



THE TRADITION OF THE BRAHM KAVACH SAHIB



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Numerous devout Sikhs have approached me on multiple occasions, either in person, over phone calls, or through online messages, inquiring about the Brahm Kavach, a sacred text recited by the Nihang Singhs and other members of the Sikh community. Recognizing the importance of shedding light on this aspect of our tradition, I felt compelled to create a video addressing it, which has been published. In doing so, I aim to share whatever knowledge I possess about the Brahm Kavach with the Khalsa Panth, as bestowed upon us by the esteemed Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji.

Originally composed in Sanskrit in the *Purānas*, one text recounts the mythical battle of the Goddess Durga against the demons, and the Guru has translated it into a more accessible format for our understanding. This is the accepted understanding but on my *chakravarti* around India, and doing *sangat* with very old Mahakals and Jathedars, they explained that there is more to it. That, when Guru Nanak Dev Ji disappeared in the River Bein, and merged into *Joti Prakāsh*, along with *Mūl Mantra* and *Gurmantra*, the main portion of the Brahm Kavach was given to respected Guru Ji by Akal Purakh. This was taught to Baba Buddha Ji who added the *phalshrutī* and gave this mantra to the Sixth Guru, then the couplet at the end was then added by the Tenth Nanak.

When Goddess Durga emerged victorious in her divine battle against the demons, the Devas, or demi-gods, gathered to sing her praises and recite her protective chants, known as a Kavach. This is referenced twice in the Chandi episodes in Dasam Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Amongst these, one particular protective chant was recited by Lord Brahma, hence named the 'Brahm Kavach'. The term 'Kavach' signifies words of protection (amulet) and actual physical armour or chainmail. At Gurdwara Mata Sahib Deva where Mata Sahib Deva, who was said to an incarnation of Goddess Durga, did her *bhagītī*. It was the same place where Durga herself meditated on the *Adi Shaktī* or *Para Shaktī* surrounded by 96 *Kṛorī* lions born from the lion skin of Rishi Dust Daman, and where from her forehead Kali Mata appeared and drank the blood of the demon Rakat Bija. Please Guru Sangat Ji see *Chaṇḍī dī Vār*, *Sau Sākhī*, and *Bachitra Nāṭak*.

In His sacred verses, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji revered the sword as his guiding force, as stated in *Srī Shastra Nām Mālā Purāṇ*, Sri Dasam Guru Granth Sahib (aṅg 717-18), where Guru Sahib refers to the weapons as His '*Pīr*' or guide. In the creation of the universe, it is acknowledged that Akal Purakh first created illusion or maya (mammon), from which multiplicity and infinite universes emerged, as is described in Gurbani. Maya was created, or mammon, in various forms, and is symbolised throughout Sikh teachings. The first instance being when Guru Nanak Sahib Ji

referred to mammon or maya in *Jap Ji Sāhib* (aṅg 3) of *Adi Guru Granth Sahib* as ‘*Kudrati*,’ illustrating its diverse manifestations.

In the era of *Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji*, particularly in the dark age of *Kaljug*, this maya has taken the form of the *Kirpan* (sword). *Guru Gobind Singh Ji* hailed the *Kirpan* as his ‘*Ishṭadeva*’ or cherished divinity-guide, thus emphasizing its significance in the life of a *Khalsa* warrior. *Brahma Ji* recited the *Brahm Kavach* in praise of Goddess *Durga*, which then *Guru Gobind Singh Ji* translated into *Gurmukhi* and further extolled the power of the *Kirpan*. This *Brahm Kavach*, also referred to as the ‘*Bhagautī Kavach*’ in the *Buddha Dal*, serves as a protective shield associated with the *Kirpan*. *Maharaj Kalgidhar Patishah Ji* penned: ‘ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ ਹੈ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਅਖ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਵਚ ਲਿਖਯਤੇ॥’ ‘*Ik Oaṅkār srī vāhigurū jī kī phatiha hai || srī bhagautī jī sahāi || atha bhagautī brahama kavaca likhayate ||*’ Therefore *Guru Khalsa Ji*, *Bhagauti* is the name for the *Kirpan*. The *Kavach* mentioned in the *Markaṇḍe Purāṇ* is the ‘*Durgā Kavach*’ recited by *Brahma Ji* for *Durga Ji*. ‘*Bhagauti*’ signifies the *Kirpan*, akin to the *Kavach* recited by *Maharaj Sahib Ji* in praise of the *Kirpan*. This association is evident in the phrase ‘*Bhagautī Brahm Kavach*’ (*Brahm Kavach of the Kirpan*).

There are two variations of the *Kavach*: some comprise 108 names of the worshipped deity, while others contain 32 names. *Maharaj Kalgidhar Patshah* chose the 32-named *Kavach*, inspired by *Brahma Ji*'s recitation of a similar *Kavach* while praising *Durga Ji*. Here are the 32 feminine *Divine names of the Kirpan* recited in the ‘*Bhagautī Kavach*’:

1. *Khaṛag Khaṅdā Asī* - The *Khanda*, *Khadag*, and *Kirpan* sword that severs falsehood.
2. *Arigar* - The one who eliminates adversaries.
3. *Dharam Rachh* - The protector of righteousness.
4. *Tag Chhattarī* - The sword guiding warriors.
5. *Bishvapāl* - The sustainer of the universe.
6. *Bhūpāl Pachh* - The ally of kings.
7. *Pāl Pachh* - The devourer of foes.
8. *Ran Kachh Attarī* - The weapon worn by warriors.

9. *Rāj Maṇḍā* - The source of kings' honour.
10. *Ati Prachanḍā* - Possessor of immense power.
11. *Īsavarī* - The sovereign of the universe.
12. *Karivār* - The embodiment of the sword.
13. *Shakati* - The omnipresent force.
14. *Brahamī* - The consort of Brahma Ji, Mata Saraswati.
15. *Baishanavī* - The consort of Vishnu Ji, Mata Laxmi.
16. *Bhavānī* - The consort of Shiv Ji, Mata Parvati. Akal Purakh Parmeshwar - Whose Maya takes the form of Durga, Saraswati, Laxmi, and Parvati at various places.
17. *Tū Tarivār Haiṅ* - In the dark age of Kaljug - That Baba Nanak Ji described- ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਦੁਣ ਕਰਾ ਵੀਚਾਰ॥ O Nature, now you've taken the form of the sword.
18. *Nit Jiyotī* - You manifest yourself in the form of light.
19. *Mukat Dā-ik* - The liberator.
20. *Dhārādhār Kripān Haiṅ* - The Kirpan that resounds with each strike.
21. *Chanḍkā* - Slayer of the demon Chand.
22. *Mritkā Jagat Jananī* - The progenitor of the mortal realm.
23. *Kālikā* - The form of Goddess Kali.
24. *Gunkhān Haiṅ* - A treasure trove of virtue.
25. *Akāl Joti* - The eternal light of the Creator.
26. *Nahakalanḱā* - Free from sins.
27. *Mahābalī* - Possessor of immense strength.
28. *Dhritmān Haiṅ* - Exemplar of patience.
29. *Bhav Māṅkā* - Revered by the entire universe.

30. *Khal Hānkā* - Destroyer of enemies.

31. *Ratt Pānkā* - Drinker of blood.

32. *Jag Mān Hai* - Universally respected.

In the book about the traditions of Buddha Dal, Giani Kirpal Singh Ji gives a different version of the above. Previously, the Brahm Kavach script lacked the verse referring to ‘*Akāl Joti*.’ I have heard that this line was left out of the Buddha Dal prayer anthology as fanatics wanted to misuse the power of this mantra. It was taught to me in the Buddha Dal by Akali Baba Santa Singh 96 Krori but is different to the version herein, and has its own lineage of transmission. According to Giani Gurwinder Singh Ji, respected Guru Khalsa Sadh Sangat Ji, the esteemed Udasi Saint Swami Brahm Dev Ji came across an ancient manuscript of the *Sarbloh Prakash (Sri Sarbloh Granth Sahib)*. Within this manuscript, at the culmination of the text, there existed a folio with the mantra of Brahm Kavach Sahib. Swami Brahm Dev Ji meticulously copied this *pāṭh* from the manuscript, thus bestowing upon us the complete Brahm Kavach script. He graciously entrusted this copy of the Brahm Kavach to the Namdhari Samprada (Sect). Subsequently, his Vidya Guru and also a mentor of Akali Nihang Dr Kamalroop Singh, Giani Hardeep Singh Ji Hazur Sahib Wale, received this *pāṭh* and thoroughly examined it. Upon scrutiny, it was discovered that the earlier published version of the Brahm Kavach contained five and a half stanzas, omitting one stanza. There is one handwritten manuscript in an anthology of the Brahm Kavach at Guru Nanak Dev Ji University, Sri Amritsar. Also, interestingly there is a sword of the Tenth Guru with the complete Brahm Kavach etched into the blade at Sri Hazur Sahib, Nanded.

The respected Giani Gurwinder Singh states about the pairs of *shabads* or words in the Brahm Kavach. For clarity, let's consider a few examples: ‘*Chhattarī*’ and ‘*Attarī*’ form a pair, ‘*Karivār Haiṅ*’ and ‘*Tarvār Haiṅ*’ constitute another pair, and ‘*Kripān Haiṅ*’ along with ‘*Gunkhān Hai*’ form a third pair. Furthermore, let's consider additional pairs: ‘*Dhritmān Haiṅ*’ and ‘*Jagamān Haiṅ*’ form the fourth pair. ‘*Chhattarī*’ and ‘*Attarī*’ constitute the fifth pair. ‘*Sanptā*’ and ‘*Akanptā*’ are the sixth pair. The essence of the path lies in the combination of these six pairs. Hence, according to Giani Ji, it is imperative to include this stanza in the recitation. According to his research and having delved into the annotations of ancient scholars and personally examining handwritten manuscripts, he found this stanza consistently present. This reaffirms the importance of including it in the *pāṭh*. According to Giani Ji as stated by Kalgidhar Patishah Ji:

‘*Ih Kavach Brahamā Ko Batīsā,*’ meaning this 32-named Kavach was recited by Brahma Ji in the presence of Goddess Durga. However, I recite this Kavach in the presence of the sword the source of Her victory, the *Bhagautī*.

‘*Paḍhai Jo Nit Chattrī*’ - The warrior who recites this 32-verse pāṭh daily.

‘*Ranjīt Lahai, Nribhūt Rahi*’ - Will attain victory in battle,

‘*Riddhi Siddhi Pāvai Attrī*’ - Fearlessness and mystical abilities.

‘*Leh Bed Bhed Jo Paḍhai Bipra*’ - The learned individual (Brahmin) who recites it will possess comprehensive knowledge of the Vedas.

‘*Baisya Dhañn Sukh Sañptā*’ - The merchant who recites it will be blessed with wealth, peace, and happiness.

‘*Dhañn Dhām Tan Arog Sūdar*’ - The worker (Sudra) who recites it will have prosperity in their household and remain free from illness.

‘*Pāe Sukh Akañptā*’ - Those who recite it will experience enduring happiness in their lives.

ਦੇਹਰਾ॥

ਇਹ ਬੋਲਾ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕਾ ਸੁਣੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਬੀਰ॥ *Iha bolā Harigobind kā suṇo Khālsā bīr.*

ਫਤਿਹ ਪਾਉ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਮੈ ਪਕੜ ਹਾਥਿ ਸਮਸੀਰ॥ *Fatih Pāu Maidān mai pakar hāthi samasīr.*

In conclusion, Guru Gobind Singh Ji says ‘Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, the embodiment of *Miri-Piri*, emphasizes, ‘He who engages in battle while wielding the kirpan (sword) shall emerge victorious.’’

According to the the *Gurū Pañth Prakāsh* by Giani Gian Singh, reciting this path 125,000 times during a *Havan* ceremony guarantees victory in worldly endeavors. Additionally, ancient Saints recommended reciting it 32 times daily to ensure continual blessings from the kirpan. We know this happened according to Rattan Singh Bhangu (1810) in his work, when Akali Baba Gurbax Singh did the ceremony before going to battle with Ahmed Shah Abdali. Similarly, also by Akali Nihang Baba Dip Singh Ji according to Giani Gian Singh (1888).

This 32-named kavach is a revered practice among the old Gursikhs, evident in various handwritten *pothā*. For the convenience of the Gursikhs, this *pāṭh* has been meticulously transcribed from old manuscripts and made available in printed form after the necessary corrections by Giani Gurwinder Singh Ji:

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ॥ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ॥

ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ ਹੈ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਅਥ ਭਗਉਤੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਵਚ ਲਿਖਯਤੇ॥ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ
੧੦॥ ਖੜਗ ਖੰਡਾ ਅਸੀ ਅਰਿਗਰਿ ਧਰਮਰੱਛਿ ਤੱਗਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥ ਬਿਸ੍ਵਪਾਲਿ ਭੂਪਾਲਿਪੱਛ ਪਲਭੱਛ ਰਣਕੱਛ ਅੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥੧॥ ਰਾਜਮੰਡਾ
ਅਤਿਪ੍ਰਚੰਡਾ ਈਸ਼੍ਵਰੀ ਕਰਵਾਰਿ ਹੈਂ॥ ਸਕਤਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਨੀ ਬਿਸਨਵੀ ਭਵਾਨੀ ਤੂੰ ਤਰਵਾਰਿ ਹੈਂ॥੨॥ ਨਿਤਜਿਯੋਤੀ ਮੁਕਤਿਦਾਇਕ
ਧਾਰਾਧਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਹੈਂ॥ ਚੰਡਿਕਾ ਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਜਗਤ ਜਨਨੀ ਕਾਲਿਕਾ ਗੁਨਖਾਨਿ ਹੈਂ॥੩॥ ਅਕਾਲਜਿਯੋਤੀ ਨਿਹਕਲੰਕਾ ਮਹਾਬਲੀ
ਧ੍ਰਿਤਮਾਨਿ ਹੈਂ॥ ਭਵਮਾਨਕਾ ਖਲਹਾਨਕਾ ਰੱਤਪਾਨਕਾ ਜਗਮਾਨਿ ਹੈਂ॥੪॥ ਇਹ ਕਵਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਕੇ ਬਤੀਸਾ ਪਵੈ ਜੇ ਨਿਤ ਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥ ਰਣਿ
ਜੀਤ ਲਹੈ ਨ੍ਰਿਭੀਤ ਰਹਿ ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਪਾਵੈ ਅੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥੫॥ ਲਹਿ ਬੇਦ ਭੇਦ ਜੇ ਪਵੈ ਬਿਪ੍ਰ ਬੈਸਯ ਧਨ ਸੁਖ ਸੰਪਤਾ॥ ਧਨ ਧਾਮ ਤਨ
ਅਰੋ ਗ ਸੂਦਰ ਪਾਇ ਸੁਖ ਅਕੰਪਤਾ॥੬॥੧॥ ਦੋਹਰਾ॥ ਇਹ ਬੋਲਾ ਹਰਿਗੋ ਬਿੰਦ ਕਾ ਸੁਣੋ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਬੀਰ॥ ਫਤਿਹ ਪਾਉ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਮੈ
ਪਕੜ ਹਾਥਿ ਸਮਸੀਰ॥੧॥ ਦੋਹਰਾ॥ ਯਾ ਬਿਧਿ ਨਾਮ ਉਚਾਰ ਬਿਧ ਪੁਨਾ ਕਰਯੋ ਪਰਯੋਗ॥ ਪਾਠ ਸਵਾ ਲੱਖ ਹਵਨ ਕਰ ਜੀਤ ਜੰਗ
ਤਬ ਹੋਗ॥

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ॥ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ॥

*Ik Oankār srī vāhigurū jī kī phatiha hai || srī bhagautī jī sahāi || atha bhagautī brahama kavaca
likhyate || pātīsāhī 10 || khaṛaga khaṇḍā asī arigari dharamaracchi taggachattrī || bisvapālī
bhūpālipaccha palabhaccha raṇakaccha attrī ||1 || rājamaṇḍā atipracāṇḍā īsvarī karavāri haiṅ ||
sakati brahamanī bisanavī bhavānī tūntaravāri haiṅ ||2 || nitajiyotī mukatidāika dhārādhara kripāna
haiṅ || caṇḍikā mritu jagata janānī kālikā gunakhāni haiṅ ||3 || akālajiyotī nihakalaṅkā mahābalī
dhritamāni haiṅ || bhavamānakā khalahānakā rattapānakā jagamāni haiṅ ||4 || iha kavaca brahamā
ko batīsā paḍhai jo nita chattrī || raṇi jīta lahai nrībhīta rahi ridhi sidhi pāvai attrī ||5 || lahi beda
bheda jo paḍhai bipra baisaya dhana sukha saṅpatā || dhana dhāma tana aro ga sūdara pāi sukha
akaṅpatā ||6 ||1 || doharā || iha bolā harigobīnda kā suṇo khālasā bīra || phatiha pāu maidāna mai*

pakar hāthi samasīra ||1 || doharā || yā bidhi nāma ucāra bidha punā karayo parayoga || pāṭha savā
lakkha havana kara jīta jaṅga taba hoga ||

The Guru also symbolised His contemporary battle with the mythological battles of the goddess Chandi versus the demons. According to Sukha Singh, writing in 1797, the Guru expounded the *Markaṇḍe Purāṇ* in the *sangat*, and from this came *Chaṇḍī Charitra* and *Chaṇḍī Charitra Ukati Bilās*. He wished to inspire the Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims to fight the bigoted Imperialism of the time. Some of the verses for battle within these compositions are very famous.¹ Writing in relation to the Chandi episode which shall follow in this chapter, Sukha Singh writes that the Guru composed the charitras of the Devi in *Bhākhā* and that it was recited to the Sikhs. The Guru himself writes ‘*pahile Chaṇḍī Charitra banayo. nakh sikh te kram bhākh sunāyo* - I first wrote the *Chaṇḍī Charitra*. I spoke and told it in order from top to toe’. If we take the account of Sukha Singh to be reliable then this may also mean that the Guru explained it as a *kathā* to the *sangat*. Chandi is employed by the Guru as a literary personification of the *Shaktī* or the eternal power of Akal, and is symbolised physically as weapons primarily in the form of the double-edged broad sword (*Khaṇḍā*) and the *Kirpān*. The Chandi compositions were said as ‘incantations’ in *Shastra Pūjā* (worship of weapons) where an offering of *Bhaṅg/Sukhā* (cannabis) is also made.² The Tenth Guru would often lead righteous warriors in reciting Goddess Chandi's Path and participate in its recitation himself.

We can see this also in the accounts by Kankan (1696), Kuir Singh (1751) and Kavi Santokh Singh (1843). The ninth chapter of *Gurbilās Pātshāhī Dasavī* (1797) by Sukha Singh mentions how Guru Gobind Singh was reciting Brahm Kavach and *Chaṇḍī Charitra* while performing a *havan* to make the Goddess appear at Naina Devi prior to the creation of the Khalsa:

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰ ਸੁ ਕਵਚ ਆਦਿੰ ਜੁ ਪਾਠ । ਦਿਨ ਰੈਣ ਠਾਂਢਿ ਠਾਟੰਤ ਠਾਣ । ਸਤਮੈ ਕਥਾਨ ਕਥਤੇ ਨਿਧਾਨ । ਜੋ ਗਿਨੈ ਸੁਧ
ਬੇਦਾਨ ਜਾਨ |20|

¹ Kuir Singh, *Gurbilās Pātshāhī 10*, ed. S. S. ‘Ashok’, (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1999), verse 65:165. Kuir Singh (1751) quotes from the *Bachitra Nāṭak*.

² Sukha Singh, *Gurbilās Pātshāhī 10*, ed. G. K. Jaggi, (Patiala: Bhasha Vibhag, 2000), p. 244. We find all of this in the practices of the Buddha Dal. Furthermore, the festival and rites of Dussherā which is also detailed by Sukha Singh (verse 138) is again their practice. The Buddha Dal have a scripture called the *Dussherā Mahātam Granth* which contains all the full details of the aforementioned practice, and accompanying compositions from the DG.

Braham Kavach and other similar *bani*; would be recited day and night while standing with music; the 700 *Salokas* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇ* [the *Chaṇḍī Charitra*] was expounded on by the Treasury [Guru Gobind Singh]; which has been carefully explained in the Vedas. ਜਿਹ ਭੁਜਾ ਆਠ ਰਾਜਤ ਅਨੁਪ । ਖਗੁ ਸੈਫ ਸਾਂਗ ਧਨੁ ਥਿਰੁ ਸਰੁਪ ।

It describes the Goddess, who is beautifully adorned with eight arms, whose form resides in the *Kharag* [double edged sword], *Saif* [straight sword], *Sāṅg* [metal Spear] and the *Dhanuk* [Bow].

Bhai Sukha Singh, *Gurbilās Pātshāhī 10* (1797), Chapter 9.

Also see:

ਸੁਨਿ ਕਰਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਲਗੀਧਰ ਬੋਲੇ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪਯਾਰੇ!

ਕਾਲ ਕੋਚ ਤਨ ਪਹਿਰਨ ਕੀਨੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕੋਚ ਉਰ ਧਾਰੇ ॥੧੪ ॥

Guru Gobind Singh spoke ‘listen my beloved Khalsa. Wear the armour of Mahakal (Death) on your body and in your heart by reciting the Brahm Kavach.14.

Santokh Singh, *Kavī, Gur Pratāp Sūraj Granth*, ed. Bhai Vīr Singh, Volume 6.

Brahm Kavach is generally considered like a mantra. The term ‘Kavach’ refers to chain mail armor. Why do we wear chain mail armor? It serves to protect our limbs from being severed by enemy weapons, akin to modern-day bulletproof jackets or vests. Poets would often recite verses conveying similar sentiments, suggesting the importance of protective gear. In contemporary times, chain mail armor has become outdated. It used to be made of metal, known as *Sanjo* or *Patelan*, with variations including flat armor and chain mail. Sadh Sangat Ji, this armor serves as a literal shield, but the Mantra or Kavach, is also recited for spiritual protection. When a warrior recites the 32 named Brahm Kavach and holds the sword, it symbolizes his readiness for battle.

According to Sant Giani Inderjit Singh Ji Raqbavale, this sword that was handed over to Vishnu Ji by Brahma Ji for vanquishing the demon Mur, is a significant aspect of the Khalsa's *Rahit* (code of conduct), as taught by Kalgidhar Patshah. We as devotees of Guru Nanak's house, wear the sword to uphold righteousness and combat tyranny. The sword embodies the Timeless

energy of the Creator. Regarding weapons associated with deities, Chandi is depicted with the Kirpan, while Shiv Ji wields the *Trishūl* (Trident). Similarly, *Sudarshan Chakkar* is Vishnu Ji's weapon and Hanuman Ji is depicted with a spear. Warriors typically wield weapons they have mastered. Was the *Srī Sāhib* (sword) a manifestation of the Kaljug? No, as illustrated in the story of the demon Mur's defeat, where the sword emerged from a *Havan Kund* during a *Havan* performed by the Demi-Gods in the earlier ages.



VISHNU JI HOLDING THE SRI BHAGAUTI READING TO SLAY MUR DEMON

This mythological narration is translated by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in *Bachitra Nāṭak*, but is also from *Kalika Purāṇa*, that once Vishnu Ji was sleeping and wax dripped out of his ear, from which two demons were formed. At the same time Brahma Ji was creating the world and there was

water everywhere. The gaze of these demons fell upon Brahma Ji who was seated on a lotus flower. They started to move towards Brahma Ji violently in order to devour him. Brahma Ji saw this and told the demons. 'Parmatma (the Supreme Soul) has given me the duty to create the world, I am the creator.' The demons replied, 'We do not recognize any Creator, in fact we are the creator', and so Brahma Ji ran away to save his life. Brahma Ji reached the Himalayas, which at that time was simply made from vast areas of ice. After Brahma Ji ran away these demons started fighting with Vishnu Ji. This fight continued for a very long time, but Vishnu Ji was not able to destroy them. In the end Vishnu Ji thought of a tactic and he told the demons, 'You have won, and I have lost'. Hearing this the demons were overjoyed, and the demons told Vishnu Ji to ask for something. Vishnu Ji cleverly asked for the heads of the demons as a boon. The demons Madhu and Kaitab listened to this request and told Vishnu Ji that we cannot be killed over water because water is the source of our life. If you want to kill us, then take us to a place with no water. Vishnu Ji then took the demons to where the water was frozen and at this same place Brahma Ji was performing a havan (a ritual involving the burning of offerings). At the completion of Brahma Ji's havan, a sword appeared out of the fire and a divine revelation was given to Brahma Ji that he must take this sword and give it to Vishnu Ji, so that the demons may be destroyed. Vishnu Ji was given the sword, then he put the demons on his thigh and killed them. As Vishnu Ji killed these demons in the Himalayas by placing them upon his thighs therefore in a place there was no water the demons were collectively given the name Muro meaning a place devoid of water. Guru Gobind Singh Ji narrates that:

ਬਲ ਲਾਇ ਹਾਰੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਜਬ, ਮਯੇ ਨਾ ਅਸੁਰੇਵ ਹੈ। ਤਬ ਜਾਇ ਹਿਮਗਿਰ ਸਿਖਰ, ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਸੰਗ ਰਿਖਿ ਮੁਨਿ ਦੇਵ ਹੈ।

When the demi-gods exhausted their efforts and lost to the demons. These demons could not be killed by any of them then Brahma Ji with the rishis (spiritual seers) went to the peak of the Himalayas.

ਬਹੁ ਦਿਵਸ ਕੀਨੇ ਹਵਨ, ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਓ ਖੜਗ ਰੂਪ ਮੁਰਾਰਿ ਹੈ। ਦੁਤਿ ਕੋਟਿ ਦਾਮਨਿ ਭਾਨਸੀ, ਨਹਿ ਸਯੇ ਕੋਇ ਸੰਭਾਰ ਹੈ।੮।

For a very long time Brahma Ji performed a havan, then Akal Purakh (the timeless being) appeared in the form of a Kharag (broad sword). The radiance of that broad sword was equivalent to millions of flashes of lightning, the demi-gods could not bear the gleam of that sword.⁸.

ਤਬ ਦੇਵ ਬਾਨੀ ਭਈ ਨਭ ਤੈ, ਅਹੋ ਅਜ ਗਹਿ ਲੀਜੀਏ। ਇਸ ਸੰਗ ਮਰੁ ਕੇ ਮਾਰਕੈ, ਸਭ ਜਗਤ ਕੇ ਸੁਖ ਦੀਜੀਏ।

Then Brahma heard a divine revelation from the sky, 'O Brahma, hold the sword in your hands.

And with this kill the demon Maru and let there be tranquility in the world.’

ਸਨ ਸੁਖ ਦਾਨੀ ਦੈਵਬਾਨੀ, ਖੜਗ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਜੀ ਲਯੋ। ਪੜ੍ਹ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਕਵਚ ਬਤੀਸ ਨਾਮੰ, ਹਾਥ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਕੇ ਦਯੋ ।੯।

Hearing these peace giving words Brahma Ji proceeded to hold the broad sword.

Then Brahma Ji recited a mantra of protection consisting of 32 names of the sword and then gave the sword to Vishnu Ji.9.

ਹਰਿ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਸੋ ਮਰੂ ਮਾਰ ਕੈ, ਮੁਰਾਰੀ ਜਗ ਬਿਦਤਾਇਓ। ਫਿਰ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਸੋ ਬਿਧ ਤ੍ਰਿਪੁਰ ਕੇ, ਤ੍ਰਿਪੁਰਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਸਦਵਾਇਓ।

Vishnu Ji used that sword and killed the demon Maru and this resulted in the world calling Vishnu Ji Murari. Even though Murari is used as a name for the incarnation of Vishnu Ji who was Krishan ji as he killed the demon in his previous life.



Maharaj Sahib Ji has revered Shastars as a Pir/Guru (Mystic/Saint). *Shastars* are handheld weapons, while *Astras* are released from the hand, such as bows and arrows. We bow down in reverence to all *Shastars* and *Astars*, considering them our Gurus. Despite the historical worship

of Shastars by great Gursikhs, the practice has waned, with some associating it solely with Hindu tradition. However, where Gurbani is revered, so should *Shastars* be. Among all *Shastars*, the *Sri Sahib* (Sword) holds the utmost significance.

According to Sant Giani Inderjit Singh Ji, the sword is often likened to the tongue of the Creator. Just as food is accepted through the tongue, symbolically feeding a loved one entails them tasting the food rather than simply acknowledging it. In a similar vein, when the *pāṭhī* Singh symbolically accepts food through the Sri Sahib, it is a gesture of offering sustenance to the Creator, to bless before eating. ਕਰੀ ਪਾਕਸਾਲ ਸੋਚ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰਾ ਹੁਣਿ ਲਾਵਹ ਭੋਗ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਏ॥੨॥ *karī pākasāla soca pavitrā huṇi lāvaha bhoga hari rāe*॥2॥ Some may argue against using the term ‘*bhog*’ (offering/union) for blessing food, deeming it inappropriate, and suggest using ‘*parvan*’ instead, which is commonly associated with clothes. However, ‘*parvan*’ is reserved for clothes and *Shastar*, while ‘*bhog*’ is the appropriate term for offerings like Degh. Other articles earned through honest living are offered humbly to Maharaj (God).

After completing the *havan*, a celestial voice instructed Brahma to take the sword as it was imbued with divine power, intended to vanquish the demon Mur. Brahma, being a Brahmin, handed the sword to Vishnu, a *Kshatri*, along with a 32-named Mantra Kavach for protection. Over time, the sword passed through various hands, including those of righteous kings, the Devi when she slew demons Sumbh and Nisumbh, then to Marich (Brahma Ji’s human child), then Manu, then Satguru Maharaj. As per Sant Inderjit Singh Maharaj Ji’s *Kathā* until it came into the possession of Kalgidhar Patshah Ji, who entrusted it to the Khalsa. This divine power inherent in the sword is why it is revered as the Shiromani (greatest) *Shastar* and should not be touched with impure hands. Guru Gobind Singh Ji refers to the incident with the Devi, the Divine-Sword, and Brahm Kavach. This is in two Chandi compositions, *Chaṇḍī Charitra* and *Chaṇḍī Charitra Ukati Bilās*, viz:

ਕਬਿਤੁ॥

kabitu.

ਮਿਲਿ ਕੇ ਸੁ ਦੇਵਨ ਬਡਾਈ ਕਰੀ ਕਾਲਿਕਾ ਕੀ ਏਹੋ ਜਗ ਮਾਤ ਤੈ ਤੇ ਕਟਿਓ ਬਡੋ ਪਾਪੁ ਹੈ॥

mili ke su devana baḍāi karī kālikā kī eho jaga māta tai to kaṭio baḍo pāpu hai.

All the gods gathered and sang this Eulogy in praise of the goddess: ‘O Universal Mother, Thou hast effaced a very great sin.

ਦੈਤਨ ਕੇ ਮਾਰ ਰਾਜ ਦੀਨੋ ਤੈ ਸੁਰੇਸ ਹੂੰ ਕੋ ਬਡੋ ਜਸੁ ਲੀਨੋ ਜਗਿ ਤੇਰੋ ਈ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪੁ ਹੈ॥

daítana ke m̄ara r̄āja dīno tai suresa hūn ko baḍo jasu līne jagi tero ī pratāpu hai.

‘Thou hast bestowed on Indra the kingdom of heaven by killing the demons, Thou hast earned great reputations and Thy glory hath spread in the world.

ਦੇਤ ਹੈ ਅਸੀਸ ਦਿਜ ਰਾਜ ਰਿਖਿ ਬਾਰਿ ਬਾਰਿ ਤਹਾ ਹੀ ਪੜਿਓ ਹੈ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਉਚ ਹੂੰ ਕੋ ਜਾਪ ਹੈ॥

deta hai asīsa dija r̄āja rikhi b̄ari b̄ari tahā hī paṛio hai brahama kauca hūn ko jāpa hai.

‘All the sages, spiritual as well as royal bless Thee again and again, they have revited there the mantra called ‘Brahm-Kavach’ (the spiritual coat of mail).’

ਐਸੇ ਜਸੁ ਪੂਰ ਰਹਿਓ ਚੰਡਿਕਾ ਕੋ ਤੀਨ ਲੋਕਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਧਾਰ ਸਾਗਰ ਮੈ ਗੰਗਾ ਜੀ ਕੋ ਆਪੁ ਹੈ ॥੨੨੨॥

aise jasu pūra rahio caṇḍikā ko tīna loki jaise dhāra sāgara mai gaṅgā jī ko āpu hai ॥222॥

The praise of Chandika pervades thus in all the three worlds like the merging of the pure water of the ganges in the current of the ocean.227.

ਚੌਪਈ॥

chaupāī.

Quatrain.

ਉਸਤਤਿ ਸਬ ਹੂੰ ਕਰੀ ਅਪਾਰਾ॥

usatati saba hūn karī apārā.

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਵਚ ਕੋ ਜਾਪ ਉਚਾਰਾ॥

brahama kavaca ko jāpa ucārā.

All of them extremely eulogized the goddess and repeated the mantra known as ‘Brahm-Kavach’.

ਸੰਤ ਸੰਬੂਹ ਪ੍ਰਫੁਲਤ ਭਏ॥

saṅta saṅbūha praphulata bhae.

ਦੁਸਟ ਅਰਿਸਟ ਨਾਸ ਹੁਐ ਗਏ॥੨੨੨੧॥

dhusaṭ arisaṭ nās huai ge.2.221.

All the saints were pleased because the tyrants have been destroyed.

Returning back to the story of the Devi and Guru Gobind Singh Ji, writing in 1810, Sir John Malcolm writes that:

GURU GOVIND, agreeably to the directions he had received from two Brahmin necromancers, threw a number of magical compounds, given him by these Brahmins, into a fire, near which he continued in prayers for several days. A sword of lightning at last

burst from the flame of fire; but GOVIND, instead of seizing this sword in an undaunted manner, as he was instructed, was dazzled by its splendour, and shrunk from it in alarm. The sword instantly flew to heaven, from whence a loud voice was heard to say, 'GURU GOVIND! thy wishes 'shall be fulfilled by thy posterity, and thy followers shall daily increase.' The Brahmins were in despair at this failure; but, after deep reflection, they told GOVIND, there was still one mode of acquiring that honor, for himself, which appeared, by the decree that had been pronounced, doomed for his posterity. If he would allow them to take off his head, and throw it into the fire, he would be resuscitated to the enjoyment of the greatest glory. The Gúrú excused himself from trying this experiment, declaring that he was content that his descendants should enjoy the fruits of that tree which he had planted...by his disciples who exalt the slightest of his actions into the achievements of a divinity, or lastly by himself, for he wrote an account of his own wars, in terms more calculated to inflame the courage of his followers, than to inform the historian.'³



DASAM GURU GRANTH SAHIB, NATIONAL MUSEUM, DELHI, DEPICTING THIS HAVAN EVENT

Again, according to Malcolm's account this incident is primarily related to the Divie-Sword. I have visited the Naina Devi Mountain in India, talked to various Masters, and examined the history

³ Malcolm, J. (1810). *Sketch of the Sikhs: A Singular Nation, who Inhabit the Provinces of the Penjab, Situated Between the Rivers Jumna and Indus*. India: Asiatic Society, p. 222.

that has been censored from modern ‘Sikhism.’ This has taken a number of years. Recently we found a copper plate with the Guru’s *Nishān* (handwriting) which he presented to a Pandit, recording in this event, see below.



This ceremony is recorded in a book from the Guru’s Court called *Das Gur Katha* (1696) Kavi Kankan. Giani Gian Singh writes that Guru Gobind Singh Ji recited Braham Kavach and *Bhagautī Astotar* during Phagun 1752 VS (1695), when Pandit Keshav Das requested Guru Gobind Singh Ji to summon the goddess Chandi, Guru Ji gave him the materials to conduct a havan but he remained unsuccessful in summoning the goddess. Then Guru Ji told his Gursikhs that the real goddess Chandi is Akal Purakh’s divine power, which gives power to all, and is the Sword. While praising that power Guru Ji recited the prayers of *Ugradantī* and *Vār Bhagautī*.

ਦੇਹਿਰਾ ॥

ਛੱਕੇ ਆਦਿਕ ਉਸਤਤੀ ਬਰਨੀ ਤਬ ਗੁਰ ਜੋਇ। ਲਿਖੀ ਦਸਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮੈਂ ਜਾਨਤ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖ ਸੋਇ॥

Uggardanti and other prayers of praise were recited by the Guru at that time. They are written within the Dasam Sri Guru Granth Sahib and the Sikhs of the Guru know this.

(*Gurū Pañth Prakāsh* – Giani Gian Singh)

After giving this sermon to the Sikhs, Guru Ji put all the extra materials into the *havan*, from which a sword appeared. Guru ji took this sword in his hands and recited Braham Kavach. Day and night Guru. Some scholars have the belief that Guru Ji took their own sword out of the scabbard and recited this prayer. Some traditional scholars believe that the second time Guru Ji recited this prayer was at the request of Baba Dip Singh Ji and Bhai Mani Singh Ji at Anandpur Sahib. The

Singhs told Guru Ji that in battle the Mughals read prayers which turn away the blades of their weapons and asked Guru Ji to protect them. Hearing the humble request of the Singhs Guru Ji recited Braham Kavach and ordered the Singhs that before going into battle they should recite this prayer and told them that by doing so they would attain victory on the battlefield.

Kavi Kankan links this episode to the creation of the Khalsa Panth, through that same *Khaṇḍā* as viz:

ਚੌਪਈ॥ *chaupāi*. Quatrain.

ਤਬਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਇਹੁ ਕੀਨਾ॥

tabate gurū pañth ihu kīnā.

Thus was the Guru Panth formed.

ਹੁਕਮ ਅਵਰ ਕਾ ਰਹਿਨੁ ਨ ਦੀਨਾ॥

hukam avar kā rahinu na dīnā.

The Divine order was that the tyrants must not remain.

ਬਾਣੀ ਕਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਅਕਾਲ॥

bāṇī karī akāl akāl.

The *bani* of Akal Akal was recited.

ਚਾਰ ਬਰਨ ਜਪਿ ਹੋਹਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ॥੨੨੭॥

chār baran japi hohi nihāl.227.

All four castes reciting it became ecstatic.

ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਾ ਜਾਪੁ ਜੁ ਕਰੇ॥

akāl purakh kā jāpu ju kare.

Those who meditated on Akal Purakh.

ਸੇ ਨਰ ਕਾਲ ਫਾਸਿ ਨਹੀ ਪਰੈ॥

se nar kāl phāsi nahī paraiṅ.

Those beings never had to face the noose of death.

ਤਾਂਤੇ ਕਹੀਏ ਧੰਨ ਅਕਾਲ॥

tāṅte kahīe dhañ akāl.

Thus, they say blessed is Akal!

ਜਾਂਤੇ ਛੂਟ ਜਾਂਯ ਜਮ ਜਾਲ॥੨੨੮॥

jānte chhūt jānya jam jāl.228.

Thus, they are victorious over the web of death.228.

HOW IS A FIRE CEREMONY CONDUCTED?

The full tradition of how weapons are worshipped and the haven is conducted please see the book on the traditions of Buddha Dal by Giani Kirpal Singh. I have given a general guide here as well as referenced the Namdhari traditions. Generally, one would offer the ingredients of degh, like cardamom, cloves, sugar, pepper, etc, incense, *smagari*, and pure rose water. The materials used while performing havan are all natural and also have ayurvedic properties. The first step towards performing a *havan* is acquiring all the materials required for it. Arranging the ingredients beautifully is Feng Shui or *Vastu shastra*. The *havan kund* is beautifully decorated with flour, turmeric, sacred thread and all auspicious objects are meticulously placed around it. A *swastikā* should be drawn also, and a *trishūl* and *garvā* placed nearby. In *havan* our arms and hands are used with beauty and grace, while being seated peacefully with ease, at one place, performing *mudras* automatically. The ingredients for a havan are wooden sticks about 6'-8' long from the mango tree, ghee or clarified butter, curd, honey, flowers, fruits, *gaṅgā jal* or pure water, sacred thread, camphor, turmeric, rice, roli, mango leaves and *havan samagri* or special ingredients which are a mixture of herbs, and incense etc. The vessel used to perform the *havan* is called the '*havan kund*.' The *havan kund* is built according to *Vastu*. After arranging all the materials, people are made to sit on all four sides of it. The person performing the havan is meant to face eastwards. Firstly, the red-yellow coloured raw unspun thread is tied around the wrist and a *tilak* made on the forehead with turmeric and rice. Both these acts are accupressure based. The nerves of the wrist are pressed and then the third eye is pressed to ignite inner powers, in readiness to perform the havan. Then taking some water in one hand, touching it with two fingers of the other, each limb and sense organ is touched to purify and bless it so that it may see, hear and do good and remain healthy always. After this in the *agnī kund*, camphor and ghee-soaked mango sticks are burnt, with the thought that 'let my body, just like these wooden sticks obtain ghee (a symbol of nutrition) so that it is always healthy to be sacrificed to ignite the fire of truth in others, and be burnt in the process.' The wood needs to be cut into size of *kund*.

Seven Singhs who are clean, with washed hair, made the place clean, with *kamarkasā* as *Safarjaṅg*, cleaned with water. Draw the yantra, the two triangles and *mūl maṅtra* with *shastar*,

like a *kirpan*. With circles and eight curves with a *Bhupara*, with flour and tumeric. In a *garvā*, water is placed with *Mūl mantra* repeated. The sacred swords should also be ceremonially displayed. The *Gurū Gyatrī* – ‘*Gobiñde Mukañde Udare Apare,*’ should be recited and also *shardaī* will be offered to the *havan* and swords, plus the *jhaṭkā* of a goat, and the coconut. An *Ardāsīā* Singh says the intention. At commencement, 1. *Jap jī Sāhib, Jāp Sāhib*, 2. *Chaṇḍī dī Vār, Ugradantī bāñī*, 3. *Akāl Ustati*, 4. *Chaṇḍī Charitra dūjā*, 5. *Chaupaī Sāhib*, and with *smagrī*, we will also use conchs and drumming. The Pujari faces the east direction. At the end of the recitation. *Giān Prabodh, Shabad Hazāre 10, Chaupaī Sāhib, Zafarnāmā, Jap jī Sāhib, Anañd Sāhib, Salok,* and *Ardās* will be recited. With *jhaṭkā* of a goat, of 5 coconuts, and 5 melons, and *shardaī*, and offerings to the *havan* and swords. Langar should will be throughout.

BRAHM KAVACH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

I have included two Gurmukhi versions of the *Brahm Kavach* bani, one by Sat Sri Singh, the other by me. There are also two transliterations one, again, by Sat Sri Singh, the other by me. There are also two translations one by Balkar Singh (Oxfordvala) and the other by Sat Sri Singh.

ਖੜਗ ਖੰਡਾ ਅਸੀ ਅਰਿਗਰ ਧਰਮ ਰੱਛ ਤੱਗ ਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥ਬਿਸ੍ਵ ਪਾਲ ਭੂਪਾਲ ਪੱਛ ਪਲ ਭੱਛ ਰਣ ਕੱਛ ਅੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥ ਰਾਜ ਮੰਡਾ ਅਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡਾ
ਈਸ੍ਵਰੀ ਕਰਵਾਰ ਹੈ॥ਸ਼ਕਤਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੀ ਬੈਸ਼ਨਵੀ ਭਵਾਨੀ ਤੂੰ ਤਰਵਾਰ ਹੈ॥ਨਿਤ ਜਿਯੋਤੀ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦਾਇਕ ਧਾਰਾਧਾਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਹੈਂ॥ ਚੰਡਕਾ
ਮੰਡਕਾ ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕਾ ਜਗਤ ਜਨਨੀ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਗੁਨਖਾਨਿ ਹੈਂ॥ ਭਵ ਮਾਨਕਾ ਖਲ ਹਾਨ ਕਾ ਰੱਤ ਪਾਨਕਾ ਜਰ ਮਾਨ ਹੈਂ॥ ਇਹ ਕਵਚਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ
ਕੋ ਬਤੀਸਾ ਪਛੈ ਜੋ ਨਿਤ ਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥ਰਣ ਜੀਤ ਲੈਹ ਨਿਰਭੀਤ ਰਹਿ ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਪਾਵੈ ਅੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥ਲਹਿ ਬੇਦ ਜੋ ਪਛੈ ਬਿਪ੍ਰਬੈਸਯ ਧੰਨ ਸੁਖ
ਸੰਪਤਾ॥ ਧਨ ਧਾਮ ਤਨ ਅਰੋਗ ਸੂਦਰ ਪਾਇ ਸੁਖ ਅਕੰਪਤਾ॥ਇਹ ਬੋਲਾ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕਾ ਸੁਣੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਬੀਰ॥ਤਿਹ ਪਾਓ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਮੈ
ਪਕੜ ਹਾਥ ਸਮਸ਼ੀਰ॥ ਚੋਹਰਾ ॥ ਯਾ ਬਿਧਿ ਨਾਮ ਉਚਾਰ, ਬਿਧ ਪੁਨਾ ਕਰਯੋ ਪਰਯੋਗ ॥ ਪਾਠ ਸਵਾ ਲੱਖ ਹਵਨ ਕਰ ਜੀਤ ਜੰਗ ਤਬ
ਹੋਗ॥

kharaga kharindā asī arigara dharama racha taga chatrī. bishva pāla bhūpāla
pacha pala bhacha rana kacha atrī. rāja maṁdā ati pracamḍā īsvarī karavāra
hai. shakati brahimī baishanavī bhavānī tamū taravāra hai. nita jiyotī mukati
dāika dhārādhāra kripāna hairṁ. camḍakā maṁdakā mritakā jagata janani
kālakā gunakhāni hairṁ. bhava mānakā khala hāṁna kā rata pānakā jaga māna
hairṁ. iha kavaci brahamā ko batīsā padhai jo nita chatrī. rana jīta laiha
nirabhīta rahi ridhi sidhi pāvai trī. lahi beda jo padhai bipra baisaya dhāṁna
sukha saṁpatā. dhana dhāma tana aroga sūdara pāi sukha akāmpatā. iha bolā
harigobindā kā suno khālasā bīra. fatiha pāo maidāna mai pakara hātha
shamashīra. doharā. yā bidhi nāma ucāra bidha punā karayo parayoga. apātha
savā lakha havana kara jīta jāṁga taba hoga.

One Oankar -The Ultimate Oneness. Victory to The Supreme Wondrous Enlightener. In recognition of the Destroyer. The double edged broad sword. And the doned sword. And the chakra adorned around the neck. You are the protectors of righteousness. And the sacred thread of the warrior. In recognition of the Nurturer of the universe. The Nurturer of the land. The one higher than even the purest lotus. Yours are the many beautiful kingdoms. You are the brilliance of the sun. You are the master Creator. You are the sweet Mother. You perpetually create. With Your power and radiance. You are Goddess of Creation. You are Lakshmi and Vishnu's power. You are of Shiva himself, shakti of shakta. The sword, the sword. You are the Eternal light and liberator. Giver and provider. Sharpest edge of all blades. Wearer of the sword of mercy. As the clouds bring thunder. So You are the lightning. You the flashing sword. You are the light and heat and fury. You the Destructor and Creator in one. Mother, You that kills. Yet You that gives birth. All existence worships You. You, who moves up and down, cutting. Lover blade glistening with blood. You are respected by the whole world. The warrior who reads this –. Brahma's mantra of protection. 32 times daily. Will win all battles and abide in Fearlessness, good fortune, wealth, Prosperity and magical powers. All of these will the warrior receive. By finding this secret. By reading this scripture. The holy gain unmoving peace and honour. The merchants gain wealth and mansion. The labourer gains health and strength. To this verse by Hargobind. Listen O Khalsa warriors. Victory comes by stepping on to the battlefield. By holding the sword in hand. Couplet. This way

it has been recited. For others to read and perform pure deeds. With unbending concentration. Read this 125 000 times with the havan. And time after time victory will be sure to come.

The translated version by Sat Sri Singh Khalsa:

ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹ॥

ik o-ang kār sṛī wahegurū jī kī fateh.

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਵਚਿ॥

braham kavach.

Brahma's Fortress (Mantara of Protection).

ਖੜਗ ਖੰਡਾ ਅਸੀ ਅਰਿਗਰ ਧਰਮ ਰੱਚ ਤੱਗ ਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥

kharag khandā asī ar(i)gar dharam rach tagg chhatrī.

(You are the) [In recognition of] Kharag (twelve fist long double edge sword), Khanda (ten fist long khanda representing Mahakal), Asi (double handed sword), Arigar (enemy of the throat), Dharam Rach (guardian of Dharam), Tagg Shattri (caste string of a kshatriya, a sword belt).

ਬਿਸ਼ਵ ਪਾਲ ਭੂਪਾਲ ਪੱਛ ਪਲ ਭੱਛ ਰਣ ਕੱਛ ਅੱਤ੍ਰੀ॥

bis(h)av pāl bhūpāl pachh pal bhachh ran kachh attrī.

(You are the) [In recognition of] Bishvapaal (Nurturer of the universe), Bhupaal (Nurturer of the world) [Devour of Kings], Pal [time, moment] Pacch (Devour of time?), Ran [battle, battlefield] Kacch (Preserver of honour on the battlefield), Attrī (weapon adorning warrior).

ਰਾਜ ਮੰਡਾ ਅਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡਾ ਈਸਵਰੀ ਕਰਵਾਰ ਹੈ॥

rāj mandā at prachandā īsavrī karvār hai.

(You are the) Raj Manda (adorner of kingdoms), At Parchanda (Extremely fierce), Isvari Karvar (Sword of Shiva).

ਸ਼ਕਤਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੀ ਬੈਸ਼ਨਵੀ ਭਵਾਨੀ ਤੂੰ ਤਰਵਾਰ ਹੈ॥

s(h)akat brahemī bais(h)anvī bhavānī tū(n) tarvār hai.

(You are) Shakta (Parbati, wife of Shiva), Brahmani (Saraswati, wife of Barhma), Baishnavi (Laxmi, wife of Vishnu), Bhavaani (fierce form of Parbati), You are the Tarvaar (sword).

ਨਿਤ ਜਿਯੋਤੀ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਦਾਇਕ ਧਾਰਾਧਾਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨ ਹੈ ॥

nit jiyotī mukat dā-ek dhārādhār kripān hai.

(You are the) Nit Jiyoti (the eternal flame), Mukta Daek (granter of salvation), Dharadhaar (sword), Kirpan (sword).

ਚੰਡਕਾ ਮੰਡਕਾ ਮ੍ਰਿਤਕਾ ਜਗਤ ਜਨਨੀ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਗੁਨਖਾਨਿ ਹੈ॥

chandkā mandkā mritkā jagat janani kālka gunkhān hai.

(You are) Chandka (angry eight-armed warrior goddess Chandi), Mandka (beautifully adorned Chandi), Mritka (mother of Earth), Jagat Janani (mother of world), Kaalkaa (dark form of chandi), Gunkhaan (treasure mine of virtue).

ਭਵ ਮਾਨਕਾ ਖਲ ਹਾਨ ਕਾ ਰੱਤ ਪਾਨਕਾ ਜਗ ਮਾਨ ਹੈ॥

bhav mānkā khal hān kā ratt pānkā jag mān hai.

(You are the) Bhav Manka (virtue to the world), Khal Hanka (defeater of evil ones), Ratt Panka (drinker of blood), Jag Man (pride of the world).

ਇਹ ਕਵਚਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਕੋ ਬਤੀਸਾ ਪਢੈ ਜੋ ਨਿਤ ਛੱਤ੍ਰੀ ॥

eh kavach brahamā ko batīsā padhāi jo nit chattrī.

That Kshaytria (warrior) who reads this Kavach of Brahma of 32 (praises) daily,

ਰਣ ਜੀਤ ਲੈਹ ਨਿਰਭੀਤ ਰਹਿ ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਪਾਵੈ ਅੱਤ੍ਰੀ ॥

raṇ jīt laih nirbhīt reh ridh sidh pāvai attrī.

(he) will attain victory on the battlefield, remain fearless, and attain Ridhi Sidhi (yogic spiritual powers).

ਲਹਿ ਬੇਦ ਭੇਦ ਜੋ ਪਢੈ ਬਿਪ੍ਰਬੈਸਯ ਧੰਨ ਸੁਖ ਸੰਪਤਾ॥

leh bed bhed jo padhāi biprabais dhan sukh samptā.

A Brahmin who reads this will know the secret of the Vedas,

and a Vaish who reads with will attain comfort of wealth and family.

ਧਨ ਧਾਮ ਤਨ ਅਰੋਗ ਸੂਦਰ ਪਾਇ ਸੁਖ ਅਕੰਪਤਾ॥

dhan dhām tan arog sūdar pā-e sukh akamptā.

Wealth, home, and a body without ailments, of beautiful unswerving comfort [is attained by contemplating this mantra].

ਇਹ ਬੋਲਾ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਕਾ ਸੁਣੋ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਬੀਰ॥

eh bolā har(i)gobind kā suṇo khālsā bīr.

This utterance is of Guru Hargobind, listen Khalsa warriors !

ਫਤਿਹ ਪਾਓ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਮੈ ਪਕੜ ਹਾਥ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੀਰ॥

fateh pāo maidān mai pakar hāth s(h)ams(h)īr.

Attain victory on the battlefield holding a Shamshir (curved sword).

ਦੋਹਰਾ ॥ ਯਾ ਬਿਧਿ ਨਾਮ ਉਚਾਰ, ਬਿਧਿ ਪੁਨਾ ਕਰਯੋ ਪਰਯੋਗ॥

dohrā. yā bidh nām ūchār, bidh punā karyo paryog.

This way it has been recited for others to read and perform pure deeds with unbending concentration.

ਪਾਠ ਸਵਾ ਲੱਖ ਹਵਨ ਕਰ ਜੀਤ ਜੰਗ ਤਬ ਹੋਗ॥

pāth savā lakh havan kar jīt jang tab hog.

Read this 125 000 times with the havan, and time after time victory will be sure to come.

For the pronunciation of the romanised version:

line above letter: long vowel

line below letter: retroflex (with tongue curled back against palate)

(i) almost not audible

(h) different pronunciation possible: either 's' or 'sh'

(n) nasal ending of the vowel before

For the audio visit: <http://www.sikhnet.com/audio/brahm-kawach>

The Brahm Kavach and Kavach is also referenced in *Sri Sarbloh Granth Sahib*:

ਰਿਪੁ ਦਲ ਸਕਲ ਜੀਤ ਜਗ ਮਾਤਾ ਭੂਮਿ ਕੇ ਭਾਰ ਉਤਾਰਯੋ॥

ਦੁਸ਼ੁਬਿਧੁੰਸਨਿ ਅਸੁਰ ਸੰਘਾਰਨਿ ਸੰਤਨ ਦੂਖ ਨਿਵਾਰਯੋ॥

ਅਬਿਚਲ ਰਾਜ ਦੀਯੋ ਸੁਰਪਤਿ ਕੇ ਨਿਜ ਕਰ ਤਿਸਹਿ ਉਬਾਰਯੋ॥

ਜੈ ਜੈਕਾਰ ਭਯੋ ਸੁਰਮੰਡਲ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਸੁ ਕਵਚ ਉਚਾਰਯੋ॥ ੧੯॥੩੩੧॥

ਅਥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਰਬਲੋਹ ਕਵਚ ਲਿਖਯਤੇ॥

ਅਥ ਪ੍ਰਾਰਥਨਾ ਪੰਚ ਸ਼ਲੋਕੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਰਬਲੋਹ ਕਵਚੰ ॥

ਸਕਲਾਨਿ ਭੂਧਰਾਨਿ ਭਵੰਤਿ ਕੱਜਲ, ਪਾਤ੍ਰੰ ਭਵੰਤਿ ਸਾਗਰਾ ॥

ਬ੍ਰਿਖਛਾਨ* ਸਕਲਾਨਿ ਲੇਖਨਾ, ਉਰਬੀਯੰ ਭਵੰਤਿ ਕਾਗਰਾ ॥੧॥੨੦੮॥

If all the mountains are the ink, if all the oceans were to hold the ink, if all the trees are pens and all the land is the paper.

ਸਾਰਸ੍ਵਤੀ ਆਦਿ ਭਵੰਤਿ ਬਕਤਾ, ਲੇਖਕੰ ਭਵੰਤਿ ਗਜਾਨਨਹ ॥

ਤਦਯਪਿ ਮਹਾਤਮ ਨ ਜਾਨੰਤਿ ਰੋਮੰ, ਤ੍ਵ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਬਿਅੰਤ ਨਾਥੰ ॥੨॥੨੦੯॥

If Saraswati and other Gods and Goddess are the narrators, if Ganesh is the writer, then still not even one hair/even a little bit of his greatness they would not be able to comprehend, because Sri Sarbloh Ji your praise is without end/infinite.

ਬਿਧਿ ਭਵ ਸੇਸ ਨਾਰਦਾਦਿ ਸਾਰਦ ਕਥੰਤਿ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਨ ਪਾਵੰਤਿ ਪਾਰੰ॥

ਨੇਤਿ ਨੇਤਿ ਬਦੰਤਿ ਨਿਤਯੰ ਨ ਲਹੰਤਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਅਨੰਤ ਸਾਰੰ ॥੩॥੨੧੦॥

Brahma, Shiv, Sheshnaag, Saraswati and Naarad all say the greatness of Sri Sarbloh Ji, but they cannot comprehend His limit. For this they always call him infinite! infinite! yet still they cannot find Sri Sarbloh's limit.

ਰਿਸ਼ਿਗਨਾ ਮੁਨਿਵਰਾਦਿ ਪੁੰਗਵ ਸੂਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰਾਦਿ ਨਿਗਮੰ ਪੁਰਾਨੰ ॥

ਸ੍ਰਫੰਦ ਛੰਦ ਗਾਥਾ ਕਬਿ ਜਨਾਨਿ ਕੇਵਿਦ ਗਾਯੰਤਿ ਨਿਤਯਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਨ ਲਭੰਤਿ ਮਰਮੰ ॥੪॥੨੧੧॥

All the Rikhis, great Munis, the complicated teachings like the Vedas, Shastars, Puraan, etc, and through Kathas (discourses), poets, and Pandits, always sing (your glory) but cannot find your secret.

ਏਕ ਜੀਹ ਤ੍ਵ ਦਾਸ ਨਾਥੰ ਕਿਮ੍ ਪਾਰੰਤੀ ਕਥੰਤਿ ਨਾਮੰ ॥

ਪਾਹ ਪਾਹ ਛਮੇ ਪਰਾਯੰ ਸਰਨਯ ਸਰਨਯ ਸਰਨਯ ਨਮਾਮੀਸੰ ॥੫॥੨੧੨॥

Oh Master, your servant (I) only have one tongue, saying your names how can I reach your limits? For this reason I am in your protection (sharan) I am in your protection (sharan) forgive my faults!

(Sri Sarbloh Granth Sṛīk, Vol. 2, aṅg 374) Translation by Jvala Singh Canadavala.

The term Kavach and the Ram Kavach are also found in Adi Sri Guru Granth Sahib:

Ram Kavach

ਗੋਂਡ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥

Gond, Fifth Mehl:

ਜਾ ਕਉ ਰਾਖੈ ਰਾਖਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

One who is protected by the Protector Lord -

ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਅੰਗੁ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

the Formless Lord is on his side. ||1||Pause||

ਮਾਤ ਗਰਭ ਮਹਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਨ ਜੋਰੈ ॥

In the mother's womb, the fire does not touch him.

ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਲੋਭ ਮੋਹ ਨ ਪੇਹੈ ॥

Sexual desire, anger, greed and emotional attachment do not affect him.

ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਜਪੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥

In the Saadh Sangat, the Company of the Holy, he meditates on the Formless Lord.

ਨਿੰਦਕ ਕੈ ਮੁਹਿ ਲਾਗੈ ਛਾਰੁ ॥੧॥

Dust is thrown into the faces of the slanderers. ||1||

ਰਾਮ ਕਵਚੁ ਦਾਸ ਕਾ ਸੰਨਾਹੁ ॥

The Lord's protective spell is the armor of His slave.

ਦੂਤ ਦੁਸਟ ਤਿਸੁ ਪੇਹਤ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

The wicked, evil demons cannot even touch him.

ਜੇ ਜੇ ਗਰਬੁ ਕਰੇ ਸੇ ਜਾਇ ॥

Whoever indulges in egotistical pride, shall waste away to ruin.

ਗਰੀਬ ਦਾਸ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਸਰਣਾਇ ॥੨॥

God is the Sanctuary of His humble slave. ||2||

ਜੇ ਜੇ ਸਰਣਿ ਪਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ॥

Whoever enters the Sanctuary of the Sovereign Lord -

ਸੇ ਦਾਸੁ ਰਖਿਆ ਅਪਣੈ ਕੰਠਿ ਲਾਇ ॥

He saves that slave, hugging him close in His embrace.

ਜੇ ਕੇ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਕਰੇ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ॥

Whoever takes great pride in himself,

ਓਹੁ ਖਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਰੁਲਤਾ ਖਾਕੂ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੩॥

in an instant, shall be like dust mixing with dust. ||3||

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਾਚਾ ਹੋਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

The True Lord is, and shall always be.

ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਜਾਈ ਬਲਿਹਾਰ ॥

Forever and ever, I am a sacrifice to Him.

ਅਪਣੇ ਦਾਸ ਰਖੇ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ॥

Granting His Mercy, He saves His slaves.

ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪ੍ਰਾਣ ਅਧਾਰ ॥੪॥੧੮॥੨੦॥

God is the Support of Nanak's breath of life. ||4||18||20||