

Understanding Sadhana through the Life of Sri Ramakrishna: The Experience of God Realization through Tantric Sadhana — IV

— PRAVRAJKA VIVEKAPRANA

Now we move to a unique level of Sri Ramakrishna's sadhana. As explained earlier, because the ancient thinkers discovered that there are three levels of human, mental, emotional evolution, they also found many paths of moving from Dvaita, to Vishishtha Advaita, and finally to Advaita. The most important underlying factor to understand for spiritual aspirants, is the power or significance of the human ego.

Ahamkara or Ego

What keeps us separate from God is our ego. The key is to understand why the ego has arisen in human beings because if we look at evolution, animals do not have an ego. Although they have their sense of separation. But the rising of *ahamkara*, ego, in its very predominant level is very strong. Is that good or bad?

From the ordinary religious point of view, the ego or *ahamkara* is bad, and it should be killed we are told, it needs to be destroyed. Our ancient psychologists understood that it can neither be killed nor destroyed, it has to be transformed. The transformation, as through Dvaita, Vishishtha Advaita, and Advaita, till it vanishes into Brahman. That was the basic idea... but knowing that most human beings cannot jump to Advaita immediately, the need to pray to an outside God was the beginning. Then, with Vishishtha Advaita, which is based on relationship, the ego extends. This extension gives a feeling of joy or of

relating. The key is extending to the whole universe. Here the individual ego is considered bad and it becomes important to let go of our will power and submit totally to the Will of God. The only thing to understand here is that everything functions with the Will of God. This is a very tough *sadhana*, to forget the ego. Sri Ramakrishna likens this to the *Ashwattha* (peepul) tree, you pull out the roots and they come back the very next day. Ego is like that; Sri Ramakrishna says, "let the rascal be, but as a child of God or the servant of God." These are the only type of relationships that can work in this Age, he asserts. We need to have the capacity to relate outside the instinctive boundaries, to extend the boundaries. This Age demands it.

Love can never survive where there is no freedom. Human ego is evolving, it has to evolve. From 'I' and 'mine' we need to expand. Otherwise it is merely selfish love or attachment.

The four yogas were given as paths in India; to help us in this process of evolving. They urge us to transform our ego from the lowest level to the highest possible. The ego says 'I', since the basic attachment is to ourselves. To get out of that we have "God and I" to begin with till "God and I are One", and finally "I am That".

Sri Ramakrishna's First Guru

After having finished his *sadhana* based on the pure desire to realize whether

God was real, or not, on his own, without any help, Sri Ramakrishna had moved on to the level of Vishishtha Advaita, where he got a little bit of help from gurus. The first guru was Bhairavi Brahmani.

This idea that now evolution has to become conscious so that people rise above instinctive relationships is what we are being told by this particular *sadhana* of Sri Ramakrishna, which is very peculiar, very difficult to understand and accept because we have become a race of timid people. Sri Ramakrishna, by his own desire to realize the various forms of God, practised the well-known ways of reaching out to the realization of God. But because of the physical and mental symptoms that he developed everyone around him thought that he had gone mad. And therefore there was great anguish in the hearts of those who knew him and loved him, to cure him. They were trying to find out remedies to get him out of his “God madness”. This phenomenon also was not unknown in India. We know of historical persons such as Mira Bai, the 16th century ‘queen’ by social status, who abandoned the social norms completely and with single-pointed devotion, worshipped her Lord Krishna. She was ostracised, efforts were made to kill her, but she stayed steadfast in her path only to merge into her *Ishta* in the final Oneness. Surdas, who was blind, was also fixed in his worship of Sri Krishna. As per legend he blinded himself so that he did not see anything that would tempt him to turn to the world. There are many such stories. But “being mad for God” was not unknown, especially during the Bhakti Movement in India that swept over east and north India, reaching its zenith between the 15th and 17th century CE.

Sri Ramakrishna also then started believing that there was something wrong with him since everyone around him thought so. He gave in to all kinds of suggestions. But Bhairavi Brahmani came into his life at this time and proved that he was not crazy but his symptoms were typical of a person who is in the state of God realization. She proved that all this is written of in our ancient books. Something that occurred ages ago, and recurs and can be proved again, shows that it is a science. We are aware that science asks for proof for everything. For example, what is water made up of? It has two parts of hydrogen and one of oxygen. This can be replicated universally. But surely and similarly, if there is recorded replication in religion and spirituality then that is also scientifically true. This is what was needed to be re-demonstrated and that is why Sri Ramakrishna’s *sadhana*, spread over 12 years, is scientifically true. Bhairavi Brahmani tried to convince him that he was not suffering from any disease. But because others would not believe this, he would cry and keep running to the Mother and ask her why she was putting him through this.

Tantric Tapasya

The Bhairavi felt that he had to be taken through a course of disciplines that are written of in the books, so that by those disciplines he can see the results for himself, and is convinced that what he has is not a disease but it is the result of his *tapasya*. So what was this next level? This was the *Tantric tapasya*. In India we had forgotten the basic idea that there is just one God, that there cannot be millions of Gods, there cannot be millions of universes either;

whatever there is in this universe, be it good, bad, or indifferent, auspicious or inauspicious, comes from the same source. Everything that is in the universe can be traced to the one and the same source. It may be a very difficult concept to understand or accept, but it had to be demonstrated once again. Sri Ramakrishna, therefore had to demonstrate through his *tapasya* and *sadhana*, that this was also once believed to be a path to realization of God — through certain fearful practices. We believe such acts or practices are terrible and cannot be the manifestation of God or part of His mercy. But it is our understanding that needs to evolve because our own perceptions and ideas have become very narrow. Every aspect of life has to be accepted. Sri Ramakrishna himself gave us this philosophy:

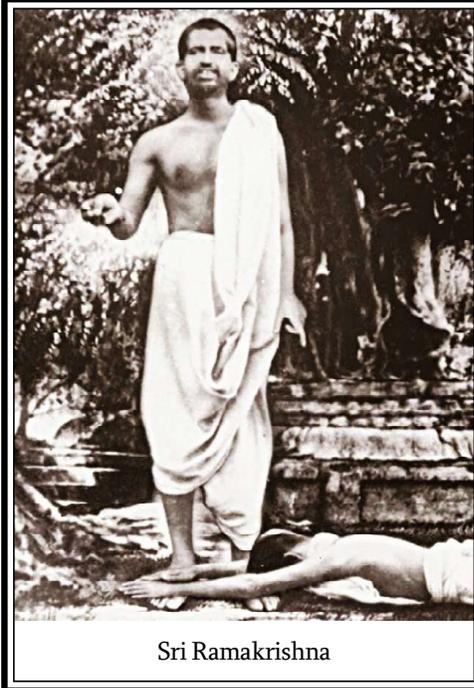
as many opinions, that many paths.

Tantric psychology was developed in India to give a path to people who want to enjoy life and yet realize God. This concept was being forgotten, that whatever one is doing, however one is living, the purpose of life is to move towards God realization. For this purpose, we were given the four ‘ashramas’:
Brahmacharya (the time for education and disciplining one’s mind and body), *grihastha* (worldly life, enjoyment, family, work, earn a living, etc.), *vanaprastha* (moving away from the world, and relationships), and

finally Sannyas or *moksha* (renunciation and working towards Self-, or God-realization). Therefore, whatever be the life we live we are supposed to move towards the final goal, and at no point stagnate or get stuck. In the modern Age, the belief is entrenched in the thought that life is only for enjoyment, little realizing that the more

the enjoyment the greater the suffering. Thus the Master took the hint from the Universal Mother, forgot everything else and merged himself in Tantric *sadhana* and the learned and masterly Brahmani took endless pains to collect, from various parts of the country, things specifically necessary for particular rites and give the Master instructions regarding their application at the time of *sadhana*. The skulls of five dead

beings, including that of a man, were brought from somewhere far away from the River Ganga, and two altars propitious for Tantric *sadhana* were constructed; one under the vilva tree, situated at the northern boundary of the Temple garden, and the other under the Panchavati, planted by the Master himself. Sitting on either of these skull seats, according to need, the Master spent his time in *japa*, meditation, etc. This extraordinary *sadhaka* and his guide were not conscious for a few months how days and nights slipped by. The Master used to say:



Sri Ramakrishna

In the day time, the Brahmani went to places far away from the Temple garden and collected and brought various rare articles prescribed by the Tantras. Placing them either under the vilva tree or under the Panchavati at night, she called me, taught me how to make use of those things and helped me in the performance of the worship of the Divine Mother, according to the prescribed rules with their aid, asking me at last to merge in japa and meditation. I acted accordingly, but I had to perform almost no *japa* because hardly had I turned the rosary once that I merged completely in *samadhi*, and realized the result proper to those rites, there was thus no limit to my visions and experiences, all very extraordinary. The Brahmani made me undertake, one by one, all the disciplines prescribed in the 64 main tantras. All difficult to accomplish in trying to practice which, most of the *sadhakas* go astray. But I got through them all, successfully, by the Mother's Grace.

On one occasion I saw that the Brahmani had brought at night, nobody knew from where, a beautiful woman in the prime of her youth, and said to me, "my child worship her as the Devi." When the worship was finished she said, "My child sit on her lap and perform Japa." I was seized with fear and wept piteously and said, "Oh Mother, Mother of the Universe, what is this command that thou givest to me, one who has taken absolute refuge in Thee?" But as soon as I said so, I felt that I was possessed by some unknown power and an extraordinary strength filled my heart. And no sooner as I, uttering the *mantras*, sat on the

lap of the woman, like one hypnotised, unaware of what I was doing that I merged completely in *samadhi*. When I regained consciousness I saw the Brahmani waiting on me and trying to bring me back to normal consciousness. She said, "the rite has been completed my child, Others restrain themselves with very great difficulty under such circumstances and then finish the rite with nominal japa for a very short time only, but you lost all consciousness and were in deep *samadhi*." When I heard this I became reassured and started saluting the Mother again and again with a grateful heart for enabling me to pass that ordeal, unscathed.

On another occasion I saw that the Brahmani cooked fish, in the skull of a dead body, and performed *tarpan* (an offering), she also made me do that and asked me to take that fish. I did as I was asked and felt no aversion, whatsoever. But on the day when the Brahmani brought a piece of rotten human flesh, and asked me to touch it with my tongue, after *tarpan*, I was shaken by aversion, and said, "can it be done?" So questioned, she said, "what is there my child, just see how I do it." Saying so, she put a portion of it into her own mouth and said, "aversion should not be entertained", and placed again a little bit of it before me. When I saw her do so, the idea of the terrible Chandika form of the universal Mother was inspired in my mind and repeatedly uttering Mother I entered into *bhava samadhi* then there was no aversion, when the Brahmani put it into my mouth.

Sri Ramakrishna The Great Master,
Vol. 1, pp.226-227

The concept here is to overcome fear and revulsion; to overcome the belief that such things are evil and disgusting, because there is no such thing. If we find this concept as horrible, we forget that we carry around our own skeleton and our innards, which can be quite revolting, in this body all the time. At the same time, in this body we also carry all that can be most beautiful. It is important to grasp this concept to understand our place within the body, of it being the instrument, and overcome any attachments to it. From Sri Ramakrishna's description we can understand that when one overcomes fear one moves to another level of consciousness. One needs to face reality. And for that, in fact, we need to be brave and determined. That is, in fact, the essence of human life.

Complete Control of the Senses

With special reference to Thakur's rare experience of aversion when he was asked to touch the piece of rotten human flesh with his tongue, the *sadhana* is to have such extreme control over the salivary glands that there is no concept of taste. Similarly, when Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went to his guru seeking *sannyasa*, the guru asked him how he could prove that he was ready for it. Chaitanya placed sugar on his tongue, and it remained absolutely dry. There was no saliva secreted at all. While we are talking of extreme levels of self-control, we must realize that this expectation of self-control that is demonstrated in these tantric rituals or otherwise were not just expected from those who were seeking to take *sannyasa* or wanted to renounce the world. Exercising self-control was expected of all human beings, as a matter of course. From these rituals we also realize why we are

expected to worship the terrible form of the Mother. These images are to be worshipped so that we can overcome our fears and aversions, our hatred and violence.

According to our psychology, every human being is born with six enemies (*shadripu*): *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (attachment), *mada* (pride), *matsariya* (envy). They are our hidden enemies. They come up only under certain stimulation. All actions and reactions rise from within us. Because all these are hidden we search or find reasons outside, but there are no reasons outside. In order to overcome these enemies, tantric psychology tells that there are these and other instinctive emotions can be roused to overcome them. We have to relate and be aware. In true relationships there has to be a reciprocal interchange of energy. Sri Ramakrishna demonstrates, therefore, if we relate for everything only with the Mother, the Divine Energy, that ultimate reciprocity prevails and keeps us in equanimity. In equanimity there is Self-realization, which is the final goal. In Sri Ramakrishna's words (in continuation of the description of his Tantric Sadhana), "...I remember the day when I was able, by the Grace of the Mother, to view with perfect equanimity, the supreme pleasure of a pair of lovers, seeing nothing in it but the blissful sport of the Divine. The mind instead of descending even to the neighbourhood of ordinary human feelings, soared higher and higher, merging at last in deep *samadhi*. After regaining normal consciousness, I heard the Brahmani say, 'You have reached the desired end of a very difficult Tantric Sadhana and become established in the Divine mood. This is the ultimate *sadhana* of the heroic mode of worship.'" ❀

Guru Nanak, the Prophet of Equality and Harmony

— UMESH GULATI

The advent of Guru Nanak in India during the fifteenth century was a great blessing to the world. India in the fifteenth century faced a major social, political, and spiritual crisis. While the ruling class desecrated many Hindu temples, the priests, too, exploited the Hindus. To enrich themselves they fed people with the religion of rituals and superstitions, completely devoid of its real essence. Muslims too, were divided into factions and sects. Guru Nanak summed up the degradation of the country in the following words:

*Fools pass for learned ones,
sophistry for wisdom,
and everyone seeks for nothing but
pelf?*

Baba Nanak, as he was affectionately called by his close companions, was born on April 15, 1469 at Talwandi (now known, after him, as Nanakana Sahib), some forty miles south west of Lahore, Pakistan. Both his father Kalyan Das Mehta and mother Triptan were devout Hindus. His birthday is celebrated in the month of November on the Purnima (full-moon) day.

Nanak's father wanted him to become a *Patwari*, record keeper, like himself, and enrolled him into a school with that objective. Nanak's mind, however, was not made for learning analytical knowledge. On the contrary, it was given to knowing the more integrative knowledge of the Spirit. No wonder, he quickly mastered Punjabi and Sanskrit (and later Persian and Arabic), and composed a poem in Punjabi at a young age which

surprised his teachers. In this poem, which is preserved in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the young saint explains the meaning of a truly learned person: *He who unravels divine knowledge is the real pundit.*

Saints like Nanak are lights unto themselves. He who knows the Lord, all is revealed to him by the Lord. Truly said Nanak: "I speak only what Thou make me to speak." After Nanak quit school, his father tried to get him interested in some secular pursuit like cattle grazing or farming. One day when he led his cattle for grazing, he chose to sit under a tree in meditation, while the cattle grazed at another's farm. Seeing him uninterested in any productive work, Nanak's parents married him off at the early age of 14, ostensibly to make him responsible. But that did not change much. Once his parents gave him silver coins to buy goods wholesale from the market to sell in retail in the village for a profit. But Nanak distributed the money among the poor. For him there was no truer trade than feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Serving God in man was Nanak's watchword.

At last, as a result of loving entreaties of Nanak's sister Nanki, his father sent him to her house in Sultanpur, where his brother-in-law, Jairam, got him a job as a store-keeper with Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi. As Nanak was charitable by nature, he would give away a greater part of his salary, mostly in kind, to the poor. While at work, when he reached the figure 13 – *tera* (meaning yours), he would repeat frequently "*Tera, main tera*" (yours, I am yours, Lord).

It was during his stay at Sultanpur

that Nanak disappeared (remaining absorbed in *samadhi* for three days in the woods), and was presumed drowned in a nearby rivulet. On his return he had no words to express his experience, so he took recourse to saying in negatives: “*Na koi Hindu; na koi Mussalman*” (“There is no Hindu; there is no Muslim”) For what else does one experience in *samadhi*, except unity, and pure Consciousness? In that state duality disappears, conflicts vanish, and subject and object become one.

The Nawab understood Nanak’s mind and invited him to join him and the Qazi (Muslim priest) for a prayer in a Mosque. During the prayer, Nanak remained standing and didn’t kneel. The knower of God is fearless like a child who tells the truth as he sees it, and the pure mind of Nanak could see through peoples’ minds. So when the Qazi demanded the reason for Nanak’s impertinence, the latter replied, “What prayer was I expected to join? While pretending to be praying, you were occupied with the thought of the new born foal who was loose in the yard, and feared that it might fall into an unfenced well.” Turning to the Nawab, Nanak said, “You were not praying either, because you were thinking of purchasing horses in Kabul.” Both the Nawab and the Qazi admitted their guilt and fell at Nanak’s feet for forgiveness.

There is a saying in India, “A river is that which flows, and a monk is one who moves from place to place.” Nanak truly reflected that spirit. Although he had been married and had two children, he was a monk par excellence. He avoided all worldly comfort. While traveling along with his disciples Bala and Mardana, he often avoided settled places. He depended mostly on wild berries and fruits, and didn’t

seek the charity of people. When offered, he accepted only enough food that would last for just that time; he never hoarded for the future.

At Aminabad, he preferred to eat with Lalo a low-caste carpenter, but rejected the invitation of Malik Bhago, a high-caste government official. When Malik demanded the reason, Nanak replied: “In your delicacies is the blood of the poor, while the coarse bread of Lalo, who earns by the sweat of his brow, is sweet like milk.” Indeed, according to the *janam sakhis* (the legendary biographies of Guru Nanak), he took some part of food brought from Lalo’s house in his right hand and that of Malik’s in his left, and pressed his fists. While milk came from his right hand, blood oozed from the left hand.

Guru Nanak was strictly monotheist, and taught the oneness of God. He called the Supreme Being as *Ikk Onkar* (One, without a second). According to Nanak, God is eternal, infinite and all-pervasive; He is transcendent as well as immanent, and without or with attributes, impersonal or personal — *nirguna* or *saguna*. After his ecstasy near Sultanpur, Nanak composed a poem that forms the preamble to the *Japuji*, the opening text of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

“There is only One God. He is the Supreme Being. Only His name is true. He is the creator of all life and matter. He was in the beginning, He was in all ages. The true One is, was, O Nanak, and shall forever be.”

Guru Nanak, however, didn’t believe in the descent of God as an *avatara* or incarnation, but having realized God himself, he was impelled to teach humanity the path of righteousness and thus relieve its suffering. That is what the role of a

spiritual teacher is. And a guru, meaning, “a person who dispels ignorance about man’s divine nature”, is God’s close substitute. “A rose by another name,” said Shakespeare, “would smell as sweet.” Nanak was indeed the true guru of all humanity. He said that all men and women are the children of God and therefore have inherited His divinity. It is because we forget our divine origin, our true Self, that we commit sins and evil acts. By practicing spiritual discipline as prescribed in *Japuji* — purity, simplicity, and charity — one can overcome evil and become virtuous. Guru Nanak said, “Truth is higher than all else, but higher, by far, is the living of truth.”

According to Guru Nanak, the ultimate objective of man’s life is to achieve *moksha* or *mukti*, which means freedom from the ego, and from the cycle of birth and death. Man’s bondage arises because of his egoism, which separates him from God, keeps him under the spell of ignorance, and alienates him from the universal Will or *Hukam*. There are six deadly passions, which are responsible for man’s spiritual blindness: *agyan* (ignorance or nescience), *kama* (sensuality), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (attachment), and *ahankara* (pride). A person with these passions is called *manmukha*. These cause his suffering in this world.

It was to free man from his sufferings that Nanak embarked on his *uddasis*,

(spiritual travels or holy wandering), and preached the gospel of harmony, love, and peace. His message was simple. He didn’t ask for austerities and penances, fasts, mechanical rituals, and escapes to pilgrim places, stressed by the yogis and *Naths* (yogis of the Gorakhanath tradition) of his time. Instead, he urged them to consider their body as the temple or the house of God, and to use it to gain spiritual knowledge, and serve humankind. He stressed that the battle of life must be fought fearlessly with a perfectly controlled mind and sensitive heart. By immersing oneself in *Nam* or *Sat Nam*, which is the true name of God, or *shabad*, one can transcend this *samsara*, the finite world of coming and going. He exhorted his disciples, called Sikhs

(Sanskrit *shishya*), to abide by the principle of earning their livelihood by honest labour, engaging in prayer and meditation, and sharing the fruit of their labour with all: *kirat karni, Nam japna, te vanda chhakna*.

His *uddasis* that had begun when he was 34 years old, took him to the four corners of India, and even to foreign lands like Saudi Arabia and Iraq. In his discussions with the yogis recorded in the *Siddha Gosti* (spiritual interfaith dialogue as given in the *Adi Granth*), Guru Nanak spelled out his method of achieving liberation— not by running away from the world, but by controlling the senses, living a detached life, being sensitive to the needs of the downtrodden, and having love and



Guru Nanak

sympathy for all. A person of these virtues is called *gurmukha* in the *Siddha Gosti*.

In contrast to the self-centred *manmukha*, a *gurmukha* sees himself in all, and all in himself, and becomes an active agent for promoting the collective well-being of all. Indeed, he sees God in everything and every being.

According to the *janam sakhis*, once in Mecca, Nanak was sleeping with his feet turned toward the Kaba, the holy mosque. When someone objected, Nanak asked him to turn his feet in the direction where God was not. As legend has it, in whichever direction the person moved Nanak's feet, the Kaba appeared there. It may be mentioned here that the term *Gurmukh* got transformed into *Khalsa*, meaning "pure" in Persian, by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

Finally, at the age of 52, Nanak settled down at Kartarpur, a habitation that he himself had founded on the eastern bank of the River Ravi, and remained there until his death on September 22, 1539. There grew around him a community of his followers drawn from all castes and occupations. An institution of far reaching importance, the *langar* (a free kitchen or communal dining hall), emerged at this time, where people shared a meal without distinction of caste or creed. A key element in this exercise was the spirit of *seva* or selfless service. To further breakdown the hierarchical system in the society of his time, Guru Nanak himself ate with all the people, sitting side-by-side with them, he enjoyed being equal to them.

Out of this *langar* tradition grew two other institutions, *dharamshala* or *dharamsal* and *sangat*. The former was the place where people gathered to pray and to sing Guru Nanak's hymns. In the *Japuji*,

Guru Nanak calls this world as *dharamsal* or the place for virtuous deeds, and the human body as an agent for ethical actions, further reinforcing the idea that religion is not a matter of believing in a dogma, but living it.

The first *dharamsal*, according to the *Puratan janamsakhi*, was established at Talumba in the Multan district of the present-day Pakistan. It is this same *dharamshala*, which came to be called *gurdwara* from the time of Guru Gobind Singh. While *dharamshala* was the forerunner of *gurdwara*, *sangat* stood for an assembly or congregation of people (called *bhaís* or brothers), assembled for prayer or religious ceremony. All spiritual and social matters were to be decided by the consensus arrived at by the *sangat*. Needless to say, it was these *sangats* that laid the foundation for the future Sikh community or *Sikh Panth*.

As mentioned earlier, Guru Nanak did not respect meaningless rituals and *pujas* in temples that didn't come from the devotees' hearts. He didn't think much about worshiping idols, and also cared little about a time-honoured custom of splashing river water toward the east for the welfare of the departed souls. Most importantly, he didn't accept caste divisions in the Hindu society, and expressed his opposition to untouchability in a beautiful song:

The real pariahs are the evil thoughts — cruelty, slander and wrath.

Let Truth, self-restraint and good acts be your rites, and your ablutions the remembrance of God's name.

This, I believe, is the quintessence of Nanak's teachings, stressed by every

saint before and after him, that religion doesn't consist in certain symbolic expressions or in the outward observance of rituals, *pujas*, etc., but in the cultivation of love and sympathy for our fellow beings. The fact that Guru Nanak laboured so much against rituals was because, he could see through the hypocrisy of those who use these rituals as a cover. If rituals and rites would be performed to purify our hearts as they were meant to do, he would have been all for them. It is unfortunate that any good custom or law started with good intentions becomes over time corrupted and loses its initial intent. Knowing that, he recommended *japa*, or the constant remembrance of God, which he called *satnam*. *Japa* then, is a spiritual detergent, as it were, in which our mind should be constantly soaked to make it free from any trace of pride and prejudice.

Guru Nanak preached the same gospel of eternal religion, Sanatana Dharma, which has come from the mouths of great *rishis* (sages) and mystics of India. So there is indeed a continuous Vedic tradition in the body of Sikh religion, which in essence is Hinduism shorn of the scum of superfluous rituals accumulated over a long period of time. What makes us stand in awe and wonder of Nanak, however, is

that he was one of the few saints of India who spoke and wrote in the popular dialect of North India, and thereby made the true Vedic religion accessible to the illiterate masses.

His institution of the *langar* tradition, is his greatest legacy, and along with *sangat*, he laid down a practical way of achieving the ideal of equality and a casteless society in India. Without imbibing the spirit behind these two institutions, *bhajans* and *kirtans* (devotional singing), *kathas* (discourses), *pravachans* or *akhanda paths* (holy readings) will be of no avail. People may be divided functionally into different roles, but in God, we are all one. Finally, Nanak uplifted the status of women by permitting them in *dharamshalas* and *langars* on par with men. He believed that man cannot attain spiritual emancipation without women's help. In this respect he was way ahead of his times. ❀

References:

1. MacLeod, W.H. 1980, *Early Sikh Tradition, A Study of the Janam Sakhis*, Clarendon Press
2. Gopal Singh, 1965, *Guru Nanak*
3. Harbans Singh, 1983, *Berkeley Lectures*
4. Jodh Singh, 1982, *The Religious Philosophy of Guru Nanak*

Guru Nanak was born in the sacred land of India. He gave a message of love and peace of the whole world and preached the same through his teachings. He was full of affection for everyone and his arms were always outstretched as if to embrace the whole world. There was no difference between a Hindu and a Muslim for him. He was common Guru to all. He was the Guru of all human race.

Swami Vivekananda