

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa Waheguru ji ki fateh

I would like to start by thanking the organisers for inviting me to speak at this event today. It is an enormous privilege both to be here but to also have been given the opportunity to address you on the topic of dharma and logos

For Sikhs, the word "Dharma" means the "path of righteousness". "duty" --the way",

What is the "righteous path"? It is the path given to us by God - God revealed the path to Guru Nanak the founder of the Sikh faith who then revealed it to us through the shabad, the words which are enshrined in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji, the last and final guru of the Sikhs.

ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ ॥

I was a minstrel, out of work, when the Lord took me into His service.

ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਰੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ ॥

To sing His Praises day and night, He gave me His Order, right from the start.

ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੈ ਮਹਲਿ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ॥

My Lord and Master has summoned me, His minstrel, to the True Mansion of His Presence.

ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਰ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

He has dressed me in the robes of His True Praise and Glory.

ਢਾਢੀ ਕਰੇ ਪਸਾਉ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਜਾਇਆ ॥

His minstrel spreads His Glory, singing and vibrating the Word of His Shabad.

Guru Nanak travelled the four corners of this world to spread the message of dharma

Gurbani Shabad of "*Jaisi Mein Aavey Khasam Ki Bani, Tesra kari gyan vey Lalo. - As the Word of the Forgiving Lord comes to me, so do I express it, O Lalo*" (SGGS p722).

siqgur kl bwxl siq siq kir jwxhu gurisKhu hir krqw Awip muhhu kFwey]

O GurSikhs, know that the Bani, the Word of the True Guru, is true, absolutely true. The Creator Lord Himself causes the Guru to chant it.

How clearly the Guru tells that God prepared and then sent him to the world to start a new Dharma.

To follow the path of righteousness, our gurus gave us principles to live by.

The primary object of a Sikh's life is to seek union with God and hence, liberation from the cycle of births and deaths (cycle of re-incarnation) which is dictated by a person's thought, deeds and actions in this life. The first message Nanak taught us is, '**Ik-Oankar**'. Ik-Oankar is the Seed-Formula (Root formula). With this Ik-Oankar, "Mool Mantar" (the Sikh Basic Formula) begins. "Ik" is equal to One " 1 " in the Roman characters, and "Oankar" means, "All Pervading, Omnipresent, God" - All pervading God is only He, and there is none other like Him.

This important message is reiterated through the shabad, 'Sahib mera Eko hai, Eko hai Bhai, eko hai' which means 'My Master is One, One only, Oh Brother, He is Sole.'

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Jee gave a threefold path to humanity that would alleviate man of sorrow, redeem mankind from sin and elevate one's soul until it merges with the supreme Lord.

These three golden rules, or the 'Three Treasures' by which we are to lead our lives on the path of righteousness are,

Naam Japna -- Remember God's Name in every single endeavour you undertake-- meditate on God through reciting, chanting, singing and constant remembrance followed by deep study & comprehension of God's Name and virtues.-- In real life to practice and tread on the path of Dharam (righteousness) – The inner thought of the Sikh thus stays constantly immersed in praises and appreciation of the Creator and the ONE ETERNAL GOD Waheguru.

Dharam di Kirat Karni -- this means to carry out good deeds and earn a honest, pure and truthful livelihood by exercising ones God given skills, abilities, talents and hard labour for the benefit and improvement of the individual, their family and society at large.

Vand Chakko -- Selflessly serving others, sharing income and resources including foodstuffs or other goods: community-wide system for sharing with, and giving shelter to, those in need. The idea is not to make others dependent on charity but to enable them to receive help from a social system set up for the purpose, with dignity. Therefore, all, the rich and the poor (Sikh and non-Sikh), without distinction, are required to sit side by side in the Langar at a Gurdwara and partake food. Langar is the Guru's educational institution giving first lessons in sharing, service, humility and equality. Even giving and receiving of so called "charity" must not detract from human dignity. It must be given and accepted in humility, without any sense of pride (haomai) in the giver, or loss of personal dignity in the receiver. In this sense the Sikhi concept of "charity" may be unique amongst world religions.

In addition to these three golden rules, physical actions that we are to take to live on the path of righteousness, Guru Nanak Dev Ji also gave us the five virtues. These five virtues set the moral standard of how Sikhs should behave; the mental state of mind that they should embody when encountering any situation in life.

. Five Virtues

- 4a. Sat (truth)-- ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ ॥੫॥-- truth is high but higher still is truthful living.(5)
- To live truthfully is to live in light of who God is and who He has made us to be. We don't define who we are. Rather, we receive our identities as a gift from God,

- 4b. Santokh (contentment)-- When all the desires vanish the state of contentment is reached, the state of "**Sat Santokh**" is acquired. Desires are the reason for our sorrows and pains; its a such for an escape from these sorrows and pains. Fulfilling desires the person gets momentary happiness; unfulfilled desires bring disappointment. A continuous string of disappointments leads to depression and to mental and physical sicknesses.

Desires lead to mental and physical distortion of the mind; whereas **contentment brings peace and calmness** to the mind. This state of calmness and fulfilment brings us closer to the Almighty, because where there is complete peace in the mental state of the person, the mind can focus on the **ultimate reality**, the Akal Purakh.

- 4c. Daya (compassion)-- ਯੋਲੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਾ ਪੁਤੁ ॥ -meaning that Dharma or **Religion is the son of Compassion**. Putting it another way: There would be **no religion if there was no compassion**. This highlights how important this quality is and that it is a central quality, one which religion cannot function without.

Today we live in a world which is continually being brought to the brink of disaster due to lack of compassion. Religion is misinterpreted to spread terror and communal disharmony.

Following in the footsteps of Guru Nanak Sahib, we pray to the Timeless Lord, to save the burning world; to save all humankind no matter which religious path one chooses to follow.

In our Ardaas (supplication) we recite Guru Nanak Sahib's concluding

prayer:

- “May all enjoy well-being through Your [Compassionate] Will.”

4d. [Nimrata](#) (humility)— Embracing a humble outlook and attitude towards life will free you from the stressful quest for some intangible "significance" or unrealistic degree of importance, success, fame or power. Humility means learning to value yourself in a way that isn't dependent on outperforming other people and being the best, or one of the best, at things you do.

Humility Offers Social Benefits

Having the ability to be humble comes with strong social benefits. Researchers at the University of Maine recently studied how humble people perform in social groups and how they're perceived by others. What they discovered, as published in the "Journal Of Positive Psychology," is that humble people are more effective leaders and are valued in social settings due to their tendency to behave more generously, selflessly and altruistically.

Humility facilitates effective learning by keeping you open to new possibilities.

4e. [Pyaar](#) (love)-- This is a very positive and powerful tool in the [Sikhs](#) arsenal of virtues. When one's mind is full of love, the person will overlook deficiency in others and accept them wholeheartedly as a product of God.

ਸਾਚੁ ਕਰੋ ਸੁਨ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਭੈ ਜਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਓ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਇਓ ॥੯॥

I tell the truth; listen everyone. Only those who have Loved, will realize the Lord. (9)

Another vital part of the Sikh faith is equality. I've touched upon the notion that we all come from the one source so that we should be all be treated equally but I would like to focus on this a little more and highlight importance of gender equality in Sikhi.

Equality- Guru Nanak condemned this man-made notion of the inferiority of women, and protested against their long subjugation. The Ultimate Truth was revealed to Guru Nanak through a mystic experience, in direct communion with God. Guru Nanak conveys this Truth through the bani,

As the Divine is in all, women cannot be seen as “lower,” he said. In fact, no one can be “lower” or “higher.” Instead, Guru Nanak Sahib proclaimed that all have the same spiritual potential and therefore should be granted the same social, spiritual, and economic rights. From then on, each of our Gurus worked for the advancement of women.

One of the beautiful things about Sikhi is seeing this empowerment embodied in Gurbani as seen in these one shabads:

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married.

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੇਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥

Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come.

ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥

When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound.

ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨੁ ॥

So why call her bad? From her, kings are born.

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all.

ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੇਇ ॥

O Nanak, only the True Lord is without a woman.

The Sikh dharam is a complete way of life. Sikhs have been set goals to improve the world around them and for each and every person, regardless of their personal beliefs.

Socio-political Goals of Sikhi

- World peace and survival of humankind in the long run depends on the egalitarian principles of equality and sharing on this earth, also referred to as the “Great Mother” in Guru Granth Sahib (Mata dharat mahat), who feeds her children. All human beings are brothers and sisters and must learn to share, and live in peace and with dignity.
- For this reason, the Sikh socio-political objectives are described in three words in the Sikh slogan, “Degh, Tegh, Fateh !”
- Degh is the cauldron symbolising community kitchen and the principle of sharing with dignity. This leads on to welfare, social and economic objectives.
- Tegh is the sword of justice and equality which protects the weak and creates an egalitarian order so that “No one inflicts pain on another in a Halemi raj, or global benign regime.” (GGs p.74).
- And so the socio-political objective of the Khalsa Panth, the Order of the Khalsa (those directly linked with the Guru), laid down by the Tenth Guru, Gobind Singh, is that Degh and Tegh shall ultimately prevail on this earth, this “Temple of God”. (Degh Tegh jaag meh doun chaalay)

Sikh Dharm is the God-given ability to stand in the presence of God without any sense of guilt, condemnation, shame, or unworthiness

and to stand in this world without any sense of inferiority, weakness, fear, or cowardice.

This has all again been revealed to us by the almighty -

ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥

By myself, I do not even know how to speak; I speak all that the Lord commands.763

ਏਹੁ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

This Word is spoken by the One who created the whole universe. ||1||306

- "Nanak is the first born in India who says that the religion he preaches is a revealed religion",

In the words of Nanak -

ਸਚੁ ਵਰਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ॥

Those who have truth as their fast, contentment as their sacred shrine of pilgrimage, spiritual wisdom and meditation as their cleansing bath,

ਦਇਆ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਖਿਮਾ ਜਪਮਾਲੀ ਤੇ ਮਾਣਸ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ ॥

kindness as their deity, and forgiveness as their chanting beads - they are the most excellent people.

ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਏਹੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਰੁ ॥

Practice truth, contentment and kindness; this is the most excellent way of life.

Sikhi Dharma is a spiritual path that is open to all sincere spiritual seekers regardless of their ethnicity or nationality.

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