



ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥



HAIR

A
DIVINE GIFT

By
Sewa Singh (Sant)
English Version By:
Mrs. M.K. Thiara (U.S.A.)

Auth. & Publishers
SEWA SINGH (SANT)
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IMPORTANCE OF HAIR

God created and made human beings from the head to toe. He adorned and established external and internal organs of the body, blessing us with completeness.

Similarly hair is priceless gift from god and as important an organ as any other part of the body. Absence of even a single part of the body becomes an obstacle for the body to function correctly, making the body appear ugly and creating an inferiority complex in the person.

Just like a person without a hand is addressed as one handed, a person without one eye is known as blind in one eye, and a person deprived of legs or feet is called lame, a person without hair on his head is called bald-headed and a person without a beard is known as beardless or Khoda.

Just as a person develops an inferiority complex because of the absence of any God given organ of the body, the importance of hair as an essential part of the body can be revealed by the bald- headed person or the person who doesn't have a beard. This person, in spite of having all other parts of the body, still feels incomplete among society. He is always rueful because he feels accursed by God. The bald- headed or beardless person always prays and requests for the ability to grow some hair. He also tries to acquire hair by spending large amounts of money on doctor's visits, medicines, and facial ointments.

Acquisition of hair is sometimes not successful, despite numerous efforts and expense.

I would like to relate a personal experience so that the importance of hair becomes clearer. I was sitting in my room at Rampur Khera Gurdwara Sahib one summer's day not so long ago. Two military men from Pathankot came to see me. One of them was a major and the other was a colonel. The Major was already acquainted with me, but it was Colonel Sahib's first visit. After the major had introduced his companion, we served them some refreshments and snacks. Major Sahib had adopted the teachings code of conduct of Sikhism, however the Colonel Sahib had been trimming his beard.

Major Sahib addressed me and said that Colonel Sahib was his senior officer at their army barracks. He said, "It is not my place to say anything but because I am his well-wisher, I am going to say something relating to him". Major Sahib continued, "Colonel Sahib does read the Guru's word. He believes in God, is faithful, but at the same time he keeps trimming his beard. Please inspire him to adopt the ideal, original, perfect form of the Sikh with uncut hair and beard." After listening to the Major's plea I replied in answer that Colonel sahib is an educated and wise man. He knows what is good and bad for him. A hint is enough for a wise man instead of advice or any explanation. I told Major Sahib that he had already given that hint to Colonel Sahib.

While this conversation was underway, a person whose name was Gurdev Singh, also known as Dev, was fighting with

some kids who were eating food in the community kitchen (langar). He was talking angrily with them because they were teasing him. I heard the rueful words spoken by Dev and knew why he was fighting with the kids. Dev had been living at the Gurdwara (Guru's house) for the past two to three years. He had been doing voluntary service (Seva). He would often argue with the kids.

I called one of the disciples and asked him to bring Dev to me. He went and brought Dev back to me. I asked Dev about the cause of the fight with the kids. Dev said, "I serve food from the community kitchen to these kids but they tease me by making comment like, 'Hey lady give us some cooked lentils and give us some Chapatti (Indian tortilla) ' You tell me if I look like a lady. I am already accursed by God and stricken by fate. God didn't give me a beard and that is one reason I didn't get married. I am neither considered a male or a female. These kids harass me even more by calling me a lady. I live a miserable life and try to pass the time by doing voluntary service and living at the Gurdwara. Please tell them not to make me any more miserable or else I will break somebody's arm or leg." I listened to the whole conversation in front of the Major and Colonel Sahib. I told Dev that when I go down, I would punish those guilty kids. I advised Dev to stay calm. After I consoled Dev, he went downstairs to the community kitchen or langar.

When he left, I addressed Colonel Sahib and asked if he had listened to the grief of this sufferer. I said how it was strange that a person who has been given hair and beard by God was not willing to keep it. On the other hand, a person who was never blessed with hair and beard is unhappy because he believes his

bald-headed or beardlessness is a sign of God's displeasure and a punishment for his bad deeds. I told Colonel Sahib to decide for himself and think about why we are destroying this symbol of manliness with our own hands.

If God had not given us hair or beard then we would have been in the same condition as Dev. We would not have been enumerated in the male or female category. Colonel Sahib was a wise man. He agreed that it was a personal fault and our laziness. We make mistakes just by imitating other people. He made a promise that next time we met, he would definitely be in the form of an ideal Sikh with uncut hair and beard. He asked me to pray for him so that he could keep his promise to be a true Sikh of the guru. I received a letter from Major Sahib after some time in which he expressed his happiness about Colonel Sahib keeping his hair and beard uncut. Most of the time it is not that people are helpless. Usually it is due to ignorance that people are trying to compete in a race to look better than the other person. They are breaching God's order by cutting hair.

Hair doesn't just grow after a child's birth. Just as other parts of the body are formed in accordance to limits inside the mother's womb, hair too develops on a baby according to God's will but within fixed limits during pregnancy. God's plan is truly marvelous. Just as Guru's word commands: -

Pooray kaa kee-aa sabh kichh poora

All that the perfect lord does is perfectly complete

Ghat vadh kichh naahee

There is nothing less or more in his creation

(Salok 1st Guru, p 1412)

The complete lord God has created such an exquisite and complete universe; wherever the body needed external hair, a fixed length of hair was given. For the protection of delicate internal limbs of the body, God created hair wherever it was needed. God provided hair on the ear membrane, and inside the nose to prevent dust going into our lungs. God also gave hair on the head and beard on men's faces. It is God's will that he provided hair on women's heads only. The person, who unwisely goes against God's will never achieve success. Hair keeps on growing even when human beings are cutting it all their life. A person ultimately has to surrender in front of God's will. God has blessed human beings with hair according to the environment in which they live. Dark black and curly hair was given to people who live in a hot climate. Brown and white hair has been given to people who live in cooler areas so that the body can adapt to the environment. God has not provided us with extra limbs for the body nor has he deprived us of any limbs. According to Baba Kabir ji's command: -

Na kachh poch maatee kay bhaanday

There is nothing wrong or deficient in the pot of clay

(i.e this body)

Na kachh poch kumbhaarai

There is no deficiency in the potter

(God who made this body)

(Parbhathi Bhagat Kabir Ji, p1350)

If an incomplete person tries to interfere with and defy God's will, he will gain nothing but humiliation and assets of sinful deeds. In composition of God's word, Guru Arjun Dev Ji has

praised God in Vadhans Rag by portraying Him with an appearance of long hair and beautiful nose. He points out that God's form is endowed with these qualities. Guru Ji's command is: -

Tayray bankay loin dant reesaalay

Your eyes are so beautiful and your teeth delightful

Sohnay nak jin lamrhay waalaa

Your nose is so graceful and your hair is so long

(Vadhans 5th Guru, p567)

Satguru ji encourages us to meditate on God by referring to him as Kayshav, Keso (having hair). Baba Kabir ji's command says: -

Kabir kayso kayso kookee-ai na so-ee- ai asaar

Kabir, Chant the name of the beautifully haired lord, do not sleep unaware

Raat divas kay kooknay kabhao kay sunai pukaar

Chanting his name day and night, the lord will eventually hear your call

(Salok Kabir ji, p 1376)

Baba Nam Dev ji has guided us to ask our graceful God with uncut hair to help us escape from the cycle of death and birth.

Kaysvaa bach-uneee a-ee-ay ma-ee ay ayk aan-jeo

The Beautiful haired lord says the creation and I are one

(Dhanasari Bhagat Namdev ji, p 693)

While we pray and worship God and refer to Him as having hair, we should know that all holy men whether they are Muslim or from another religion, priests, divine avatars and saints, prophets who are sent by God to show people the path of truth, have all kept untrimmed hair and beard. According to Muslim faith, the whole universe is the descendant of Adam. God created Adam in his own appearance and made all messengers of God prostrate in prayer (Muslim way of praying) to Adam.

Another thing to remember is that Baba Adam disobeyed God's command only once. As a result he had to fall below his status in heaven onto earth. But those people who disobey God's command everyday, repeatedly cutting their hair, God Knows what price they will pay?

In his literature, Sikh philosopher Professor Puran Singh ji has written in clear words about the importance of hair and the five symbols of Sikh faith. There is no argument or reasoning about the fact that hair and the five symbols of Sikh faith are given by Guru Sahib and God Himself, and that we must keep these priceless gifts in good condition with lots of love and respect. These gifts are just like ornaments bestowed by a husband to a devoted wife. We love the gifts given by our dear God.

In ancient times, instead of giving a Brahmin (a caste in India) the death sentence, his hair and beard would be cut, and that was considered a punishment worse than a death sentence.

“Moodyang praanayat ko Dando Brahmunsus vidhee yaatay”

(Mehlaa: Seng: Dhe: 8 Salok 379)

Today, people are paying money out of their pocket to cut their hair and beard without being given a death sentence. Under what duress people inflict this punishment of a death sentence upon themselves? Only those who cut their hair can tell. Kalgidhar Ji, our tenth guru, has urged us to be ideal Sikhs by keeping God-blessed hair. He has stressed that unshorn hair is his hallmark of a sikh. We find evidence for this in one letter that Guruji sent to the Sikhs of Afghanistan.

“Ek Onkar Satguru Ji saha-ai”

“The entire congregation will be protected by Guru. You have my blessing. Take the consecrated water administered in Khalsa Baptism from the five beloved ones. Keep the hair as this is My Hallmark. Don't be casual about kirpan (holy Dagger) or the special underwear shorts worn by baptized Sikhs. Keep pure steel bracelet in your hands. Take care of your hair twice a day; the members of entire congregation don't eat meat of an animal slaughtered by Muslims after they recite a prayer. Don't keep contacts with a person who cuts hair or beard or kills his own daughter, —————Pray, recite Waheguru, Waheguru, uphold principles, a lot of faith and the Sikh code of conduct.”

(God's order for congregation of Kabul)

Bhai Mardana ji's son Noor asked,” What advice can you

give me Father, as you have spent all of your life in the company of Guru Nanak Dev Ji?” Mardana ji advised his son to do three things. First of all he told him to keep hair on his head. Second, meditate and recite Satnam in the last quarter of the night. Finally, he told his son to do voluntary service in looking after the congregation. Noor committed himself to his father’s advice and gained the blessing of his father and of God.

A great scholar and a popular writer of the 20th century wrote the history of mankind in twenty editions. His name was Mr. Arnold Toynbee. Once an American woman asked him about his research of the whole world and his meetings with people of different ethnic backgrounds. She inquired about his knowledge and understanding of different customs and religious philosophies. She asked him, “Can you please tell me, who is the best looking person in the world?” Mr. Toynbee answered very quickly, “The ideal Sikh who has an open beard.” The lady who asked him this question was very surprised but asked another question very quickly. She said, “Can you tell me who is the ugliest person in the world?” Mr. Toynbee’s answer was, “In my opinion, that Sikh is ugly who has cut his hair and beard.”

Satguru Ji and his Sikhs tolerated indescribable and unbearable hardship and torture to maintain this divine beautiful gift and blessing, but they did not give up their ideal Gursikh appearance with hair and beard. Five and seven year- olds Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh Ji gladly accepted the punishment of being buried alive but fulfilled their faith in Sikhism with unshorn hair until the last breath of their lives. For his firm faith in Sikhism, Bhai Taru Singh ji was scalped

alive. For the same belief, one by one, every limb of Bhai Mani Singh ji was cut to pieces. Bhai Mati Das Ji had his body sawn in two parts for the same reason. Bhai Dayal Das ji was boiled in a large cooking vessel. Bhai Subheg Singh and Bhai Shahbaaz Singh ji were tortured by being spiked around a spinning wheel, but didn’t let anybody interfere or get rid of their form of an ideal Sikh with hair and beard. In order to preserve their identity as an ideal Sikh with hair, Sikh ladies who were imprisoned for their belief’s ground flour in large quantities with a manual hand-grinding mill whilst their children were cut to pieces. Despite all this torture they held on to their religious beliefs.

Our Sikh elders abandoned the comforts of their home, stayed hungry many a times, and lived miserable lives in jungles but did not give up their identity as an ideal Sikh with hair and beard blessed by God. The dishonest people of the world did not shatter them. They remained ideal Sikhs until the last breath of their lives. Satguru ji gave His word of honor as he pointed to these people who were firm believers in their religious faith. —

“In putran kay sees par vaar deeo sut chaar

I have sacrificed my four sons upon the heads of these sons

Chaar muai to keeya huuaa jeevat lakh hazaar

The death of four has allowed many thousands more to come alive”

Satguru ji sacrificed His own beloved sons, and accepted and adopted us as His own sons. Today we have to introspect and live according to Farid Ji’s command :

Aapan-ray Girheevaan meh sir neeva kar daykh

Lower your head to look under your own bed

(Salok Farid, p 1378)

Have we truly become sons and daughters of the Guru? Do our faces resemble the faces of Baba Jhujhar Singh, Baba Zoravar Singh, Baba Fateh Singh, Baba Ajit Singh and Guru Kalgidhar Ji (10th Guru of the Sikhs)? I bow my head to those people who have adopted standards and rules set by Guruji and are whose appearance resembles our Guruji's. Those who are renouncing divine law and appearance given by God should look inside their heart and introspect. After that they should decide if the path they have chosen is harmful or beneficial.

We should think about our well-being and loss. We should not just copy other people. We should adopt the Path of our Guru. Satguru ji has alerted us that: -

Gursikh meet chalhu Gur Chaalee

O Sikhs and friends of the guru walk on the Guru's path

Jo Gur Kahai soee Bhal maanhu har har katha niraalee

Whatever the guru says accept that as good, the sermon of the lord Har Har is unique and wonderful

(Dhanasari 4th Guru, p 667)

Please don't copy other people and damage your spiritual and material worlds. According to Baba Kabir ji's words, don't be careless and foolish by digging your own grave. Listen to Baba Kabir ji's command and try to settle it within your heart: -

Kabir Deen gavaa-i-ai dunee si-on dunee na chaalee saath

Kabir Mortals lose their faith for the sake of his world but in the end the world will not go with them

Paa-ay kuhaara maari-ya gaafal apunai hath

Thus the idiot strikes an axe in his or her own foot

(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, p1364)

People always dislike a careless, foolish person, and nobody considers him a good. A smart person adopts the advice of Guru's, holy and wise men. Consider how marvelous is the bounty of being an ideal Sikh with hair and beard. A person who has hair and a gracefully tied turban on his head is addressed as, "Sardar Ji" (meaning chief) by everybody. If a person is clean-shaven, he will be addressed as Babu ji, Bhayeea ji or Chowdhry regardless of his status and wealth. He will never be addressed as "Sardar ji".

Only an ideal Sikh with hair and beard can be addressed as "Sardar Ji". Satguru ji abandoned caste-arrogant people and chieftains and adopted the powerless and those who were disrespected, as His own sons by blessing them with high status in society. His word of honor is: -

Jin kee jaat go-ut kul nahe

Those who have no caste or lineage or surname

Sardari nah bhai kadaee

Those who have no chiefdoms to claim

En he ko Sardar Bnaoo

These people I will make cheiftains

Tabhai Gobind Singh Naam Kahanoo

Hence Guru Gobind Singh am I called

Satguru ji opened up stockpiles of blessings and gave us the unrestricted and substantial handfuls of high status in society. But we are not ready to accept these blessings and are holding ourselves back. What greater misfortune can befall us than this?

Ancient Sikhs attuned themselves with God by reciting His name so deeply even their small hair of the body were reciting God's name thus...

Gurmukh rom rom her dhiavay

The Guru Attuned recites the name of god with every hair

(Ramkali 1st Guru, p941)

Today we have made up our minds to destroy our hair, which is spiritually very harmful and disadvantageous. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji has ordered us, by revealing that there are five symbols of Sikhism. (Kara, Kirpan, Kanga, Kutchh and kesh). none of these symbols are exempt for a sikh however, without unshorn hair, the other four symbols are meaningless. His word of honor is :

“Nishaan-e- Sikhi ey Panj Harf kaaf

Hargiz na bashad ee panj muaaf

Kara, Kardo kachh kanga bidan

Bina kes haich asat jumla nesha

Kalgidhar (10th Guru of Sikhs) Ji's historical orders have been recorded by the poet Senapat. According to these orders, Guru's Sikh should never cut his hair and beard. A Sikh should never use drugs. This is the noble path to live a successful life.

“Seess na mandavai meet hukaa tuj bhalee reet

Mun mai kar prem preet sangat mai jee-ee-ai

(Sri Gur Sobha chapter6)

Huka nahi peevai sees dari na mandavai

So to Waheguru Waheguru Guru Ji Ka Khalsa

(Sri Gur Sobha Granth ch. 5)

Pun sang saraa prabhoo ji sunaee

Bina teg teerang rho nah bhaee

Bina shashtar kesang nrang bhaadh jano

Ghai kaan ta ko kitai lai sedhano

Ehai more agiyaa suno lai piaray

Bina teg kesang divo na deedarai

Ehai more baina manaiga so jo-ee

Tisai ichh purang sbhai jaan ho-ee

(Gur Bilas pa: 10 chapter 23)

Satguru ji has given great importance to hair and martial arts because hair is a symbol of divine power. A person, who becomes aware of the unapproachable power of hair, never desires anything bad about his or her hair.

A story is written in an ancient biblical book called Tanakh about a character named Samson. A boy named 'Samson' was born in the house of Manoah who lived in the city of Zorah. He was very brave and powerful. He had ripped many lion's jaws with his own hands. He defeated 1000 soldiers with one bone of a donkey. Samson had beaten Palestinians badly. They were very irritated with him.

Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah. Palestinians bribed her to find out the cause of Samson's power and bravery by submission to her love. She asked Samson about the secret of his power. Samson told her that he never shaved his head or cut his hair and ever since he was in his mother's womb he has maintained the likeness of God almighty. He told her that this power would stay with him as long as he didn't cut his hair. If for any reason his head were shaved, then the power within him would disappear; he would become powerless, as God would abandon his side. Delilah told the secret to his enemies. They planned a conspiracy with her to cut Samson's hair.

She made Samson fall asleep on her lap and called a man to shave his head. Samson became powerless after his hair was cut. His divine power was gone. After that, his enemies attacked. Delilah informed him about the attack. Samson woke up and went outside to fight like he used to do. He was not aware of losing his divine power. The Palestinians caught him, poked his eyes out and brought him to court. They tied him with brass chains and threw him in jail, where he operated the grinding mill for the rest of his life.

(Judges chapter 13-16)

Just because of this one reason of cutting hair, people of India have lived a life of slavery like a herd of sheep for years. Whoever and whenever they wanted, raiders from Gazni or sometimes from Kabul or Qandhar brought their army to attack and trample the people of India all the way to Delhi. They took looted wealth and herded kidnapped girls and women whether married or not, so that they could be sold like cheap animals in the markets of Kabul.

It was only the Khalsa (Baptised Sikhs with untrimmed hair and beard) who defeated these cruel people that came through the Khyber Pass mountain roads to rob wealth and honor. Khalsa army not only closed those roads forever but also ruled these cruel people. Khalsa army forced these tyrants to do unpaid labor and penalized them by having them pay taxes. Khalsa army freed those captive Hindu girls who were either married or unmarried and returned them home safely. Only the Khalsa army was brave enough to take up this courageous action. Nobody else received or can claim this honor.

Once there was a famous writer in England. His name was George Bernard Shaw. One day he was getting his haircut and having a shave. His younger son was watching him shaving his beard. Spontaneously, he told his dad that his teacher taught him about how famous writers, wise men, and philosophers keep their hair and beard uncut as a symbol of nature's gift. He asked his father, "Don't you want to become a great man or a philosopher? Do you want to rebel against nature?" Those words spoken innocently by George Bernard Shaw's son made such a great impact on him that he threw all his shaving equipment out of

the window. He promised to live by nature's law. He established his reputation as a world famous philosopher and writer while keeping his hair and beard untrimmed.

Often it happens in this world that a person is ignorant about the qualities of some valuable things and doesn't appreciate them. Unknowingly he becomes unappreciative of them. That is why Baba Kabir said in his command: -

Nahee patan nahee paarkhoo nahee gaahak nahee mole

There is no market, no appraiser, no customer, no price

(Salok Kabir page 1365)

But the person who is blessed by God to assess a valuable thing and understand its qualities, he learns to appreciate that thing and takes good care of it.

A holy man called Peer Budhu Shah knew the value of hair. He accompanied Satguru Kalgidhar Ji during the battle of Bhangani. During this battle Budhu Shah's two sons and a few hundred disciples became martyrs. After winning the battle, When Satguru ji arrived on the pure holy land of Paonta Sahib, he sat in a hall of audience. He praised the brave warriors and blessed them with appropriate gifts. Guru Sahib ji acknowledged holy man Budhu Shah's sacrifice and he was asked to come forward. Guruji gave his love and lots of blessings. Guruji gave his word," Peerji, you have sacrificed a lot. You can ask for anything." There were tears in Budhu Shah's eyes and his heart was filled with love when he heard Guru ji's words. He folded his hands, saluted Guru's feet and said, "Dear Guru ji, if you are pleased with me then please bless me with your hair along

with your comb so that I can have a glimpse of you everyday with this hair." Satguru ji fulfilled his desire. Budhu Shah kept that hair in a golden box as long as he lived. He used to get up early in the morning, take a bath, meditate and then have a glimpse of Guru Ji through the hair and comb, the tokens given by Guruji.

Bhai Nand Lal ji knew the value of the hair, and that is why he left his job at a royal court. He wanted to preserve the looks of an ideal Sikh with uncut hair and beard and that is why he took Kalgidhar Sahib ji's shelter. He did voluntary service within Guruji's command and led a successful life by becoming a baptized Sikh. Bhai Nand Lal ji noticed that both the spiritual and material worlds were united in Guru ji's one hair strand. He learned that the value of this one strand of hair is priceless even when compared with the wealth of both worlds.

Deen Duneeya dar Kmandae aan paree Rukhsar mai

Her dow aalam keemte yak tar mooyae yar mai

(Gazal-2 Bhai Nand Lal Ji)

Bhai Taru Singh ji knew the value of hair because he refused to accept worldly wealth, comforts, and ranks. He told Nawab Zakaria Khan, " Hey Khan I will never convert to the Islamic religion by giving up my appearance of a Sikh with hair and beard." He told Khan that even if he were offered the ruling and control of all states, he still would never convert to such a religion where he would be punished hereafter and face God's anger.

Zakaria Khan asked him if a person gets punished for converting into the Muslim religion. Bhai Taru Singh Ji gave a logical answer, “Khan ji if you plant a garden or build a building then how would you treat that person who tries to ruin your garden or that building? Khan became angry and said in an authoritative voice, “Whoever ruins my garden or the building, I will punish that person by throwing him in jail.” Bhai Taru Singh ji smiled and told Khan that if somebody tried to damage God’s created image, wouldn’t God punish that person. Zakaria Khan was speechless. He felt humiliated when he heard those true words from Bhai Taru Singh Ji. Khan ordered his subordinate furiously to bring Taru Singh Ji’s appearance of an ideal Sikh to an end by cutting his hair. Taru Singh ji’s determination was rewarded. His hair became as hard as Iron wires. Even a scissor could not cut his hair. The humiliated Khan called the hangman who was a shoemaker to cut off the scalp from Bhai Taru Singh Ji’s skull.

Bhai Taru Singh Ji tolerated this torture, fulfilled his firm determination, gained God’s happiness by obeying His command, but never got rid of his appearance of an ideal Sikh with hair and beard. Why would a person let go of God given parts of the body and an appearance with hair and beard? There are five main reasons for all this as far as I can tell.

DISRESPECT OF HAIR THROUGH IMITATION

A popular game in this world continues to be copying others. Very few people live their lives introspecting properly and conducting an evaluation of their gains and losses. Otherwise, the whole universe is carrying on by imitating others. There is a saying in Punjabi language, “Where ever most of the village herd is, there will be Banto’s calf.” However, one should remember that we suffer discomfort, unhappiness, and harm because we choose to imitate others.

Let us take a look at the example of farmers to understand the harm of imitating without due diligence. A few farmers planted potatoes as a cash crop. In imitation, soon after the majority of other farmers too started to grow potatoes by buying expensive seeds. Because of the abundant quantity of potato crops, many farmers suffered a loss instead of making a profit because they had overspent money on expensive seeds and fertilizers.

Just like this incident, farmers started growing poplar trees about ten years ago by copying other farmers. They didn’t do their calculation or anticipate the future market value of these trees. The end result was that trees were sold at a very cheap price due to the abundance of poplar trees on the market. The businessmen made money but the farmers were under a lot of debt. After popular, eucalyptus trees were planted and sold. What was the reason? It seems that nobody has been successful or will be successful by imitating others without any reflection or diligent thoughts.

If we look at wedding arrangements, one person tries to compete with another and spends lot of money. A third person tries to compete with the fourth and it continues. A person loses his capacity for good and is under lot of debt because of imitation. One should remember that nobody will ever be successful by copying others and will definitely regret it. Success in life is always result of careful thinking and perceiving loss and profit.

In modern times our children think of themselves as heroes by dressing and changing their appearance. They try to copy film actors, singers who sing indecent songs and performers who exhibit nudity on stage. These performers disguise themselves into different personalities and loose dignity in their characters.

Those singers of indecent songs, actors, and performers do make a lot of money, but what did those people gain who imitated them? All they gained was distortion of their perfect image of ideal Sikh with hair and beard, sins, immoral acts, and the displeasure of Guru Ji.

If one does want to copy others, then they should copy those who are smarter than them and have a higher moral character. They should try to imitate respectable people and warriors like Bhai Taru Singh Ji, Bhai Mati Das Ji, and Bhai Dyala Ji to whom the whole world bows down in respect and will continue to do so. But the condition of people today is:

Dharam Pankh Kar Udreeya

Religion has taken wings and flown

(Var Majh Salok 1st , p 145)

Today it seems like, “ Saram Dharm do-ai chhap khaloai koor pheraï pardhan va Lalo” is true. Call it a predominance of

ignorance, farsightedness, or just plain lack of knowledge but young men today are engrossed in imitation such that...

Kabir deen gavaa-i-aa dunee sio dunee chalee na saath,

Kabir Mortals lose their faith for the sake of his world

but in the end the world will not go with them

Paa-ay kuhaara maari-ya gaafal apunai hath

Thus the idiot strikes an axe in his or her own foot

(Salok Bhagat Kabir Ji, p1365)

Young men are entrapped by fashion in such a way that they can't find a way out. Young men are eager to disguise themselves as girls and look like them. Young girls are eager to take the place of young boys by dressing in different kinds of men's clothes. —

“Aapo dhapee hairat hoosai”

What is the reason for all this? It seems like the effects of television, the companionship of bad people, the imitation of one another under ignorance, and not following Guru ji's advice are all causes for this.

This bad influence will not go away unless we get rid of the habit of imitation under ignorance and start thinking about our profit and loss but with the enlightenment of Guru's advice. We won't be able to get out of this marshland until we give up the companionship of bad people, and watching immoral programs on television. If we do want to get out of this mess, then we should make determined effort with Guru Maharaj Ji's support. Guru ji will definitely help you. Our heritage and life will become successful.

CUTTING HAIR TO LOOK GOOD

The entire human race wants to show off its beauty through appearance. Ever since a person is born, two characteristics under the influence of this materialistic world become so rigid in every male or female that they can't get rid of them throughout their lives.

The first characteristic is that a person believes that he or she is wise and intelligent. A human being with their limited wisdom thinks that they are wiser than everybody else and always try to give advice. If a wise man tries to give advice to the person with little wisdom, that person opposes the wisdom offered by being angry instead of receiving the advice. This is due to the fact that such a unwise person firmly believes in their mind that he or she is the wisest and most intelligent person.

The second matter is that the person believes he or she is very beautiful and tries to be even more beautiful. A person is dominated by the desire to look beautiful. They try their utmost to fulfill this desire by standing in front of the mirror, using different kinds of powders, creams, and colors for facial make up. Sometimes he or she tries to use hair color dyes to change the color of their original hair, with which God has so kindly blessed us, and are the true symbols of "beauty". He or she tries to cut hair either with scissors or a razor. A person's psychological condition submerges in such a way that even their eyebrows are not spared the strokes of a razor. The human race becomes ugly and awful instead of becoming attractive. A person

still gets no peace of mind. A mind is still not satisfied even when a person pierces their nose and ears in the hope of looking better. A person's race to look better does not leave them alone even when he or she is of an old age. According to Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's command:

Sar kampeeyo pag dug maga nayan jot te heen

This head trembles, feet falter and dither, eyes have lost their light

But a human being, even in this stage of life, looks at their black hair and tries to cover his or her old age under this sheet of black hair. But one day such a person loses against nature. At last, one has to start walking toward the next journey after this world with deep repentance. At that time Baba Kabir Ji's command becomes very obvious:

Farida jin loyin jug mohiya say loyin mai dith

Farid I have seen those eyes that enticed the world

Kajal rekh na sehdiyaa say pankhee soo-ay bahith

Once they could not endure mascara now birds hatch their young in them

(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, p1378)

Remember this human body, which is made up of five elements, can never become beautiful because the body is made up of a combination of things like blood, lymph, and bones. These three things are wrapped inside the skin by nature. All of these things are impure. If you want to become charming, then you should make your soul beautiful. By following the path shown by Guru Ji and improving yourself, Bhagat Farid Ji

guarantees that those people who do try to improve themselves will definitely meet with ever-graceful God. The person who meets God always enjoys a comfortable life.

Aap savaray mai milay mai miliya such hoay

God says if you reform yourself you will meet me, meeting me you shall have peace

(Salok Bhagat Farid Ji, p 1382)

In Guru's eyes, that person is not endearing who alters his appearance with different kinds of colors. In Guru's eyes, the person who disrespects hair by cutting it with scissors or a razor is also not endearing. In guru's eyes, that person is endearing who always keeps God in his heart and collects the capital of God's name with the company of religious congregation. The command of Guru Sahib Ji is:

Say-ee sunder sohniya saadh sangat jin baihney.

They alone are truly beautiful who sit in holy congregation

Her dhun jinee sanjiya sayee gambheer apaar

They who have earned the treasure of name are wise

(Devghandhari 5th Guru, p 530)

It is essential that instead of looking good in people's eyes, we should become beautiful in God's vision. We should improve our soul rather than our body. We will look ugly by cutting or damaging our original appearance that is blessed by God.

**CONTRIBUTION OF LADIES IN
DEGRADATION OF YOUNG MEN**

It is often heard that ladies have contributed a lot toward forcing young men to become clean-shaven. Just remember, ladies, the person who disregards the Sikh code of conduct and the person who forces anybody to do the same are both equally guilty. In the modern world, it is often heard that young ladies give preference to clean shaven young men when selecting husbands instead of an ideal Sikh with hair and beard.

Unfortunately it is bad taste for girls. Just think about it, if a young man can become rebellious and unfaithful to his God, then how long will he be a faithful companion? Ladies, please remember that if young people don't listen to God's command, then, there will be a time when God won't listen to you either. Ladies, if you are the cause for young men to demolish their heritage, then you will also suffer equal punishment for disobeying Guru's command and rebelling God.

When you deal with your husbands who have destroyed their heritage, you will oppose them because they will come home drunk, after gambling, or doing evil deeds. In return they will call you bad names, say good and bad words, and beat you up. Then you will not improve anything but gain grief and repentance. Now is the time to be cautious. If you want to become the proprietress of your heritage then you should remember the historic achievements of Mata Sahib Kaur, Mata

Sunder Kaur, Mata Bhag Kaur, and Bibi Sharan Kaur. Please keep in mind those mothers who cleaned and grinded grain in large quantities with hand operated grinding mills, passed a day with only one cup of water and one fourth portion of a chapatti (Indian tortilla), saw their children being cut into pieces, but kept firm in their religious faith. Today, in order to gain comfort for a short time, we are effortlessly making the mistake of forgetting our religious principles.

Today God's words are excluded from the lullabies sung by mothers. In the evenings, mothers don't have the time to talk about Sikh history or Guru's biographies and stories. This is one of the main reasons that our young men are facing such a miserable condition. How would the root of a tree grow if it doesn't get enough water?

Today there are very few parents who encourage their children to follow religious traditions and rules. Most of these children's traditions are being formed from cartoon stories, the actions of movie stars, and words of singers who sing indecent songs. It is not the kid's fault. It is the parent's fault as they are so busy in the race to make more money that they have forgotten to spend even ten minutes with their children. The children are suffering punishment for the negligence of their parents. How long will this go on? As long as we don't try to make any effort for our kids to follow religious traditions, this will state of affairs will go on.

The religious rites are formed by connecting with Satguru's words, by listening and reading to our great, golden history and with the company of pious, moral friends.

Today it is essential that we should connect with God's word and wear our religious apparel. We should listen and study our golden history, accompany the religious congregation, and abandon bad company. Then there will be no reason for us not to connect with our heritage. We will definitely connect.

CUTTING HAIR AS AN EXCUSE BEFORE GOING ABROAD

In modern times, many young people are getting their hair cut by using the excuse that they are going abroad in order to earn a living. In fact this is nothing but an expression of mental weakness. Today when we take a look at foreign countries, it seems like Sikhism has flourished more abroad rather than in Punjab. Sikhs have established great reputation for hard work and intelligence at all levels and walks of life in America, England and Canada. The ideal Sikhs with hair and beard possess high ranks in government, private industry, farming, and transportation fields. In foreign countries Sikhs have achieved great respect and pride in political fields too. The ideal Sikh appearance is not dependent or in need of any introduction. In India, ideal Sikhs have also achieved high positions like those of Prime minister, President, Army General, and Planning Commissioner.

In America, after the incident of the September 11, some mischievous and ignorant people did mischievously attack Sikhs because they perceived them as Muslims. After some incidences American Government posted a calendar, which exhibited the distinct appearance of Sikhs in all government offices and police stations. In this calendar, photos of young Sikh kids with Patka (special cloth tied around the hair on the head), adult male Gursikhs with turbans and open beard, female ladies with Keski (small turban around the head) were published. In this calendar no clean-shaven person or a Sikh who trims their beard was

portrayed. It is worth thinking that an ideal Sikh with beard and uncut hair is considered part of the Sikh nation, but the people who trim their beard are not considered Sikhs by the government. There is a saying in Punjabi to describe these people who abandon their principles that, “neither good for home nor place to call home”. These clean-shaven Sikhs are not included either in the category of Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs. That is why clean-shaven Sikhs should return to their faith by abandoning social approval, and connecting with their heritage. By so doing they should make this world and their next world comfortable and rewarding.

INFERIORITY COMPLEX
WITHIN ONESELF

Sometimes our young generation raises the question of why they are hated for having the appearance of an ideal Sikh with hair and beard by the majority of clean-shaven people amongst whom they have to live. Even if the argument of these young people is considered, hatred and discrimination cannot come to an end by cutting hair or beard. Beyond hair and beard, there is discrimination going on and will keep going on between people of white and brown skin, and between people of brown and black skin. Will we take our skin off from our body or change our skin color by skin grafting. It will never be possible. After skin, discrimination about language will start. There will be no end to this. Hatred and discrimination is going on in every country among people of one state and another state. This discrimination is going on in our country too. Muslims are doing this to other Muslims. Americans, British or Canadian English people are doing this to their own people. It is human nature to hate and discriminate, and this cannot be changed.

Just remember that a person, who destroys God blessed hair, has also relinquished their right to God and the Guru. Guru doesn't trust that person who is rebellious against Guru's orders. It is the command of Guru Gobind Singh Ji that as long as Sikhs live in this world and take good care of God blessed hair, beard and complete appearance, He will bless that Sikh with all His glory by considering him faithful to God. But the day a Sikh will mingle with the world by abandoning his loyalty to God,

he will lose Guru Gobind Singh ji's trust and confidence. According to Guru Gobind Singh ji's command: -

**“Jab lag Khalsa rehay naira, Tab lag Tej Deo mai saraa
Jab eh ghai bipan dee reet, mai naa karo en kee parteet”**

It is vital that every human being should stay connected with their heritage and have trust in God and Guru. We shouldn't cut hair and beard, which are entrusted to us and blessed by God; we shouldn't betray His trust. Otherwise, we will become unreliable people that nobody trusts. That is why we should always remember Guru Arjun Dev ji's command and not destroy our trust ourselves. Whoever loses his own trust by his own deeds, for them Satguru ji's commands: -

Apnee parteet aap hee khovai

He himself destroys his credibility

Bahur us kaa bisvaas na hovai

And he shall not be trusted again

(Gauri Sukhmani 5th Guru , p 268)

An unreliable person is not trusted by anybody and is looked down upon by everybody. Guru's word command: -

Bhulan ander sabh ko abhul Guru Kartar

Everyone is prone to mistakes except the perfect guru and lord

(Sri Rag 1st Guru, p61)

And

Bhulan vich keeaa sabh koe Kartar aap na Bhulai

Everyone makes mistakes only the creator makes no mistake

(Parbhathi 1st Guru, p 1344)

The creator and the guru are perfect. They can never make a mistake. We should have faith in these lines of Gurbani (God's word), the completeness of the Creator, and make our short-term life successful by following the path shown by Guru. We should not damage our own present and the next world by being defiant to Guru and the Creator.

Change Required In Methods Of Preaching

In modern times we need to quickly approach the young generation, who are confused, without any direction, while living a life guided by their mind. They have turned away from their heritage and culture. We need to make changes in our way of preaching in order to direct these young men and women who have been misled from away from their legacy. For the benefit of dishonored young men, we need to take them in our loving embrace, pat them on the back, and make them realize the importance of establishing closeness in their relationship with Guruji's. Instead of saying harsh words to them, we need to adopt a way of humble entreaty in the name of Guru, just like Bhai Veer Singh ji achieved success in uniting Professor Puran Singh Ji with the main idea of Sikhism by embracing him lovingly in 1913.

It happened like this. Bhai Puran Singh Ji had adopted the teachings of the Sikh religion since childhood. After receiving higher education in India, he went to Japan to receive education in chemistry. There he was impressed by views of Swami Ram

Tirath ji and he adopted those views. The Sikh nation broke all relations with him. The time came in 1913 when Chief Khalsa congregation organized a Sikh educational conference at Sialkot City. During the selection of speakers, Puran Singh ji's name was presented. Because he had deserted Sikh religion, there was a discussion about whether he should be invited or not. Some people said yes and some said no during the discussion. Finally, it was decided that Puran Singh was a sensible, intellectual person but had gone on the wrong path under the influence of Swami Ji's ideas. Teachings of Sikhism were still assimilated inside Puran Singh ji. He should be invited and given a chance to express his views. After agreement, an invitation was sent to Professor Puran Singh Ji. During the conference he gave an impressive speech about the doctrine of Sikhism. After the lecture he came and sat next to Bhai Veer Singh ji.

Bhai Veer Singh ji patted Professor Puran Singh ji on the back and rubbed the hair on his head gently with love and said, "Puran Singh I had heard that whoever cuts God's gifted hair, their hair become very rough. But your hair is still very soft even after you had it cut. What do you use on your hair?" After he said that, Bhai Veer Singh Ji invited Puran Singh for dinner at his house. In the evening both ate dinner together and discussed views of Sikhism for a long time.

Bhai Puran Singh Ji's wife Bibi Maya Devi Ji has written that he was mumbling something when he came home that night after dinner. After he put his bags down, his first words were,

“Maya Devi, I will not cut my hair again.” Maya Devi has referred in her writing that she told him that he was fine the way he was. He had made a mistake in the past and Sikh nation didn’t mingle with him for ten years. If he made a mistake again then, only God knows that for how long he will have to suffer the agony of separation

Bhai Puran Singh ji told his wife, with a heart full of love and determination, that once his hair had been blessed by the touch of an ideal Sikh like Bhai Vir Singh ji, a barber’s hands couldn’t touch that hair again. Bhai Puran Singh Ji became an ideal Sikh with hair and a beard. He was accepted in God’s sight. He enjoyed happiness and unique love by adopting teachings of Sikhism. He wrote about these happy moments in the form of a poem and prose and became a resource to the right path for countless people. He is still doing that by means of his literature.

Please remember a person is driven by an insult but is inspired with love. Today it is essential to show the right path of Sikhism to the young generation by embracing them with love and by using tools given by Guru Arjun Dev Ji: -

Gareebe gadaa hamaree

Humility is my spiked club

Khnnaa sagal rain chhaaree

My dagger is to be the dust of all men

Es aagai ke na tikai vaykaaree

No evildoer can withstand these weapons

Gur Pooray ayh gal saaree

The perfect guru h given me this understanding

(Sorath 5th Guru, p628)

Please forgive any mistakes.

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa

Waheguru Ji ke Fateh.

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