

What is Gurduara:

We go to Disneyland or we enter into Great America Park, we go to our Grandma's home or we go to our classroom, there is one thing in common, through which we entered into it. That is called door (dr j W dAwr). Similarly when we go to meet Guru or God, we go through a door and that door is called Gurdwara (girdvwr) or Gurduara (grdAwr).

Gurduara is not just a building. It is a place where there must be:

- a) Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, The Living Eternal Guru and,
- b) Nishan Sahib, Sikh Flag

Guru Ka Langar (Food) is also available at the Gurduaras.



Anyone regardless of his/her race, color, caste, creed or country can enter into the Gurduara. Everyone is required to cover his/her head, remove the shoes, wash their hands and feet, and should not possess or consume any toxic like tobacco, alcohol etc.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji wherever he established the congregation, it was called "Dharamsaal". As Bhai Gurdaas Ji have written

Gr Gr Awr Drmsal hw'klrqn sdw ivsAwr]

Everyhome has become a place of dharma where singing.

Overtime Dharamsaal evolved into the Gurduara. As mentioned earlier Gurduara is: a door towards Guru or through Guru. According to the Sikh Code of Conduct whenever one is feeling melancholy and is in low spirits, one should go to Gurduara. Every Sikh must attend Gurduara regularly so he/she can reach to the Guru/Waheguru.

Guru Amar Daas Jee tell us in Anand Sahib the importance of Gurduara.

ij s noKQw sKwieh Awpxl is grdAwr'lsKupvhy]

Those whom You cause to listen to Your sermon, find peace in the Gurduara, the Guru's Gate.

grdAwr'li wie Bivnl ieknw dsvw dAwruidKwieAw]

Through the Gurduara, the Guru's Gate, some are blessed with loving faith, and the Tenth Door is revealed to them.

Also every Sikh should do Paath from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Jee because just going to Gurduara and coming back to home is not going to help us to reach our Goal, that is becoming one with God. In other words we should do Sadh Sangat.

gr isKl dw dKxw grmiK sDslgiq grdAwr]

Why one go to the Gurduara:

- ?? For seekers, it is spiritual guide
- ?? For ill, it is a hospital
- ?? For students, it is a school
- ?? For hungry, it is food
- ?? For travelers, it is a resting place
- ?? To thank Guru Ji for everything He gave us including this human life

Gurduara..... Guru ka duaar - Door (house) of Guru Ji

Attending the Gurduara Sahib is similar to visiting someone's house. At first, the visits are infrequent, and perhaps even shy. Yet, slowly, as one gets to know the other better and better, the visits become more comfortable, more frequent, and begin to feel more normal. In the same sense, one gains a higher level of comfort in the house of Guru Ji. In the beginning making rare visits or infrequent visits to the Gurduara Sahib, then the visits become more and more frequent. Eventually one begins to feel an attachment with the House of Beloved Guru Ji and Guru Ji itself.

Then comes a stage, when we desire to visit Guru Ji and it bothers us when we cannot visit Gurduara. We begin to think of the Gurduara Sahib more and more often. The desire grows in our mind to attend the Gurduara Sahib as often as possible.

"Main binh Gur dekhai, Neend na aavai."

Rather than merely sitting in the Diwaan Hall we should try to listen to Guru Ji's message through His Sikhs. It is vital that along with sitting in the darbaar hall, we should also try to truly find the Guru by listening to the Kirtan, Kathha, and Paath.

"Gurduarai jaaye, sojhi paayesi."

"Jis nau kathha sunaaehi aapni, Se Gurduarai sukh paavehe."

Then, soon, we will reach that avasthha (state of mind) where we will feel Guru Ji by our side, always, inside or outside the Gurduara Sahib. Of course, attending the Gurduara Sahib is vital, but we will no longer feel as if that is the only way to be in the presence of Guru Ji.

"Guru mere sang sadha hai naaley, Simar simar tis sadha samaaley."

Then, Guru Ji will reside in our very soul, and we will *feel* it, Guru Ji will be such a complete part of us that we will have guidance in every little thing we do. Guru Ji will be our heart, our mind, all our body and soul. Guru Ji is in our each and *every single* breath, with which we will remember God, 'Wah-Guru Wah-Guru', and all our pains and sorrows will be forgotten. We will realize the existence of Truth inside of us. But this will start in the physical presence of our Guru going to Gurduara Sahib. We must start out at the bottom, and work our way to the top. Our Guru Ji is with us *always*. We only have to realize this. All this is behind a door, a certain door. That door is the Gurduara.

"Gurduarai laaye bhaavni, I kna dasvaa duaar dikhaaya.

Let the secret be revealed.