



Sukhmani ~
The Secret of Inner
Peace

Translation and Commentary
By Doug Marman

Sukhmani ~ The Secret of Inner Peace

Spiritual Dialogues Project
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(PDF) Sample Chapter

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HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

SUKHMANI WAS WRITTEN by Guru Arjan as a prayer-song. The pattern of its words contains a rhythm, much like the Sufi practices that came before it. Repetition of certain phrases beat like a drum upon the heart, showing that these words are designed to resound with a reverberation that opens the consciousness.

For the full effect, you should read the book aloud, listening to the echo and response, within yourself. This might seem strange at first.

Remember, these words come from an oral age, when truth was spoken. Today, we think of writing as the ideal medium for knowledge. Guru Arjan, however, intended readers to use his written words more as a recipe. Speak these words, yourself, and feel them within. This creates the experience he is describing.

REMEMBERING GOD

Ek Onkar (The One God) is realized through
the grace of the True Guru.

I bow to the Primal Guru, the source of all teachings.
I bow to the Guru of the Ages, who existed before time.
I bow to the True Guru.
I bow to the Living Guru.

1.

Remember, remember, remember God,
And obtain the spiritual peace that dispels the troubles of
mind and body.

Remember the Name of **Ek** (The One) which showers
blessings upon the world.

Its name is uttered and remembered silently by countless beings.

Writers of the holy books have found the most sacred word of **Ek**.

They declare this Word is God's name.

In whomever's heart the **Ek** resides, even to a small extent, No praises can describe such a one.

There are lovers who long for only one glance from IT.
O Nanak, join the society of those who are closest to God.

2.

God's Name is **Sukhmani** (Bestower of spiritual peace and happiness).

This nectar resides in the hearts of true lovers of God.

Pause.

By remembering God, Soul leaves behind the cycles of birth and rebirth.

By remembering God, the Lord of Death stands aside.

By remembering God, the dark shadow of **Kal** cannot approach.

By remembering God, the inner enemies of turmoil and confusion retreat.

By remembering God, obstacles of the heart cannot arise.

By remembering God, the lover of God remains awake, inwardly, night and day.

By remembering God, fearfulness leaves the mind.

By remembering God, sorrow and pain may pass by, but they cannot grip Soul.

The gift of the remembrance of God is gained in Satsang, amongst true lovers of God.

O Nanak, all treasures of wealth are obtained through the sincere love of God.

3.

By remembering God, we obtain the nine treasures of spiritual awareness.

By remembering God, we gain divine knowledge, contemplation with a focused mind, true wisdom, and the ability to discriminate and recognize Truth.

Remembrance of God is an act of true devotion, producing
fruits of love.

By remembering God, the appearance of duality vanishes.

By remembering God, the lover of God bathes in a sacred
river within.

By remembering God, we gain honor in the highest realm.

By remembering God, the sincere seeker sees whatever
God does as good and accepts His Will as good.

By remembering God, we gain the gifts that come through
human life.

Those whom God causes to do so remember Him.

O Nanak, follow those who remember.

4.

The remembrance of God is the greatest of all works.

By remembering God, millions are rescued from worldly
traps.

By remembering God, our thirst is quenched.

By remembering God, we find meaning in all things.

By remembering God, the fear of death disappears.
By remembering God, all desires are satisfied.

By remembering God, the worries of our mind are washed
away,
And the nectar of **Nam** fills the heart.

God sits on the tongues of true saints.
O Nanak, become the follower of the followers of such
saints.

5.

Those who remember God are wealthy in the truest sense.
Those who remember God become honored by Spirit.

Those who remember God are welcomed by life.
Those who remember God are distinguished by their
truth.

Those who remember God become dependent upon none
but God.
Those who remember God are the true rulers of this
world.

The remembrance of God brings happiness and peace.
Those who remember God gain the immortal state of Soul.

But only those whom God showers His Grace upon
become attached to His remembrance.
O Nanak, ask for the guidance of such saints.

6.

Those who remember God are true philanthropists.
I am in awe of those who remember God.

The faces of those remembering God are filled with light.
By remembering God, their lives are occupied with joy.

Those who remember God rise above the mind.
The lives of those who remember God are holy and true.

Those who remember God attain true pleasures.
Those who remember God reside close to Him.

They are watchful night and day for the blessings of God.
Nanak, contemplation on God is a gift of true saints.

7.

By remembering God, the goal of all goals is
accomplished.

By remembering God, all worries wash away.

By remembering God, we praise Him.

By remembering God, we are absorbed in His bliss.

By remembering God, we arrive at the immovable center
of reality.

By remembering God, our heart blooms as a lotus with
roots in the earth and flowers that float on the water
of Life.

By remembering God, we hear the unsurpassed music of
the highest heavens.

The peace and happiness gained by remembering God are
without limits.

He, on whom God showers His Grace, remembers Him.

O Nanak, seek the protection of such saints.

8.

By remembering God, His lovers gain distinction and fame.

By remembering God, holy scriptures are composed.

By remembering God, we are given spiritual powers, but remain content and generous.

By remembering God, even the lowly and down-trodden become famous throughout the worlds of God.

The remembrance of God supports the whole planet.
Remember to remember God, the cause of all causation.

It was for the remembrance of God that this world was created.

Wherever God is remembered, there He is Himself.

God grants this secret teaching, O Nanak,
To those who receive the gift of His Name through the
grace of the True Guru.

Commentary:

LISTEN TO THE RESONANCE and reverberation of Arjan's phrase, "remembering God," over and over. This sound carries an echo of the spiritual exercise it is describing: repeating the sacred names of God. This is what this chapter describes through its words and, even more importantly, with its fabric and design.

Simran is the chanting of the True Name or Nam of God. This theme will resurface throughout *Sukhmani*. But even though Arjan says it over and over, never once is the actual name of God ever mentioned. There is a reason for this.

Many who follow traditional Sikh teachings consider *Waheguru*, which means Great Guru, the name itself. This is what they chant. Some use the name *Ek Onkar*, and some use *Sat Nam*, which means True Name. However, it is clear that Guru Arjan, just as Guru Nanak before him, never says the name itself. They only refer to it. This shows us that the Name is something else. It is not a word to be spelled out with letters. It can only be uttered in the unspoken language, as Guru Nanak called it. This means that only Soul knows how to speak it. It must come from within.

Even more importantly is the fact that this is not mentioned in writing. The practice of chanting the name of God is taught to those who would follow these teachings. This shows that the power of this system is derived not from the word itself, but from the grace of the True Guru or Spiritual Teacher.

This is the meaning of the opening phrase of *Sukhmani*. This teaching is gained “through the grace of the True Guru.” It is imparted, or shall we say transmitted, to the follower. The seeker must catch its inner form and resonance from those who have it.

Therefore, the name of God is something that comes to us from out of the heart of Reality. Sometimes called the Voice of God, or the Word of God, it resonates with the core of Life. It is a link that connects all living things, but it is hidden. This unwritten Name or *Nam* is the Bestower of spiritual peace and understanding.

Such a simple foundation for a teaching—it has been taught down through the ages, but is often misunderstood. There are many today who claim that Sat Nam is the true name of God, and *Sukhmani* was written to be the True Guru for Sikhs. However, when Guru Nanak first began his teaching, there were no Sikhs at the time. He was writing about the heart of the heart of the heart of the

spiritual path. He was writing for those who wanted to follow the inner Sound Current.

Those who caught this became Sikhs, not the other way around. Being born a Sikh doesn't make one a follower of the inner teaching, only the outer teaching. Just as being born or baptized a Christian doesn't give an inner link to the Word of God. The same is just as true about ECKists born into Eckankar, or those born into Sant Mat or Radhasoami. Only those who follow the unspoken, inner form are the true followers, according to Guru Nanak.

Therefore the true name of God is not uttered in *Sukhmani* because it cannot be. Yet it resides on the tongues of those who know it, and they repeat it continuously within themselves. The understanding of this paradox is resolved once we gain the inner Name or *Nam* "through the grace of the True Guru."

But who is the True Guru? The opening of *Sukhmani* gives us clues:

*I bow to the Primal Guru, the source of all
teachings.*

*I bow to the Guru of the Ages, who existed
before time.*

I bow to the True Guru.

I bow to the Living Guru.

There are many levels to the meaning of Guru. The Primal Guru is the original source of these teachings. This is the aspect of God, Itself, that sends its blessings to all of life. In Sant Mat, Radhasoami, and Eckankar this is known as *Sat Nam*, the first complete manifestation of God. It is not the fullness of God Itself, but the first form that embodies God's spirituality.

The First Guru existed before the beginning of the ages. This is what Paul Twitchell called the Historical Mahanta, which first taught at the creation of the lower worlds, and manifests in every epoch to advance the path to the next stage. Kabir is known as the father of Sant Mat because of the changes he brought to the teachings. According to followers of Radhasoami, Shiv Dayal Singh, their founder, evolved the teachings to a higher level with his advent. These are examples of the changes that come with an Historical Mahanta.

The True Guru is the Inner Master who we contact through contemplation and who guides us along the spiritual path. He comes in a form we are familiar with, but is actually a universal matrix that teaches any who sincerely desire to travel the path back to God. The term used by Sant Mat and Radhasoami is "Sat Guru," which literally means "True Guru." Amongst Christians, the

Christ is the True Guru. ECKists call it the Mahanta Consciousness.

The Living Guru is the living person who carries the teaching into the world and offers a link to the True Guru. He is the outer Master who also teaches as an Inner Master. Sometimes called the "*Sant Sat Guru*," or just "*Sant*," he is also known as the "Living ECK Master." This is what Guru Nanak referred to as the "Preceptor of the Age." The Sufis call him the Pole of the World. If a teacher cannot teach through inner channels, as well as through outer words, and if his teaching is not based upon direct contact with the inner teachings, then he is not a real Master. He is simply a preacher or scholar.

Therefore, when Arjan refers to the True Guru, he means something more than a human being. It manifests both outwardly and inwardly. It belongs to no religion, since it pre-dates all of them. Yet, It is the source of all spiritual teachings and wisdom. Connecting us on the outer to the true name of God, the True Guru leads us back to the original source, which is God Itself.

The need of a Guru, Master, or Spiritual Teacher is at odds with our modern scientific culture. Academic education teaches intellectual knowledge that can be gained from studying written words. To scholars, sacred teachings are no more than what is contained in the holy

books of the various traditions. If we study and read these holy books, they claim, we will understand everything known to religion.

This shows that our modern educational system is focused on the outer world. There is no mention of an inner teaching that can only be caught through contemplation and by connecting with those who have gained it before. Only Soul, or *Surat*, can gain these secrets of Spirit.

The other problem with gurus and spiritual teachers, of course, is how difficult it can be for seekers to distinguish the true ones. Wherever we look, we see examples of men and women claiming to be teachers. Many are no more than orthodox preachers, and the worst are deluded by their own self importance. This makes finding a Living Guru a difficult task.

Popular Western society has no solution to this dilemma. It rejects the problem by claiming that those who follow spiritual teachers are fools. As a result, the mainstream belief today is that we should only depend upon ourselves or God, but never another person.

Sukhmani gives out a very different teaching. The message is just as relevant today as it was 400 years ago. The path of the mind is a road filled with doubts and fears, because the mind cannot resolve these issues. But the *Nam*

of God can. As Rumi, the Sufi mystic, once explained, God doesn't solve each problem separately, but provides one answer that resolves all questions.

Therefore, practice of the remembrance of God, when learned from one who carries this Nam upon their tongue, restores to us the true meaning of the Path. Soul recognizes the truth of this, and the happiness discovered is proof of this. This is how *Sukhmani* imparts spiritual peace.