ਚਾਰ ਪਦਾਰਥ

FOUR CARDINAL BLESSINGS

(Writer: Dr. Kala Singh)

In Hinduism if a person possesses char Padarath (Four Cardinal Blessings), one is considered to have attained all worldly happiness. Gurbani also mentions Char Padarath (Four Cardinal Blessings).

– ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਲੈ ਜਗਿ ਆਇਆ॥ ਸਿਵ ਸਕਤੀ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸਾ ਪਾਇਆ॥
ਏਕੁ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਪਿੜ ਹਾਰੇ ਅੰਧੁਲੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਾ ਹੇ॥ (੧੦੨੭)

One came into the world with four cardinal blessings and got engrossed in worldly temptations (Maya). Because of that forgot God and Its blessings. Those who forget blessings of the God, lose the human life in a game of chance.

– ਜਨਮਿ ਮਰੈ ਤ੍ਰੈ ਗੁਣ ਹਿਤਕਾਰੁ॥ ਚਾਰੇ ਬੇਦ ਕਥਹਿ ਆਕਾਰੁ॥
ਤੀਨਿ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਕਹਹਿ ਵਖਿਆਨੁ॥ ਤੁਰੀਆਵਸਥਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਜਾਨੁ॥
ਰਾਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਤਰਣਾ॥ ਬਾਹੁੜਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ ਹੈ ਮਰਣਾ॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਕਹੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਈ॥ ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਮੁਖਿ ਸੋਈ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਅਰਥੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ॥ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ॥ (੧੫੪)

The four Vedas describe three fold qualities of Maya (Rajo, Tamo, Sato) in this world. Those who love these three qualities of Maya are subject to spiritual life and death. Such people describe and explain only these three states of mind (mann). The fourth state, union with the God (Turiavastha) is known only through the True Guru. Spiritual life and death is a vicious circle. One only gets out of it by living life according to the teachings of True Guru. Everyone including Simrities, Sastras (Hindu Holy Books) and Pandits speaks of four cardinal blessings. But the treasure of liberation (Mukat Padarath) can only be achieved through devotional worship of True Guru.

– ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮਾਗੈ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਾਗੈ॥
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਆਪੁਨਾ ਦੂਖੁ ਮਿਟਾਵੈ॥ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਦ ਗਾਵੈ॥
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਆਪੁਨੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਲੋਰੈ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਇਹ ਹਉਮੈ ਛੋਰੈ॥
ਜੇ ਕੋ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਡਰੈ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸਰਨੀ ਪਰੈ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦਰਸ ਪਿਆਸਾ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਸਾ॥ (੨੬੬)

Some are committing themselves to the service of Sadhs (Holy people) to obtain the four cardinal blessings. To erase sorrows from their life some are chanting Har Har name in their mind (mann). Some are trying to renounce ego in the company of Gurbani (Sadh Sangat) to get honour in life. Some are in the sanctuary of holy people to get out of the circle of birth and death. Nanak says I am sacrifice to those who seek guidance from Guru to seek the blessings of the God. This Shabads clearly says that Sikhs don't seek these four cardinal blessings, but the blessings of the God. Guru further says:

– ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਜਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਅਕਥ ਸੁਨਥਈ॥

ਧਰਮੁ ਅਰਥੁ ਸਭੁ ਕਾਮੁ ਮੋਖੁ ਹੈ ਜਨ ਪੀਛੈ ਲਗਿ ਫਿਰਥਈ॥(੧੩੨੦)

If you remember virtues of the God all the time the four cardinal blssings (Dharam, Arath, Kaam, Mokh) will follow your shadow. Means, you will never seek them, never feel a need for them.

The four cardinal blessings (Char Padarth) were defined by Brahmins as per Hindu Puranas:

1. DHARAM:- Rituals to please gods and fulfilling Karmic debts.

2. ARATH:- Assets, Wealth.

3. KAM:- Worldly desires.

4. MOKSH:- Liberation from life and death cycle.

Mokh/Moksha is considered to be liberation from cycle of death and rebirth, achieved after death. Gurmat view differs from it and treats Mokh/Mukti as liberations from worldly temptations (Maya) which can be realized while living not after death. The rituals, supernatural powers and worldly treasures have no importance in Gurmat. They hinder spiritual progress and create ego in the mind (mann).

- ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਆਰਾਧਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਿਧਿ ਆਪਾਰ॥ ਧਰਮ ਅਰਥ ਅਰੁ ਕਾਮ ਮੋਖ ਦੇਤੇ ਨਹੀ ਬਾਰ॥(੮੧੬)

If we get blessings of the God in the form of virtues, the four cardinal blessings will always be with us but we will not need them because they are nothing compared to the blessings of the God.

- ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ॥ ਪਾਰਜਾਤੁ ਜਪਿ ਅਲਖ ਅਭੇਵਾ॥
ਕਾਮੁ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਕਿਲਬਿਖ ਗੁਰਿ ਕਾਟੇ ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਈ ਆਸਾ ਜੀਉ॥ (੧੦੮)

Four cardinal blessings, the Elysian Tree, the source of all blessings (According to Hinduism) are in the service (Seva) of God. With God's blessing all sinful acts including sexual lust and anger vanish and the hope of meeting the God are fulfilled.

- ਏਕ ਭੀ ਨ ਦੇਇ ਦਸ ਭੀ ਹਿਰਿ ਲੇਇ॥ ਤਉ ਮੂੜਾ ਕਹੁ ਕਹਾ ਕਰੇਇ॥ (੨੬੮)

When we don't get something from God we complain. The God has given us countless blessings (Ten here means countless). If God takes all of them away what can we do? So we should always be thankful to the God. According to this Shabd the God has given us countless blessings, not these four.

- ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਅਸਟ ਦਸਾ ਸਿਧਿ॥ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਸਹਜ ਸੁਖੁ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ॥
ਸਰਬ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਜੇ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਹਹਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਰਾਵਣਾ॥ (੧੦੮੬)

The four cardinal blessings, eighteen miraculous spiritual powers and nine worldly treasures (In Hinduism) are in remembering God all the time. If you yearn for blissful state, get spiritual wisdom from true Guru. The blissful state itself is the four cardinal blessings, eighteen miraculous spiritual powers and nine worldly treasures.

Which cardinal blessings Guru is referring for Sikhs to obtain?

- ਰਤਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਘਰ ਤੇ ਪਾਇਆ॥ ਪੂਰੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਮਿਟਿਆ ਅੰਧਿਆਰਾ ਘਟਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਨਣਿਆ॥ (੧੨੯)

The person who has understood the Cosmic Law of the God through the Shabd (Knowledge and spiritual wisdom) of the True Guru has found the precious Treasure within oneself. That person has dispelled the darkness of spiritual ignorance and recognized the Divine Light within.

- ਬਲਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਬਿਨਸਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਰਤਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਲਾਧਾ॥ (੭੮)

This spiritual wisdom given by the Guru dispelled the darkness of spiritual ignorance. I have found the Precious Treasure of the God. In these two Shabads Guru is saying that knowledge and wisdom from True Guru is a Precious Treasure (Ratan Padarath).

- ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹ ਬਿਨਾਸੁ॥ (੬੪੦)

- ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਤਤੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥ (੬੧)

In these two Shabads Guru Says Love of the virtues of the God (Prem Padarath) is the essence of the Guru's teachings. Prem Padarath dispel emotional attachment to worldly temptations (Maya).

- ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਗਈ ਬਿਲਾਇ॥ (੬੫੩)

- ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਹਜਿ ਸਮਾਇ॥ (੩੪)

- ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਲਾਭੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਨਿ ਹੋਇ॥ (੬੧)

- ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਅਚਿੰਤੁ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ॥ (੫੫੨)

- ਕਲਜੁਗਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਭਗਤ ਜਨਾ ਉਧਰੇ॥ (੯੯੫)

- ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਜਿਨ ਨਰ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੇ ਭਾਗਹੀਣ ਮੁਏ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਵੈ॥ (੪੯੪)

- ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮਾਂਗੈ॥ (੩੯੪)

In these Shabads Guru says virtues of the God (Naam) is the supreme blessings (Pradhan Padarath). Those who obtain it their mind (mann) reap the everlasting profit in the form of dispelling anxiety (Chinta), and are always in a blissful state. Those who don't get are spiritually dead. Nanak begs the blessing of virtues of the God (Naam Padarath).

- ਗਿਆਨ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਇ॥ (੬੦)

- ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੋ ਦੇਇ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇ॥ (੭੫੯)

In these Shabads Guru says spiritual wisdom from Guru's teachings (Giyan) is the Giyan Padarath.

- ਜਨਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜੀਤਿਆ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨ ਜੂਐ ਹਾਰਿ॥ (੧੨੨੬)

- ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਏ ਇਹੁ ਜਨਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਜੀਤਾ ਰੇ॥ (੪੦੪)

- ਜਨਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਖੋਇਆ ਕਉਡੀ ਬਦਲੈ ਜਾਇ॥ (੧੨੬੧)

– ਬਿਨੁ ਬੂਝੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਵਣੇ ਜਨਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਖੋਇ॥ (੩੩)

In these Shabads Guru says life (Janam Padarath) is also a priceless blessing. Those who live it according to the teachings of the Guru are victorious and those who live it according to their own will are always in misery and are losers.

Conclusion

The four cardinal blessings (Char Padarath) mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib are those which people believed at that time and are from Hindu Puranas. Guru used them to make people understand that spiritual teachings and wisdom from the Guru (Gyan Padarath, Ratan Padarath, Naam Padarath) is the supreme blessing. The one who obtain it loves the virtues of the God (Prem Padarath) and they live in a blissful state and are victorious in life (Janam Padarath).