

Can we use the word Waheguru for Akal Purkh (God) in Sikhism?

According to Sikhism the God (**Akal Purkh or Waheguru**) is one and only one. The definition of God is clearly mentioned in the beginning of Guru Granth Sahib as:

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ (੧)

One Universal Creator God. The Name Is Truth. Creative Being Personified. No Fear. No Hatred. Image Of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-Existent. By Guru's Grace (1)

Different religions or sects represent the name of God differently. Christian use the name as God, where as Muslim represent as Allah. According to Hindus, there are so many names as Ram, Krishna, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh, etc. Though in Gurbani, the name of God (**Akal Purkh**) have been represented by many a names being used at that time. But it has been clearly mentioned that it is one and only one. In Sikhism it mostly represented as **Akal Purkh**.

ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ ਚਿੰਤਾਮਣਿ ਕਰੁਣਾ ਮਏ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਦੀਨ ਦਇਆਲਾ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਣਿ ਸੁਖ ਭਏ ॥੧॥ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਅਗਾਧਿ ਬੋਧ ॥ ਸੁਨਤ ਜਸੋ ਕੋਟਿ ਅਘ ਖਏ ॥੨॥ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਿਧਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਇਆ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਲਏ ॥੩॥੧੩॥੧੫੧॥ (੨੧੨)

He is the Wish-fulfilling Jewel, the Embodiment of Mercy. ||1||Pause|| The Supreme Lord God is Merciful to the meek; meditating in remembrance on Him, peace is obtained. ||1|| The Wisdom of the Undying Primal Being is beyond comprehension. Hearing His Praises, millions of sins are erased. ||2|| O God, Treasure of Mercy, please bless Nanak with Your kindness, that he may repeat the Name of the Lord, Har, Har. ||3||13||151||

The word Waheguru has been used about 13 times and Wahguru 3 times in Guru Granth Sahib on pages 1402, 1403 and 1404.

Bhatts have used the word Waheguru and Wahguru in the praise of 4th **Nanak Jot**, i.e. Guru Ram Das Ji. This is very clear from the title of Bani on Page 1396 of Guru Granth Sahib. Similarly, Bhai Gurdas Ji has referred Waheguru as **Gur Shabad** in his **Vaaraan**. For example:

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਲੈ ਪਿਰਮ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਚੁਪ ਚਲੇਲਾ ॥ (੪-੧੭-੪)

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਲਾਹਣਾ ਗੁਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਅਲਾਏ ॥੧੩॥ (੯-੧੩-੬)

In Gurbani, we cannot understand the complete message conveyed by a particular Shabad, just by reading any single line of our choice from that Shabad. Complete understanding is possible only if we study the complete Shabad. Let us take the case of the following **Vaar** of Bhai Gurdas Ji.

ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਿਖ ਹੈ ਪੀਰ ਪੀਰਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੁਰਤ ਚੇਲਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਸੋਈ ॥ ਦਰਸਨ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਕਰ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸਤਸੰਗ ਵਿਲੋਈ ॥ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੁ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ ਜਪ ਹਉਮੈ ਖੋਈ ॥ ਆਪ ਗਵਾਏ ਆਪ ਹੈ ਗੁਣ ਗੁਣੀ ਪਰੋਈ ॥੨॥ (੧੩-੨-੬)

Normally people just quote the following line and conclude that if you keep on repeatedly saying the word 'Waheguru', then you can achieve the ultimate.

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੁ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ ਜਪ ਹਉਮੈ ਖੋਈ ॥

If by saying a single word the whole problem can be solved, then why Guru Sahib had to write 1430 pages of Guru Granth Sahib. They would have just written a single word 'Waheguru' on all the pages. But Guru Sahib have not done like that. Therefore, the mechanical repetition of the word 'Waheguru' is not acceptable in Gurmat.

If Bhai Gurdas Ji has said Waheguru as Gur Mantar, then he has also clarified that Waheguru means Shabad of Guru. This he has clarified in his above-mentioned Vaaraan itself and also in many other Vaaraan.

When we take a closer look of this **Vaar**. Then we find that the first sentence of this **Vaar** is connected with the following Shabad of Guru Nanak Sahib. In which Guru Sahib have stated that neither Guru can be in physical form, nor the follower can be in physical form.

ਪਵਨ ਅਰੰਭੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਸ਼ਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ (੯੪੩)

From the air came the beginning. This is the age of the True Guru's Teachings. The Shabad is the Guru, upon whom I lovingly focus my consciousness; I am the chaylaa, the disciple.

The last sentence of this **Vaar** is related with the following Shabad.

ਮਨੁ ਬੇਚੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਪਾਸਿ ॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਰਾਸਿ ॥ (੨੮੬)

One who sells his mind to the True Guru - that humble servant's affairs are resolved.

So long we do not submit (sell) ourselves to the teachings of the Guru, till that time the ego will not go. As long as we do not overcome our ego, good qualities will not get generated in us. This is possible only if we make **Gur Shabad** as part and parcel of our life.

Bhai Gurdas Ji has condemned those who worship other than Gur Shabad. That tongue is of no use, which worships some thing else other than **Gur Shabad**. The hands and feet are of no use if they have not done any service according to the Guru.

ਪ੍ਰਿਗ ਸਿਰੁ ਜੋ ਗੁਰ ਨ ਨਿਵੈ ਗੁਰ ਲਗੈ ਨ ਚਰਨੀ॥ ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਲੋਇਣਿ ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸ ਵਿਣੁ ਵੇਖੈ ਪਰ ਤਰਣੀ॥ ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਸਰਵਣਿ ਉਪਦੇਸ ਵਿਣੁ ਸੁਣਿ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨ ਧਰਣੀ॥ ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਜਿਹਬਾ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਵਿਣੁ ਹੋਰ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਸਿਮਰਣੀ॥ ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਹਥ ਪੈਰ ਹੋਰ ਨਿਹਫਲ ਕਰਣੀ॥ ਪੀਰ ਮੁਰੀਦਾਂ ਪਿਰਹੜੀ ਸੁਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਰਣੀ ॥੧੦॥ (੨੭-੧੦-੬)

Bhai Gurdas Ji has repeatedly clarified **Waheguru as Gur Shabad** in his Vaaraan.

There are many Shabads in Guru Granth Sahib, which say that; there is no difference between Guru and Akal Purkh (God). Akal Purkh is the ultimate and only with the help of Guru one can reach the Ultimate.

ਗੋਡ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਰਿ ਮਨ ਮੋਰ ॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਨਾ ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਹੋਰ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਟੇਕ ਰਹਹੁ ਦਿਨੁ ਰਾਤਿ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਮੇਟੈ ਦਾਤਿ ॥੧॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੁ ॥ ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਚਰਣੀ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਮਨੁ ਲਾਗੈ ॥ ਦੂਖੁ ਦਰਦੁ ਭ੍ਰਮੁ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਭਾਗੈ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਪਾਏ ਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੁ ॥੨॥ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਘਾਲ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਕਉ ਦੁਖੁ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੈ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਜਾਪੈ ॥੩॥ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਕਥਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਭਾਗ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਚਰਣੀ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਮਨੁ ਲਾਗ ॥੪॥੬॥੮॥ (੮੬੪)

Know that the Guru and the Transcendent Lord are One. Whatever pleases Him is acceptable and approved.

ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਦਇਆਲ ਬਖਸਿੰਦੁ ॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਚਰਨੀ ਜਾ ਕਾ ਮਨੁ ਲਾਗਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਤਿਸੁ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਾਗ ॥੪॥੩੬॥੪੭॥ (੮੬੭)

The Guru is the Supreme Lord God; the Guru is the Lord of the Universe. The Guru is the Great Giver, merciful and forgiving. One whose mind is attached to the Guru's feet. O slave Nanak, is blessed with perfect destiny.

ਭੈਰਉ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੇਮੁਹਤਾਜੁ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਚਾ ਸਾਜੁ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਭਸ ਕਾ ਦਾਤਾ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਬਿਧਾਤਾ ॥੧॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਜੈਸਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋ ਦੇਵ ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਭਾਗੁ ਸੁ ਲਾਗਾ ਸੇਵ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਰਬ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲੈ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਰਿ ਜੀਵਾਲੈ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੁ ਭਈ ਹੈ ਸਭਨੀ ਥਾਈ ॥੨॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਤਾਣੁ ਨਿਤਾਣੁ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਘਰਿ ਦੀਬਾਣੁ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕੈ ਹਉ ਸਦ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਇਆ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੁ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰਿ ਦਿਖਲਾਇਆ ॥੩॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਉ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੈ ॥ ਜਿਨਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਤਿਸੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਨ ਸੰਤਾਪੈ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋਧੇ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਬੇਦ ॥ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਭੇਦ ॥੪॥੧੧॥੨੪॥ (੧੧੪੨)

There is no deity equal to the Guru. Whoever has good destiny inscribed on his forehead, applies himself to seva - selfless service.

Nanak has studied the Simritees and the Vedas. There is no difference between the Supreme Lord God and the Guru.

So by combining all the above mentioned facts, we can say that:

Waheguru = Nanak Jot = Gur Shabad = Guru = Akal Purkh (God)

Though word Waheguru have not been directly used for Akal Purkh in Guru Granth Sahib. But the above-mentioned Shabads clearly indicate that word Waheguru can be used for Akal Purkh in Sikhism. Guru Gobind Singh Ji has also used “**Ek On Kar Waheguru Ji Ke Fateh**”.

Now a day, the so-called Saints have created lot of confusion. They say that one can achieve the Ultimate (Akal Purkh), by simply repeatedly saying ‘Waheguru’, ‘Waheguru’.

Probably this may be the reason, why Guru Sahibs have not directly used the word Waheguru for the Akal Purkh in Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Sahibs have used their far sightedness and wanted not to leave any chance for the misuse of this word (Waheguru) and guarded the Sikhs from being misguided by someone else. It has been clearly mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib that mechanical repetition of any single Shabad (Word) is Jog Matt and not Sikhism.

॥ ਨਾਦੀ ਬੇਦੀ ਸਬਦੀ ਮੰਨੀ ਜਮ ਕੇ ਪਟੈ ਲਿਖਾਇਆ ॥੨॥ (੬੫੪)

The musicians, the Vedic scholars, the chanters of one word and the men of silence, all are listed on the Register of Death.

Hence the word Waheguru does represent the name of Akal Purkh. But just by saying “Waheguru”, “Waheguru”, one cannot achieve him. We can achieve Him only by practically following the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib. This has been well explained and guided by the following Kabit of Bhai Gurdaas Ji.

*ਪੁਛਤ ਪਥਕਿ, ਤਿਹ ਮਾਰਗ ਨ ਧਾਰੈ ਪਗਿ॥ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਕੈ ਦੇਸ, ਕੈਸੇ ਬਾਤਨੁ ਕੇ ਜਾਈਐ ॥ ਪੁਛਤ ਹੈ ਬੈਦ, ਖਾਤ ਅਉਖਦ ਨ ਸੰਜਮ ਸੈ,
ਕੈਸੇ ਮਿਟੈ ਰੋਗ, ਸੁਖ ਸਹਜ ਸਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਪੁਛਤ ਸੁਹਾਗਨ, ਕਰਮ ਹੈ ਦੁਹਾਗਨਿ ਕੈ, ਰਿਦੈ ਬਿਬਿਚਾਰ, ਕਤ ਸਿਹਜਾ ਬੁਲਾਈਐ ॥ ਗਾਏ
ਸੁਨੇ ਆਖੇ ਮੀਚੈ, ਪਾਈਐ ਨ ਪਰਮਪਦੁ॥ ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ, ਗਹਿ ਜਉ ਲਉ, ਨ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥੪੩੯॥*

We learn the way of life from Gur Shabad. But success is possible only if we practically follow the path shown by the Guru. Cure for all types grieves is available in Guru Granth Sahib, but we have to control, the five sins (Sex, Anger, Greed, Affection, Ego). Then only we can achieve the state of ultimate happiness (Anand). Gurbani shows the path of truth. Hence, we must be firm on the path of truth. Following the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib, is the path of Sikhism. So we should act according to that.

*ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪ ॥ ਹਮ ਅੰਧੁਲੇ ਅੰਧ ਬਿਖੈ ਬਿਖੁ ਰਾਤੇ ਕਿਉ ਚਾਲਹ ਗੁਰ ਚਾਲੀ ॥ ਸਤਗੁਰੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰੇ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਹਮ ਲਾਵੈ
ਆਪਨ ਪਾਲੀ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਮੀਤ ਚਲਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਚਾਲੀ ॥ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੋਈ ਭਲ ਮਾਨਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਥਾ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ॥ ੧ ॥ (੬੬੭)*

O Sikhs of the Guru, O friends, walk on the Guru's Path. Whatever the Guru says, accept that as good; the sermon of the Lord, Har, Har, is unique and wonderful.

All the brothers, sisters and elder ones are requested to practically follow the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib. In this way we can bring happiness in our own life as well as peace and prosperity for the mankind. So let us start **reciting, learning, understanding and practically following Gurbani** to achieve the ultimate aim of our life.

“Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ke Fateh”

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