

Grade: 7

Course: Virṣā (ਵਿਰਸਾ)

Lesson Number: 2

Unit Name: The Sikh Ardās (ਸਿਖ ਅਰਦਾਸ)

Title: The role of Ardās in a Sikh's Daily Life

Standards

Standard 5: The Sikh Ardās

- Students can recite, translate, and explain the Ardās and its importance.
 - Students will be able to recite and explain the different allusions in the Ardās with the history, as they now understand it. They will also be able to explain the importance of Ardās as a daily prayer and the place it has in Sikh life.

Objectives

1. Students will learn the importance of Ardās in a Sikh's life.

Prerequisites

- Students should know the meaning of the Ardās (Lesson 1).
- Students should also have read the essay, included in the Teacher Resources in Lesson 1 as homework.

Materials

- Information on the Sikh Ardās (see websites and books included in Teacher's Resources)
- Essay entitled "The Sikh Prayer" by Tejā Singh (ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ), from previous class

Advanced Preparation

- Students should have already read the essay "The Sikh Prayer" by Tejā Singh, from Lesson 1.

Engagement (10 - 15 minutes)

- Greet students and give them a couple of minutes to settle down.
- Get one student to lead the class in an Ardās asking for permission to begin the class.
- The teacher may want to read and discuss chapter 57 of Jasvant Singh Neki's (ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇਕੀ) book entitled "Ardās - Darshan, Rūp, Abhiās" (ਅਰਦਾਸ - ਦਰਸ਼ਨ, ਰੂਪ, ਅਭਿਆਸ) which discusses the method of doing Ardās.
- If you feel that your students are at a level where they can read this chapter on their own, then it would be appropriate to give them the chapter for reading at home as a follow up.

Exploration (30 - 35 minutes)

- Students should have read the essay by Tejā Singh that was provided as homework in the previous class.
- Ask students to discuss their feelings about the article and about learning the meanings in the last class.
- They do not need to discuss the questions at this point, but will discuss it later in the class.
- Try and steer your discussion towards their thoughts on the need for an Ardās.
- Discuss the first question from the questions assigned on Tejā Singh's essay.

- In order to illustrate the prevalence of prayer in a Sikh's life, direct the students' attention to the *Sabad* in Rāg Gūrjī (ਰਾਗ ਗੂਜਰੀ) by Gurū Rāmdās Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਸਾਹਿਬ) recited as a part of the evening prayer, Rahirās (ਰਹਿਰਾਸ) (copy of *Sabad* – ਸਬਦ, attached).
- Have a student read out the Gurmukhī (ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ) part of the *Sabad* and discuss the translation line by line. Depending on the class's level of understanding, the teacher may want to make an overhead of the *Sabad* without the translations and have the students work out the translations as a class.

Explanation/ Extension (5-10 minutes)

- Reiterate the fact that Ardās is an inseparable part of a Sikh's life. A Sikh begins every day and every task with a prayer.
- Discuss the other questions.
- If students feel comfortable sharing their answer to the last question, get them to read out the personalized section of their Ardās to the class.

Evaluation (On-going)

- Students should be evaluated on their understanding of the Ardās, which will be reflected in their discussion and in their answers to the questions accompanying Tejā Singh's essay.

Teacher Resources

- Singh, Tejā. The Sikh Prayer. <http://www.searchsikhism.com/prayer.html> (article)
- Singh, Kapūr. Pārāsharaprashna, The Baisākhī of Gurū Gobind Singh. Gurū Nānak Dev University, Amritsar, 1959. (Chapter 13)
- Singh, Pūran. Spirit of the Sikh – Part II, Volume 2. Pañjābī University, Paṭiālā, 2nd edition, 1993. (Chapter 10)
- Singh, Kānh (Nābhā). Gurmat Sudhākar. Bhāshā Vibhāg, Amritsar, 1970. (pp 247-248)
- Singh, Harbans. Encyclopedia of Sikhism. Pañjābī University, Paṭiālā, 1992. (Volume 1)
- Nekī, Jasvant Singh. ਅਰਦਾਸ – ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਰੂਪ ਅਭਿਆਸ. Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1989.
- Nekī, Jasvant Singh. Ardās - Darshan Rūp Abhiās. Singh Brothers, Amritsar 2000.
- Singh, Jogindar. ਅਰਦਾਸ – ਪ੍ਰੰਪਰਾ ਤੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ. Sundar Sarup Publishers, New Dillī. (no date)
- Singh, Principal Satbīr. ਮੇਰੇ ਲੈਕਚਰ. New Book Company, Jalandhar, 2002. (Chapter 13)
- Singh, Catar & Jīvan. Illustrated Ardās. Amritsar. (available in English and Pañjābī)
- “The Sikh Rahit Maryādā Section Two,” June 12, 2007. <http://www.allaboutsikhs.com/sikh-way-of-life/the-sikh-rehat-maryada-section-two.html#art2>

Note for the Teacher

Answers to questions on Tejā Singh’s (ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ) Essay “The Sikh Prayer” (Handed out in the previous class)

Questions

1. Why is prayer so important in the life of a Sikh (ਸਿੱਖ)? (1 mark)
Prayer is very important in the life of a Sikh because a Sikh’s conception of Vāhigurū (ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ) is personal. A Sikh is in constant communion with Vāhigurū through prayer.
2. How do we know that prayer occupies an important position in Sikhi? (2 marks)
We know that prayer occupies an important position in Sikhī because the Sikh scriptural canon, i.e. Gurū Granth Sāhib chiefly comprised of prayer such that no ceremony is complete without it. Before embarking on any task, a Sikh is instructed by the Sikh Rahit Maryādā (ਸਿੱਖ ਰਹਿਤ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ) to perform Ardās (ਅਰਦਾਸ).

(**Note:** At this point, it might be useful for the teacher to direct the students’ attention to a *Sabad* – ਸਬਦ, from Gurū Granth Sāhib (ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ) in order to illustrate how even most of Gurbānī (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ) is a prayer. See following page for a suggested sabad and its translation. The teacher should also point out that the *Maṅglācaran* (ਮੰਗਲਾਚਰਨ) at the beginning of many *Sabads* and sections of gurbānī are really just short prayers asking Vāhigurū for blessing before beginning the *Sabad*.)
3. What is so unique about the authorship of the Ardās? (2 marks)
The authorship of the Ardās is unique because it is not the work of a single man or woman; the entire Sikh Panth (ਪੰਥ) has been working on it for centuries, and even today the community has not completely abdicated their right of molding the Ardās to express present day difficulties and sorrows.
4. Explain how the Ardās can be personalized by the person who is reciting it. (1 mark)
The Ardās can be personalized by the person who is reciting it during the last section of the prayer. At this point, s/he can express his/her own thoughts or the conjectured ideas of the

congregation.

5. Using the information from the text as well as your own ideas, explain why this is important/unique. (2 marks)

Personalizing the Ardās is important because it allows the Sikhs to express their own thoughts at the time of prayer. In this way, a Sikh can address Vāhigurū with the issues/problems/thoughts that are uppermost in his/her mind allowing for a very personal harmony with Vāhigurū.

6. How does the Ardās/ prayer prepare us for harmony with Vāhigurū? Why is it important for Sikhs to remember the sufferings and sacrifices of earlier Sikhs? (6 marks).

Just as the *Gurūs* (ਗੁਰੂ) composed Gurbāṇī (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ) with attention to preparing a disciple for harmony with Vāhigurū, the Ardās also first prepares the Sikh for communion with Vāhigurū. “The Sikh has to bring himself into a prayerful mood before he addresses himself to his Vāhigurū, when he actually prays. We stand face to face with Vāhigurū. But before we enter into the innermost tabernacle of Vāhigurū and reach that consummation, we have to traverse the ground of moral struggle and spiritual preparation. We have to realize what the communion with Vāhigurū is meant for those who have loved him. What sufferings and sacrifices they had to undergo to be able to meet with Vāhigurū. We have to refresh ourselves with the sweet faith of those immortals and fortify our minds with their patient strength and resignation. Prayer does not mean a mere physiological harmony with Vāhigurū, but an undisturbed rest in Vāhigurū. It means an active yearning of the soul to feel one with Vāhigurū who is always active and patient, who is always hopeful. Prayer should, therefore, refresh our spirit and make us ready to be in Vāhigurū’s will. This can be done if we first commune ourselves with the Vāhigurū revealed in History, and reverently watch the organic growth of Divinity in humanity. To do this we have to feel ourselves a part of that congregation of Vāhigurū-like beings who represent the best in humanity. We should steep ourselves in association of those in whose company we feel the presence of Vāhigurū.

7. Tejā Singh states that “The community even now has not abdicated its right of molding this part of the prayer; it can refer in any suitable terms to the present day difficulties and sorrows of the panth e.g.in connection with the wearing of *Kirpāns* (ਕਿਰਪਾਨ) and the reforming of *Gurduārās*”. What present day difficulties/ sorrows/ issues would you want to address or raise in your personal Ardās? (2 marks)

It is important to remember the sufferings and sacrifices of the earlier Sikhs because it reminds the present generations of Sikhs of the men and women who died for their love and faith in Vāhigurū. “How many hearts in these long centuries has it soothed in affliction and strengthened in difficulties. It bears the stamp of all that is the best and most moving in Sikhī. It is the crystallization of the Sikh nation’s history. It is the living monument of its greatness which generations of the Sikhs will repeat to themselves to keep alive the old fire in their midst.”

ਰਾਗੁ ਗੁਜਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪

Rāgu Gūjri Mahalā 4 (Cauthā)

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਜਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਤਪੁਰਖਾ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰਉ ਗੁਰ ਪਾਸਿ ॥

ਹਮ ਕੀਰੇ ਕਿਰਮ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਕਰਿ ਦਇਆ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥੧॥

hari ke jan satigur satpurkhā binaū karaū gur pāsi.

ham kīre kiram satigur sarṇāī kari daiā nāmu pargāsi.

Devotee of Vāhigurū, Vāhigurū's disciple, true Gurū! I pray (make a supplication) before you! I, a worm, have come to your sanctuary my true Gurū! Have compassion and illuminate the light of Vāhigurū's remembrance within me.

ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਮੇ ਕਉ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਸਖਾਈ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਹਮਰੀ ਰਹਰਾਸਿ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

mere mīt gurdev mo kau rām nāmu pargāsi.

gurmatī nāmu merā prān sakhāī hari kīratī hamarī raharāsi. rahāu.

O my friend (Gurū)! Enlighten me with the light of Vāhigurū's Identity.

Through the Gurū's teachings, allow the remembrance of Vāhigurū to be my soul's friend and allow the praises of Vāhigurū to be my luggage with which I travel through life. (Pause/reflect).

ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਕੇ ਵਡ ਭਾਗ ਵਡੇਰੇ ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸਰਧਾ ਹਰਿ ਪਿਆਸ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਾਸਹਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਣ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥੨॥

hari jan ke vaḍ bhāg vaḍere jin hari hari saradhā hari piās.

hari hari nāmu milai triptāsahi mili saṅgati guṇ pargāsi.

Those who have faith and love for Vāhigurū are the most fortunate of Vāhigurū's servants. Meeting with the true congregation, virtues are developed, one is satisfied.

ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਰਸੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਤੇ ਭਾਗਹੀਣ ਜਮ ਪਾਸਿ ॥

ਜੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਏ ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਜੀਵੇ ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਜੀਵਾਸਿ ॥੩॥

jīn hari hari hari rasu nāmu na pāiā te bhāghīṇ jam pāsi.

jo satigur saraṇi saṅgat nahī āe dhriḡu jīve dhriḡu jīvāsi.

Those who have not received the understanding of Vāhigurū through the meeting with the Gurū are the most unfortunate and are as if emotionally dead (life is useless for them).

Those who have not entered the sanctuary of the true Gurū, those who do not sit with the true congregation where you come to know the virtues of Vāhigurū, their lives are useless.

ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ਤਿਨ ਧੁਰਿ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਲਿਖਾਸਿ ॥

ਧਨੁ ਧੰਨੁ ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿ ਰਸੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਮਿਲਿ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥੪॥

jīn hari jan satigur saṅgat pāi tin dhuri mastaki likhiā likhāsi.

dhanu dhannu satsaṅgati jitu hari rasu pāiā mili jan nānak nāmu pargāsi.

Those servants of Vāhigurū who have received the company of the true Gurū, (understand) that they are fortunate.

Blessed, blessed is the true congregation, in whose company the blissful Name of Vāhigurū is received; O Nānak! By meeting them, the Name of Vāhigurū is illuminated within the heart.

Translations adapted from Gurū Granth Sāhib Darpan (ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਰਪਨ),

www.gurugranthdarpan.com

34. Through Nānak may Your Nām for ever be on the increase.
35. And may all prosper by the grace.
36. The Khālsā belongs to the Vāhigurū, who is always victorious.

Excerpts from: The Sikh Prayer by Tejā Singh. Published by SGPC, Ammritsar

Questions

1. Why is prayer so important in the life of a Sikh? (1 mark)
2. How do we know that prayer occupies an important position in Sikhī? (2 marks)
3. What is so unique about the authorship of the Ardās? (2 marks)
4. Explain how the Ardās can be personalized by the person who is reciting it. (1 mark)
5. Using the information from the text as well as your own ideas, explain why this is important/ unique. (2 marks)
6. How does Ardās/ prayer prepare us for harmony with Vāhigurū? (4 marks)
7. Why is it important for Sikhs to remember the sufferings and sacrifices of earlier Sikhs? (2 marks).
8. Tejā Singh states that “The community even now has not abdicated its right of molding this part of the prayer. It can refer in any suitable terms to the present day difficulties and sorrows of the Panth e.g.in connection with the wearing of *Kirpān* (ਕਿਰਪਾਨ) and the reforming of *Gurduārās*”. What present day difficulties/ sorrows/ issues would you want to address or raise in your personal Ardās? (2 marks)

Total: __/16

Answers to questions on Tejā Singh's (ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ) Essay "The Sikh Prayer" (Handed out in the previous class)

Questions

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