

Bhai Jeevan Singh jee's 1978 Canada Tour & Controversy
From Soora Feb 1979
Translated by Admin www.tapoban.org

Bhai Sahib Jeevan Singh jee was one of the first Gursikhs who did parshaad of tat-Gurmat in Canada and helped bring people into a Sikh way of life. In 1978, Bhai Sahib visited Toronto and a controversy erupted when he refused to take parshaad or langar in the Gurdvara. Khalsa Samaachar newspaper condemned Bhai Sahib for this "violation" of Gurmat. Bhai Sahib was then a Hazooree Ragee at Patna Sahib and the accusation was levelled that Bhai Sahib does not eat Karah Parshaad nor takes Langar. It was also said that Bhai Sahib was doing "different" amrit sinchaars which were not normally done in the Panth i.e. insisting on keskee as kakaar and doing naam driR. Here's what the Soora magazine had to say about the entire issue:

Respected Sardaar Jeeo (editor of Khalsa Samaachar),

We are astonished to see that a learned man like you, without knowing the truth, in Khalsa Samachar's December 28, 1978 issue published the news that Bhai Jeevan Singh's not accepting Parshaad and Langar is against Gurmat.

Before publishing this, did you even try to find out why Bhai Jeevan Singh jee, while preaching in Canada does not accept parshaad in those people's langar?

According to the Gurmat Rehit Maryada, the langar prepared by a patit or non-amritdhaaree is not acceptable and this food cannot be called "Guru Kaa Langar".

In "Nirgunearaa" 1977, Prof. Pooran Singh jee writes in the article "Satguru's Divine Langar":

"In the Baba's langar, there is not un-touchability over caste and class, but this langar is hidden from plain view. This is the langar of an Emperor. Not just anybody (Lundee Buchee) can come here... "tithay jodh maahbal soor" Guru's totally prepared Singhs who are tyaar-bar-tyaar, are the Soldiers (workers) here" etc.

The meaning of this writing is that in the Pangat (area where langar is eaten) there is no caste or class distinction or discrimination, but in preparing the langar, it is the Guru's specific maryada that not just anyone can prepare the langar. For this task, it is necessary to be "guru vala" or amritdhaaree.

That is the Guru's Langar where the food's preparers and servers are Guru's Singhs. "Vaydeenaa(n) kee dostee vaydeenaa(n) kaa khaaN" i.e. according to the Guru's orders eating the food of those without the Faith is restricted in Gurmat. According to the Sikh Rehit Maryada, a Sikh should have food and social relations with other Sikhs only.

We've found out that Bhai Jeevan Singh jee in last year's Canada tour did keertan in a Gurdvara. After the keertan, that Gurdvara's Committee President was about to give Bhai Sahib a Siropa. That President was a Patit Sikh with no kesh or beard. Bhai Sahib in the Deevan said "Daas cannot accept a Siropa from the hands of a Patit Sikh, so please forgive Daas for this."

The disease of Patit-ism is very big in Canada and many Gurdvara organisers are Patits. In this situation, if Bhai Jeevan Singh jee refused to eat the parshaad of a Patit individual, then this is following the Guru's orders. Is it a crime to remain steadfast in Gurmat Rehit and obey the Guru's orders?

If our other preachers and ragis in an attitude of greed go to those countries and eat the food of these sharabee-kababee (meat/liquor consuming) patit individuals, it does not mean that one should start pointless propaganda against such a person who remains firm in Gurmat maryada and refuses to eat this food. We can expect this from the patit individuals but it's beyond our understanding when a Panthic Newspaper does this propoganda.

It's regrettable you haven't bothered to know the truth about how Bhai Jeevan Singh has gone there without any greed and is humbly preaching Gursikhi. So we request you try to find out the reality and make the Sangat aware of this reality and Gurmat.

Soora Parivar

Despite all the controversy and pressure, Bhai Jeevan Singh jee remained firm in his bibek, and took a stand, even where it alienated some people who refused to accept or understand Gurmat. This episode teaches us that no matter what, we must take a stand when it comes to following the rehit of Guru Sahib.