

Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha on Guru Gobind Singh

Mr. Parminder Singh

Assistant Professor, Department of History, SGGS College, Chandigarh

ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 16 September 2019

Keywords

Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, Guru Gobind Singh, Gurmat Sudhakar, Bikhre Moti, Gurmat Martand, Gurmat Prabhakar, melodiousness, glory, grace, society, religion, rituals, superstition..

Corresponding Author

Email: parminder.singhbuttar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Present paper intends to focus on ideas of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha about Guru Gobind Singh where focus is on various attributes of Guru Gobind as a personality. References from Gurbani and from Bhai Kahn Singh's works have been taken into account. Hymns of Gurbani have been mentioned for support of the ideas being presented. Various aspects of Guru Gobind Singh are presented through the perception of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha.

1. Introduction

Gem of Sikh History, creator of Great Sikh Dictionary the Encyclopedia of Sikhism, the Mahan Kosh, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha is a well known Sikh scholar and Encyclopedist, whose contribution in the field of literature is exemplary. He witnessed the transforming Punjab as in his life time from 1861 to 1938 various socio-political and religious changes were sweeping the region.¹ After receiving the natural training from a remodeled atmosphere of late 19th Century, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha in his scholarly contribution has recorded and commented upon these changes. Therefore his works may be seen as a reflection of the society of that time and the ideas presented in that period. Bhai Kahn Singh's works include *Raj Dharam*, *Natak Bhavarth Deepika*, *Hum Hindu Nahin*, *Gurmat Prabhakar*, *Gurmat Sudhakar*, *Samasya Poorti*, *Guru Gira Kasoti*, *Pahaad Yatra*, *Vilayat Yatra*, *Sharab Nished*, *Ik Jyotish Granth*, *Sad ka Parmarath*, *Gurshand Diwakar*, *GurShabad Alankar*, *Roopdeep Pingal*, *Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahankosh*, *Gurmat Martand*, *Gurmahima Sangrah*, *Anekarth Kosh*, *Nammala Kosh* and *Vijay Swam Dharam*. There are some unpublished works as well which were later on edited and published by the scholars interested in the works of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha. The present paper attempts to focus on the ideas of Bhai Kahn Singh on Guru Gobind Singh. There are some works where Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha has referred the Gurbani of Guru Gobind Singh and he interprets these compositions.

Bhai Kahn Singh for the reformation of Sikhism in particular, and society in general, has focused on several scholars before his times. Guru Gobind Singh is among them - a great Guru, saint, soldier and scholar whose works throws light on several issues of society. Bhai Kahn Singh has devoted his chapters to the writings of and about Guru Gobind Singh. *Gurmat Sudhakar* means 'Sikhism as a reformer', *Gurmat Prabhakar* 'Sikhism an Illuminator', *Gurmat Martand* 'Sikhism a Shining Sun' and *Bikhre Moti* (Scattered pearls) a Punjabi book that is collection of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha's articles edited by Ravinder Kaur Ravi are some of the writings

where Bhai Kahn Singh's opinion about Guru Gobind and his reliability on Guru's works and hymns can be clearly traced that makes the opinion and understanding of Bhai Kahn Singh about Guru Gobind with clarity. Issues highlighted by Guru Gobind Singh as interpreted by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha in these works are the focus of the present paper. There are three sections of the paper. Section one deals with the poetic attributes of Guru Gobind Singh as presented by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha. Second section highlights some issues related to the society, rituals and superstitions as raised by Guru Gobind Singh and referred by Bhai Kahn Singh in his works. This analysis is concluded in section third.

Bhai Kahn Singh in the preface of *Gurmat Sudhakar* advises to follow the footnotes of the book that is his interpretation along with the explanation of the text. Guru Gobind's Gurbani, some questions answered by Guru Gobind Singh, views of *Sena Pat* a court poet of Guru Gobind Singh, a discussion and questions and answers between followers and Guru Gobind Singh are taken up by Bhai Kahn Singh in chapter one, eight, twelve and fourteen respectively. Whatever he has provided in this book about reformation and change according to Sikhism, is based on references of Guru Gobind's works.

Ravinder Kaur Ravi in *Bikhre Moti* has collected more than dozens of articles of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha out of which three are directly on Guru Gobind Singh, published in various magazines of those times. Two articles are in Punjabi and one is in English. While talking about Guru Gobind Singh Bhai Kahn Singh has mentioned the incomparable and unique personality of Guru Gobind Singh. He has considered these attributes of Guru Gobind Singh as the reason of belief of all followers in Sikhism. He is incomparable because no one else on this earth is equal to him when all prophets are mentioned. In words of Bhai Kahn Singh,

'Do we regard Guru Gobind Singh a unique incarnation and peerless messenger of God, because he is a Guru, who grants us salvation and we belong to his dispensation? No,

¹ Shamsheer Singh Ashok, *Parsidh Vidwan Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha*, National Printing Press, Jauriyian Bhatthiyan, Patiala, 1966, p.1 (Pbi.)

Kalghidhar²'s unrivalled beauties themselves show beyond dispute that he stands unrivalled. This is why he is a unique leader. In all Rishis, Avatars and prophets who have lived and worked in the world, there has been a special trait which brought them into prominence par excellence, as for instance the trait of ornamental beauty of Sri Krishna ji, Chivalry on Ram Chandra ji, wrath in Parsuram, peace in Bhagwan Budha etc, etc. you cannot name a single religious leader, who combined in him all these traits in their due proportion and still rose above them? Only the 10th Guru reflects in himself all these traits. Rather he is their very source, their very stay.³

Above mentioned paragraph has been taken from an article published in 'The Khalsa' Amritsar, on 5 January 1930, as mentioned by the editor of the book.

Bhai Kahn Singh has referred to Amrit Rai, the court poet of Guru Gobind Singh, while explaining the various qualities of Guru Gobind. His nine traits as God of Beauty, Poet of Poets, God of Learning, Protector of Weak and Oppressed, his quality of equality between himself and the Khalsa and his baptism by the five beloved ones (*Panj Payare*) and his quality of a true sacrifice on the martyrdom of his sons, he does not allow any tear to come down from his eyes and accepts the whole Sikh community as his children, his trait of *Yama* or the real punisher who beholding the swords in hands punishes and destroys the devils in the battle field, make his personality unique.

Sadhu Govind Singh's *Itihas Guru Khalsa*, referred by Bhai Kahn Singh throws light on some other qualities as

'Bharat has produced any number of religious preceptors and she will produce any number again. But the re-advent in her world of Dharma Guru like Guru Govind Singh is impossible. Countless selfish men have born and died; but Guru Govind Singh will live for all time, glorious and resplendent. Blessed the country, blessed the age, blessed the land, blessed the town, blessed the house and blessed the mother that can produce a great being like Guru Govind Singh!⁴

The same article of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha under the title '*Sahib Gobind Singh Navon Rass Bheeno Hai*' was published in Punjabi, in *the Khalsa*, Amritsar in the month of January 1933.⁵

Another essay of Bhai Kahn Singh with the title 'ਮਹਾਨ ਕਵੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ' (Maha Kavi Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj) was published in '*Khas Phulwari*' edited by Hira Singh Darad, explains the attributes of a great poet of Guru Gobind.

Bhai Kahn Singh himself was a translator and commentator of many works of Sanskrit and other literature. He also knew the technical requirements of great poetry. According to him there are three attributes of a great poet of 'epic'. Those attributes are melodiousness, glory and grace. Bhai Kahn Singh finds all these qualities in the poetry of Guru Gobind Singh. While talking about his melodious quality, he has mentioned the Charming Mode (*Manohar Chhand*) and a

prosodic meter or form of four rhyming lines (*SurDhun Savayae*). Here the beauty of Akal almighty, power known as *Shakti* and its another form *Chandi* a goddess are praised in a melodious style.

ਮੀਨ ਮੁਰਝਾਨੇ ਕੰਜ ਖੰਜਨ ਖਿਸਾਨੇ ਅਲਿ ਫਿਰਤ, ਦਿਵਾਨੇ, ਬਨਿ ਡੋਲੈ ਜਿਤ
ਤਿਤ ਹੀ॥
ਕੀਰ ਅਉ ਕਪੋਤ, ਬਿੰਬ ਕੋਕਿਲਾ ਕਲਾਪੀ ਬਨ, ਲੂਟੇ ਫੂਟੇ ਫਿਰੈ, ਮਨਿ ਚੈਨ ਹੂੰ ਨ
ਕਿਤ ਹੀ॥
ਦਾਰਿਮ ਦਰਕ ਗਯੇ ਪੇਖਿ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਪਾਂਤਿ, ਰੂਪ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਾਂਤਿ ਜਗਿ ਫੈਲ ਰਹੀ
ਸਿਤ ਹੀ॥
ਐਸੀ ਗੁਨ ਸਾਗਰ ਉਜਾਗਰ ਸੁ ਨਾਗਰ ਹੈ, ਲੀਨੇ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ ਹਰ ਨੈਨ ਕੋਰ ਚਿਤ
ਹੀ॥

Meen murjane kanj khanjan khisane al firat, diwane, ban
doley jit tit hi.
keer au kapot, bimb kokila klapi ban, lootey footey firey,
mann chaen hu na kit hi.
Darim darak gayo pekh darsan pant, roop hi ki kranti jag
fael rahi sit hi.
Aesi gun sagan ujjagar so nagar hai, leeno mann mero har
naen kor chit hi.

While talking about Chandi, Guru Gobind Singh as mentioned by Bhai Kahn Singh says,

ਹਰਿ ਸੇ ਮੁਖ ਹੈ ਹਰਿਤੀ ਦੁਖ ਹੈ ਅਲਿਕੈ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਚ ਪ੍ਰਭਾ ਹਰਿਨੀ ਹੈ। ਲੋਚਨ ਹੈ
ਹਰਿ ਸੇ ਸਰਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਸੇ ਭਰੂਟੇ ਹਰਿਸੀ ਬਰਨੀ ਹੈ॥
ਕੇਹਰ ਸੇ ਕਰਿਹਾ ਜਲਬੇ ਹਰਿ ਪੈ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਹਰਿਨੀ ਤਰਨੀ ਹੈ। ਹੈ ਕਰ ਮੈ ਹਰਿ
ਪੈ ਹਰਿ ਸੇ, ਹਰਿ ਰੂਪ ਕਿਯੇ ਹਰਿਕੀ ਧਰਨੀ ਹੈ॥

Har so mukh hai hariti dukh hai alikae har haar prabha
harini hai. Lochan hai har se sarse har se bhroote harsi barni
hai.

Kehar so kariha jalbo har pae har ki harini tarni hai. Hai
kar mae har pae har so, har roop kiye harki dharni hai.

Second quality is Glory. That is mentioned by Bhai Kahn Singh, when he talks about Guru Gobind Singh's *Vachittar Natak* (Wonderful Play) where Glory of sword and power has mentioned by Guru Gobind Singh.

ਖਗ ਖੰਡ ਬਿਹੰਡ ਖਲ ਦਲ ਖੰਡ ਅਤਿ ਰਣ ਮੰਡ ਬਰਬੰਡ। ਭੁਜਦੰਡ ਅਖੰਡ, ਤੇਜ
ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ, ਜੋਤਿ ਅਮੰਡ, ਭਾਨ ਪ੍ਰਭੰ॥

ਸੁਖ ਸੰਤਾ ਕਰਣੈ, ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਰਣੈ, ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਹਰਣੈ, ਅਸਿ ਸਰਣੈ। ਜੈ ਜੈ
ਜਗ ਕਾਰਣੈ, ਸਿਸਟਿ ਉਬਾਰਣ, ਮਮ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਰਣ ਜੈ ਤੇਗੰ॥⁶

Khag khand bihandan khal dal khandan att rann
mandam barbandam.

Bhujdand akhandam, tej prachandam, jot amandam,
bhan prabham.

Sukh santa karnam, durmat darnam, kilvikh harnam,
as sarnam.

Jai Jai jag kaaran, sist ubaran, mamm prtiparan jai
tegang.

Third quality of a great poet is Grace mentioned by referring a stanza of *Akal Ustat* (Praise of Almighty) one of the

⁶ Gurbani verses quoted in the present work, have been taken from Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha's writings.

² Metaphor used for Guru Gobind Singh

³ Ravinder Kaur Ravi (ed.), Jagmail Singh Bhathuan (asstt. ed.) *Bikhre Moti- Bhai Kahn Singh de Nibandh*, Navyug publishers, New Delhi, 2008, p.126, (Pbi.)

⁴ Ravinder Kaur Ravi (ed.), Jagmail Singh Bhathuan (asstt. ed.) *Bikhre Moti- Bhai Kahn Singh de Nibandh*, p. 128

⁵ Ibid. p.56

writings of Guru Gobind Singh. Grace is the blessings of almighty. As everything originates from the almighty and finally all get mixed up in the same source, the God almighty.

ਜੈਸੇ ਏਕ ਆਗ ਤੇ ਕਾਨੁਕਾ ਕੋਟ ਆਗ ਉਠੈ। ਨਿਆਰੇ ਨਿਆਰੇ ਹੁਇ ਕੈ, ਫੇਰਿ ਆਗ ਮੈਂ ਮਿਲਾਹਿਗੇ॥

ਜੈਸੇ ਏਕ ਧੂਰ ਤੇ ਅਨੇਕ ਧੂਰਿ ਪੂਰਤ ਹੈ। ਧੂਰ ਕੇ ਕਨੂਕਾ ਫੇਰ ਧੂਰਿ ਹੀ ਸਮਾਹਿਗੇ॥

ਜੈਸੇ ਏਕ ਨਦ ਤੇ, ਤਰੰਗ ਕੋਟ ਉਪਜਤ ਹੈ। ਪਾਨਿ ਕੇ ਤਰੰਗ ਸਬੈ, ਪਾਨਿ ਹੀ ਕਦਾਹਿਗੇ॥

ਤੈਸੇ ਵਿਸਵਰੂਪ ਤੇ, ਅਭੂਤ ਭੂਤ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਹੋਇ। ਤਾਂਹੀ ਤੇ ਉਪਜਿ ਸਬੈ ਤਾਂਹੀ ਮੈ ਸਮਾਹਿਗੇ॥⁷

Jaese ek aag te kanuka kot aag utthey, niyare niyare huye kae, fir aag me milahenge.

Jaese ek dhoor te anek dhoor poorat hai, dhoor ke kanooka fer dhoor hi smahenge.

Jaese ek nad te, tarang kot upjat hai, Paan ke tarang sabe, paan hi kahaenge.

Taese visawroop te, abhoot bhoot pragat hoe, taahi te upaj sabhey taahin mae smahenge.

Here Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha presents Guru Gobind Singh as a great poet who is providing all attributes in his writings in a very lucid form. Bhai Kahn Singh has presented Guru Gobind Singh a very unique personality, great poet and has directly written about him in various magazines and papers.

II

The ideas of Guru Gobind has mentioned by Bhai Kahn Singh becomes clearer while focusing on some other works of Bhai Kahn Singh. *Gurmat Prabhakar*, *Gurmat Sudhakar* and *Gurmat Martand* are the famous and most important works of Bhai Kahn Singh where Guru Gobind's thoughts about society, religion, rituals and superstition are recorded.

In the context of society in general, according to Bhai Kahn Singh, Guru Gobind Singh is of the opinion that though there is linguistic and cultural difference, yet all people are same and should live in common brotherhood feelings for each other. There should not be any discrimination on basis of this difference of caste, religion or sect. Overall improvement of everyone should be the goal. This is what the Sikh Gurus taught.

ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਮਸੀਤ ਸੋਈ, ਪੂਜਾ ਔ ਨਮਾਜ਼ ਓਈ, ਮਾਨਸੁ ਸਭੇਕ, ਪੈ ਅਨੇਕ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਹੈ।

ਦੇਵਤਾ ਅਦੇਵ ਜੱਛ ਗੰਧੂਬ ਤੁਰਕ ਹਿੰਦੂ, ਨਯਾਰੇ ਨਯਾਰੇ ਦੇਸਨ ਕੇ ਭੇਸ ਕੇ ਸੁ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ।

ਏਕੈ ਨੈਨ, ਏਕੈ ਕਾਨ, ਏਕੈ ਦੇਹ, ਏਕੈ ਬਾਨ, ਖਾਕ ਬਾਦ ਆਤਸ਼ ਔ ਆਬ ਕੇ ਰਲਾਵ ਹੈ।

ਅੱਲਹ ਅਭੇਖ ਸੋਈ, ਪੁਰਾਨ ਔ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਓਈ, ਏਕ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਭੈ ਏਕ ਹੀ ਬਨਾਵ ਹੈ। (ਅਕਾਲ ਉਸਤਤਿ)⁸

⁷ Ravinder Kaur Ravi (ed.), Jagmail Singh Bhathuan (asstt. ed.) *Bikhre Moti- Bhai Kahn Singh de Nibandh*, pp. 61-63(Pbi.)

Dehura maseet soi, pooja au namaz oyi, Manas sabhek, pae anek ko prabhav hai.

Devta adev jachh gandrab turk hindu, Niyare niyare desan ke bhes ko so bhaav hai.

Ekey naen, ekey kaan, ekey deh, ekey baan, Khaak baad atash au aab ko ralav hai.

Allah abhekh soi, pauran au quran oyi, Ek hi saroop sabhey ek hi bnav hai.

Castes are derived from the Karma. Division of caste is based on occupation. With the change of occupation castes also change. Nothing is fixed by birth, specially the caste.

ਸਾਧ ਕਰਮ ਜੇ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਮਾਵੈ, ਨਾਮ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਕਰਾਵੈ।

ਕੁਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਕਰਮ ਜੇ ਜਗ ਮੈ ਕਰਹੀ, ਨਾਮ ਅਸੁਰ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਜਗ ਧਰਹੀ।

(ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)⁹

Sadh Karam Jo Prakh Kmavey, Naam devta Jagat kahavey.

Kukrit karam je jag mae karhi, naam asur tin ko jagg dharhi.

Person who is a teacher and performs the rituals is Brahman and the person in business or commerce is a *Vaesh*. But if a person born in *Shudra* or lowest family becomes a teacher and a scholar should be considered as Brahman. A farmer, who works in farm, knows the use of weapons, and also keeps the weapons with himself should be called *Kashatrya*.¹⁰

As the bamboos get fire with a friction and all dry leaves start burning, similarly, Indian people are fighting and dying due to jealous and hatred feelings.¹¹ Person, who is devil, acts as bad person, does the bad deeds, is considered as *Malechha*. It means person who is born in high caste, still does the bad deeds is lowest person or *Neech*. An educated person, who is a good thinker, and idealistic and doer of noble acts and intelligent is considered a praise able person. On the other hand born in high caste but doer of bad and devil acts is considered as lowest or *Neech*. There is mentioned an example of a person who was Brahman, but tried to give poison to sixth Sikh Guru Hargobind.

ਦੁਸਟ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਮੁਆ ਹੋਇਕੈ ਸੂਲ, ਮਲੇਛ ਪਾਪੀ ਪਚ ਭਇਆ ਨਿਰਾਸ।

(ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ)

Dusat brahman mua hoyeke sool, Malechh paapi pach bhaya niras.

It means that a person born in Brahman family was considered as high Varna, did an act of lower person by poisoning the Sixth Sikh Guru. Due to this a Brahman became a *Neech* or *Malechha*.¹²

⁸ Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurmat Sudhakar*, Shri Gurmat Press, Amritsar, 1922, p.23, (Pbi.)

⁹ Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurmat Sudhakar*. p39 (Pbi.)

¹⁰ Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurmat Prabhakar*, Shri Gurmat Press, Amritsar, 1922, p.389, (Pbi.), Parminder Singh, 'Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha and Society', Panjab University Research Journal (Arts) Vol xlv, No.1, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 2018, p. 31

¹¹ _____, *Gurmat Sudhakar*,

_____, p.47, (Pbi.)

¹² *Gurmat Sudhakar*. p. 64 (Pbi.)

If somewhere in Sikh *Gurbani*, terms lower or *Malechha* and *Neech* are used those are for the devil and those persons who do the activities of devils. These terms are not used for any particular group of people based on caste system.

ਅਬ ਰੱਛਾ ਮੇਰੀ ਤੁਮ ਕਰੇ, ਸਿੱਖ ਉਬਾਰ ਅਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਘਰੇ, ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਜਿਤੇ ਉਨਵਤ
ਉਤਪਾਤਾ, ਸਕਲ ਮਲੇਛ ਕਰੇ ਰਣ ਘਾਤਾ।

Ab rachha meri tm karo, sikh ubar asikh sanghro.
Dushat jite uthwat utpata, sakal malechh karo ranghata.

ਉਤਪਾਤੀ ਜੀਵ ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਔਰ ਮਲੇਛ ਹੈਨ ਜਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਸ਼ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ
ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਫੈਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।¹³

Utpaati jeev dushat aur malechh hain jinnah de naash hon
to sansar vich shanti fael sakdi hai.

In Sikhism Varna System is according to the deeds of the person. It has nothing to do with birth and caste. All Varna and castes become one by joining Sikhism like many metals are mixed and made single metal. Baptism in Sikhism finishes all previous births. This new change brings equality.

ਸੁਣੀ ਪੁਕਾਰ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਠਾਯਾ। ਚਰਣ ਧੋਇ

ਰਹਿਰਾਸ ਕਰ, ਚਰਨਾਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਪੀਲਾਯਾ।

ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪੂਰਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ, ਕਲਿਜੁਗ ਅੰਦਰ ਇੱਕ ਦਿਖਾਯਾ। ਚਾਰੇ ਪੈਰ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ,

ਚਾਰ ਵਰਨ ਇਕ ਵਰਨ ਕਰਾਯਾ।¹⁴

Suni pukar dataar prabh, gur nanak jag mahe pathaya.
Charan dhoye rehras kar, charnamrit sikha pilaya.
Parbrahm pooran brahm, kalyug andar k dikhaya. Chare
paer dhramm de, charr varan ikk varan karaya.

The Guru is also concerned about issues related to the marriage. Bhai Kahn Singh mentions that the book referred by him for writing the specific chapter was written by a Sikh and in the beginning there was mentioned *Sri Mukh Vaak Patshahi 10vi* (tenth). It seems that these ideas are somehow coming from Guru Gobind Singh.

Marriage at proper age instead of young age and marriage to a hard-worker though poor are the suggestions made. But it does not mean that the rich persons are unacceptable. Noble qualities and attributes are preferable instead of money. Expenditure of marriage should be limited that will remove any financial burden on both families. While talking about charity it is mentioned that the priest or religious person who performs all the religious activities of marriage should not receive money in form of fee, from girls and family. Such a high and sacred place is given to women whose marriage ceremony is taken as sacred ceremony and receiving money for the sacred cause is denied. Both families should deal properly with each other. Both should get together occasionally and share meals. This enhances the social bond. But it does not mean that both should be greedy for money from each other. If husband or wife dies, the living person should not look for a partner without remarriage. Remarriage should take place within same age group and widow or widower should try to find a person who

has also lost his or her life partner. Extramarital affairs are sins. Even a widow and widower are not allowed to have extra affair for physical comfort only. There is a proper way and that is remarriage.¹⁵

Another issue discussed is of substance abuse. Drugs spoil the life and the person loses patience. It weakens the mind and body.¹⁶

While opposing the devils of society Bhai Kahn Singh also focused on some rituals and superstitions those were practiced in society. While mentioning the *Gurbani* and other sources Bhai Kahn Singh has finely interpreted and presented his own understanding of such practices and his opinions. All the practices are false if these are not being performed from the depth of heart and with connection of almighty. Worship of stones, wearing *taweez* as necklace, worship of dead and forefathers etc are not the religion. These are not part of Sikhism too. References of Guru Gobind are given by Bhai Kahn Singh where example of a social custom known as Sati is mentioned. Guru Gobind Singh talks about the real truth and worship of almighty. He gives examples of Sati and snakes. If a woman whose husband is dead burns herself alive willingly, she will never get salvation. Similarly, spending the whole life in caves, will not earn any salvation, because the snakes who live under the ground are not getting any benefit of it.¹⁷

At the death of a person in the family, should continue their day routine. There food should be same as earlier. They should not weep by shouting. A cremation is necessary of the dead body though it is day or night. There should not be any construction of any small structure of few bricks known as *Marri*¹⁸. It simply denies the rituals.

Nature and almighty is above all who has created the whole universe. If it is accepted that human is made up of five elements. Those five elements are taken from the nature and nature is under the almighty. Instead of worshiping the almighty other worships and rituals are false. *Waheguru* or almighty is beyond and above all materialistic structures. God is neither created nor destroyed. Practice of Kashi Allahabad is mentioned. According to this practice, people go to the Kashi for holy bath and then cut themselves by a cutter or hacksaw and in this way they think they will get salvation. But in Sikhism all such practices are denied. It is a socio-religious drawback, where people blindly follow a ritual and give up their lives.¹⁹

ਕੂਕਤ ਫਿਰਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਰੋਵਤ ਮਰਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਜਲ ਮੇ ਡੁਬਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਆਗ ਮੇ ਜਰਤ ਹੈ।

ਕੇਤੇ ਗੰਗਵਾਸੀ ਕੇਤੇ ਮਦੀਨਾ ਮਕਾ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ, ਕੇਤਕ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਕੇ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਏ ਹੀ

ਫਿਰਤ ਹੈ।

ਕਰਵਤ ਸਹਿਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਭੂਮਿ ਮੇ ਗਡਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਸੂਆ ਪੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਦੁਖ ਕੇ ਭਰਤ

ਹੈ।

ਗੌਨ ਮੇ ਉਡਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਜਲ ਮੇ ਰਹਿਤ ਕੇਤੇ, ਗਯਾਨ ਕੇ ਬਿਹੀਨ ਜਕ ਜਾਰੇਈ

ਮਰਤ ਹੈ।

Kookat firat kete, rovat marat kete, jall me dubat kete, aag
me jarat hain.

¹⁵ *Gurmat Sudhakar*, pp. 450-452 (Pbi.)

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 452, 482, (Pbi.)

¹⁷ *Gurmat Sudhakar*, pp. 3-13, 22, (Pbi.)

¹⁸ Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurmat Martand*, SGPC Publication, Amritsar, 1962, p. 478 (Pbi.)

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 24, (Pbi.)

¹³ *Gurmat Sudhakar*, p.129, (Pbi.), Parminder Singh, 'Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha and Society', Panjab University Research Journal (Arts) Vol xlv, No.1, p. 32

¹⁴ *Gurmat Sudhakar*, pp. 142, 153,435-437, 517, Parminder Singh, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha and Society, p. 32

Kete gangwasi kete madina makka niwasi, Ketak udasi ke bharmaye hi firat hain.

Karwat sahet kete, bhrom me gadat kete, sooa pe charrat kete, dukh ko bharat hain.

Gaen me udat kete, jall me rehat kete, gyan ke biheen jak jarey marat hain.

In some families women tries to control the husbands by following the superstition methods. Such practices should not be followed. Effect of ill stars and evil practices are not good for simple life. Such practices should be avoided.²⁰ Spell, charming and superstition are denied in Sikhism.²¹

Guru Gobind's advice to the Khalsa is mentioned where he is opposing all the rituals and superstitions and advising to follow the almighty *Sri Asidhuj*, punish the sinners, doer of evils and anti-humanity elements. He handed over the responsibility of protection of the saints. It means the people of saintly attributes should always be respected and protected. Khalsa is totally distinct from all others.²²

III

Bhai Kahn Singh reiterates the ideas of Guru Gobind Singh as he understands them and has observed several social issues of his contemporary time. He supports his views by providing examples of such social drawbacks of the earlier times. References from *Gurbani* and other literature make his contribution stronger and unique. He is addressing all cultural groups and communities and identifying the common issues of all. Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha has focused on Guru Gobind Singh in his various writings. He has presented Guru Gobind Singh as a great poet, a writer, a saint and a warrior. Guru Gobind's views about caste system, some of the social customs, rituals are very finely presented by Bhai Kahn Singh in his works with a unique style. He is anti caste and Varna discrimination. In this way Guru Gobind's attributes and his impact on society as referred by Bhai Kahn Singh becomes much clearer. He underlines the relevance of ideas of Guru Gobind Singh in the early 20th century and the contemporary time as well. It is an attempt through this work to focus on poetic and intellectual attributes of Guru Gobind through the eyes of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha.

References

1. Ashok, Shamsheer Singh, *Parsidh Vidwan Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha*, National Printing Press, Jauriyian Bhatthiyian, Patiala, 1966, (Pbi.)
2. Nabha, Kahn Singh, *Gurmat Martand*, S.G.P.C, Amritsar, 1962, (Pbi.)
3. _____, *Gurmat Prabhakar*, Shri Gurmat Press, Amritsar, 1922, (Pbi.)
4. _____, *Gurmat Sudhakar*, Shri Gurmat Press, Amritsar, 1922, (Pbi.)
5. Ravi, Ravinder Kaur (ed.), Jagmail Singh Bhathuan (Asst. ed.) *Bikhre Moti (Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Ji De Nibandh)*, Navyug Publishers, New Delhi, 2008, (Pbi.)

Journal

1. Panjab University Research Journal (Arts) Vol xlv, No.1, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 2018

²⁰ *Gurmat Sudhakar* pp. 77, 123

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 78, (Pbi.)

²² *Ibid.* pp.13-14 (Pbi.)