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Book Review

# ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੀਰਛਠ

ਜੂਨ 2019





## ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੀਰਤਨ

ਇਸ ਅੰਕ ਵਿਚ

ਸੰਪਾਦਕ (ਆਨਰੇਰੀ)

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ਸਹਿਯੋਗੀ

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- ਲੇਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਏ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਜਾਂ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਟ੍ਰਸਟ ਦਾ ਸਹਿਮਤ ਹੋਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।
- 'ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੀਰਤਨ' ਡਾਇਰੈਕਟਰ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ ਦੇ ਪੱਤਰ ਨੰ: 4/8/90, ਮਿਤੀ 20/2/91 ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਰਾਜ ਦੇ ਸੀਨੀਅਰ ਸੈਕੰਡਰੀ ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨਿਤ ਹੈ।

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ਡਾ. ਜਾਗੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ 'ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਟ੍ਰਸਟ' ਨੇ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟਰਜ਼ ਅਤੇ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨਰਜ਼, ਸ਼ੋਅਰੂਮ ਨੰ: 443, ਸੈਕਟਰ 70, ਮੁਹਾਲੀ (ਫ਼ੋਨ: 0172-2216283, 98150-72197) ਤੋਂ ਛਪਵਾ ਕੇ 422, ਸੈਕਟਰ 15-ਏ, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ।

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Book Review

(16)

Book Review of:

## Guru Amar Das

Book by: \* S. Makhan Singh  
Review by: \*\* Dr. Harpreet Kaur

S. Makhan Singh has scripted down on many topics from the rich history and heritage of Sikhism. The present book written by S. Makhan Singh delves into life, times and institutions laid down by Guru Amar Das and is humble tribute to Guru Amar Das, *The Third Nanak*. Guru Angad passed the lineage of Guruship to Amar Das; his successor in 1552. Guru Amar Das consolidated the mission of spreading Sikhism by introducing social reforms and establishing confirmed social practices, endorsing the much-needed changes in the degenerating society of those times. Till he attained 95 years of age, the Guru led the followers as a torch-bearer.

The Guru's life is embodiment of *Sewa* (selfless service). Guru Amar Das through his own dedicated *Sewa* (selfless service) to Guru Angad Sahib set a marvelous precedent of this paramount value. Unfavorable weather, his own old age or any other constraint would not hinder his daily routine and He continued to serve Guru Angad Sahib and the Sangat.

Guru Amar Das regularly held morning sessions in which the religious discourses and Kirtan recital were organized. These holy congregations held by Guru Amar Das in the mornings were attended by the distressed and sick, who had a firm faith that the blessings of the Guru would solve all their problems.

Guru Amar Das introduced an innovative practice of *Manji* system that brought about a religious resurgence and has been covered in the book with an insightful touch providing valuable details. The *Manjis* set up by Guru Amar Das rejuvenated the directionless people and provided them with a soothing canopy of religion and religious discourses. *Manjis* set up and the *Pirhian* appointed by the Guru to manage religious administration became centres of imparting teachings of the Gurus, purging social evils and laying foundation of new religious practices. The teachings and values of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad Dev were imparted to the people.

Guru Amar Das established 22 *Manjis* and ordained men and women to carry out the Sikh missionary and parish work by appointing them as territorial deputies or *Vicars* (*Manji*) and leadership was given to both. The women during the time of Guru Amar Das played a lead role in creating and running the functionalities of *Manjis* and cradles. Through the efforts of the Third Guru, 72 sub-centres or 'Cradles' were established. The cradles transformed the entire social and religious scenario and mothers were enthused to instill the values of the Sikh religion to their children. The Guru assigned them leadership role. The position women as mothers were exalted and as leaders, were recognized in a society that was biased towards women.

Guru Amar Das emphasized the importance of disseminating religious doctrines to the people through the written literature. Guru Amar Das got distributed small booklets inscribed by Sansar Ram, his grandson to elevate the mental faculties of the devotees. Guru Amar Das inspired his son, Bhai Mohan to compile volumes (*sanchian*) of Gurbani, the possession of which was passed on to Guru Arjun while compiling Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Amar Das composed *Anand Sahib* (*Sri Guru Granth Sahib: Pgs. 917-922*) that is rendered on all occasions irrespective of its nature emphasizes on merging the soul with the Divine through the medium of the Guru, inner devotion and *Naam Simran*. Infact, the collection of hymns (907 hymns) in 18 musical measures are pronounced by Guru Amar Das that are compiled in Sri Guru Granth Sahib and is almost 15% of the Holy Scripture and the third largest collection of *Gurbani*.

them. Assuming the form of Guru Amar Das, the formless lord has given his own light to all. **Bhatt Bhikha** who was eldest of the Bhattas has composed 3 *Sawaiyas* extolling the Third Guru who according to him is a Creator-Lord in the *Kaliyuga* (Dark Age). Admiring and eulogizing the Guru's multi-dimensional personality, Bhikha says that Guru Amar Das had fully vanquished lust, wrath, avarice, attachment and ego. Bhikha states that he has come across Guru Amar Das who is the master of all powers and blessings. Through Guru's grace, Guru Amar Das has blessed him by his glimpse that had freed him from his deviation.

Bhai Gurdas Ji is a great devotee of the *Guru-ghar*, a great personality and the very first interpreter of Gurbani. In many *Pauri* of the *Vaars* written by Bhai Gurdas, Guru Amar Das has been mentioned and praised. For Guru Amar Das Bhai Gurdas writes, "Guru Angad Ji is form of Guru Nanak. He is manifestation of His Light. He has been granted blessings of the Lord as was ordained for him, then this blessing was passed on to Guru Amar Das and he became Guru and established himself in Goindwal. With the blessing of Waheguru miracles occur". Like Bhatt Kal, Bhai Gurdas also says that the spread of His touch is beyond anyone and cannot be described in words. His Light is manifestation of the bounties of *Waheguru*.

Bhai Nand Lal was the crown jewel and the favourite poet amongst 52 poets, scholars and musicians in the court of Guru Gobind Singh. In his Persian composition namely, *Tausif-O-Sana*, he showers laudations on Guru Amar Das.

This book supplements the earlier efforts of S. Makhan Singh who has to his credit 3 illustrated books in Punjabi, English and Hindi on Guru Amar Das, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru *Walgatha*- an illustrated book on life and times of 10 Sikh Gurus. S. Makhan Singh has edited these for Punjab and Sind Bank. S. Makhan Singh has to his credit another illustrated world known book '*Sikh Heritage in Paintings*'. Another book authored by him namely, '*Concept of Sadh Sangat in Sikhism*' was published recently. The present book penned down by S. Makhan Singh is valuable to the scholars as well as general readers and reflects his persistent zeal to preserve, promote and espouse the glorious values of the rich Sikh heritage. Such books are a need of the present hour so that we can disseminate the known and not so known facts of our glorious history to the community and society at large.

**\*\*Dr. Harpreet Kaur**  
Principal

*Mata Sundri College for Women*  
*University of Delhi*



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