਮਿਲ ਗਏ ਹੈ।
 ਗਮੇ ਕੋਹਸਾਰ ਮੇਂ ਸਰ ਐਸਾ ਮਾਰਾ
 ਕਿ ਜਾਇ ਅਪਨੀ ਸੇ, ਅਬ ਤੋਂ ਹਿਲ ਗਏ ਹੈ।
26. *Zakham ab mat kuredo, ke ab toẽ mil gaay hain.*
Dastan farkat na sunaa, ke dil mil gaay hain.
Gamay kohsaar main sar aisa mara
Ke jae apnee se, ab toe hil ga-ay hain.

Try not to scratch the wounds, recently healed
 And narrate not the story of separation, to bonded
 hearts, now.

So hard, struck I, the mountain of miseries,
 To make it shift its place, now.

27. ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਕੀ ਉਦਾਸ ਰਾਹੋਂ ਮੇਂ
 ਤੁਮੇ ਭੀ ਉਦਾਸ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ।
 ਨਾ ਹਾਲੇ ਦਿਲ ਤੁਮ ਕਹਿ ਸਕੇ,
 ਨਾ ਹਾਲੇ ਦਿਲ ਹਮ ਕਹਿ ਸਕੇ।
 ਤੁਮ ਛੁਪੇ ਛੁਪੇ ਸੇ ਰਹੇ,
 ਹਮ ਨੇ ਭੀ ਕੁਛ ਛੁਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

27. *Zindagi ki udaas rahoon main*
Tume bhi udaas paya hai
Na haal-e dil tum kaih sakay,
Na haal-e dil hum kaih sakay.
Tum chhupay chhupay se rahey.
Hum ne bhe kuchh chhupaya hai.

In the gloomy walks of life,
 I sensed your pensive state too,
 Neither, you exposed your inner self
 Nor could I express myself
 Hidden, you remained as usual
 I did hide too, something from you.

28. ਦਮ ਭਰਤਾ ਹੂੰ, ਕਿ ਦਮ ਲੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਹੂੰ।
 ਸ਼ੁਕਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਭੀ, ਕੁਛ ਦੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਹੂੰ।
 ਜ਼ੇਰੇ ਜੁਲਮ ਜਬ ਖਾਮੋਸ਼ ਮਾਸੂਮੀਅਤ ਦੇਖੀ।
 ਤੇ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਕਹਿ ਦੇਤਾ ਹੂੰ
 ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਭੀ ਕੁਛ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਤਾ ਹੂੰ।

28. *Dam bharta hoon, ke dam lay sakta hoon.*
Shukar hai ke main bhe kuchh de sakta hoon.
Zarre julam jab khamosh masoomeeat dekhi,
To 'Maskin keh daita hoon,
Ke main bhe kuchh keh sakta hoon.

Observing myself, proud I feel that
 I am capable of something to share by your grace.
 Observing innocence being crushed under oppression,
 I say aloud O! Maskin
 I am capable to express myself, by your grace.

29. ਸਜਾਏ ਗੀਤ ਬੇ-ਸਾਜੇ ਸਾਜ਼
 ਗਾਏ ਗੀਤ ਬੇ-ਆਵਾਜ਼
 ਰੋਏ ਬਹੁਤ ਅਸ਼ਕ ਬਿਨਾ
 ਬੇ-ਕਾਬਾ ਹੈਂ ਹਮ ਹਜਾਜ਼।
 ਸੋਏ ਬਹੁਤ ਨੀਂਦ ਬਿਨਾ
 ਔਰ ਬੇ ਮੰਜ਼ਿਲ ਹੈਂ ਹਮ ਰਾਹੀ।
 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਨੇ ਐਸੇ ਕੀਆ ਹੈ
 ਅਪਨੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਕਾ ਆਗਾਜ਼।

29. *Sajaaee geet-be-sajo saj*
Gaee geet be-awaj
Roay bahut ashak bina,
Be-kabba hain hum hajaj
Soay bahut neend bina
Aur be manzil hain hum rahi
'Maskeen' ne aise kiya hai
Apni zindagi ka aagaz.

I fashioned my songs in tuneless music
 And sang them without sound.

Wept a lot without tear, and
 Myself Hāji, without Kaaba visitation.
 Slept a lot, without retiring,
 And roamed around without destination.
 In such a way O! Maskin
 Did I start my life's journey?

30. ਸਾਂਸ ਲੈਨੇ ਕੇ, ਯਹਾਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਕਹਤੇ ਹੈਂ
 ਨੁਮਾਇਸ਼ ਜ਼ਰ ਕੋ, ਯਹ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਕਹਤੇ ਹੈਂ
 ਅਹਿਸਾਸੇ ਖੁਦੀ ਮੈਂ ਕਬੀ ਡੁਬੇ ਹਮ।
 ਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਮਸ਼ਾਰ ਹੀ ਸ਼ਰਮਿੰਦਗੀ ਕਹਤੇ ਹੈਂ

30. *Saans layne ko, yahan zindagi kahatay hain,*
Numaeeesh zar ko, yeh bandagi kehatay hain
Ah-saase khudi main kabhi dubay hum.
To sharam saar he sarmindagi kehtey hain.

Just to breathe is termed as life, over here,
 And exposition of wealth, the religious devotion, here.
 When I delved deep inside my-self
 What is called Shame, I found there.

31. ਕੁਛ ਮਾਜ਼ੀ ਕੀ ਖ਼ਾਕ ਹੂੰ,
 ਕੁਛ ਮੁਸਤਿਕਬਿਲ ਕਾ ਨੂਰ ਹੂੰ।
 ਜੀਨਾ ਅਭੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਇਆ,
 ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਹਾਲ ਸੇ ਅਭੀ ਦੂਰ ਹੂੰ।

31. *Kuchh maazi ki khak hoon,*
Kuchh mustak-bil ka noor hoon.
Jeena abhi nahi a-ya
Ki-yon ke haal se abhi door hoon.

Some dust of the past
 Some glimmer of the future, I am.
 I know not, how to live in present,
 Far off my destination, I am.

32. ਮਾਂਗੀ ਥੀ ਇਕ ਕਲੀ, ਉਤਾਰ ਕੇ ਹਾਰ ਦੇ ਦੀਆ।
 ਚਾਹੀ ਥੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਕ ਧੁਨ ਅਪਨਾ ਸਿਤਾਰ ਦੇ ਦੀਆ।
 ਝੋਲੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਛੋਟੀ ਥੀ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ'।
 ਤੂੰਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਹੱਸ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੇ ਦੀਆ।
32. *Mangi thee ik kali, u-ttar ke haar de deeya.*
Chahi thi siraf ik dhum apna sitar de deeya:
jholli bahut hi chhoti thi 'Maskin'.
Toon ne toe huss ke sab sansar de deeya.

One flower I prayed for, once and received a garland, in gift.
 My request was for only a tune and received a Sitaar,
 in gift.
 Very small was my begging bowl, O! Maskin,
 And you offered me the whole world, in gift.

33. ਚਹਚਹਾਨਾ ਹਾਰ ਕਾ ਔਰ ਰੋਣਾ ਫੂਲ ਕਾ
 ਗਿਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੀ ਪਰ ਕਿਰਨ ਕਾ ਔਰ ਉੜਨਾ ਧੂਲ ਕਾ।
 ਗਰਦਸ਼ੋ ਮੈਂ ਹੁਸਨੋ ਜ਼ਰ ਸ਼ਰਮੋ ਹਯਾ ਬਾਜ਼ਾਰ ਮੈਂ।
 ਅਸਮਤ ਕਾ ਲੁਟਨਾ ਖੇਲ ਹੈ, ਬਿਕਨਾ ਇਲਾਹੀ ਅਸੂਲ ਕਾ।
33. *Cheh-chahana haar ka aur rona phool-ka*
Girna zameen par kiran ka, aur urhnaa dhool ka.
Gardeshon main husano zar sharmo haya
bazar main.
Asmat ka lutna khel hai; bikna illahi asool ka.

Garland glows while the flowers cry,
 Dust storm appears when a ray of truthful light touches
 this world.
 Transitory are beauty, wealth, honour and pride,
 Justice is bought, and rape rampant, in this world.

34. ਦਮ ਦਮ ਕਰ, ਯੂੰ ਹੀ ਦਮ ਨਿਕਲਤਾ ਜਾਏ।
 ਸਫਲ ਹੈ ਵੋਹੀ ਦਮ, ਜਿਸ ਦਮ ਯਾਦ ਤੂੰ ਆਏ।
 ਢੂੰਡੇ ਹਰ ਤਰਫ ਯਿਹ ਮੰਨਤਜ਼ਰ ਨਿਗਾਹੋ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ'।
 ਕਬੀ ਆ ਮਿਲ ਤੂੰ ਮਾਲਿਕ ਦਾਮਨ ਰਹਿਮਤ ਕਾ ਫੈਲਾਏ।

34. *Dam dam kar yun he dam nikalta ja-ay.*
Safal hai wohi dam, jis dam yaad toon aain.
Dhunday har taraf yeh mantzar negahain
'Maskin'.
Kabhi aa mil toon malik daman rehamat ka
faila-ay.

All my breaths are being wasted away,
 Fruitful is the moment, I meditate on you.
 Everywhere I long for your vision, O! Maskin
 Bless my heart O! Lord, I have spread this sheet for you.

35. ਕੌਨ ਕਹਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਤੁਮ ਅਪਨੀ ਤਜੌਰੀ ਦਾਨ ਦੋ।
 ਜੇ ਮਿਲਾ ਤੁਮ ਕੇ ਕਿਸੀ ਸੇ, ਹਮੇ ਵਰਦਾਨ ਦੋ।
 ਚਾਹਤਾ ਹੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਅਭੀ ਕੇਵਲ ਅਰੇ ਇਤਨਾ ਹੀ ਬਸ।
 ਪਿਆਰ ਕੇ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਕਾ ਖੋਇਆ ਹੂਆ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਦੋ।

35. *Kaun kehta hai ke tum apni tajuori daan do*
Jo milla tum ko kissi se , humay vardan do.
Chahata hoon main abhi keval arey itna he bas.
Pyaar ke bhagwan ka kho-ya hua asthan do.

Who says, I ask for your treasury in alms,
 Just share a little you have received from others,
 Give the due place for the loving Lord in your life,
 That's what I ask for, at the moment from others.

36. ਫਿਲਸਫਾ ਹਜ਼ਾਤ ਕੀ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਮੇਂ ਅਬ ਕੁਛ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਤਾ।
 ਕਿਤਾਬੇ ਮੌਤ ਕੇ ਔਰਾਕ ਉਲਟਾ ਰਹੇ ਹੈਂ ਹਮ।
 ਬੇਸੀਦਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਲਿਬਾਸ ਹਜ਼ਾਤ ਕਾ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ'।
 ਅਬ ਇਸੀ ਫਿਕਰ ਮੇਂ ਸੇ ਪਲਟਾ ਰਹੇ ਹੈਂ ਹਮ।

36. *Philsafa hazat kee kitab main ab kuchh nahi milta.*
Kitaabee mouth ke aurak ulta rahe hain hum.
Boseda ho gaya libaas hayat ka 'Maskeen'
Ab isi fikkar main se palta rahe hain hum.

I am shuffling through pages of death's book now.
 After nothing is left to know in the book of Life.

Rotten became the garment of body's life, O! Maskin
I am pondering over to replace, for a brand new life.

37. ਜਬ ਜਬ ਹਮ ਆਪਨੀ ਫਿਤਰਤ ਸੇ ਉਦਾਸ ਹੁਏ
ਤਬ ਤਬ ਹਮ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ ਪਾਸ ਹੁਏ
ਮੇਰਾ ਜਿਹ ਤਸਵਰ ਅਬਾਦਤ ਜਿਹ ਮੇਰੀ
ਤੁਮੇ ਰਾਸ ਨ ਆਈ, ਹਮ ਨਾ ਕਾਬਿਲੇ ਸਨਾਸ ਹੁਏ।

37. *Jab jab hum apnee fitrat se udaas huay*
Tab tab hum tumare pass huay
Mera yeh tassvar abbadat yeh meri
Tumae raas na aae, hum na kabilay snash hu-ay.

Whenever I turned away from selfish nature
I felt your presence, very near.
My intellect and contemplation failed, and
I remained unrecognized, though very near.

38. ਕੁਛ ਐਸੀ ਭੀ ਹੰਸੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸਨੇ ਰੁਲਾਇਆ ਹੈ।
ਕੁਛ ਐਸਾ ਭੀ ਰੋਨਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਹੰਸਾਇਆ ਹੈ।
ਐਸੇ ਭੀ ਜਠੂਨ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਮੇਂ ਮੁਰਦਮੀ ਹੈ।
ਐਸੀ ਭੀ ਮੋਤ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਜਗਾਇਆ ਹੈ।

38. *Abh kuchh aisi bhee hanssi hai jis nay roo-laiay hai.*
Kuchh aisa bhi roona hai, jis ne hansa-ya hai.
Aise bhi janoon hain, jis mein murdamiee hai
Aise bhi mo-ut hai, jis ne jaga-ay hai.

There is such a laughter, which actually makes you cry,
And there is such a wailing too, which makes you really
laugh.

There also is such a passion, deadly virus it contains,
And there is such a death too, which awakens your self.

39. ਖਿਲਤੇ ਹੱਗੇ ਫੂਲ, ਹਮ ਨੇ ਨਹੀ ਦੇਖੇ
ਝਰਤੇ ਹੱਗੇ ਝਰੂਨੇ, ਹਮ ਤੋਂ ਪਿਆਸੇ ਹੈ,
ਉਗਤੇ ਹੱਗੇ ਸੂਰਜ, ਘਰ ਮੇਂ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਹੈ,
ਵਜ਼ਨ ਹੈ ਮੁਸਤਿਕਬਿਲ ਕਾ, ਰੈਨ ਬਸੇਰਾ ਹੈ।

39. *Khil-tay hõn-gay phool, hum ne nahi de-khây*
Jhar-tay hon-gay jharne, hum to pyaase hain,
Ugtay hon-gay suraj, ghar main andhera hay,
Vajan hai mustakbil ka, rein bassera hai.

Flowers might be blooming, I see them not
 Waterfalls might be there, thirsty I am.
 My house is dark, there is Sun outside
 Burdened with worries of future, in transition I am.

40. ਬਨਾਉ ਜਿਸੇ ਬਨਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਟਾਉ ਜਿਸੇ ਮਿਟਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ
 ਸਰਫ ਹੁਈ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਬਨਾਨੇ ਮੈਂ ਮਿਟਾਨੇ ਮੈਂ।
 ਸ਼ਮਾਂ ਹਯਾਤ ਜਲਾਤੇ ਰਹੇ, ਬੁਝਾਤੇ ਰਹੇ,
 ਵਕਤ ਯੂ ਗੁਜਰਾ ਹੰਸਾਨੇ ਮੈਂ ਰੁਲਾਨੇ ਮੈਂ।
 ਗੁਜਰ ਗੁਜਰ ਕੇ ਯੂ ਗੁਜਰੇ, ਰਾਹੋਂ ਮੈਂ,
 ਲੈਟ ਆਏ ਨ ਕਬੀ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਆਜ਼ੀਆਨੇ ਮੈਂ।

40. *Banaon jisee banta nahi mitaon jisee mita nahi*
Saraf hoo-ee zindagi bana-nay main mita-nay main.
Shama hayat jlatay rahe bujhatay rahe,
Vakt yun gujra hans-nay main roolanay main.
Gujar gujar ke yun gujre rahoon main,
Lout-a-ay na kabhi 'Maskeen' ashi-ya-nay main.

I try to please my Love, but fail and
 Succeed not, in decimating my foe, I desire
 My whole life is spent, placating and decimating, such
 I made someone's life aglow, and someone's dark.
 My time is spent, to make someone happy and someone
 cry such.
 I failed to return in my real Home, O! Maskin
 By strolling in the walks of life such.

41. ਮੈਨੇ ਰੀਤ ਗਾਏ, ਮਗਰ ਸੁਨ ਨਾ ਸਕਾ।
 ਅਸ਼ਕ ਬਹੁਤ ਬਹਾਏ, ਮਗਰ ਪੀ ਨਾ ਸਕਾ।
 ਹਸਾ ਤੋ ਰੁਲਾ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਹੰਸਾ,
 ਸਾਂਸ ਲੀਏ ਮਗਰ ਜੀਅ ਨ ਸਕਾ।

41. *Mai-nay geet ga-ay magar sun na saka.*
Ashak bahut baha-ay, magar pee na saka.
Hasa toe rulah ke he hansa,
Saans le-ay magar jee na saka.

- Lots of songs I sing, but hear them not.
 Lots of tears I shed, but taste them not.
 Laughed I, only after making someone cry,
 I take lots of breaths, but live them not.

42. ਹਮ ਖਿਆਲ ਹਮ ਰਾਜ ਪਰ ਨਸੀਬ ਨਾ ਥੇ,
 ਹਮ ਦਰਦ ਹਮ-ਦਮ ਪਰ ਕਰੀਬ ਨਾ ਥੇ।
 ਬਾ-ਤਾਮੀਜ਼ ਬਾ-ਸ਼ਾਉਰ ਬਾ-ਅਦਬ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ',
 ਪਰ ਦਰੇ ਨਬਜ਼ ਕੇ ਤਾਬੀਬ ਨਾ ਥੇ।

42. *Hum khayal hum raj magar naseeb na thay.*
Hum-dard hum-dum par kareeb na thay.
Ba-tameez ba-sha-oor ba-adab 'Maskin'.
Par dourai nabaz ke tabeeb na thay.

There were people of my opinion and taste, out there,
 but beyond my fate, they remained.

There were people, full of sacrifice and patience, out
 there but beyond my reach they remained:

Intellectual, respectful and mannerly they were,
 Nobody sensed the pulse of time O! Maskin,
 totally out of touch, they remained.

(PUNJABI COUPLETS)

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸ਼ੇਅਰ

1. ਤੂੰ ਵਿਥ ਪਾਈ, ਮੈਂ ਵਿਥ ਵਧਾਈ।
ਤੂੰ ਨੇੜੇ ਆਇਆ, ਮੈਂ ਸਭ ਨੂੰ ਗਲ ਲਾਇਆ।
Toon vith pa-ee, main vith vadhaaee.
Toon nay-rhe a-yah, main sub nu galey la-ya.

Separation you created, I widened the gap even more.
When I felt your presence in me, I started hugging
everyone even more.

2. ਮੈਂ ਹਾਂ ਵੀ ਕਿ ਸ਼ਾਲਾ ਐਵੇਂ ਭਰਮ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ
ਹੰਸੀ ਆਂਵਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਪਨੀ ਜ਼ਾਤ ਤੇ।
2. *Main haan- vee ke shala aivain bharam paiya hai*
Hansi aawandee hai apni zaat te.

Do I really exist or is it my illusion? O! dear
Such paradoxical thoughts of mine make me laugh.

3. ਅਬਦੀ ਨੀਂਦ ਹੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਹੈ।
ਹਰ ਇਕ ਆਹ ਮੇਰੀ ਬੰਦਗੀ ਹੈ।
3. *Aabdee neend he meri zindagi hai*
Har ek aa-ha meri bandagi hai.

Eternal slumber is my Life, in real,
Every moment longing for you, is my worship real.

(URDU COUPLETS)

ਉਰਦੂ ਸ਼ੇਅਰ

1. ਰੋ ਲੇਤਾ ਹੂੰ, ਮੈਂ ਸੋ ਲੇਤਾ ਹੂੰ।
ਹੋ ਨ ਸਕਾ ਹਕੀਕਤ ਮੇਂ ਤੁਮ੍ਹਾਰਾ, ਤਖਈਅਲ ਮੇਂ ਯੂੰ ਹੋ ਲੇਤਾ ਹੂੰ।

1. *Ro laita hoon, main so laita hoon.*
Ho na saka hakikat main tumhara,
takh-ee-al main yun ho-lay-ta hun.

I weep often, and then retire in sleep
I could not be yours in real life,
But, always enjoy your closeness in thoughts.

2. ਤੇਰਾ ਇਮਾਮ ਬੇਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਤੇਰੀ ਨਿਮਾਜ਼ ਬੇਸਰੂਰ
ਐਸੀ ਨਿਮਾਜ਼ ਸੇ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਐਸੇ ਇਮਾਮ ਸੇ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ।
2. *Tera Imam be-hazoor teri nimaz be-saroor*
Assi nimaz say gujar aise emam say gujar.

Your guide is not in presence,
Your prayer is without passion.
Transcend such a lifeless prayer,
Transcend such a guide too.

3. ਮਾਤਮ-ਪੁਰਸ਼ੀ ਛੋੜ ਦੀ, ਆਂਸ਼ੂ ਬਹਾਨਾ ਰੁਕ ਗਿਆ।
ਜਬ ਸੇ ਹਮ ਨੇ ਆਂਸ਼ੀਆ, ਅਪਨਾ ਬਨਾਇਆ ਕਬਰਿਸਤਾਂ।
3. *Matam-purshee chhod de, ashu bhana rook ga-ya.*
Jab se hum ne anshe-ya, apna bna-ya kabristan.

The time I accepted, the cemetery as my homely abode,
Ceased my tears to flow and I bereave, no more.

4. ਜੀਨਾ ਹੈ ਨਾਸੂਰ ਫਿਰ ਭੀ ਜੀਏ ਜਾਤਾ ਹੂੰ।
ਗਮ ਕੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਕੇ ਜਾਮ ਮੇਂ, ਭਰ ਕਰ ਪੀਏ ਜਾਤਾ ਹੂੰ ਮੈਂ।
4. *Jeena hai nasoor phir bhe jee-ay jatai hoon.*
Gum ko khushee kay ja-am main, bhar kar pe-ay jata hoon.
Unrelenting pain is my life, I know
But still putting up, somehow.
Using cup of pleasures, I keep on
gulping sorrow, somehow.

5. ਦੇਖ 'ਮਸਕੀਨ' ਯਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਤਕਬੀਰ ਕੀ ਮਈਅਤ ਨਾ ਹੋ,
ਇਕ ਜਨਾਜਾ ਜਾ ਰਹਾ ਥਾ ਦੋਸ਼ ਪਰ ਤਕਦੀਰ ਕੇ।
5. *Dekh 'Maskin' yeh teri takbeer kee ma-yee-at na ho*
Ek janaza ja raha tha dosh par takdeer kay.

On the shoulders of Fate, I did see
a corpse being carried away.
Look O! Maskin, it might be your
false pride going away.

6. ਤੂੰ ਅਗਰ ਗੁਲਸ਼ਨ ਮੇ ਹੈ, ਤੋ ਵੀਰਾਨੇ ਮੇ ਕੌਣ ਹੈ,
ਤੂੰ ਅਗਰ ਸ਼ਮਾ ਮੇ ਜਲਤਾ ਹੈ, ਤੋ ਪਰਵਾਨੇ ਮੇ ਕੌਣ ਹੈ।
6. *Toon agar gulshan main hai, toe veerany main kaun hai*
Toon agar shamma main jalta hai, toe parvane main
kaun hai.

If you are alive in the flowers of garden,
Then, who exhibits the wilderness? O!
If you shine in the flame, of the lamp
Then who is the moth that sacrifices itself on the flame?

7. ਚਿਰਾਗੇ ਰਾਹ ਬਨੋਗੇ ਇਕ ਦਿਨ ਨਕਸ਼ੇ ਕਦਮ ਮੇਰੇ।
ਅਭੀ ਤੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਗੁਮਰਾਹ ਮਾਲੂਮ ਹੋਤਾ ਹੂੰ।
7. *Chiraage raah bana-ay gay ek din nakshay kadam*
mai-ray
Abhi toe main gumrah maloom hota hun.

Though I look lost to some people at the moment, but
My footprints will definitely show the way to some one.

MASKIN JI'S TALK WITH A LADY IN AMERICA

On January 2005, the jewel of the Panth, Maskin ji had a conversation over the phone with a (Gurmukh) lady in America. This was a few days before he left for his heavenly abode. For the knowledge of the readers this personal talk with Maskin ji on his Life is being given at the closing part of this book.

ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਹਰੂ ਮਹਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਨ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਆਏ ॥
junum murun dhuhehoo mehi naahee
jun puroupukaaree aaeae

*Those geneerous, humble beings are
above both birth and death.*

ਜੀਅ ਦਾਨੁ ਦੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਾਇਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਲੈਨਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ ॥੨॥
(ਅੰਕ ੭੪੯)
jeea daan dae bhagtee laaein har sio lain milaaeae
(S.G.G.S.page 749)

*They give the gift of the soul,
and practice devotional worship;
they inspire others to meet the Lord. ||2||*

Kaviraj Jai Singh Ji Shūgal has done a great service by bringing into light incidents from the life of Giani Sant Ji Maskin. Giani ji had an immense capability to hold back a lot about himself.

In 1993, when Maskin ji gave talks on “Awakening of Kundalini” in the Gurudwara it seemed as though someone was speaking from personal experience or has had a first hand witness to this experience. He left for his visit to next city before I could get a chance to ask him about it. I waited for a whole year, when I

asked, he outrightly refused saying I was not that fortunate to be so blessed.

In desperation I asked Giani Sant Sing Maskin ji to lead me to a Brahm Giani,(who has reached the stage of union with the Lord)if there is one living in this world now. He told me about Brahm Giani Baba Darshan Singh from Ghanupur who used to live in Amritsar. When I reached Babaji's *dera* in Amritsar, he was sitting in Sangat. I told him how Maskin Ji had directed me to him. Addressing Maskin ji as "Patshah", (Emperor) he said that Maskin ji was a liberated soul, reborn for a noble cause of uniting the sistence of Guru Nanak Dev ji and other Gurus. He also spoke on that some time back he too had a simillar yearning to meet someone who could discourse on Gurbani the way the Gurus themselves used to explain. He expressed his desire to Sant Baba Sundar Singh Ji of Alibeig. To him, Baba Sundar Singh Ji said that you will meet him but in a foreign land. Baba Darshan Singh Ji's natural response was how a poor and an uneducated soul like him will visit a foreign country. To this Baba ji replied that only God knows, how. Baba darshan Singh Ji said that Baba Sinder Singh Ji had mentioned I d mentioned years ago was no other than Maskin Ji. I met him in a foreign land and heard his discourse for the first time there.

ਸਾਧ ਬਚਨ ਅਟਲਾਧਾ

The words of saints are forever true.

Both addressed each other as "Patshah". After their initial meeting they kept in touch with each other for the rest of their lives. Baba Darshan Singh Ji left for his heavenly abode four years ago.

One day in September 2004, when Bhappaji (Maskin Ji) was in his room, I asked him again insisting that it was difficult for my soul to accept the fact that his Kundalini was not already awakened. Hearing me Maskin Ji smiled and agreed that the soul never lies but before I could talk further he sent me out of the room requesting a cup of tea.

Towards the end of January 2005, Maskin Ji called me from California saying he had felt a desire to talk to me. In reply I expressed how fortunate I felt about this. He said that for the last three to four years, the Sangat had been requesting him to write

about his Life. Once again, I brought the matter up, saying now that you are in the process of getting your biography written; hopefully you have not kept anything secret. He laughed at this and said that as yet it is incomplete. When another soul writes about me it will be completed. I told him to admit the truth (without being humble), if he was not living his life in that one moment about which he often mentioned in his Gurbani discourses. Reluctantly he did agree to it. I instantly got back to him on this saying why on an earlier occasion in Manji Sahib, the holy site of Guru Ram Das Ji, in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib he had hurt our faith and feelings by refusing it and thus taking away those moments from us. In his reply he said though I discourse but the one who makes me speak would not let me. What was he to do as the matter was beyond his realm? In his biography he has mentioned the fact that in his discourses he spoke a lot through examples. Metaphorically, he was hat boatmen, who had already crossed the river. Then he heard a voice asking for help in crossing over and he turned around and returned to the world. Maskin Ji's own "ego" had long been annihilated. That was the reason he used to say that I do not discourse, it just happens. The day I have to do it, actually becomes a hassle. This was the way this Gurmukh led his life! He would talk about God, speak on Him and wanted others to be one with Lord in their lifetime.

Besides his discourses, for the welfare of the mankind, he took interest in writing books, preparing tapes, videos and DVD's. He used to sleep for three to four hours a day. The immense hard work he did in his life-time will be of great help to posterity. Man kind can and will be benefited from his works for centuries to come

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸਦ ਜੀਵੈ ਨਹੀ ਮਰਤਾ ॥

brahum giaanee sud jeevai nahee martaa

The God-conscious being lives forever, and does not die.

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa
Waheguru ji ki Fateh

FROM AN UNKNOWN PERSON

WaheGuru ji ka Khalsa WaheGuru ji ki Fateh

I came to Canada in 1969. I was about 31 years of age. But what I saw and heard here was completely different from our country. My conditions was like that of a prey who is netted in the net of a hunter. Well, I also began to run after the money but destiny had something else for me. I lost heavily. I also lost the money in the same way I have gathered it. I was very much sad and upset. I was not finding a way to come out of this tension. I was not able to comprehend what to do. Much time passed in this state. At last the time came with the grace of Guru Nanak Sahib I came to know that a religious discourser has come from our country. Somebody advised me to go to Gurudwara and listen to the discourse. Generally we used to go to the Gurudwara for a walk and to eat langar. That is all we would do. But today it appeared somewhat different, as if this Giani ji (i.e.Maskin ji) is telling something to me only. Well! I started going to the Gurudwara daily. After listening the discourse, my mind was at peace. I desired to come closed to Maskin.ji. My mind turned from all sides to one point. With the grace of Guru ji I have a meeting with Maskin ji.

ਪੂਰਬ ਕਰਮ ਅੰਕੁਰ ਜਬ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਭੇਟਿਓ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਰਸਿਕ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ॥

(ਅੰਕ ੨੦੪)

poorub karam ankur jub praguttae
bhaettiou purukh rasik bairagee

[S.G.G.S.page 204]

*When the seed of the karma of past actions sprouted,
I met the Lord; He is both the Enjoyer and the Renunciate.*

After listening to discourses daily, I began to get peace and solace.

At last, I prayed that I am completely blank, shower some grace on me also. I was told that I will get enlightenment provided I repeated God's Name. The method of repeating God's Name was explained. On that day I comprehended that to repeat God's Name, is the ultimate purpose of this life. I got Guru Ji's grace. Consciousness, sleeping since numerous births awakened. This happened because I got the glint and glimpse of a fully awakened and (रमिक) Enjoyer in Naam and (वैरागी) Recluse/ a Hermit person. By the grace of Guru ji, Gurbani, Discourse and Kirtan became a part of life. I realised that life without these is no life.

I have read that Love flourishes where there is an evenness of views. In this way I got affection for Maskin Ji. This was all due to the conjunction of previous births. When he used to give discourse to the Sangat, my mind would become fully peaceful, I used to experience that I myself is giving as well as listening to the discourse. When he used to talk about God and heavenly bodies, I would realise that no ordinary man can give such discourses. Only a human being, having super natural powers, can convey such thoughts to the congregation such a sagacious talk can not be given without the grace of God and there cannot be so much sweetness in the tongue, hearing which, the Sangat (Congregation) starts saying Bravoes. Congregations in India and abroad used to wait for Guru-lover Maskin ji so that they may experience delight on hearing Gurbani. Whenever I would come to know that Guru-lover, the great soul is coming, I would leave all my jobs and dealings where ever they were. I used to feel that I am going to get a very precious gift.

Reverend Maskin ji was not only an orator par excellence but also a practitioner of what he preached. It was a mixture of preaching and practicality. Due to this reason the impression of the discourse on the Sangat (Congregation) was instantaneous. Whenever he talked about God, he did it with complete confidence. A discourseser should have the following three qualities:-

1. Example of Shabad.
2. Experience.
3. Rationale, Reasoning.

Without these three qualities, the discourse remains incomplete. Maskin ji has spiritual experience and to express it he had examples of Shabads and reasoning. Only that person can talk out soul and God who has spiritual knowledge and is spiritualist. As such he stayed beyond mind. Being a spiritualist he talked about Heavenly world and only a saint in union with His Word can do this. Although he had not dressed himself like sadhus, yet his mind and soul were in union with God. Saints also form a part of Sikh religion and some saints have left an irremovable impression of their life. Barring a few, a large number of saints have started their own sects. Many have, in contravention of the Akal Takhat Maryada, made their own Maryadas. There is a danger to the unity of the sikh religion due to this action. There are a few saints who preach by giving priority to the Gurbani and keep the unity of the Panth in tact. Foremost among these preachers, was respected Sant Singh ji Maskin and he has immense benevolence of Guru Nanak Sahib. By viewing and listening to his discourses, lakhs of people in India and abroad are benefitting. The life-style of many misguided people like me, have altered and improved. The holy men coax every one to repeat His Name. I got the lucky time to have his audience. He used to repeat His Name in the ambrosial hours and also encouraged the Sangat to do so. He practised what he preached. He was receiver of Guru Nanak Sahib's benevolence:-

ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਧੁੜਿ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਕੀ
 ਜੋ ਆਪਿ ਜਪੈ ਅਵਰਹ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਾਵੈ ॥੨॥
 (ਅੰਕ ੩੦੫)

jan nanak dhoorr mangai tis gursikh kee
 jo aap japai avureh naam japaavai.

[S.G.G.S. Page 305]

*Servant Nanak begs for the dust
 of the feet of that GurSikh, who himself chants the Naam,
 and inspires others to chant it. ||2||*

Maskin ji has impressed upon the principle of Shabad-Guru (Exalted status of His Word) in his Book: "Shabad-Guru, Surat Dhun Chelaa." "ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ." He has vehemently exposed the falsehood of Guru in physical form *Deh Dhari Guru* (ਦੇਹ-ਧਾਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ). The principle of a single Light (Jyoti) in all the ten

Manifestations of Guru has been expressed very beautifully. However a lot of duplicity is prevalent in the religious field. It is generally seen that people dress like a saint, tie a round turban with a rosary in hand. Ordinarily brown, blue or white loose and long clothes are worn. Innocent people are made to follow them. In this manner their ultimate aim is achieved.

Saint is not the name of any dress. It is the name of conscience. If the conscience is in union with His Name, then one is a saint, otherwise one can not be called a saint. Maskin Sahib the great used to wear a simple dress and black turban. He had no (Maryada) code of conduct of his own. He used to propagate the code of conduct of the Sikh Religion. He did not construct any Dera of his own. Therefore he was not considered as a saint. But if we see with deep insight, then his life story is indicating that his thoughts waves were touching the celestial spheres. According to Gurbani he was an elevated chaste soul of these times and the shower of Guru Nanak Sahib's benevolence falling on his was clearly visible:-

ਰਾਗੁ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਘਰੁ ੧੩
raag aasaa mehulaa 5 ghar 13

ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਸੇ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਆਰੇ ॥੩॥
(ਅੰਕ ੪੦੬)
koe n jaanai koe n maanai sae purugutt har dhuaarae
[S.G.G.S. Page 406]

*Those whom no one knew,
and those whom no one respected - even they have become
famous and respected at the Court of the Lord. ||3||*

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜੀ ਬਸਹਿ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਰਸਨਾ ॥
prubh jee busehi saadh kee rasunaa.

God abides upon the tongues of His Saints

ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਕਾ ਦਾਸਨਿ ਦਸਨਾ ॥੪॥
(ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ)

Nanak is the servant of the slave of His slaves.

His utterances would become sweet and extremely juicy. These sweet words and ambrosial looks are the symbol of reaching Heaven. Such utterances and looks fill nectar in life. The life of Maskin Ji was Nectareous. Only by seating near him, mind would be at peace.

The flavour of the tree of Chandan fills the whole of forest with the flavour. In the same manner the flavour of Discourses and Kirtan (Divine songs) spread in the whole area on the arrival of the Holy Maskin Ji. It used to appear as if we are having a vision of a great chaste soul, spiritualist, saint, God-knowing and a person complete in all respects.

ਨਵ ਨਿਧੀ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਸਿਧੀ ਪਿਛੈ ਲਗੀਆ ਫਿਰਹਿ
ਜੋ ਹਰਿ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸਦਾ ਵਸਾਇ ॥
(ਅੰਕ ੬੪੯)

nav nidhee athaareh sidhee pishai lageeaa firehi
jo har hirudai sadaa vasaee.

[S.G.G.S. Page 649]

*The nine treasures and the eighteen spiritual powers
of the Siddhas follow him,
who keeps the Lord enshrined in his heart.*

I was getting a lucky time to have the company of the great person for quite sometime in the past. Every year I used to get two or four weeks when I could be separate from the people of my house. Then I used to have no other work except to listen to discourses and Kirtan the whole day. As per Guru Ji's Bani *ਬਾਣੀ*, I used to see Ridhian-Sidhian (Supernatural Powers) going around the holy person (i.e. Maskin Ji). Greatness, wealth, respect paying and applause was being showered by the Sangat. There used to be pin-drop silence in the Congregation Hall and it would seem that only the great person alone is there delivering his sermon. Because God resides in the hearts of holy men and saints, so there used to be an instant impression on the Congregation. Time used to stop. Gurbani Says:-

ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਕੀ ਹਰਿ ਧੂੜਿ ਦੇਹਿ ਹਮ ਪਾਪੀ ਭੀ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਂਹਿ ॥

(ਅੰਕ ੧੪੨੧)

gurasikhan kee har dhoorr daeh
hum paapee bhee gat panhi.

[S.G.G.S. Page 1421]

*O Lord, please bless me with the dust
of the feet of the Guru's Sikhs,
I am a sinner - please save me.*

By only putting the dust of the feet of such Gursikhs on the forehead, the life undergoes a change and one gets a proper way. Saint is the name of the state which is the Zenith of the spiritual world. The tongue of the saint is equipped with the gems of the spiritual knowledge. His training is fruitful. There is power in his utterances, nectar in his looks, revolution in his feet and growth in his hands. He remains satisfied and does not advertise his existence. To pray for every-being's welfare is the life of a saint. Maskin Ji's life was comparable to these qualities of a saint. Therefore it is a fact that though he wore shirt, trousers, basket and black turban, yet he was a great saint and God-knowing of the present times due to his inner conscience. For the last fifty years he had been trying to bring the Congregation closed to Shabad-Guru and Guru-Panth. He was also impressing upon the Sangat to follow the Maryada (code of conduct) of the Panth (Sikh Religion) and be close to the Akal Takhat (Supreme Seat of Sikh Religion). He used to meditate in the ambrosial hours of the early morning and was coaxing the Sangat to do so.

Guru Nanak Sahib travelled through out the nine continents of the world and brought the sangat close to the Word-Guru. After Him, Guru Amar Dass Ji Maharaj had established 22 ਮੰਜੀਆਂ (Sub-Seats) for propagation of the sikh faith. For the last fifty years Maskin Ji was also accordingly propagating the Bani ਬਾਣੀ of Guru Nanak Sahib by visiting various places in the country and abroad and was enlinking the Sangat with ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ (Word-Guru). There was limitless benevolence of Guru Nanak Sahib on him. His inner being had been in union with Shabad-Guru ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ. That is why when he used to give sermon, the tongue would become juicy. There would be shower of examples of Shabads and reasoning. Sangat used to enjoy. Where ever he went, lakhs of people used to assemble. Guru Ji says:-

ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਕਾ ਦਾਸਨਿ ਦਸੁਨਾ ॥੪॥

(ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ)

nanak jan kaa daasan dasunaa ॥੪॥

[Sukhmani Sahib]

God was residing on the tongue of Maskin Ji. His tongue was full of Naam Ras (Juice of God's Name). He was giving very refined reasoning, exmples of comparative Shabads and he had a practical experience of His being. He would narrate to the Sangat spiritual knowledge and details of others worlds in the sky

ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਸੇ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਆਰੇ ॥੩॥

(ਅੰਕ ੪੦੬)

koe n jaanai koe n maanai sae pargatt har duaarae

[S.G.G.S.Page 406]

These details were impossible without the union with the Shabad-Guru. If God is residing in the mind, then the innocence of eyes, the purity and exhilaration of mind indicate that God has started residing in the eyes. If God is residing in the mind then tongue, full with juice, always repeats His Name. Some what like this had been seen in the great elevated soul.

Please parden the mistakes.

Servant of Guru Panth
Gum Naam
Canadian

**THE LAST WORDS UTTERED BY
MASKIN JI ON THE COMPLETION OF
THE DISCOURSE ON THE
GURBANI OF LAVAN
(ਲਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ) at kanpur**

Maskin Ji gave separation of the physical body to all of us suddenly on 18-02-05 at Etawah(U.P.,India). One day before on 17-02-05 during his systematic discourse on 'Gurbani Lawan' ਲਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ (by which every Gursikh couple gets married by doing circumambulations around Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji) which was going on in Kanpur, he had uttered his last words and these are given below. Generally since some years, Maskin ji used to say at the end of the discourse:

"Health permitting and the life remaining,

I will have your glimpse again."

However it was different what God made him to say in Kanpur and there was a hint in it. Please read it attentively:-

Sahib says:-

ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਕਾਜੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ

ਧਨ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਵਿਗਾਸੀ ॥ (ਅੰਕ ੭੭੩)

Har prabh thaakur kaaj rachaaeiaa
dhan hirdai naam vigaasee

*The Lord God, my Lord and Master, blends with His bride,
and her heart blossoms forth in the Naam.*

[S.G.G.S.page 773]

This is such a function, Anand Karaj, God The Perfect One, has himself organized it. Happiness has been generated and there is a bliss. Every thing has happened in a normal way. Doing has been stopped. Circumambulation in the fourth lanv (ਲਾਵ), that has be-

gun. Now nothing is to be done. Now it is to be lived in Him. Living has sarterd.

ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਚਉਥੀ ਲਾਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ॥੪॥੨॥

(ਅੰਕ ੨੨੪)

jan naanak bolae chouthee laavai
Har paaeiaa Prabh avinaasee

[S.G.G.S.page 774]

*Servant Nanak proclaims that, in this, the fourth round of the marriage ceremony,
we have found the Eternal Lord God. ||4||2||*

That God, The Perfect One, has been achieved and can never be destroyed. For whom we have indulged in doing and have been doing duties, today we have become passive. God has been met. As many words were there, as much clarification I could give, as much time was available, I have placed all these views before you according to my limited intellect. Dhan Guru Granth Sahib ji Maharaj, Dhan Guru Ram Dass ji Maharaj, may shower his benevolence whose compositions's (Gurbani) explanation was started before you as per your desires. This can also be said like this:-

*End of my time,
End of my speaking power
End of my thinking power.*

This is not the end of the thoughts about four lavans. I may also say that this is not the end of thought of four lavans, because this is an extention.

Wherever a person finishes his discourse, this is the end of the time of the discourser. His power of thinking is ended. His speaking power is finished. Shabad of Guru ji never ends. Discussions of Shabad does not end. In according with the grace of Dhan Sri Guru Ram Dass Maharaj Ji and his beneficence, I have placed the meanings before you. I pray at the feet of Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji that after hearing all this, you may reach passive stage (ਨਿਸ਼-ਕਰਮ ਅਵਸਥਾ) and by explaining to you I may also reach that stage. I will pray for you and you pray for me and in this way every body's life journey may become successful. Many times Thanks to all. Pardon for any mistakes.

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa Waheguru ji ki Fateh.

Maskin ji

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