

Guru Nanak – Sabad 103
chauthai paharai rain kai vanajaariaa mitraa biradh bhiaa tan kheen ||
Raag Siriraag, Guru Nanak, Guru Granth Sahib, 76

chauthai paharai rain kai vanajaariaa mitraa biradh bhiaa tan kheen ||
akhee a(n)dh na dheesiee vanajaariaa mitraa ka(n)nee sunai na vain ||
akhee a(n)dh jeebh ras naahee rahe paraakau taanaa ||
gun a(n)tar naahee kiau sukh paavai manmukh aavan jaanaa ||
khaR pakee kuR bhajai binasai aai chalai kiaa maan ||
kahu naanak praanee chauthai paharai gurmukh sabadh pachhaan ||4||

Summary: The undeniable nature of time invites us to explore its more profound significance, moving beyond a mere linear view. Time is not just an external force; it measures the constant changes in the universe through movement, transformation, and decay. Recognizing this shifts our perspective, allowing us to see time as a reflection of our lived experiences rather than as something that governs us. The notions of past and future lose their weight, underscoring the truth that only the present moment exists. Instead of fighting against time, we can learn to embrace it, thereby transforming our relationship with life into one that is calmer, more fulfilling, and more attentive.

chauthai paharai rain kai vanajaariaa mitraa biradh bhiaa tan kheen ||
In the fourth watch of the night, O trader friend, old age comes near, and the body grows weak. The “trader friend” represents the inescapable nature of time, indicating the diminishing chance for action.

akhee a(n)dh na dheesiee vanajaariaa mitraa ka(n)nee sunai na vain ||
The eyes lose their sight, O trader friend, and the ears no longer catch the vibrations of sound; this reflects how reliance on our perceptions of the self through the external world can obscure the essence of life.

akhee a(n)dh jeebh ras naahee rahe paraakau taanaa ||
Sight dims, taste fades, and vitality no longer remains; this symbolizes withdrawal of the illusions that once sparked pleasure and desire.

gun a(n)tar naahee kiau sukh paavai manmukh aavan jaanaa ||
Without inner qualities, how can peace arise amid the self-centred who are in a loop of progression and regression? This highlights that serenity eludes the impulsive mind, which remains trapped in instability.

khaR pakee kuR bhajai binasai aai chalai kiaa maan ||

When the crop ripens, it bends, breaks, and decays; so, what is there to be proud of that comes and goes? This truth highlights the futility of ego and pride in a body that serves as a vessel, ultimately destined to return to the elements.

kahu naanak praanee chauthai paharai gurmukh sabadh pachhaan ||4||

Nanak says that in the final phase of life, those who are spiritually oriented recognize the insights of wisdom. This serves as a reminder that even amid physical decline, the conscience can attain lasting peace by aligning with wisdom rather than concentrating on what is fleeting. (4)

Essence: Guru Nanak vividly illustrates the final chapter of life, comparing it to a ripened crop that reflects our weakening bodies and fading senses. This moment is one of self-reflection, where we confront ourselves rather than others. The contrast between the distracted *Manmukh* (impulsive mind) and the steadfast *Gurmukh* (enlightened mind) is profound. While the body may begin to decline like a dry stalk, our awareness, connecting us to the whole, remains unbroken. Although pride may fade, love and understanding can still thrive. The powerful message is that even as life draws to a close, the potential for awakening endures.

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