



SIKH
Research Institute

Anand Karaj: The Sikh Marriage

State of the Panth, Report 2

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State of the Panth

The State of the Panth series is a report on Sikh matters presented by the Sikh Research Institute to the global Sikh community. The series reports on matters affecting either a large section of the Sikh Nation or a perspective on critical issues facing the human race at large. It surveys the self-identified Sikhs on their stances. It outlines a Sikh perspective based on *Gurmat* (the Guru's Way) traditions of *Bani* (wisdom), *Tavarikh* (history), and *Rahit* (lifestyle). It offers recommendations for the individual Sikhs and Sikh institutions in best practice approach to strengthen the bonds within the community.

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Acknowledgments

Reviewers

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Skyrocket

We thank Skyrocket team for sharing their design expertise and making the report as beautiful as it is. The strength of our brand is supported by their knowledge.

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Summary

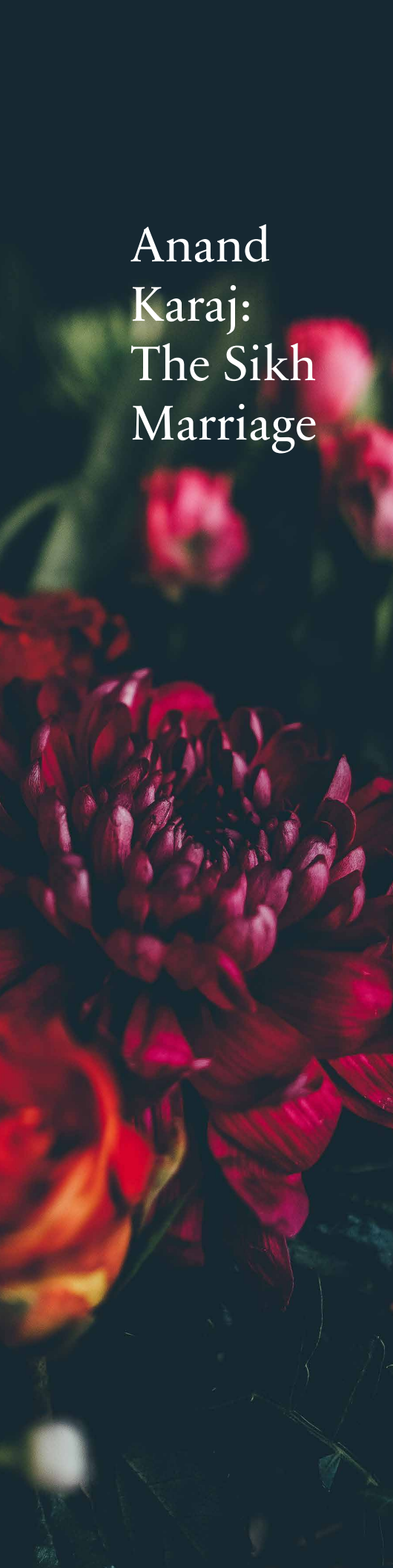
The *Anand Karaj* (Sikh marriage ceremony) is one of the life stages outlined with specific sentiments and ceremonies for Sikhs. Its procedures have received increased attention in recent years as a major community issue. These discussions revolve mainly around the right to participate, where inter-caste, inter-race, and sexuality fit into the ceremony.

The focus of this report is to understand the *Gurmat* (the Guru's Way) components of the Anand Karaj, as inferred from *Bani* (wisdom), *Tavarikh* (history), and *Rahit* (lifestyle). The principles expressed throughout the *lava* (interlinks) has a multidimensional meaning. There is a worldly literal description of the union between a husband and wife but also a metaphorical, genderless understanding of the human condition which would transcend across all sexual orientations and/or genders.

A global survey, included in the report, presented nearly 1,000 self-identified Sikhs with questions related to the rights to participate in the Anand Karaj ceremony. The survey highlights the discrepancies apparent within the Sikh population as of 2017. It suggests that organizations cannot remain passive to such community issues.

This study presents recommendations based on the Gurmat components on a personal and institutional level as a way to better understand, implement, and proceed with the Anand Karaj ceremony. Organizations need to take a more active role in engaging with a changing Sikh population, whether that be in addressing inter-faith marriages or same-sex couple marriages. On an individual level, Sikhs are prompted to reflect on why they are undergoing a Sikh marriage ceremony. The ultimate focus on the Anand Karaj is one's commitment to Guru Granth Sahib and a desire to live a life as outlined by Guru Sahib.

It is found that the Sikh marriage ceremony of Anand Karaj is a unique initiation into married life for Sikhs. The Anand Karaj highlights the ideal life trajectory or model for one's path in life as a Sikh. Those who wish and choose to abide by the Sikh paradigm and Gurmat lifestyle join a historical tradition that was built on Oneness, spirituality, and simplicity.



Anand Karaj: The Sikh Marriage

The *Anand Karaj* (literally, “blissful act”), the Sikh marriage ceremony, is one of the major life events a Sikh may undergo. The Anand Karaj itself consists of four *lava* (interlinks) in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib. The lava, popularly transliterated as *lavaan* or *lavan*, come as *lav* or the plural *lava* in Guru Granth Sahib. These lava make up the main aspect of the Anand Karaj. A variety of cultural practices tend to be included throughout the wedding festivities in Sikh families. The focus of this work is to discuss solely the Anand Karaj ceremony and is less related to other events or practices seen throughout weddings.

In recent times, the Anand Karaj has come to the forefront of community issues in regards to the right to participate in the ceremony, specifically where inter-caste, inter-race, and sexuality come into play.

A survey of 948 self-identified Sikhs from 20 different countries was conducted to summarize the 2017 Sikh population’s understanding of the rights to participate in the Anand Karaj ceremony. The survey showed distinct divides in terms of who may be able to participate specifically in the Sikh context of marriage. The survey also highlights the discrepancies apparent within the community as well as identifies where institutional educational efforts can be focused.

This study makes recommendations on a personal and institutional level that can be used by individuals and organizations to better understand, implement, and proceed with the Anand Karaj ceremony.

The focus of this report is to understand the *Gurmat* (the Guru’s Way) components of the Anand Karaj, as inferred from *Bani* (wisdom), *Tavarikh* (history), and *Rahit* (lifestyle).

Wisdom

Bani

Bhai Vir Singh begins his commentary on Sikh marriage ceremony as follows: “The code of marriage is one of the hardest worldly issues to understand. As the Sikh faith reveals every aspect of life from phenomenon to phenomenal thought, the marriage is also presented through the elevated lens: the inner self of being shines as it enters the inner self, and steps into the realm of union with the Creator.”¹ He looks at life from a universal, a holistic level, elevated from the worldly lense, and as such, the Sikh marriage ceremony must be looked at through the lens of journey of the *jiv* (being). Ultimately, the goal of the *jiv* is to recognize its own divinity, the true inner nature, to wed the Divine.

Whenever there is a question or issue in front of the Sikh *Panth* (community), the Bani of Guru Granth Sahib can be referred to for guidance and explanation—the topic of marriage is not an exception.

*They are not to be called husband and wife who only sit together;
rather they are husband and wife who have one light in two bodies.ⁱ*

— Guru Granth Sahib, 788

This excerpt from the Bani of Guru Amardas Sahib is commonly associated with the marriage ceremony, becoming quite common in pop culture and advertisements on social media platforms. Throughout Bani, the metaphor of *dhan* (wife) is used:

*That wife-human being is genuinely beautiful who
feels the presence of Husband-Divine.ⁱⁱ*

— Guru Granth Sahib, 56

The metaphor of a wife longing for her husband is commonly used to illustrate the human being's longing for *Ik Oankar* (the One Force), the Sikh declaration of Divinity. In this way, there is a common understanding of a genderless reading of Bani, such that all individuals place themselves into the role of the bride before *Ik Oankar*. The understanding of this metaphor is commonly accepted, except in the case of the “one light in two bodies” imagery.

Bani can be interpreted in a multidimensional fashion, in both literal and metaphorical ways, and this excerpt must be dealt with in a similar manner. From one angle, this could be a worldly literal description of the union between a husband and wife, but metaphorically it is a genderless understanding of the human condition, which would transcend across all sexual orientations and/or genders.

Many *sabads* (sections or excerpts from the Bani of Guru Granth Sahib) are sung before an Anand Karaj ceremony. And though they may discuss a worldly relationship in metaphor, the meaning is generally left to just a worldly interpretation.

One such *sabad* that is sung commonly at weddings is as follows:

*O my father! My marriage is done: Through the Guru, I found All-Pervasive.
Darkness of ignorance is dispelled: Splendor of Guru's wisdom is shining.
Guru's wisdom is shining, darkness is dispelled: I found All-Pervasive Jewel Element.
Disease of ego is cured, pain is gone: Through Guru's wisdom,
self-realization consumed self-centeredness.
I met Immortal Timeless Being Husband: Will never die, will never leave.
O my father! My marriage is done: Through the Guru, I found All-Pervasive.ⁱⁱⁱ*

— Guru Granth Sahib, 78

In the above sabad, Guru Ramdas Sahib illustrates that it is discovering the light of *Akal Purakh* (Timeless Being) that is the life's purpose with the Guru's wisdom. Instead of understanding how this sabad explains the union with the Divine, it has become the quintessential "wedding" sabad, and unfortunately often its true meaning is overlooked.

It is important to remember that though Bani teaches through tangible worldly metaphors and there is definitely a worldly aspect that can be interpreted, ultimately the greater meaning is with the Divine. An example of such a metaphor comes in a sabad depicting a typical South-Asian wedding where the bride-to-be and groom's wedding moment is decided. In the sabad, the groom's wedding party arrives at the bride's home and the bride's party feels the joy. They serve a myriad of foods while the officiator completes the nuptials. Similarly, the Guru officiates the unbreakable union of a human being with the Divine. It is as follows:

O' Charmer! The Union with the Perfect is the lasting wedding moment.

O' Charmer! All comforts entered, the separation left.

*Truth-Exemplars came together, contemplated on the Divine,
became the awesome groom's party.*

*Together convened, arrived intuitively,
love is borne in bride-party's mind.*

*A light together with the light, like warp-weft,
enjoys all flavors through All-Pervasive Nam-Identification.*

*Nanak appeals: Truth-Exemplar-Guru unites all with the Divine,
the All-capable Doer-Reason.^{iv}*

— Guru Granth Sahib, 846

Here Guru Arjan Sahib illustrates the being uniting with the “Timeless Being” via the relationship with the Guru to the excitement and relationship of a family wedding. Many times this sabad is misused for its literal interpretation, but the relationship described here is one with the Divine. In context to the relationship with Divine, all human beings are described as females.

*Body the dying vat, color mind with virtues, five values the wedding party.
I'll do lava-links with Charmer-Sovereign, being is colored with love.
O' Newly-wed Brides! Sing, Sing the wedding songs.
In my home entered the Sovereign, the Charmer, the Husband! Pause to reflect.
Created bedi in the lotus-heart, utterances of Supreme-Cosmic wisdom.
My groom is like a Charmer-Sovereign! Such is my great fortune.
Divine-beings, holy-people, and 330 million gods came on their flying vehicles
to see the wonder.
Kabir proclaims: Now going with the One Divine Being who married me.^v*

— Guru Granth Sahib, 482

The above sabad uses allusion and symbolism to compare the excitement of a typical South Asian wedding party to that of the union with the Divine Being. Here the colorful events of a worldly affair are contrasted to coloring the mind with the five virtues: truth, compassion, contentment, humility, and love, where the newly wed bride is now the human senses. The bride's home becomes the human heart, as her husband is used as a metaphor for the Divine, where an image of a *bedi* (a stage comprised of two ottomans where bride and groom sit under canopy during marriage ceremony) symbolizes the two, being and Divine, residing together.

Many times sabads are used at various occasions on the premise of one line, but it is essential to look at the entirety of the sabad to understand the full message being relayed. In the above sabad, Bhagat Kabir ultimately discusses the union with Ik Oankar, the One Supreme Being, and to reduce this sabad purely to its worldly metaphor is a disservice.



The focus of the Anand Karaj is ultimately the union with Ik Oankar, so the cultural and societal traditions associated with the marriage ceremony must reflect that message. Many times a cultural practice of the dowry (property or money brought by a bride to her husband on their marriage) is associated with marriage practices. These dowries can often lead to a crippling debt. If the Sikh marriage ceremony is at its center related to the spiritual journey of getting back to “Timeless Being,” a monetary dowry has no place in this practice. The focus of a Sikh spiritual union should be, if anything, an exchange of virtuous qualities or a sharing of Sikh principles which might aid in the connection of the being that is longing for Ik Oankar. Guru Ramdas Sahib highlights the need for the gift of Nam (Divine Identification) rather than worldly possessions of any kind:

*O’ My Father! Give me the gift of All-Pervasive Nam-Identification in dowry.
Give me All-Pervasive instead of expensive clothes,
All-Pervasive instead of money-jewelry, so the occasion becomes beautiful.
All-Pervasive, All-Pervasive devotion makes the occasion delightful,
Guru, Eternal Guru arranged this gift.
All-Pervasive Glory pervades the earth and the universe,
this gift can not be lessened by lessening.
Other dowry the Self-centered show and tell,
is trash-false pride, immature, and pretense.
O’ My Father! Give me the gift of All-Pervasive Nam-Identification in dowry.^{vi}*

— Guru Granth Sahib, 79

Similarly, worldly attachments or egotisms related to one's status, caste, or position in life also have no place in a ceremony that depicts a pure union with the Divine. The question on whether inter-caste or inter-race Anand Karajs can be performed is directly addressed in Bani:

Recognize the light of the All-Pervasive Divine within all, and do not consider social class or status; there is no classes or castes in the world hereafter.^{vii}

— Guru Granth Sahib, 349

There were no castes or social classes, no religious robes, no Brahmin or Kshatriya.^{viii}

— Guru Granth Sahib, 1036

O' My Charmer! We are just the ignorant children of the All-Pervasive Divine...^{ix}

— Guru Granth Sahib, 168

Throughout Bani, a message of the oneness of humanity is expressed. There must not be any consideration or merit given to the nature of an individual's socially constructed caste or their race in whether or not they can participate in an Anand Karaj, as these attributes have no place in an individual's spiritual or lifestyle practices.

As attributed to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib:

*Someone is Hindu and someone a Muslim,
then someone is Shia and someone a Sunni.
Recognize the whole of human race as one...*^x

— Tva Prasadi Kabitt 15, Akal Ustati 85

The context of the Anand Karaj moves beyond worldly understandings of caste, race, or sexuality and describes a state of spiritual existence that one must strive for. The focus of the Bani recited at the time of the Anand Karaj revolves around a dual meaning of both the spiritual journey of the couple but also the journey of the being to the ultimate union with Akal Purakh.

The first *lav* (lava is plural) symbolizes a new beginning and the importance of a spiritual union. It is revealed that marriage is a *parvarati karam* (worldly blessing). The second lav advises for a blissful wedded life, placing the Guru at the heart of the marriage. Specifically, that the Divine initiates you to meet the Timeless Reality, where worldly insecurities and egotism fade away. It is in the second link that the importance of pursuing the teachings, searching for a congregation of *sadh sangat* (saintly beings) is emphasized as means to pursue divine realization. The third lav instructs spending time in the company of *sangat* (holy/good congregation), where the consciousness is spontaneously filled with *virag* (innate yearning). The fourth lav describes the union of the couple with the Creator, and completes the marriage ceremony. In the fourth link, the consciousness experiences *sahaj* (intuitive nature) and is in the state of union with the Timeless Reality, the Creator, Akal Purakh.²

The Anand Karaj is a unique display of acceptance of the wisdom of Bani. As a couple undergoes the Anand Karaj ceremony, they bow after each stanza in the lava, physically symbolizing display of acceptance.

The central focus of the Anand Karaj, and by extension the central focus throughout a Sikh life is the journey to Akal Purakh. Guru Nanak Sahib expresses that:

I burn-discard that custom which makes me forget the Beloved.

Nanak: That love is auspicious which secures honor with the Sovereign.^{xi}

— Guru Granth Sahib, 590

Undergoing an Anand Karaj is not only a commitment in the worldly sense between the couple but is motivated by accepting a Gurmat lifestyle as outlined by Guru Granth Sahib.

Marriage is not a requirement, but a recommended lifestyle. Bhai Gurdas explains:

As the ocean is supreme amongst lakes and rivers,
and *Sumer* is supreme amongst mountains, this world considers.
As sandalwood tree is supreme amongst the trees,
and gold is acknowledged best amongst the metals.
As swan amongst birds, tiger amongst quadrupeds,
Siri rag amongst *rags*, and philosopher's stone amongst stones.
As Guru's wisdom and contemplation amongst wisdoms and contemplations,
Householder is first amongst all lifestyles.³

The original Lava in Gurmukhi and the entire transcreation is available at the end of the report.

History

Tavarikh

From Guru Nanak Sahib, Sikhi had a unique form of a marriage ceremony. At the time of Guru Nanak Sahib's marriage to Mata Sulakhni, Guru Nanak Sahib "...refused to marry by ancient Hindu ceremony of Veda..."⁴ This revolutionary act was seen as a direct threat to the majority belief system at the time and sparked an assassination attempt on Guru Nanak Sahib to stop any resistance. Tradition tells of several versions on the form of the actual marriage of Guru Nanak Sahib and Mata Sulakhni. Oral traditions tell that "...he wrote mul mantar on a piece of paper, placed it on a low stool..." around which the marriage was performed by circling the mul mantar four times along with Mata Sulakhni.⁴ Through oral tradition, it has also been told that Guru Nanak Sahib wrote Ik Oankar on either a piece of paper or on the ground claiming that this, the sabad or word, Ik Oankar was the only true witness.

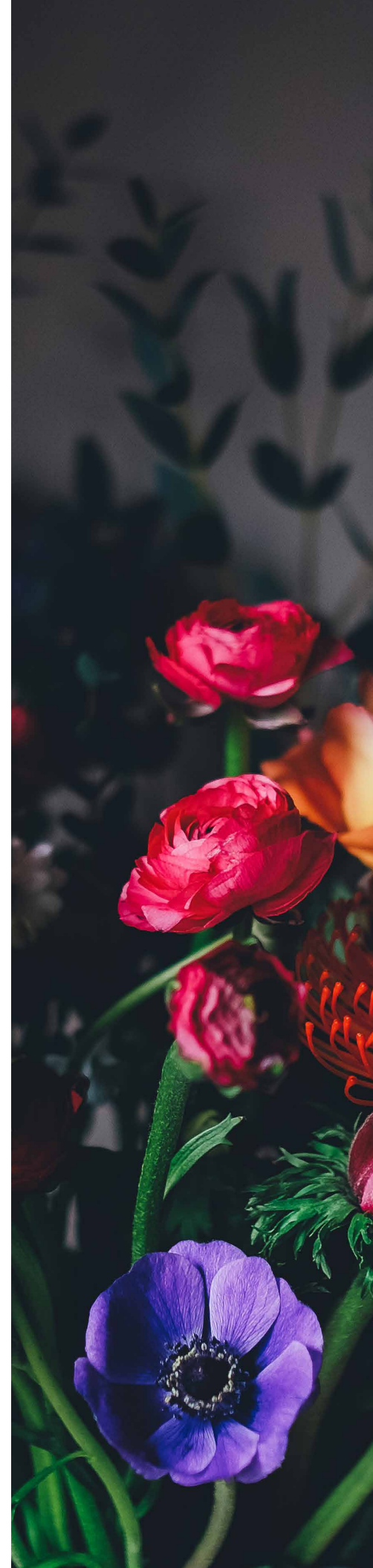
With this precedent, Sikhs had a unique tradition of marriage. Guru Amardas Sahib solidifies the process further by writing the Bani of *Anand Sahib* (a 40-stanza Bani written in rag Ramkali), which was recited at all types of occasions. Sikhs of this time were married by the reciting of *Anand Sahib* along with *Ardas* (the concluding Sikh supplication). Building on this practice, Guru Ramdas Sahib in rag Suhi wrote the lava, which were then added before the *Anand Sahib* and *Ardas* to complete the Sikh marriage ceremony as it remains until current time.

K.S. Talwar writes:

“The Anand ceremony was initiated by the third Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Amar Das, and the marriages of Bhai Kamlia and Matho Murari were performed in accordance therewith in the time of third and fourth Gurus, the last of whom composed the four Laawaan in the Subi Rag of the Guru Granth Sahib...”

The Sikhs of the time were barred from married ceremonies as performed by the Brahmins of the time as they had become Sikhs of Guru Amardas Sahib. Specifically one case of a Sikh's daughter being denied a married officiant was brought to the Guru.

“...Upon this the Sikh went to Guru Amar Das Ji and said he was prepared to keep his daughter unmarried, but would on no account consent to the ceremony being performed according to Hindus who were so wrath at his having given up the whimsical caste distinctions. Realizing the fix in which the Sikh was, the Guru ordered his son-in-law (afterwards Guru Ram Das Ji) to go and officiate the marriage of the Sikh's daughter. It was on this occasion that the four laawaan were originally composed by the fourth Guru.”⁵



Many of the Sikh Gurus underwent a form of the unique Sikh marriage ceremony. Guru Arjan Sahib and Mata Ganga were the first to solidify their marriage union through the Anand Karaj, as it has been practiced since this time.

Preceding the Anand Karaj ceremony, Guru Hargobind Sahib added a *sikhia* (instructions) starting at the marriage of Guru Hargobind Sahib's daughter. Guru Sahib explained what would be expected of both the bride and the groom now that they had partaken in this ceremony. The tradition of offering *sikhia* to the couple proceeding an Anand Karaj now includes an explanation of *hukamnama* (Guru's command), *sikhia*, and expectations of the new couple.⁶

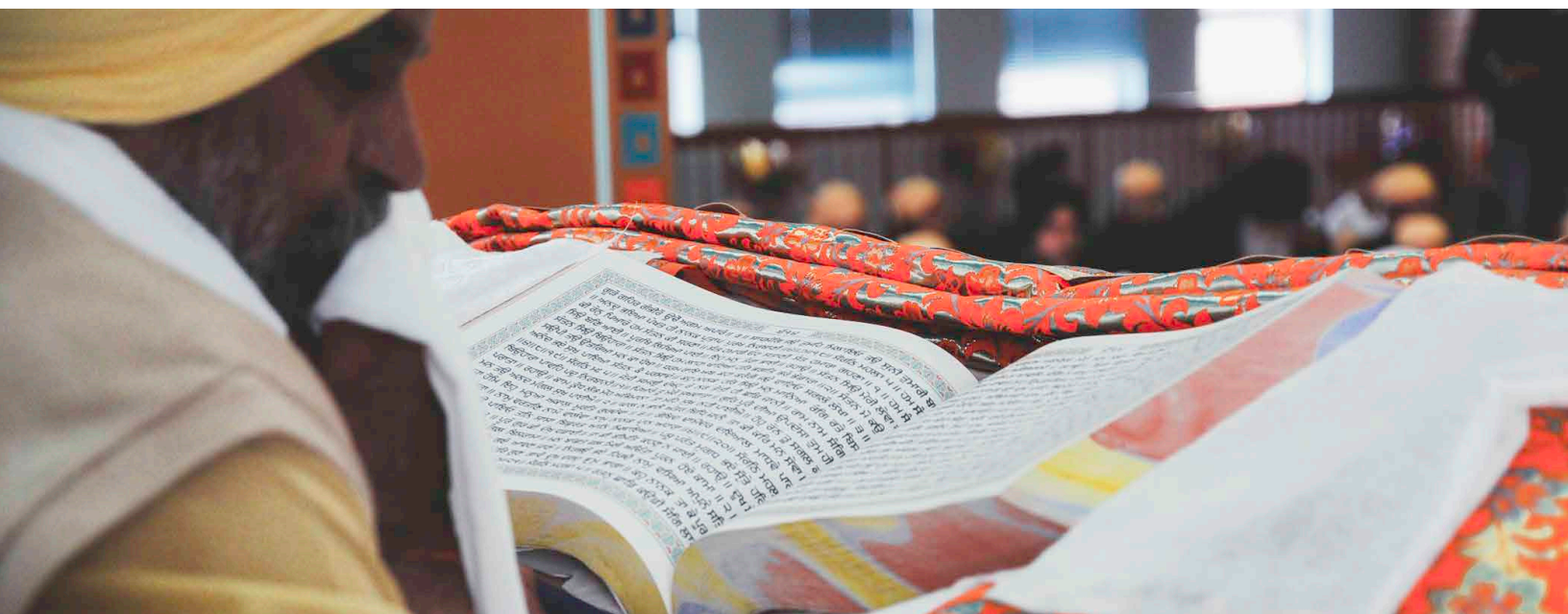
Along with this new ideology and format of marriage, the Gurus also spoke on the issue of remarriage. Guru Amardas Sahib specifically advocated for widow-marriage, teaching that widows were still respectable members of society and no negative connotation should be associated with remarriage in this context. The Gurus spoke and wrote about abolishing practices that condemned female widows known as *sati*:

Do not call them “sati,” who burn themselves along with their husbands’ corpses.

*O Nanak, they alone are known as “sati,” who die from the shock of separation.**

— Guru Granth Sahib, 787

The Gurus explicitly address and highlight that no negative association should be placed on specifically female widows, and remarriage in the context of a partner passing away is not considered negatively. This support for remarriage can be extrapolated to application in the case of divorce today. In the past, specifically females were condemned and shamed when left by their partners through death or otherwise. The Gurus emphasized that there is no shame in the act of remarriage and historically supported it.



A text dated as early as 1701 called "Prem Sumarag" (the true way to love) or Prem Marag Granth devotes a whole chapter to the Sikh marriage ceremony. It details the rites and procedures with clear and specific instructions. At over 300 years old, this is one of the first detailed descriptions available on the Anand marriage ceremony. This text is unique as it is directly Sikhi-oriented, with Sikh ideas that transcend time. Though the language reflects the time era, this is undeniably a unique contemporary account of Sikh marriages.

It explains the marriage ceremony as follows:

Its procedure. First, when a girl reaches a suitable marriage age, then mother-father shall endeavor to arrange the union. And, in the current era, it is good to arrange union for a young girl. And the union with what kind of lineage? Where the Sikhi is of the Timeless Being! Where the Khalsa is humble and earns ethically. There, without hesitation, arrange the union. Revered Timeless Being is bound to be with them. Don't look at wealth or possessions. Put your expectation-trust in the Formless Guru and arrange the union. As Guru wills, girl will be very comfortable and bring joy to mother-father.⁷

Union procedure—what's known as the marriage; the Khalsa calls it the union. As the worldly conduct the marriage, do not follow that. First, prepare for the union ... whatever is to be prepared for the union, assure it is affordable. And follow these instructions. Do not imitate the egoist. And the boy's side, follow the same instructions; assure affordability.⁸

The text continues on how the ceremony includes lava, Anand Sahib, and Ardas. Also highlighted is who is qualified to officiate the marriage ceremony, it elaborates:

Then, a Sikh-Khalsa of Revered Timeless Being, Infinite-Wisdom's lover, well-versed in Guru's Teachings, educated, disciplined lifestyle, attentive-aged. And has no meaningless desire for wealth, Guru-oriented, invite and seat that person to conduct the union. Let that person conduct the union procedure.⁹

Other examples of comments on the place of the Anand Karaj come from the first volunteer amongst the original *Panj Piara* (Five Lovers) on the Vaisakhi of 1699 to join the newly inaugurated Khalsa order—Bhai Daia Singh. As per Bhai Daia Singh's *Rahitnama* (writing on the code of conduct or lifestyle of a Sikh):

“‘Anand bina vivah na kare.’ Sikhs should perform marriage rites according to the Anand marriage rights of the Sikhs and not according to Vedic rites.”¹⁰

The idea is mirrored in a text titled “Gur Ratan Mala” (string of Guru's Gems), which possibly dates to 1724, but its current draft generally re-written with additions is from 1830s. This text was interestingly banned by the British as it reminded Sikhs of their sovereignty and desire to regain the Sikh Rule. Though its dating and authorship is inconclusive, for our purposes, it records the following:

**Without Anand marriage, if one conjugates,
Listen Sikh, Guru emphatically says, is not my Sikh.¹¹**

The Sikh identity has been political from the time of Guru Nanak Sahib. During the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, there was an attempt to revive the Sikh marriage ceremony as part of religious reform initiated by the Nirankari movement (reform movement of the mid-19th century), which was followed up by the Singh Sabha movements. The Singh Sabha movements were a collection of efforts in which Sikhs were promoting the recognition of the Anand Karaj ceremony. This was due to the renewed Brahmanical influence at court and throughout society of the time. There was a lot of opposition from the Arya Samajis (neo-Hindu movement from 1870s that severely critiqued Sikhs) and Brahman upper classes of the time, which were anxious to prove Sikhi was a sect of Hinduism that should be subject to Hindu Law for legal and capital rational. There was a great push back from other parties to delegitimize the Anand Karaj as a unique and separate spiritual ceremony and instead have it be considered under the umbrella of the Hindu faith. Due to this struggle, Sikh marriages were classified under the Hindu Marriage Act.¹² Sikh traditions have always challenged and changed the norms of the time. With this struggle, the political Sikh identity becomes engraved into the religion and/or spiritual traditions.

The Anand Karaj was first legally recognized by the Anand Marriage Act of 1909 under British India. This recognition was later revoked or appealed in favor of the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. Under Section 2, the Hindu Marriage Act was applied across many groups, including Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs.¹³ In 2007, Pakistan passed a Sikh Anand Marriage Act, which allowed Sikhs to legally marry under this specifically Sikh act. It was not until 2012, when India passed The Anand Marriage (Amendment) Bill, that Sikhs were able to register their marriage under the Anand Marriage Act instead of the Hindu Marriage Act in India. Only as recently as 2014, Sikhs in Haryana are able to register under The Anand Marriage Act instead of the Hindu Marriage Act.¹⁴

The Sikh press repeatedly reported on Anand Marriages during the close of the 19th century.¹⁵ The Anand Karaj, or Anand ceremony, can be traced back throughout the history of Sikhs. Over the course of the Ten founder Gurus, and then later through collective Sikh efforts, the Anand Karaj has been added to, discussed, and reformed.

These are not conversations and issues of the distant past. Though countries such as India and Pakistan do recognize the Anand Karaj marriage ceremony through ceremonial Marriage Acts, they are not given the significance under legal terms. Currently, the Sikh Marriage is up for reform in Panjab and Pakistan to allow for recognition on a legal basis, something that is not available in any other country. Efforts are being made globally by Sikhs to continue the discussion on understanding and improving implementation.

The global Sikh community needs to be vigilant and aware of current practices to keep in alignment with Gurmat and Sikh principles on legal, personal, and institutional fronts over time, as Sikhs have done throughout.

Lifestyle

Rahit

It is explicitly outlined in the 52 Hukams dictated by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib that married life should not begin without the initiation of the Anand Karaj ceremony, but before that life stage, many main life events are indicated in the life of a Sikh.

The life cycle of a Sikh is laid out from:

- Ceremonies pertaining to birth/naming
- Pursuit of spiritual and/or worldly education
- *Amrit* (Immortal Nectar) via *khande-ki-pahul* (prepared via double-edged sword)
- Responsibilities associated to living a worldly life (including earning an honest living and giving back 10% of one's income and/or time)
- Ceremonies related to last rites/funeral

With this "life cycle" laid out for a Sikh, the idea was that before an individual would choose to undergo the Anand Karaj, they would have become "of the Guru." In this way, only a self-identified Sikh would go through the processes necessary to make it to the stage of the Anand Karaj.

In the *Sikh Rahit Maryada* (Sikh code of conduct) under Section Four: Chapter XI, Article XVII, the procedure of the *Anand Sanskar* (referring to Anand Karaj) is outlined. Key components are highlighted here:

- A Sikh man and woman should enter wedlock without giving thought to the prospective spouse's caste and descent.
- A Sikh's daughter must be married to a Sikh.
- A Sikh's marriage should be solemnized by Anand marriage rites.
- Persons professing faiths other than the Sikh faith cannot be joined in wedlock by the Anand Karaj ceremony.
- A baptized Sikh ought to get his wife baptized.¹⁶

This version of the Sikh Rahit Maryada was drafted by Sikh scholars in 1925, for which a final version was completed in 1936. Finally, in 1945, this Rahit became accepted and was printed by the Sikh Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee (SGPC) and other parties.

The language of the SGPC sanctioned Sikh Rahit Maryada, the ceremony of the Anand Karaj is addressed to a couple consisting of a man and a woman. It should be noted that the collective that documented the Sikh Rahit Maryada did so in 1993.

Though the current form of the SGPC-printed Rahit Maryada contains language that is limited to the union of a man and a woman, perhaps this language choice reflects the time period rather than explicitly the conduct for the Anand Karaj, as the emphasis is not placed on the sex and/or gender of the individuals but rather in the phrasing of the ceremony details.



Also outlined in the Sikh Rahit Maryada is issue of remarriage:

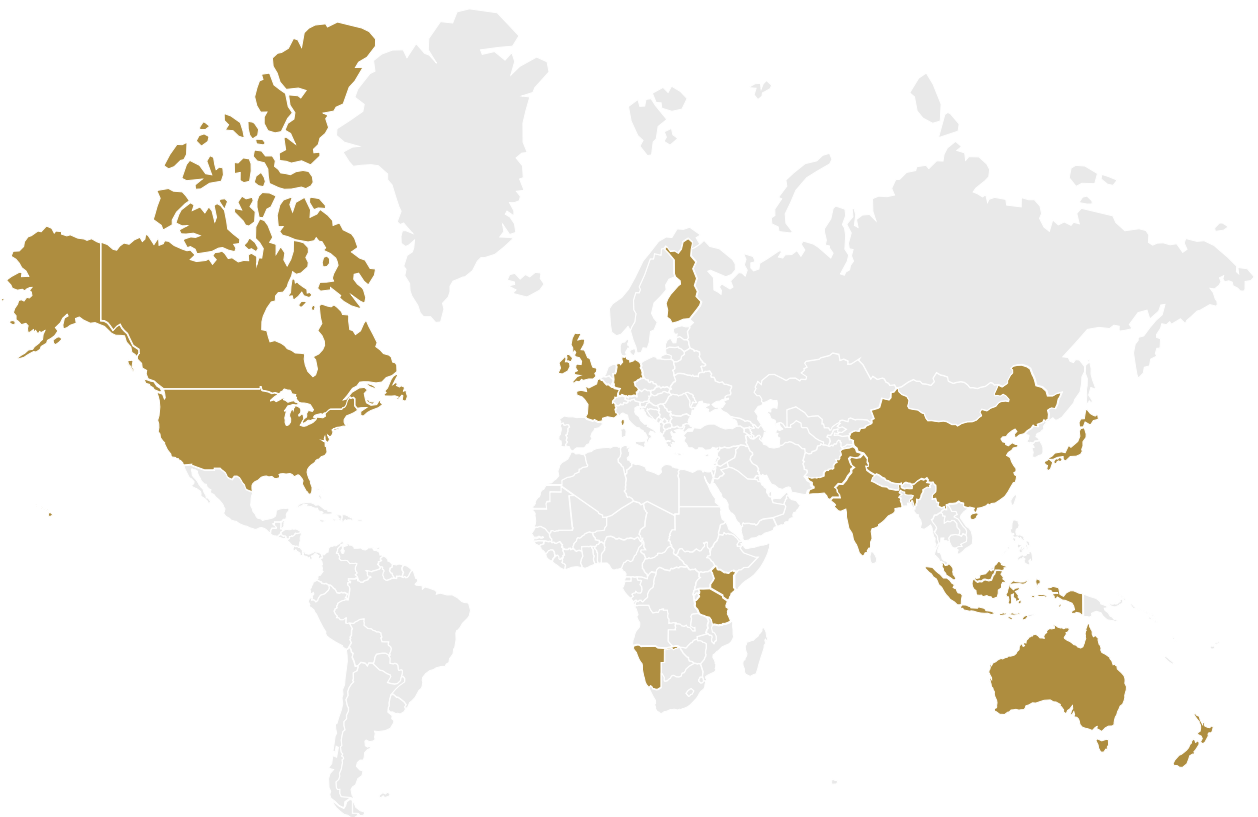
- If a woman's husband has died, she may, if she so wishes, finding a match suitable for her, remarry. For a Sikh man whose wife has died, similar ordinance obtains.
- The remarriage may be solemnized in the same manner as the Anand marriage.¹⁷

This follows a historical tradition where remarriage in the event of the passing of a partner is considered a non-issue.

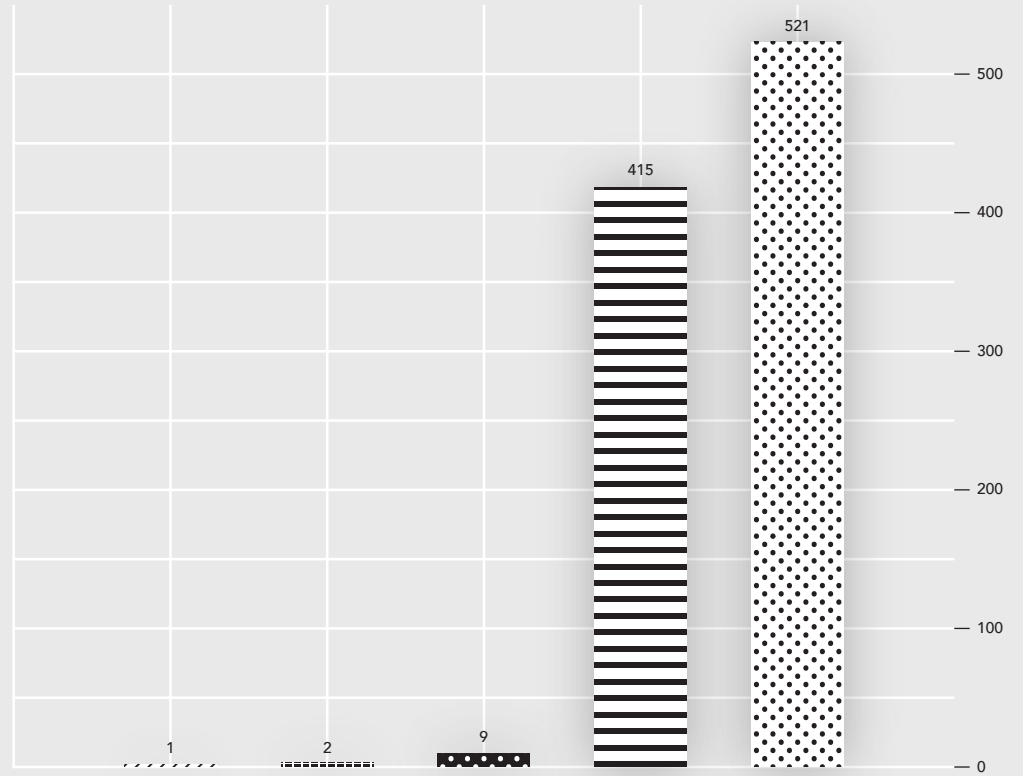
Professor Teja Singh writes that, "While keeping the Sikhs associated with their Guru and maintaining his spirit amongst them, they have not produced any narrowing effect on their beliefs or modes of worship. All worship or ceremony, whether in temple or in home, whether on birth, marriage, or death, consists of nothing else but praying and chanting hymns. Could anything be simpler?"¹⁸ As many aspects of our lives, and as a result our faith, become commercialized, the Sikh marriage ceremony is not immune to this commercialization. It is important to not tie the Anand Karaj's spiritual and religious celebration to that of a worldly grandeur and allow for its simplistic beauty to remain with its devotion and spirituality.

Survey

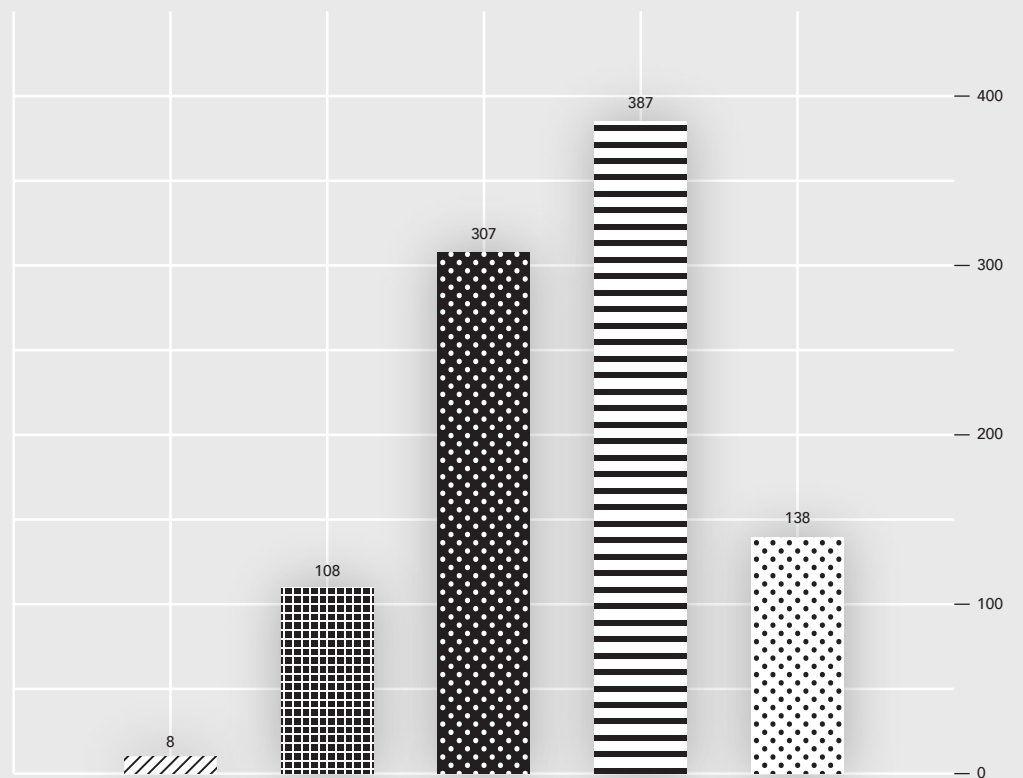
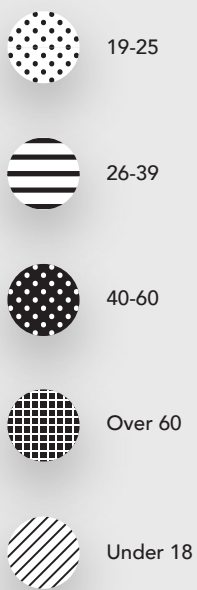
An online social media survey was conducted to gain insight into how the 2017 Sikh community itself would express views on Anand Karaj and marriage rights. A total of 968 voluntary respondents from 20 different countries participated in the survey. Of the total number of respondents, 948 self-identified as Sikhs. For the purpose of this research into the Sikh community, only respondents who identified as a Sikh will be considered. The demographic breakdown of those Sikh respondents is as follows:



Gender Identity



Age Group



The purpose of this survey was to understand the perception of major issues in regards to the current Anand Karaj practices as seen by self-identified members of the community itself. The survey focused on the issue of right to participate in the Anand Karaj ceremony. First, the respondents were presented with a multiple choice question:

Who can participate in the Anand Karaj (Sikh marriage ceremony)?

- “Any self-identified Sikhs (heterosexual or homosexual)”
- “Any heterosexual self-identified Sikhs”
- “Any willing participants (Sikhs or non-Sikhs)”
- “Any heterosexual Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs”

Interestingly, no participant opted to use the multiple choice option that this question allowed.

Participate in Anand Karaj	Female	Male	Prefer not to answer	Gender Variant/ Non-Conforming	Transgender
Any heterosexual Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs	25	57	1		
Any heterosexual self-identified Sikhs	90	145	1	1	
Any self-identified Sikhs (heterosexual or homosexual)	84	107	1		
Any willing participants (Sikhs or non-Sikhs)	216	212	6	1	1

Participate in Anand Karaj	Under 18	19-25	26-39	40-60	Over 60
Any heterosexual Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs	2	23	28	21	9
Any heterosexual self-identified Sikhs	2	40	96	67	32
Any self-identified Sikhs (heterosexual or homosexual)	2	39	88	50	13
Any willing participants (Sikhs or non-Sikhs)	2	36	175	169	54

The options of this question aimed to touch on the issues of inclusion, orientation, and identification of who is a Sikh. It was found that for all combinations of associations between gender and age group respectively, there was no significant difference among the possible groupings. Following, all responses are analyzed without these demographic components. It was found that approximately half (52%) of Sikh respondents felt that some form of belonging to the community was necessary to participate in the Anand Karaj. However, 46% of respondents felt that any willing participants (Sikhs or non-Sikhs) should be allowed to participate in the Anand Karaj ceremony. The nature of that belonging to the community was less conclusive.

Of those respondents that felt belonging to the Sikh community was a necessary measure for participating in the Anand Karaj ceremony, 38% percent felt any self-identified Sikh could participate, 46% felt any heterosexual self-identified Sikh could participate, and only 16% of individuals felt only heterosexual Amritdhari Sikhs should be allowed to participate in the Anand Karaj. In hindsight, an additional category of “Any homosexual Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs” or a variation with “Any Amritdhari Sikhs” should have been included to better understand the differentiation between orientation and Sikh identification. Only 25% of total respondents felt sexuality of participants was important and chose any heterosexual self-identified Sikhs.

Though the views of the 2017 Sikh community seem divided, a majority (64%) believed that their views on the participation in the Anand Karaj would carry over into participation in marriage ceremonies at large (civil, legal, or other forms of marriage ceremonies).

Next, respondents were presented with:

Check all that in your opinion are acceptable under the Anand Karaj.

- Inter-faith
- Inter-race
- Inter-caste

The results across all Sikh respondents were as follows:

	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Inter-faith	59%	41%
Inter-race	86%	14%
Inter-caste	93%	7%

The majority of Sikh respondents believe that it is acceptable to have an inter-race or an inter-faith marriage under the Anand Karaj. Inter-faith seems to be more polarizing but the majority of respondents felt that it was acceptable. It would seem from this response that the majority of Sikhs felt inter-race and inter-caste marriages to be a non-issue, which would align with the message of equality and humanity seen throughout the Bani of Guru Granth Sahib. These findings may be considered surprising as these marriages are continually highlighted as major Sikh population issues.

Perhaps a more poignant question, such as if the Sikh respondents would themselves participate in an inter-race and/or inter-caste marriage, would have uncovered the true sentiments around these topics. This disconnect with popular discussion around inter-race and inter-caste marriage displays a discrepancy of what Sikh respondents know to be the Gurmat perspective versus what is actually practiced in everyday life. In contrast, inter-faith marriage is also seen as acceptable by majority of respondents, which does not necessarily align with Gurmat opinion. The responses around this question illuminate a clash of personal practice and the public perception around marriages.

There does not seem to be a major consensus over most questions such that it would suggest there is an overwhelming Sikh majority opinion on the right to participate in the Anand Karaj. This gives an indication that there is a need for clear education on this matter from a Gurmat lense as to create a Sikh understanding around marriage.



Recommendations

With what has been discussed from the Gurmat perspective using Bani, Tavarikh, and Rahit, the following recommendations are offered to grow the understanding amongst the Sikh community.

Personal

Individuals must reflect on why they are undergoing a Sikh marriage ceremony. The Sikh Anand Karaj is not tied to the other social and cultural traditions associated with marriage celebrations but is a unique spiritual and political undergoing for a couple to willingly choose to participate in. If the motivation for proceeding with an Anand Karaj has a focus on anything beyond one's commitment to Guru Granth Sahib and a desire to live a life as outlined by Guru Sahib, it should not be seen as a social obligation for anyone to undergo the Sikh marriage ceremony.

In regards to marriages between same-sex couples, we suggest that individuals have patience with the process as institutions engage in discussion on how to appropriately move forward. Changes to a global Sikh population's collective understanding is not something that can be done quickly, especially without a historic precedent to refer to. This slow-to-change behavior is seen today, even where inter-caste marriages are concerned, as an issue that has clear Sikh ideological understanding and background. The topic of same-sex Anand Karaj is not one that can be ignored and should be discussed on the organizational level, but as that begins to happen on a global scale, individuals should proceed with marriages in other forms (legal, civil) that are available to them.



Institutional *Organizational*

Organizations, specifically Gurdwaras that conduct Anand Karaj ceremonies, must take a more active role in walking the couple through the procedure and expectations of the Anand Karaj. Those that have made the personal choice to go through the Anand Karaj must be offered support in the form of teaching or guidance on the format, spiritual and religious aspects of the ceremonies. There must be no assumption made that the couple will take this initiative on their own. Each organization must have a formal “contract” or agreement that is outlined to couples and families on the specifics of the Anand Karaj and what it entails in advance of the marriage ceremony, and only if both parties agree should the Anand Karaj be conducted. This agreement should outline the teachings of the Anand Karaj, the general procedure of the ceremony, and clearly lay out assumptions in regards to religious beliefs/practices of the couple.

Overall, organizations need to take a more active role in engaging with a changing Sikh population, whether that be in addressing inter-faith marriages or same-sex couple marriages. Organizations should not be passively allowing any couples to undergo the Anand Karaj at their institutions, but have an active understanding of their own opinions and the Gurmat perspective on these issues. Organizations cannot ignore issues such as same-sex marriages. The discussion around the Gurmat understandings and legalities need to be started such that organizations can plan how to facilitate these conversations in the near future. In being an institution that performs the Anand Karaj ceremony specifically, Gurdwaras need to hold some responsibility in leading the Sikh Panth into having these conversations and facilitate the community in addressing these issues in a direct manner.

Institutional *Officiator of Marriage*

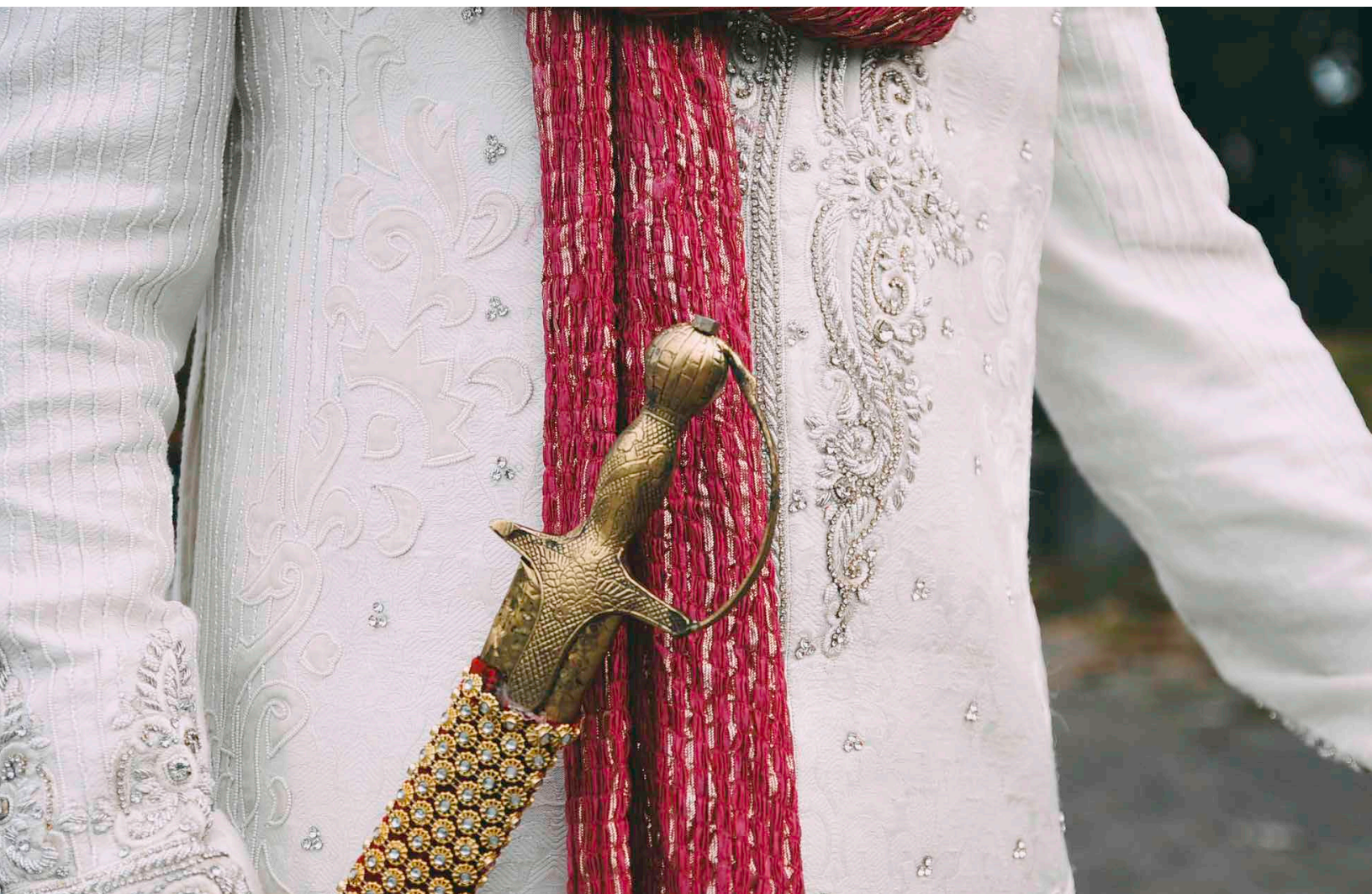
Though history tells of a progressing and then solidified Anand Karaj procedure, the Sikh marriage ceremony today needs a unifying reform. Only a proposal on the “religious” or Sikh Anand Karaj procedure is highlighted here. Any social components that stray away from values of simplicity and humility that are innate to Sikhi are arduous to “legislate.” It is proposed as follows:

- a. The couple to be wed first bow to Guru Granth Sahib before sitting down in front of Guru Sahib, separate from the rest of the sangat.
- b. Granthi (Officiator) announces that the Anand Karaj ceremony is to be performed and confirms with the couple, individually, that:
 - i. they are voluntarily participating in this marriage ceremony,
 - ii. they are not already married,
 - iii. they bow to the sanctity of Guru Granth Sahib,
 - iv. they shall abide by the marriage vows to be taken in front of the Guru Granth Sahib, and
 - v. if the couple has not taken Amrit, it is recommended that they take Amrit at a later date.
- c. Upon agreeing to the above, the couple bow to Guru Granth Sahib and the sangat witness it with “Vahiguru ji ka Khalsa, Vahiguru ji ki Fatih.”
- d. Ardas followed by hukamnama must be performed, including both the couple and their respective guardians.
- e. The sikhia from the sabad and the lava to be recited should be explained to the couple.
- f. As each lav is sung and/or recited, the couple should bow before Guru Granth Sahib at the completion of each lav sabad.
- g. Upon completion of the four lav, six stanzas of Anand Sahib must be sung.
- h. An Ardas from the whole sangat upon witnessing the Anand Karaj ceremony.
- i. Hukamnama should be taken from Guru Granth Sahib.
- j. The couple is declared as married upon hearing the final hukamnama from Guru Sahib.
- k. A written/printed copy of the hukam with signatures at the bottom of the Officiator, both sets of parents, date of the ceremony, and place of the Anand Karaj should be given as a gift from the sangat/Panth.

The socio-religious place of marriage makes it a deeply personal, communal, spiritual, and religious phenomenon. The concept of marriage must be viewed from many angles and its importance exists in many of these planes simultaneously. It is perhaps not possible to summarize what marriage should symbolize for each individual or specifically lay out what is the ideal for each person.

From the Gurmat perspective, it is possible to understand marriage in the spiritual and religious sense, which then influences how individuals and communities choose to engage with those beliefs.

The Sikh marriage ceremony of Anand Karaj is a unique initiation into married life for Sikhs. The Anand Karaj highlights the ideal life trajectory or model for one's path in life as a Sikh. Those that wish to and choose to abide by these spiritual beliefs and Gurmat lifestyle choices, join a historical tradition that was built on equality, humanity, and spiritual simplicity.



References

We present the direct references from the
Guru Granth Sahib in original Gurmukhi as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>i. ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਇਕਨੇ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਇ ॥੩॥</p> <p>ii. ਸਾ ਧਨ ਖਰੀ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੀ ਜਿਨਿ ਪਿਰੁ ਜਾਤਾ ਸੰਗਿ ॥</p> <p>iii. ਵੀਆਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਾਬੁਲਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੇ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਅਗਿਆਨੁ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਕਟਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡੁ ਬਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਬਲਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਬਿਨਸਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਰਤਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਲਾਧਾ ॥
ਹਉਮੈ ਰੋਗੁ ਗਇਆ ਦੁਖੁ ਲਾਥਾ ਆਪੁ ਆਪੈ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਖਾਧਾ ॥
ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਵਰੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਨਾ ਕਦੇ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਜਾਇਆ ॥
ਵੀਆਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਾਬੁਲਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੇ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥੨॥</p> <p>iv. ਸਾਹਾ ਅਟਲੁ ਗਣਿਆ ਪੂਰਨ ਸੰਜੋਗੇ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਸੁਖਹ ਸਮੂਹ ਭਇਆ ਗਇਆ ਵਿਜੋਗੇ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਤ ਆਏ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਧਿਆਏ ਬਣੇ ਅਚਰਜ ਜਾਵੀਆਂ ॥
ਮਿਲਿ ਇਕਤ੍ਰ ਹੋਏ ਸਹਜਿ ਢੋਏ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਉਪਜੀ ਮਾਵੀਆ ॥
ਮਿਲਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤੀ ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਭਿ ਰਸ ਭੋਗੇ ॥੩॥</p> <p>v. ਆਸਾ ॥
ਤਨੁ ਰੈਨੀ ਮਨੁ ਪੁਨ ਰਖਿ ਕਰਿ ਹਉ ਪਾਚਉ ਤਤ ਬਰਾਤੀ ॥
ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਸਿਉ ਭਾਵਰਿ ਲੈਹਉ ਆਤਮ ਤਿਹ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਾਤੀ ॥੧॥
ਗਾਉ ਗਾਉ ਰੀ ਦੁਲਹਨੀ ਮੰਗਲਚਾਰਾ ॥
ਮੇਰੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਆਏ ਰਾਜਾ ਰਾਮ ਭਤਾਰਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਨਾਭਿ ਕਮਲ ਮਹਿ ਬੇਦੀ ਰਚਿ ਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਉਚਾਰਾ ॥
ਰਾਮ ਰਾਇ ਸੋ ਦੁਲਹੁ ਪਾਇਓ ਅਸ ਬਡਭਾਗ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥੨॥
ਸੁਰਿ ਨਰ ਮੁਨਿ ਜਨ ਕਉਤਕ ਆਏ ਕੋਟਿ ਤੇਤੀਸ ਉਜਾਨਾ ॥
ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਮੋਹਿ ਬਿਆਹਿ ਚਲੇ ਹੈ ਪੁਰਖ ਏਕ ਭਗਵਾਨਾ ॥੩॥੨॥੨੪॥</p> | <p>vi. ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਾਬੁਲਾ ਹਰਿ ਦੇਵਹੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਮੈ ਦਾਜੇ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕਪੜੇ ਹਰਿ ਸੋਭਾ ਦੇਵਹੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਸਵਰੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਕਾਜੇ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾਜੁ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ਗੁਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਦਾਨੁ ਦਿਵਾਇਆ ॥
ਖੰਡਿ ਵਰਭੰਡਿ ਹਰਿ ਸੋਭਾ ਹੋਈ ਇਹੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਨ ਰਲੈ ਰਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਹੋਰਿ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਦਾਜੁ ਜਿ ਰਖਿ ਦਿਖਾਲਹਿ ਸੁ ਕੂੜੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ਕਚੁ ਪਾਜੇ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਾਬੁਲਾ ਹਰਿ ਦੇਵਹੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਮੈ ਦਾਜੇ ॥੪॥ (79)</p> <p>vii. ਜਾਣਹੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਨ ਪੂਛਹੁ ਜਾਤੀ ਆਰੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਹੋ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥</p> <p>viii. ਵਰਨ ਭੇਖ ਨਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਖੜੀ ॥</p> <p>ix. ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕੇ ਹੈ ਇਆਣੇ ॥</p> <p>x. ਜਾਲਉ ਐਸੀ ਰੀਤਿ ਜਿਤੁ ਮੈ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਪਰੀਤਿ ਜਿਤੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੇਤੀ ਪਤਿ ਰਹੈ ॥੨॥</p> <p>xi. ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੇ ਮਝਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨਿ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ ॥੧॥</p> |
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The direct reference from “Akal Ustati” in the
original Gurmukhi as follows:

- xii. ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕੇਉ ਰਾਫਜੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸਾਫੀ ‘ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ ॥

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See "Lavan Stik."
2. Inni Kaur, *Laavan: The Wedding Hymns* (2010).
Retrieved from: <https://sikhchic.com/article-detail.php?cat=22&id=1273>
3. Bhai Gurdas, *Kabitt*, 376 (Amritsar: SGPC).
Original Gurmukhi as follows:

ਜੈਸੇ ਸਰਿ ਸਰਿਤਾ ਸਕਲ ਮੈ ਸਮੁੰਦ੍ਰ ਬਡੇ ਮੇਰ ਮੈ ਸੁਮੇਰ ਬਡੇ ਜਗਤੁ ਬਖਾਨ ਹੈ ॥
ਤਰਵਰ ਬਿਖੈ ਜੈਸੇ ਚੰਦਨ ਬਿਰਖੁ ਬਡੇ ਧਾਤੁ ਮੈ ਕਨਿਕ ਅਤਿ ਉਤਮ ਕੈ ਮਾਨਿ ਹੈ ॥
ਪੰਛੀਅਨ ਮੈ ਹੰਸੁ ਮ੍ਰਿਗਰਾਜਨ ਮੈ ਸਾਰਦੁਲ ਰਾਗਨ ਮੈ ਸਿਰੀ ਰਾਗੁ ਪਾਰਸ ਪਖਾਨ ਹੈ ॥
ਗਿਆਨਨ ਮੈ ਗਿਆਨ ਅਰੁ ਧਿਆਨਨ ਮੈ ਧਿਆਨ ਗੁਰ ਸਕਲ ਧਰਮ ਮੈ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਸਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਹੈ ॥
4. K.S. Khokar, *Anand Marriage – Development and History* (Global Sikh Studies, 2005), p. 5–6, Retrieved from Global Sikh Studies.
5. K.S. Talwar, "The Anand Marriage Act," *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. 2 Part 2, ed. Ganda Singh (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1968), p. 400–401.
6. *The Sikh Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, p. 121.
See entry for "Anand Karaj."
7. Randhir Singh (ed), *Granth Prem Sumarag: Khalsai Jivan-Jac (Patshahi 10)*, 3rd ed., (Jalandhar: New Book Company, 2000, Originally in 1953), First Instruction, ch. 4, p. 18.
8. *Ibid.*, *Second Instruction*, ch. 4, p. 18.
9. *Ibid.*, *Fifth Instruction*, ch. 4, stanza 5, line 7, p. 21.
10. Tarlochan Singh, *The Turban and the Sword of the Sikhs* (Sikh Missionary Society, Gravesend, 1977), p. 95.
11. ਬਿਨਾਂ ਅਨੰਦ ਬਿਵਾਹ ਤੇ ਭੁਗਤੇ ਪਰ ਕੀ ਜੋਇ ।
ਸੁਣ ਸਿਖਾ ਗੁਰ ਕਹਿ ਬਕੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਿਖ ਨ ਸੋਇ ।
Pracin Sau Sakhi, Couplet 25, Sakhi 8, 4th ed., (Piara Singh Padam, Singh Brothers, 1997), PDF p. 70/198.
Also known as Gur Ratan Mal.
12. *The Sikh Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, p. 121.
See entry for "Anand Karaj."
13. *The Hindu Marriage Act*, English Translation (1955).
14. S. Siwach, *Haryana government woos sikhs with anand marriage act politics and nation* (The Economic Times (Online), May 9, 2014). Retrieved from: <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/1522427309?accountid=14656>
15. *The Sikh Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, p. 126. See entry for "Anand Marriage Act."
16. *Sikh Rehat Maryada*, English Translation (1993) Amritsar: SGPC. (Original in Panjabi was adopted as Sikhs code of conduct in 1945). See Article XVII – Anand Sanskar (Lit. Joyful Ceremony) Retrieved from: <http://sgpc.net/sikh-rehat-maryada-in-english/>
17. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
18. Teja Singh, *The Sikh Religion: An Outline of its Doctrines*, 8th ed., (Reprint, Amritsar: SGPC, 1989, Originally printed in 1938), p. 25.

Lava Original and Transcreation

We present the lava bani in original Gurmukhi
and the entire transcreation as follows:

ਸੂਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿਲੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਪਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਕਰਮ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਬਾਣੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਵੇਦੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਹੁ ਪਾਪ ਤਜਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰਾ ਆਰਾਧਹੁ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥
ਸਹਜ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੋਆ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਮਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਜਨੁ ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਲਾਵ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਆਰੰਭੁ ਕਾਜੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

ਹਰਿ ਦੂਜੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਨਿਰਭਉ ਭੈ ਮਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਭਉ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਰਾਮੁ ਹਦੁਰੇ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮੁ ਪਸਾਰਿਆ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਸਰਬ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰੇ ॥
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਏਕੇ ਮਿਲਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਮੰਗਲ ਗਾਏ ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੂਜੀ ਲਾਵ ਚਲਾਈ ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦ ਵਜਾਏ ॥੨॥

ਹਰਿ ਤੀਜੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਮਨਿ ਚਾਉ ਭਇਆ ਬੈਰਾਗੀਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਵਡਭਾਗੀਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇਆ ਮੁਖਿ ਬੋਲੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥
ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਕਥੀਐ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥
ਹਿਰਦੈ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਉਪਜੀ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੀਐ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਭਾਗੁ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਤੀਜੀ ਲਾਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਉਪਜੈ ਮਨਿ ਬੈਰਾਗੁ ਜੀਉ ॥੩॥

ਹਰਿ ਚਉਥੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਮਨਿ ਸਹਜੁ ਭਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਹਰਿ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਭਾਇਆ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈ ॥
ਮਨ ਚਿੰਦਿਆ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਵਜੀ ਵਾਧਾਈ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਕਾਜੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ਧਨ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਵਿਗਾਸੀ ॥
ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਚਉਥੀ ਲਾਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ॥੪॥੨॥

Lava Original and Transcreation

Rag Suhi, Fourth House, Chant House 1
One Force, Realized by Perfection's Grace

All-Pervasive's first link:

*Worldly commitment perseveres,
dearest adoring Charmer.
Wisdom perseveres Supreme-Cosmic and faith,
Surrenders transgressions,
dearest adoring Charmer.
Preserve Faith,
Contemplate All-Pervasive Nam (Divine Identification),
Nam remembrance perseveres.
Revere Eternal-Guru, Complete Guru,
All evil transgressions vanish.
Intuitive bliss emerges.
O' Fortunate,
Mind feels All-Pervasive,
and All-Pervasive's sweetness.
The being Nanak says,
"The first link
initiates creative ceremony." 1.*

Lava Original and Transcreation

All-Pervasive's second link:

*Met the Eternal-Guru, through The Being,
dearest adoring Charmer.
Mind becomes fearless and reverent,
The filth of ego vanishes,
dearest adoring Charmer.
Realize Immaculate reverence,
sing All-Pervasive virtues,
see All-Pervasive Charmer's Presence.
All-Pervasive Charmer's Self,
Owner pervades,
permeates everywhere.
Inside, outside—
One All-Pervasive Divine,
amidst All-Pervasive's beings sing wedding-song.
The being Nanak says:
"Second link continues,
Unstruck Sabad* resounds." 2.*

*The word, section or excerpt that elicits the Infinite Wisdom from Guru Granth Sahib.

Lava Original and Transcreation

All-Pervasive's third link:

*Mind feels excitement, divinely-passionate,
dearest adoring Charmer.*

*Meet All-Pervasive through Truth-Exemplar beings,
Realize All-Pervasive and become fortunate,
dearest adoring Charmer.*

*Realize Immaculate All-Pervasive,
Sing All-Pervasive virtues,*

Mouth speaks All-Pervasive's Teachings.

*Met Truth-Exemplar beings and became fortunate,
Express All-Pervasive's inexpressible narrative.*

All-Pervasive, All-Pervasive, All-Pervasive!

Melody births in the heart,

Utter All-Pervasive, sanctify forehead, Dearest.

The being Nanak says:

"The third link,

All-Pervasive births mind's divine-passion, Dearest." 3.

Lava Original and Transcreation

All-Pervasive's fourth link:

*Mind reaches Origin-State, All-Pervasive realized,
dearest adoring Charmer.*

*Naturally met through Guru-orientedness,
Mind and body felt All-Pervasive's sweetness,
dearest adoring Charmer.*

*All-Pervasive feels sweet,
my Divine likes,
feels All-Pervasive's connection day and night.*

*Mind desired, Fruit realized,
O' Owner!*

All-Pervasive Nam resounds congratulations.

*All-Pervasive Divine Ruler,
creative ceremony,*

Nam jubilates feminine-being's heart.

The being Nanak says:

*"The fourth link,
All-Pervasive Immortal Divine realized." 4.*



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