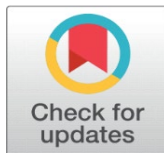
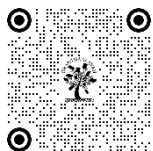


BHAGAT DHANNA JI AND HIS CONTRIBUTION IN GURU GRANTH SAHIB

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ABSTRACT

The Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism and the Eternal guru of the Sikhs, stands as a monumental text in the history of spiritual literature, embodying a wealth of philosophical wisdom, moral guidance and universal ideology. This article explores the role of Bhagat Dhanna in the Guru Granth Sahib and its significance as well. This article also tells us about the journey of transformation of a simple farmer into a great Bhakti Saint. The inclusion of Bhagat Dhanna's bani or hymns in The Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Arjun Dev (5th Sikh Guru) reinforces the universal message of spiritual unity, brotherhood and the inclusive nature of the Sikh faith.

Keywords: Spiritual Unity, Hymns, Bhakti Saint, Philosophical Wisdom, Sikh Guru, True Devotion, Holy Scriptures

1. INTRODUCTION

Actually, India has been a well-known and famous country for its spiritual identity since ages. In this context, it is true that the holy land of Rajasthan has always witnessed the holy place of many saints and sages. In the era of Bhakti Movement, the spiritual transformation of a simple farmer named Dhanna took on an identity as Bhagat Dhanna, a holy Saint who gave a message of spiritual unity. The inclusion of his preachings and hymns can be viewed in 'The Guru Granth Sahib', a holy scripture of Sikhs.

1.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To explore the role of Bhagat Dhanna in the holy scripture of Sikhs "Shri Guru Granth Sahib."
- To understand his spiritual contributions and ideology with the help of his hymns.
- His role in the Bhakti Movement emphasis on direct relation with God through his true devotion.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To write this article, a multi-dimensional approach, which integrates textual analysis and qualitative research methods to understand the contribution of Bhagat Dhanna. The most important primary source is Guru Granth Sahib where as books from various scholars and saints, poets are considered as secondary sources.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are a number of primary and secondary sources on Bhagat Dhanna and his teachings in "Guru Granth Sahib," some of the important are as under:

- 1) **Guru Granth Sahib:** The main primary source for studying and analyzing the role of Bhagat Dhanna is the Guru Granth Sahib.
- 2) **Bhakti Literature:** Several scholars and poet saints have written about the Bhakti Movement in Rajasthan. They have discussed how the Bhakti Movement gained momentum in Rajasthan with the help and teachings of Meera Bai, Dadu Dayal, Bhagat Dhanna etc.
- 3) **Dr. Gopal Singh (1960s):** Dr. Singh was the one who translated Guru Granth Sahib in English. In his translation he discussed bani contributed by bhagat Dhanna and its purity and simplicity as well. Bhagat Dhanna's bani emphasizes pure devotion towards lord.
- 4) **Dr. W.H.Mcleod:** In his research on Sikhism he mentions Bhagat Dhanna's role in Guru Granth Sahib but because of lack of sufficient sources he didn't mention about his life.
- 5) **Dr. Pashaura Singh:** One of the most renowned writers who gave a lot of work on Sikhism examines how Bhagat Dhanna's bani aligns with the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev.
- 6) **Jhalman Singh Gosal:** In his book he wrote about Bhagat Dhanna's bani and elaborated it perfectly which shows how Dhanna's teachings impact others to adopt the path of humanity and integrity.
- 7) **The Guru Granth Sahib** serves as a repository of teachings that address universal human concerns, such as the search for truth, the meaning of existence, and the cultivation of a just society. The scripture's inclusion of verses from non-Sikh contributors is particularly significant, as it amplifies voices from various regions, castes, and occupations. The teachings of saints from Rajasthan, such as Bhagat Dhanna, Bhagat Pipa, and Bhagat Beni, occupy a special place within this spiritual tapestry. These saints, rooted in the socio-cultural milieu of Rajasthan, contributed hymns that reflect their profound spiritual insights and egalitarian ethos. Their inclusion underscores the *Guru Granth Sahib's* commitment to representing a diverse spiritual heritage, offering teachings that are relevant to humanity as a whole.

4. THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY

The Bhakti Movement, which emerged in medieval India, serves as a critical backdrop to understanding the contributions of saints like Dhanna and Pipa. This movement advocated for a personal and direct connection with the divine, rejecting the hierarchical structures and ritualistic practices prevalent in orthodox religious traditions. Saints from the Bhakti tradition emphasized devotion (bhakti), humility, and ethical living, often using regional languages and folk traditions to make their teachings accessible to the masses.

Rajasthan, a land known for its vibrant culture and spiritual heritage, produced several luminaries of the Bhakti movement. These saints challenged societal norms, denounced caste-based discrimination, and articulated a vision of spirituality rooted in compassion and social equality. Their teachings found resonance in the Sikh philosophy, which similarly champions the oneness of humanity, the rejection of empty rituals, and devotion to a formless, omnipresent God. The inclusion of Rajasthani saints in the Guru Granth Sahib exemplifies the synthesis of Bhakti ideals with Sikh teachings, enriching the scripture's spiritual and philosophical depth.

5. THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF RAJASTHANI SAINTS

To fully appreciate the contributions of Bhagat Dhanna and Bhagat Pipa, it is essential to understand the socio-cultural milieu in which they lived and composed their hymns. Rajasthan, during the medieval period, was a region marked by stark social stratification, with rigid caste hierarchies and deep-rooted inequalities. Amidst this backdrop, the teachings of these saints served as a beacon of hope and transformation, offering an alternative vision of society based on equality and divine love.

These saints emerged from diverse backgrounds, each bringing a unique perspective to their spiritual teachings. Bhagat Dhanna, a farmer, epitomized the simplicity and purity of faith, demonstrating that divine grace is accessible to all, irrespective of social or occupational status. Bhagat Pipa, a Rajput king, renounced his royal privileges to embark on a spiritual quest, symbolizing the transcendence of material wealth and power. Their hymns, characterized by their accessibility and universality, resonated with people across different strata of society. By incorporating their teachings into the Guru Granth Sahib, Sikhism affirmed its commitment to inclusivity and its vision of a just and egalitarian society.

6. THE UNIVERSAL APPEAL OF RAJASTHANI SAINTS' TEACHINGS

One of the defining features of the Guru Granth Sahib is its universal appeal, which is amplified through the inclusion of teachings from saints like Dhanna, Pipa. Their hymns are not confined to specific religious or cultural contexts but address fundamental human concerns, such as the search for truth, the nature of the divine, and the path to liberation. The teachings of these saints align with the Sikh principles of Naam Japna (remembrance of God), Kirat Karni (honest living), and Vand Chakna (sharing with others). These teachings continue to inspire not only Sikhs but also people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, demonstrating their enduring relevance.

7. THE ROLE OF BHAGAT BANI IN THE GURU GRANTH SAHIB

The term Bhagat Bani refers to the hymns composed by saints and mystics included in the Guru Granth Sahib. These compositions reflect a rich diversity of spiritual thought, transcending religious boundaries and challenging societal norms. The Bhagat Bani of Rajasthani saints contributes significantly to this corpus, offering perspectives that are deeply rooted in their cultural and spiritual heritage.

Through their bani, these saints articulated a vision of spirituality that emphasized personal devotion, ethical conduct, and social justice. They rejected the ritualistic practices and dogmas of institutionalized religion, advocating instead for a direct and personal experience of the divine. This perspective aligns closely with the teachings of the Sikh Gurus, who emphasized the oneness of God and the equality of all beings.

8. BHAGAT DHANNA: THE DEVOTION OF A SIMPLE FARMER

Bhagat Dhanna, one of the revered saints whose hymns grace the Guru Granth Sahib, exemplifies the purity and sincerity of devotion. A farmer from Rajasthan, Dhanna's spiritual legacy lies in his embodiment of an unwavering faith and a simple, heartfelt approach to divinity. His teachings, captured in his verses, continue to inspire spiritual seekers across generations, emphasizing that the path to God lies in love, trust, and equality.

9. LIFE AND BACKGROUND OF BHAGAT DHANNA JI

Bhagat Dhanna Ji was born in 1415 AD in the village of Dhaun, Rajasthan, into a humble Jat family. His spiritual journey began with a simple yet profound encounter. One day, while heading to his fields, he noticed a Brahmin engaged in the worship of a stone idol. Intrigued by the ritual, Dhanna asked the Brahmin whether the idol truly fulfilled his desires. The Brahmin affirmed that whatever one asks from the idol, it grants. Curious and eager, Dhanna requested the Brahmin to give him such a deity. The Brahmin, reluctant to engage further, told Dhanna that he would provide him with an idol in exchange for a cow.

The story of Bhagat Dhanna's devotion has been beautifully narrated by Bhai Gurdas in Pauri 13 of Vaar 10. It is said that the Brahmin, wanting to rid himself of Dhanna's persistence, handed him a simple stone, calling it Thakur (God).

With deep faith and sincerity, Dhanna took the idol home, bathed it, and placed it with reverence. He prepared food and offered it to the deity, pleading with folded hands for it to accept his offering. He was so firm in his devotion that he declared he would not eat unless the idol did. Moved by Dhanna's pure and unwavering faith, the divine presence manifested, partaking in the meal. This remarkable act of devotion highlights Dhanna's innocence and the power of sincere love for the Divine.

It is believed that God was so pleased with Dhanna's devotion that He began to assist him in his daily life, even helping him plow his fields and water his crops. However, some scholars present a different perspective on Dhanna's spiritual evolution. According to another account, Dhanna was inclined toward spirituality from a young age. He regularly served ascetics and the underprivileged. One day, he encountered a mendicant who advised him to travel to Banaras to seek deeper spiritual wisdom. There, he met Bhagat Ramanand, whose saintly life left a profound impact on him. Inspired by Ramanand's teachings, Dhanna accepted him as his Guru and returned to his village to meditate and seek divine realization.

Through intense devotion and association with saints, Dhanna attained spiritual enlightenment. He came to realize the transient nature of human existence, reflecting on past lives spent in worldly attachments. He acknowledged that true peace could only be found in devotion to God. The guidance of his Guru led him to embrace the divine path, liberating him from the cycle of birth and death.

Bhagat Dhanna's teachings emphasize the futility of superficial religious practices. He rejected idol worship and critiqued the institution of priesthood, viewing it as an obstacle to true spirituality. He believed that asceticism, mere intellectual boasting, and isolated meditation in caves did not constitute genuine devotion but were instead forms of hypocrisy. His philosophy centered on the necessity of a Guru, likening the Guru's influence to that of a philosopher's stone, capable of transforming an individual's spiritual understanding.

Unlike many other saints, Dhanna expressed his faith through a direct and simple relationship with God, even making practical requests in his prayers. He saw God as a provider who fulfills the needs of His devotees. In his hymns, he described God as the nurturer of all beings, from the smallest creatures hidden within rocks to the unborn child in the womb. He firmly believed that one should not fear, for God is the ultimate caretaker and protector.

Dhanna's prayers reflect his straightforward and heartfelt devotion. He did not hesitate to ask for basic necessities such as food, shelter, and family. He argued that a hungry person cannot concentrate on God, as physical discomfort disrupts spiritual focus. This belief is echoed in the teachings of other saints, including Kabir, who remarked that hunger could even make one question devotion itself. Dhanna's profound faith in God's benevolence was so strong that it became legendary. Mirabai, another great Bhakta, famously said that Dhanna could grow crops without even sowing seeds—an expression of his boundless trust in divine providence.

The lives of great Bhagats like Dhanna Ji exemplify an intimate and loving relationship with God. Their unwavering faith and miraculous experiences demonstrate the closeness they shared with the Divine. Guru Arjan Dev Ji acknowledged this deep bond, stating that such Bhagats have made God a part of their household, living in constant communion with Him.

Bhagat Dhanna Ji lived a life of simplicity, faith, and devotion, inspiring countless seekers. He passed away in 1475 AD, having left behind a legacy of love and unwavering trust in the Divine. His teachings and three hymns are preserved in the Guru Granth Sahib, continuing to guide spiritual aspirants toward a path of true devotion and surrender.

Dhanna is often depicted as a devout individual whose faith in the divine permeated every aspect of his life. Unlike the scholars and ascetics of his time, Dhanna's spirituality was rooted in his daily experiences as a laborer, and he viewed God as an integral part of his work and existence. This connection between the divine and the mundane became a central theme in his teachings, reflecting his belief that God is accessible to anyone, regardless of their social or occupational standing.

9.1. TEACHINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Bhagat Dhanna's contribution to the spiritual and philosophical traditions of India lies in his ability to communicate profound truths through simple, relatable expressions. His hymns, included in the Guru Granth Sahib, emphasize the accessibility of God and the importance of unshakable faith. Through his teachings, Dhanna challenged the prevailing religious orthodoxy that emphasized elaborate rituals, caste hierarchies, and the intermediation of priests.

9.2. FAITH AND SIMPLICITY

Dhanna's life and verses epitomize the idea that genuine faith transcends rituals and formalities. He believed that devotion to God required neither scholarly knowledge nor material wealth but could be achieved through a pure heart and sincere intentions. His hymns illustrate how God responds to the simplicity of faith, where one's occupation or status holds no relevance.

For instance, in one of his hymns, Dhanna metaphorically describes himself as a farmer whose fields are sustained by the divine. This imagery underscores his belief that God is the ultimate provider and protector, meeting the needs of even the humblest of His devotees.

9.3. EQUALITY AND SOCIAL HARMONY

Dhanna's teachings also rejected the rigid caste-based hierarchies that dominated Indian society during his time. As a farmer, he was intimately connected with the land and the common people, and his egalitarian philosophy reflected his lived experiences. He preached that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God, and that divine grace is not restricted by birth or social position. This stance resonated with the ethos of Sikhism, which also rejects caste-based discrimination and promotes universal brotherhood.

9.4. REJECTION OF RITUALISM

Aligned with the Bhakti movement's core ideals, Dhanna denounced the complex rituals and intermediary practices prevalent in institutionalized religion. His hymns often portray a direct and personal relationship with the divine, free from the constraints of religious formalism. This perspective, shared by other Bhakti saints, aligns closely with the teachings of Sikhism, which also advocates a direct connection to God through meditation and remembrance (Naam Simran).

9.5. NOTABLE HYMNS

The Guru Granth Sahib contains a hymn by Bhagat Dhanna that encapsulates his philosophy and his deep trust in divine providence. One of the notable lines from his hymn reads:

—I am a farmer, plowing my fields, and the Lord Himself sustains me. I have no doubt; I have firm faith in my Lord.||

This hymn reflects Dhanna's rural and agricultural roots, portraying God as the sustainer of life and the ultimate source of nourishment. The imagery of plowing fields symbolizes human effort, while the acknowledgment of divine sustenance highlights the synergy between human initiative and God's grace.

In this verse, Dhanna communicates the profound spiritual truth that reliance on God is not about relinquishing effort but about recognizing divine support in all endeavors. His hymn resonates deeply with the agrarian society of his time, making his teachings relatable and accessible.

9.6. LEGACY AND INFLUENCE

Bhagat Dhanna's inclusion in the Guru Granth Sahib is a testament to the universal appeal of his teachings. Though he lived centuries ago, his message of faith, equality, and simplicity remains relevant in today's world, where materialism and social divisions continue to challenge spiritual values.

Dhanna's legacy extends beyond his hymns. As a representative of the Bhakti movement, he played a vital role in democratizing spirituality and challenging the exclusivist tendencies of institutionalized religion. His teachings bridged the gap between the divine and the ordinary, affirming that God's grace is accessible to all, irrespective of caste, occupation, or wealth.

Bhagat Dhanna's life and teachings offer a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of simple, sincere devotion. As a farmer, Dhanna's spiritual philosophy was deeply intertwined with his daily life, reflecting his belief in the omnipresence of God and the sanctity of honest labor. His hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib stand as enduring symbols of his faith and his commitment to equality and social harmony. By celebrating Dhanna's contributions, we gain a deeper

understanding of the inclusivity and universality that define the Guru Granth Sahib, as well as the enduring relevance of the Bhakti movement in shaping India's spiritual and social landscape.

Through his profound yet simple verses, Bhagat Dhanna continues to inspire those who seek a direct and personal connection with the divine, proving that true devotion knows no boundaries of caste, wealth, or knowledge. His life and teachings serve as a beacon for those who aspire to lead lives of faith, humility, and purpose, guided by the belief that God is always present in the hearts of the devoted. There are 3 hymns of Bhagat Dhanna included in The Guru Granth Sahib. His hymns reflect humility, pure devotion and unwavering faith. The hymns are composed in different Ragas such as Raag Asa, Raag Dhanasari and Raag Sorath.

Let's discuss one of his hymn:

Raag Aasa.

Ik Onkaar Satguru Prasaad.

Bharmat phirat bauh Janam bilaane tan man dhan nahee dheere ||

Lalach bikh kaam lubadh raata man bisare Prabh here, 1. Rahao||

Bikh phal meeth lage man baure chaar bichaar na jaaniaa ||

Gun te preet badhee an bhantee Janam maran phir taania ||

Jugat jaan nahee ridai niwaasi jagat jam phand pare ||

Bikh phal sanch bhare man aise param purakh Prabh man bisare.2||

Gyan prves gurhe dhan deaa dhiaan maan man ek ma-e ||

Prem bhagat maanee sukh janiaa tripat aghaane mukat bha-e,3||

Jot smaae samanee ja kai achhli Prabh pehchaniaa ||

Dhanne dhan paaia dharnee dhar mil jan sant smaania.4||

[Guru Granth Sahib. Ang 487]

Explanation: (Ik Onkar Satguru Prasad) Oneness of God. By the grace of God

I wandered through many births (incarnations), but my mind, body and materialism remain not stable.

Attached to and stained with the poison of lust and greed, the mind has forgotten the precious jewel(name) of the lord. Pause

The poisonous fruit of my sin is sweet to the demented mind, which does not know the differentiation between good and bad.

Turning away from honor and integrity, his love for other things increases and again he weaves the web of birth and death.

He does not know the true path to the Lord, who abides in mind,

burning in the trap of materialistic and worldly love, he is caught by the trap of death.

Amassing the fruits of sins, he fills his mind with them, he forgets the name of God, the supreme being, from his soul and mind.

The Guru has given the wealth of Divine or spiritual knowledge, practicing meditation, the mind becomes one with him.

By embracing the Lord's love-worship, I have come to know peace; and thus being satiated, I have been free- spirited.

He, who is filled with the Divine Light, recognizes the true God.

Dhanna has obtained the true Lord, the sustainer Lord as his wealth; and meeting the saintly and humble people, he is merged into Him. Dhanna's legacy extends beyond his hymns. His life and teachings offer a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of simple, sincere devotion.

10. CONCLUSION

Bhagat Dhanna continues to inspire those who seek a direct and personal connection with the divine, proving that true devotion knows no boundaries of caste, wealth or creed. His life and teachings serve as a beacon for those who

aspire to lead lives of faith, humility and purpose, guided by the belief that God is always present in the hearts of the devoted.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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