

O assembly of saints, think of and remember the unique sacrifice rendered by those brave Sikh men and women who sacrificed their heads, who volunteered to have their bodies cut to pieces joint by joint, who volunteered to have their scalps removed, who volunteered to be broken on the wheels, who volunteered to be cut by saws, who volunteered to be burnt alive, who sacrificed everything they had to maintain the sanctity of the Gurdwaras and who never gave up their Dharam. In the memory of these extraordinary people, say Vaheguru.

O Lord, it is the wish of the entire assembly of saints today that we continually meditate on your Name – Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru - and may all our desired pleasures and comforts in life come through such meditation. O Lord, wherever we go, please bless us with your protection and grace. May the free kitchen for one and all and justice prevail. Please confer victory on the Dharma and may your beloved saints always be honoured. Say Vaheguru.

O Lord please bless your beloved people with the gift of Sikh Dharma, the gift of discipline, the gift of divine knowledge, the gift of firm faith, the gift of belief and the biggest gift of Naam and of having a cleansing bath in the pool of nectar deep within our true self.

O Lord, may the choirs, the mansions and the banners exist forever. May the Truth triumph. Say Vaheguru.

May the minds of your beloved remain humble and their wisdom exalted. O Lord you are the protector of our wisdom. O true father Vaheguru, you are the honour of the weak, the power of the helpless ones, the shelter of the shelterless. We humbly make this prayer in your presence:
(Personal part of prayer from the heart)

Dear God, give us the Grace to realize in our consciousness and actions that we are One with you and all Creation, that there is no separation. Let us in this knowledge serve one another. Grant us the Grace of shining your Light. Grant us the grace to serve and uplift those who suffer in body, mind and spirit. Bless this congregation and all your creation

with Love and Peace, especially those who are suffering because of war, lack of food and ill health.

Please also bless the sweet pudding, Parshad and the free kitchen, Langar which your beloved servants have prepared with love and devotion.

Kindly pardon our errors in reciting Gurbani and please bless us with peace. Kindly fulfil the desires and aspirations of all. Kindly give us the opportunity to meet those wonderful people by meeting whom, we learn and experience the wonders of your nature. O God. Through Sat Guru Nanak Dev Ji, may your Name be exalted and may all beings prosper according to Your Will. Vahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa Vahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh!

SEAL OF THE ARDAAS—BY GURU GOBIND SINGH

aagya bhai akal ki tabhi chalayo panth
Under orders of the Immortal being the Panth was started.

sab sikhan ko hukum hai guru manyo granth.
All the Sikhs are enjoined to accept the Granth as their Guru.

guru granth ji manyo pargat guran ki deh.
Consider Guru Granth as representing Guru's body.
jo prabh ko milna chahe khoj shabad men le.
Those who wish to meet God can find the way in its hymns.

raaj karega khalsa akhee rahae na koe
Khalsa will rule, no enemies shall remain
khuaar hoe sabh milengai bachae sharan jo hoey
Those separated will unite, and all the devotees shall be protected.

vaheguru naam jahaaz hai charae so utharey paar
The Vaheguru mantra is the boat, whosoever enters will get off at the other side.
jo sharda ka saevaday gur paar uthaaran haar
Those who remember God with their hearts, the Guru himself takes them across

khanda jaa kae haath mai kalgee so hae sees
In his hand is a double-edged sword, and on his head a royal plume
so hamree rachiyaa karae guru khaldee dhar jagdhees
Guru protects us, the wearer of the royal plume, protector of the world (Guru Gobind Singh).

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Ardaas

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INTRODUCTION TO ARDAAS

Ardaas is a Sikh prayer before God. The word Ardaas is derived from the Persian word 'Arazdashat', meaning a request, a supplication, a prayer, a petition or an address to a superior authority. A person who performs an Ardaas is called the Ardaasia. It is done in one of the following situations:

- Before performing or after undertaking any significant task
- After reciting the daily Sikh prayers (Bani) or
- After the completion of a service such as hymn-singing (Kirtan).

HOW TO SELECT THE CORRECT ARDAAS

A short Ardaas can be done when opening the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (Guru Granth Sahib), The Sikh Holy Scripture, or a Kirtan program. A long Ardaas is done at the end of a Kirtan program and the Guru Granth Sahib is closed with a short Ardaas. So a typical Sikh program will have the following sequence of Ardaas:

- Short Ardaas to open programme and Guru Granth Sahib (Prakaash)
- Long Ardaas to close programme
- Short Ardaas to close Guru Granth Sahib (Sukhaasan)

ARDAAS POSITIONS AND PRAYERS OVERVIEW

- Before the Ardaas everyone bows with forehead touching the floor and stands up
- The Ardaasia comes to the front of the congregation in front of Guru Granth Sahib
- The Ardaasia together with the entire congregation sing the precursor to the Ardaas, which consists of steps 7-8 from Psalm 4 of Sukhmani Sahib
- Now the Ardaas, either long or short begins. The first part of the Ardaas is done in Gurmukhi whilst the remainder is recited in the local language. Note that at the end of every paragraph the whole congregation will say Vaheguru which is confirmation of what the Ardaasia has just announced
- The formal Ardaas is concluded with everyone saying Vahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa, Vahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh
- Everyone bows with forehead touching the

- floor and then stands back up
- Everyone now sings the seal of the Ardaas *Aagya Bhai Akal Ki* by Guru Gobind Singh. The last line of this hymn is repeated again and then followed by "Bole So Nihal!", by the Ardaasia
- The congregation reply with 'Sat Siri Akal!' and everyone does a final touching of the forehead to the ground
- The Ardaasia takes a seat like the rest of the congregation (Sangat).
- An order or Hukamnama is taken from the Guru Granth Sahib.
- Sikh prayers or Kirtan begins.

PRECURSOR TO A SHORT OR LONG ARDAAS— PSALM 4 OF SUKHMANI SAHIB

too thaakur tum peh ardaas
You are our Lord and Master; to You, I offer this prayer.
jee-o pind sabh tayree raas.
This body and soul are all Your property.
tum maat pitaa ham baarik tayray.
You are our mother and father; we are Your children.
tumree kirpaa meh sookh ghanayray.
In Your Grace, there are so many joys!
ko-ay na jaanai tumraa ant.
No one knows Your limits.
oochay tay oochaa bhagvant.
O Highest of the High, Most Generous God,
sagal samagree tumrai sutir Dhaaree.
the whole creation is strung on Your thread.
tum tay ho-ay so aagi-aakaaree.
That which has come from You is under Your Command.
tumree gat mit tum hee jaanee.
You alone know Your state and extent.
naanak daas sadaa kurbaanee. ||8||4||
Nanak, Your slave, is forever a sacrifice. ||8||4||

SHORT ARDAAS—BY GURU GOBIND SINGH

Ardaas
Ardaas
Ek-Oankar. Waheguroo Ji Ki Fateh
One Creator. Victory to Wonderful God.
Sri Bhagouti ji Sahai
With the blessings of the Mother Goddess

Vaar Sri Bhagouti Ji Ki Paatshaahee Dasvee
Hymn for the Mother Goddess by The Tenth King
Pritham Bhagouti Simar Kai, Guru Naanak Layee Dhi-
yae
Remembering the Primal Power, Remembering Guru Nanak
Angad Gur Te Amar Das, Raamdaasai Hoye Sahai
Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das and Guru Raam Das help us
Arjan Hargobind No Simrou Sri Har Rai
Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind, Remembering Guru Har Rai
Sri Harkrishan Dhiyaa-eeai Jis Dhithi Sabh Dukh Jaye
Remembering Guru Harkrishan, seeing whom all pains vanish
Teg Bahadur Simareeai Ghar No Nidh Avai Dhai
Remembering Guru Tegh Bahadur, the nine treasures come into your home
Sabh Thai Ho-e Sahaai.
May they all help us.

May the kind and magnificent, tenth king, Guru Gobind Singh Ji help us everywhere.

O assembly of saints, focus your consciousness on the divine light of the ten kings contained in the Holy Scripture, the Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Experience the beauty of these divine teachings in your heart and say Vaheguru.

(Personal part of prayer. Let this be a request and words which come direct from your heart. Include words that are relevant to the sequence e.g. beginning or end of a programme)

LONG ARDAAS

(Short Ardaas followed by...)

O assembly of saints, think of the deeds of the five beloved ones, of the four sons of the tenth king who attained martyrdom, of the forty liberated ones, of the brave Sikh men and women whose souls were absorbed in the vibration of God, who shared their food with others, who started free kitchens to feed one and all, who stood up to oppressors and used their swords for preserving truth and of those who overlooked other peoples mistakes. All these people were truly pure and the embodiment of God's light, say Vaheguru.