

# The Mool Mantar Controversy

First Edition, 2005



**Age-old traditions are  
being changed and  
Key Sikh institutions  
are being controlled.**

## PREFACE

Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji ordered that if a mistake was ever made in the public reading of any Gurbani, it should always be immediately corrected by someone present (regardless of who the reader is!).

Once when a Sikh of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji mispronounced one sound of Gurbani in his presence, the Guru reprimanded him immediately and informed him that prayer from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) is just like a limb of the Guru, and making a mistake while reciting Gurbani (prayer) is like hurting Guru Ji.

The current widespread practice of shortening the recitation of Gurbani compositions such as Mool Mantar goes beyond innocent "mispronunciations". The spiritual repercussions of such misdeeds can only be imagined in His Court!

Gurbani instructs, "**Do not do such a deed for which you have to regret in the end**".

There are credible reasons why the Mool Mantar should be read in its entirety - till *Nanak hosi bhi such*. This ebook provides the seeker with a basis for further research or for making an informed decision. At the end of the day, each and every one of us will have to account for our own actions. We cannot abdicate this responsibility to others.

This ebook is an abridged version based on the original (yet to be published) work by Amandeep Singh.

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# The Complete Mool Mantar

This powerful mantar (or mantra) given to us by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji forms the opening lines of our Living Scripture, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, as well as Japji Sahib, the morning prayer recited by Sikhs all over the world. It provides a complete, concise and fundamental approach to life. It encapsulates the philosophy of Sikh Dharm.

The Mool Mantar has been described as a **"fate killer. It removes the fate and changes the destiny to complete prosperity."**

The Mool Mantar, in original Gurmukhi script and its meaning in English, is given on the right.

<

siqnmu

krqw prKu

inrBau

inrvhu

Akw mthiq

Aj thl

sBM

grpBwid

]j p]

Awid scu

j gwid scu

hYBI scu

nwnk hsl BI scu ]1]

There is one God

Eternal Truth is His Name  
(Identity)

He is the Doer of everything

Fearing nothing

Without vengeance or anger

Undying form (deathless)

Unborn

Not begotten, being of His  
own Being

By the Grace of the Guru,  
made known to mankind

Recite!

As He was in the  
beginning: the Truth

So throughout the ages  
He ever has been: the Truth

So even now He is Truth  
immament

Nanak says:  
Truth shall forever be.

# Why The Mool Mantar Does *NOT* End at *Gurparsad*

"Uttering the Lord's Name, the Mool Mantar, provides the Elixir which leads to the attainment of the Perfect Lord."

SGGS (pg 1040)

Over the years, many of us may have noticed the inconsistency in the recitation of the scriptural composition known as the Mool Mantar (also spelled Mool Mantra), which appears at the beginning of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

In this article, we take a look at the issue surrounding this inconsistency from a historical viewpoint. As you read, you will begin to understand why the longer form of the Mool Mantar should be recited, as opposed to the one that, sadly, is increasingly gaining popularity in many quarters.

In Sikh Dharm today, there are essentially two main schools of thought. On the one hand, we have the *Sampardahs*, which date back to the time of our Gurus; and on the other, there is the Shromani Parbandak Gurdwara Committee (SPGC), which was established

relatively recently in the year 1925, and has managed to garner a good deal of influence over Sikh affairs by controlling several key religious institutions.

As you can see, the *Sampardahs* are more than 300 years old whereas the SPGC is barely 80 years old. Although both schools stand on common ground on many aspects of the religion, there are also differences that have caused disunity in the community. One of these is the recitation of the Mool Mantar. All the *Sampardas* recite Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*, while the SPGC advocates that it be read only till *Gurprasad and is actively encouraging this sacrilege*.

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**Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, in his wisdom, laid down how the Panth should function. He did *not* see the need to establish a 'committee', such as the SGPC, to oversee Sikh affairs.**

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## What are the *Sampardahs*?

*Sampardas* may be thought of as 'succession' lines that were started by Guru Gobind Singh Ji so that subsequent Sikh generations would not be confused in the matters of the Rehat and understanding of Gurbani, etc. Unfortunately, most Sikhs outside of India are totally unaware of these *Sampardahs*. There are five main *Sampardas*. They are as follows:

- ❖ *Sampardah* Baba Deep Singh Ji
- ❖ *Sampardah* Bhai Mani Singh Ji,
- ❖ *Nirmala Sampardah (which includes Mastuanewaleh, Nanaksarwaleh, Rarehwaleh, Harkhowalwaleh and Hoti Mardan)*
- ❖ *Udasis Sampardah*
- ❖ *Nihang Singh Sampardah*

*All of these Sampardahs can be historically traced to our Gurus and their core teachings have been handed down generation after generation to the present day. ■*

The following is the brief history of the Sampardahs:

### **Taksaal Baba Deep Singh Ji**

When Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji compiled the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in its present form at Talwandi Sabo Ki, great Sikh personalities like Baba Deep Singh Ji and Bhai Mani Singh Ji were present, along with 46 other Gursikhs. From amongst these 48 Gursikhs, Baba Deep Singh Ji was instructed to establish a Taksaal (school) to teach the true meaning of Gurbani. This is commonly known as Damdami Taksaal.

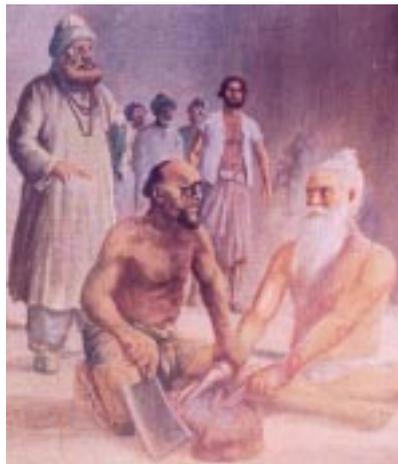


Baba Deep Singh Ji

When Baba Deep Singh Ji left his physical body after being martyred in battle, the seva was passed on to Baba Gurbax Singh, then to Baba Surat Singh Ji and it continues until today with Baba Harnam Singh Ji. This Taksaal, which has its lineage from Guru Gobind Singh Ji, recites Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

### **Taksaal Bhai Mani Singh Ji**

Bhai Mani Singh Ji, who was the other chosen soul to set up the Taksaal, settled in Amritsar where he was the head of Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). He established his Taksaal at Sato Wali Ghali where he taught the meaning of Gurbani as he had learnt from the Guru himself.



Bhai Mani Singh Ji was martyred when he was chopped to pieces in 1738

In this Taksaal, too, the Mool Mantar is recited until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

### **Bhai Ghanaiya Ji**

Bhai Ghanaiya was a devoted Sikh of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He is well-known in Sikh history for treating every one with love and respect, since in every person there is a presence of Waheguru (God).

The seva Panthi which was started by him, known for its services to humanity (also known as the Red

Cross of the Sikhs), recite the Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.



Bhai Ghanaiya is well-known for giving water and first-aid to both Sikh and Muslim combatants on the battlefield

### **Nirmalas**

This Sampardah is known as the Sampardah of Bhai Dya Singh Ji (one of the original panj pyaras). It was started by Bhai Dya Singh Ji on the orders of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

The Nirmalas are reknown throughout India for their depth of knowledge on a variety of philosophical and intellectual matters. All ancient Tikas (commentaries) on Gurbani were done by them.

Famous Saints like Sant Baba Attar Singh Ji Mastuanwaleh, Sant Baba Nand Singh Ji Nanaksarwaleh, Sant Baba Aya Singh Ji Hoti Mardanwaleh and Sant Baba Karam Singh Ji (Silat Roadwaleh, Singapore) were from the Nirmala Sampardah. Their lines link all the way to Bhai Dya Singh Ji. Bhai Dya

Singh Ji passed the Seva onto two of his followers. One was Baba Seva Singh Ji from whom the Nanaksar Sampardah comes. The other was Baba Sobha Singh, from whom the Rarehwaleh Sampardah and the Hoti Mardan Sampardah come.

Baba Karam Singh of Silat Road, Singapore, too links back to the Sampardah of Bhai Dya Singh Ji. See lineage below:

- Guru Gobind Singh Ji
- Bhai Dya Singh Ji
- Baba Sobha Singh Ji
- Baba Sahib Singh Ji Bedi Una Sahib
- Baba Bhag Singh Ji Kurhiwaleh
- Baba Bhir Singh Ji Naurangabad
- Baba Maharaj Singh Naurangabad
- Baba Karam Singh Ji (Silat Road, Singapore)

Historians like Kavi Santok Singh (author of Suraj Parkash Granth), Rattan Singh (author of Prachin Panth Parkash), Giani Gian Singh (author of Sri Guru Panth Parkash), were all Nirmalas. This Sampardah of Bhai Dya Singh Ji also recites Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

### Udasis

Udasis date back to Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. According to historians, when Guru Nanak Dev Ji returned from the 4<sup>th</sup> and the last Udasi, he took off his robe and presented it to his son Baba Sri Chand.

Baba Sri Chand continued the parampara (tradition) of Udasi, and when he left the physical world, that seva was passed on to Baba Gurditta Ji, who was the son of the 6<sup>th</sup> Guru, Sahib Sri Guru Hargobind Ji. Their line continues today with their main Gurdwara at Amritsar. The Udasis too recite Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

### Nihangs

'Ni' meaning 'without' and 'hang' meaning 'desire'. The origins of the Akali Nihang Singhs can be traced back to the first standing army of the Sikhs. Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji ordained the building of Sri Akal Bunga Sahib Ji, which is commonly referred to as Sri Akal Takht Sahib.



A Nihang Singh

Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, alongside *Akal Purakh ki fauj*, fought three successful battles in Punjab. Members of the *Akal Purakh ki fauj* were also known as Akal Purkhi Sikhs. Akali Nihang oral tradition

states that Baba Budha Ji acted as the Gatka Ustaad of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. In honour of this fact the *Akal purakh ki fauj* was also known as Baba Budha Ji ka Dal (The Army of Baba Budha Ji). During the times of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the *Akal purakh ki fauj* (nihangs) was reorganized. The lineage is as follows: Baba Binod Singh Ji, Akali Baba Kahn Singh Ji, Akali Baba Baz Singh Ji, Akali Baba Ram Singh Ji and Akali Baba Bajai Singh Ji and so on. The Nihangs also recite the Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

### Bedi Clan

The Bedi clan in India (who are the direct descendents of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and reside at Una Sahib), recite Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*. During the times of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the head of the Bedi clan Baba Kaladhar ji took amrit from the very hands of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Baba Sarabjhot Singh Ji Bedi is the head of the Bedi clan today.

As you can see, all the above mentioned Sampardas can be traced back to Guru Ji himself and they all teach as the Guru had thought to the first Mukhi of the Sampardas. All the teachings in the Sampardahs have been handed down from the Gurus themselves.

The SPGC, established in 1925, is the only movement or the only sikh

body that preaches that the Mool Mantar ends at Gurprasad. *Parbandak* means 'management'; it is simply a management committee for the temples and it has no right to interfere in the Maryada of the Panth.

Besides the Mool Mantar, there are also other aspects of the Maryada which have been modified by the SPGC for unknown reasons. For example, the Rehras (evening prayer) was shortened in the year 1932 following the Panj Khandias

interference (a movement during the British rule which was later expelled from the Sikh Dharma as they printed copies of Sri Guru Granth Sahib excluded the Bhagta di Bani from it) . Incidentally, the Panj Khandies were also responsible for the confusion pertaining to the authenticity of the Rag Mala (a composition in SGGS).

The Golden Temple in Amritsar, which is considered to be the headquarters of the SPGC, followed the ancient Maryada of Hazur Sahib,

reciting the full Rehras and Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi sach* til the year 1932 - when the SPGC changed the 300 year old Maryada.

There are five Takhts (seats of religious authority) in Sikh Dharm, of which three are under the control of the SPGC. Here too the SPGC has changed the Maryada. The other two Takhts, Patna Sahib and Hazur Sahib, continue to follow the ancient Maryada (i.e. full Rehras and Mool Mantar until *nanak hosi bhi sach*). ■

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## Mool Mantar vs Mangla Charan

The usual argument in favour of reciting the Mool Mantar until Gurbarsad is that it appears as such in other parts of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

In those parts, however, it cannot be called Mool Mantar as *Mool* means beginning and only the *Mantar* appearing in the first page can be called the Mool Mantar. Where it ends at Gurbarsad, it is considered the *Mangla Charan*.

In Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji the Mangala Charan appears in various forms as follows:

- *Ik ongkar satnam gurprasad (2 times)*
- *Ik ongkar satnam karta purakh gurprasad (9 times)*
- *Ik ongkar satnam karta purakh nirbau nirvair akal murat ajuni saibhang gurprasad (33 times)*
- *Ik ongkar satgur prasad (523 times)*

Just like *ik ongkar satgur prasad* cannot be called Mool Mantar, *ik ongkaar satnam karta purakh nirbau nirvair akal murat ajuni saibhang gurprasad* too cannot be considered Mool Mantar - it is simply a Mangla Charan. ■

# The Jathadars of Damdami Taksal

An unbroken lineage of leaders

The Damdami Taksal was founded when Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji instructed Baba Deep Singh to start an institution for imparting knowledge of Gurmat onto Sikhs.



Sahib Sri Guru  
Gobind Singh Ji



2. Shahid Baba Deep Singh Ji & Bhai Mani Singh Ji

3. Shahid Baba Gurbakhsh Singh

4. Giani Bhai Soorat Singh Ji

5. Bhai Gurdas Singh Ji

6. Giani Bhai Sant Singh Ji

7. Sant Daya Singh Ji

8. Sant Giani Bhagvaan Singh Ji

9. Sant Harnam Singh Ji

10. Sant Baba Bishan Singh Ji

11. Sant Giani Sundar Singh Ji  
Bhindranwale

12. Sant Giani Gurbachan Singh Ji  
Khalsa Bhindranwale

13. Sant Giani Kartar Singh Ji  
Khalsa Bhindranwale

14. Sant Giani Jarnail Singh Ji  
Khalsa Bhindranwale / Acting  
Jathedar Sant Baba Takhur  
Singh Ji Khalsa.

Presently, Baba Harnam Singh is  
Acting Jathedar of the Taksal.

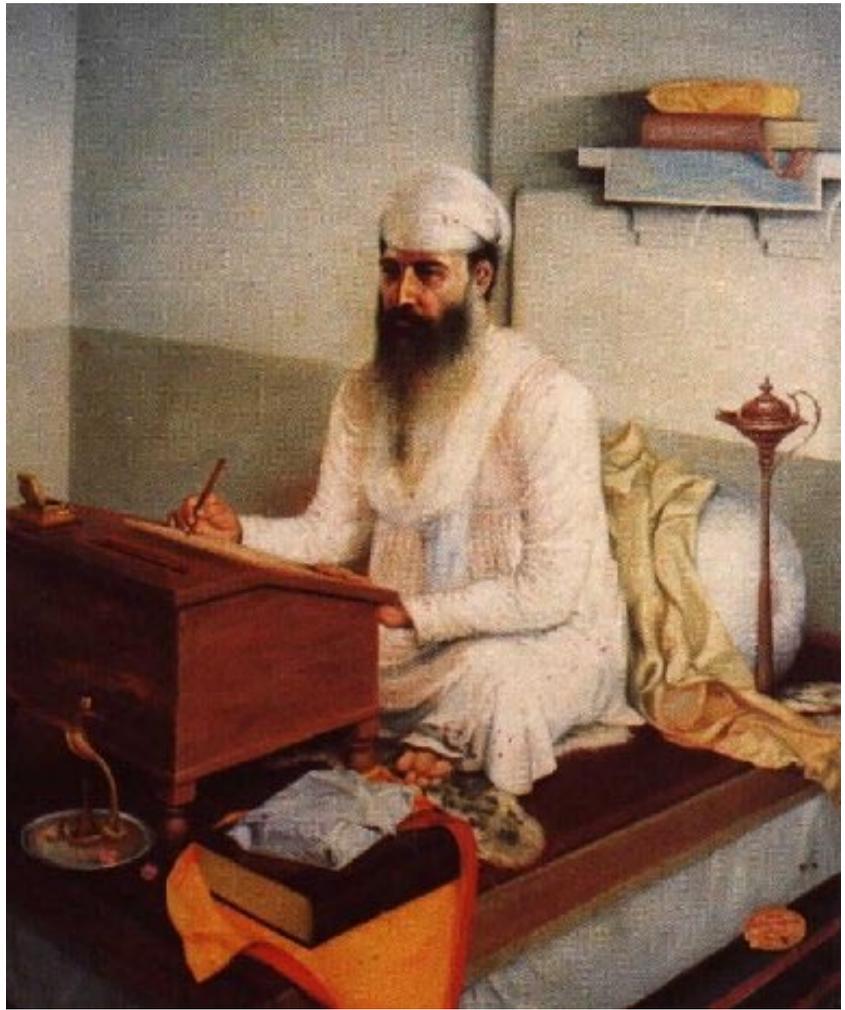
Damdami Taksal has had an unbroken lineage of Jathedars who have led the Taksal throughout Sikh history. It recites the Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*. Who are we to change this?



## Who Was Bhai Gurdas Ji?

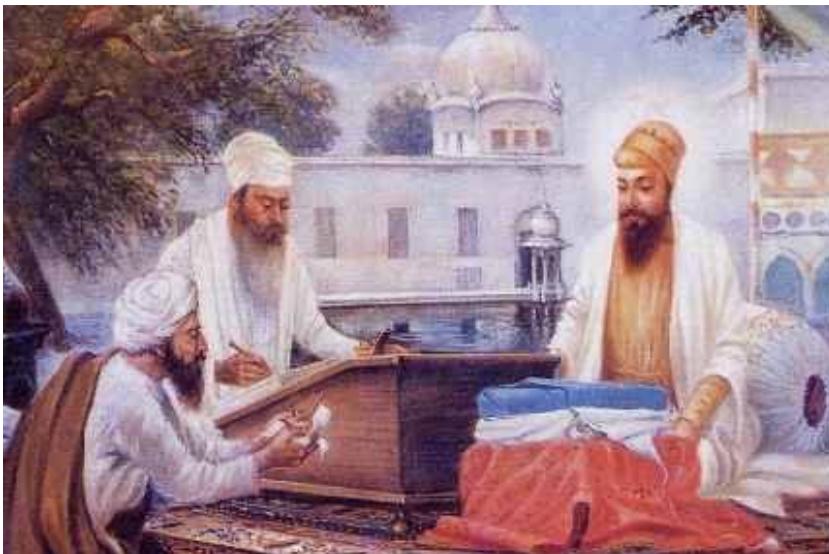
Bhai Gurdas ji, who was a nephew of the third Guru, is much honoured for his Sikhi way of life and literary work. He was a leading figure of Sikh Panth who enjoyed the patronage of Guru Arjan Dev Ji under whose supervision he inscribed the first copy of the Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, which is still extant.

When the Arjan Dev Ji decided to compile the Aad Granth containing the hymns of the Gurus and other men-of-God, he chose Bhai Gurdas to be his scribe. They worked together on the compilation which was completed in 1604. The entire text was inscribed by Bhai Gurdas. The copy written in his hand is preserved to this day in the family of the descendants of one of the sixth Nanak's sons, at Kartarpur, in Jalandhar district of present day Punjab.



*Bhai Gurdas Ji - the scholar (above)*

*Bhai Gurdas Ji inscribing the Aad Granth Sahib (below)*



Bhai Gurdas was the bulwark of Sikhi for many years. He was the expounder and exemplar of the Sikh way of life. He was a man of wide learning and devoted his exceptional talents to preaching the Sikh faith. He composed verses which are valued for its simple language and vivid exposition of the teachings of the Gurus. His work, called *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, was the first exegesis of the Sikh canon and is sung along with Gurbani, in the Sikh congregations. Guru Arjan Dev Ji put his seal of approval on it by designating it as the "key" to the Aad Granth. Bhai Gurdas ji explains the Mool Mantar until *Nanak hosi bhi such*. ■

# Other Points to Note

In addition to the information provided in earlier pages, other reliable sources exist to support the justification for the full Mool Mantra ending at *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

## The Chakra of Baba Deep Singh

On the Chakra of Baba Deep Singh, Mool Mantra is written until *Nanak hosi bhi such*. This Chakra is now housed in Sri Akal Thakt Sahib in Amritsar.

## The Kamarkasa of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

The *kamarkasa* of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, in Moti Bagh, Patiala, is engraved with the Mool Mantra until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

## The Entrance of Sri Harmandir Sahib

At the very entrance of the Harmandir Sahib, Mool Mantra is engraved in gold at the top of the door. Over there too it is written until *Nanak hosi bhi such*.

## The Thaal of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

On the Thaal (shield) of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji in Hazur Sahib, Nader, the Mool Mantra is written until *Nanak hosi bhi such*. See photo below:



## The Use of 'Dhandis' to Demarcate Verses

*Mool* means 'root' or beginning. If you see the first page of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, after Gurprasad there is only two *dhandis*, whereas at the end of *Nanak hosi bhi such* there are not only two *dhandis* but four *dhandis* with the number 1 in between (i.e. ||1||). What's the significance of this? It shows clearly that the first *pauri* (ie. the Mool mantra) ends at the four *dhandis*, i.e. after *Nanak hosi bhi such*, and NOT at Gurprasad. ■



(left). This inscription appears at the entrance of Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). It starts with the complete Mool Mantra.

The SGPC and others under their control or of like-mind have so far been unable to provide credible evidence or proof beyond a reasonable doubt to show that the Gurus intended the Mool Mantar to end at Gurparsad.

The arguments they put forward in support of their view do not appear to have such a convincing character that one can rely and act upon without hesitation. In the absence of proper credibility, they resort to edicts from 'Amritsar' in order to have their way.

If we look back at history, we find that our Tenth Master, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, was instrumental in the establishment of Damdami Taksal for imparting Gurmat and the proper pronunciation of Gurbani. That knowledge has been passed down over the centuries through an unbroken lineage of Brahm Giani jethadars. The Taksal has always been a key strategic player in the activities of the Sikh Nation.

This all-important Taksal has its authority overshadowed by the growing influence of the SGPC - a fairly new organisation that the Guru knew nothing about and which now calls itself the 'parliament of the Sikh Nation'.

Whether those in power are genuinely convinced that they are right or are now simply out to protect their credibility by further propagating their initial ideas, is anybody's guess. They simply have invested too much to back out now.