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# **An Exploration of the Twelve Months in Gurbani: The Bani of Barah Maha**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores the Barah Maha bani, a central text in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji that uses the framework of the twelve months of the Nanakshahi Calendar to illustrate the spiritual journey of a seeker. Focusing on the compositions by Guru Arjan Dev Ji in Raag Maajh and Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Raag Tukhari, this study offers a comparative analysis of the thematic, linguistic, and musical distinctions between the two compositions. By examining the emotional, natural, and theological metaphors embedded in each month's portrayal, the paper reveals how the cycle of time becomes a metaphor for divine longing, remembrance, and union. The paper also situates these banis in the broader context of Gurmat Sangeet, highlighting the unique structural components of each raag and their significance to spiritual emotion. Through detailed month-by-month reflections, the analysis brings forward the interconnectedness of inner transformation and outer natural change, emphasizing the profound depth of Sikh devotional poetry.

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### **Introduction**

In Gurbani, time is more than just a chronological construct, it's a deeply symbolic and spiritual framework through which human experience and divine connection are interpreted. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji contains several banis organized around temporal cycles, such as: quarters of the day, months, and seasons. Each of these explores the soul's journey through the metaphor of passing time. Among the most known and thematic of these is the Barah Maha (ਬਾਰਹ ਮਹਾਰਾ) banis, which directly translate to "Twelve Months." These banis appear in Sri Guru Granth Sahib twice: one authored by Guru Arjan Dev Ji in Raag Maajh and one by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Raag Tukhari. These banis use the twelve months of the Nanakshahi Calendar to provide nature, spiritual, and emotional metaphors.

The prominence of time as a narrative and educational device is further evident in other banis closely linked with units of time. Immediately following the Barah Maha bani in Raag Maajh is the bani of Dhin Rain (ਦਿਨ ਰੈਣਿ), also written by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. This

bani reflects upon the passing of day and night as symbols of impermanence and divine remembrance.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Pehrey (ਪਹਰੇ) bani in Shree Raag divides the 24-hour day into eight pehars with three-hour intervals each. This bani compares the 4 quarters of the night to four major stages of life: infancy, youth, adulthood, and old age. It further explains the importance of developing your lifestyle through the metaphor of a trader.<sup>2</sup>

Relating to the bani of Pehrey, the pehars of the day are outlined in Table 1 below to reference during the discussion of the different raags throughout this paper. There are eight pehars – four of the day and four of the night. The twenty-four hours of a day broken down into eight pehar results in three hours allotted to each pehar.<sup>3</sup>

<b>Table 1: The Division of the 24 hours of a Day into Pehar</b>		
<b>Pehar</b>	<b>Time of Day</b>	<b>Time of Night</b>
1st	6am-9am	6pm-9pm
2nd	9am-12pm (noon)	9pm-12am (midnight)
3rd	12pm-3pm	12am-3am
4th	3pm-6pm	3am-6am

With the understanding of the divisions of time through the banis of Dhin Rain and Pehrey, this paper goes in depth with the banis of Barah Maha in both raags. Through a comparative analysis, this paper will discuss the differences in Gurmat Sangeet of both raags, as well as a Gurbani analysis of both the banis.

For reference, Table 2 below includes all the months of the Nanakshahi Calendar in Punjabi and transliterated English.

<b>Table 2: The Months of the Nanakshahi Calendar</b>	
<b>Punjabi</b>	<b>Transliterated English</b>
ਚੇਤ	Chet
ਵੈਸਾਖ	Vaisakh

<b>Table 2: The Months of the Nanakshahi Calendar</b>	
ਜੇਠ	Jeyth
ਹਾੜ	Harr
ਸਾਵਣ	Saavan
ਭਾਦੋਂ	Bhadon
ਅੱਸੂ	Assu
ਕੱਤਕ	Katak
ਮੱਘਰ	Maghar
ਪੋਹ	Poh
ਮਾਘ	Maagh
ਫੱਗਣ	Phalgun

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### **Objectives**

This paper will look into the Barah Maha banis in both, Raag Maajh by Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Raag Tukhari by Guru Nanak Dev Ji from a Gurbani perspective.

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### **Raags of Barah Maha**

A raag is a certain set of ascending and descending notes that provokes a specific emotion. In Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, there are 31 shudh (raags without the influence of other raags), and 31 mishrat raags. Mishrat raags are variations of a shudh raags, a mix of two raags, a geographical variant, or a structural variant of a shudh raag.<sup>4</sup> The bani of Barah Maha has been written in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji twice: in Raag Maajh by Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Raag Tukhari by Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

### Raag Maajh

The 2nd raag in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is Raag Maajh, present from Ang 94-150. This raag is claimed to be created by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Raag Maajh is also derived from the folk music of the Maajha region of Punjab. Table 3 contains the structural components of this raag<sup>5, 6</sup>:

Table 3: Raag Maajh	
<b>Aroh</b>	SR, MP, NS'
<b>Avroh</b>	S'nDP, DMGM, RP, gRgSRN.S
<b>Thaat</b>	Khamaaj
<b>Vadi</b>	Audav-Sampooran
<b>Samvadi</b>	Rishab
<b>Jaati</b>	Pancham
<b>Pehar</b>	1st Pehar of the Night

The thaat of Raag Maajh falls under Khamaaj because nishad (N) is the only vakrit (variant of a shudh note) sur. The jaati of this raag is audav-sampooran because five notes are used in the aroh (ascending order) and all seven notes are used in the avroh (descending order). The pehar, or time of day the raag is sung, is the first pehar of the night which is from 6PM-9PM.<sup>6</sup>

### Raag Tukhari

The 22nd raag in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is Raag Tukhari. The word tukhar translates to cold, meaning that this raag is more commonly sung during winter and colder seasons. This raag is also claimed to be created by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. All the bani in this raag are written in chhants. Table 4 contains the structural components of this raag<sup>7, 8</sup>:

Table 4: Raag Tukhari	
<b>Aroh</b>	N.S, gmP, NS'
<b>Avroh</b>	S'NDP, nDP, mgRS
<b>Thaat</b>	Todi

<b>Table 4: Raag Tukhari</b>	
<b>Vadi</b>	Pancham
<b>Samvadi</b>	Shadaj
<b>Jaati</b>	Audav-Sampooran
<b>Pehar</b>	4th Pehar of the Day

The thaat of Raag Tukhari falls under Todi because madhyam (M), rishab (R), dhaivat (D), and gandhar (G) are all vakrit surs. The jaati of this raag is audav-sampooran, so five notes are used in the ascending and all seven notes are used in the descending scale. The pehar of this raag is the fourth pehar of the night which is from 3AM-6AM.<sup>8</sup>

### **Differences in the Banis**

The two compositions of Barah Maha, while sharing the same subject, have differences in formatting and structure and explain different personal experiences.

#### **Barah Maha Maajh**

Barah Maha by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, from Ang 133 through 136, contains a total of 14 stanzas. This bani begins with a padda, or stanza, with ten lines. This padda explains how one has become separated from the divine and wants to make their way to reunite themselves with the Lord.<sup>9</sup> Following the first padda, the second through the thirteenth stanzas explain the teachings of each of the twelve months in a format of nine lines per stanza. The final padda contains eight lines and summarizes the entire bani.<sup>10</sup>

In comparison to Barah Maha Tukhari, the bani of Barah Maha in Maajh has a more intellectual style because of the information provided and how it is given. This is because of the explanations, expansion of information, and the way teachings and principles are conveyed.<sup>10</sup>

#### **Barah Maha Tukhari**

The Barah Maha bani by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, from Ang 1107 through 1110, has a total of 17 stanzas.<sup>11</sup> Before the stanzas containing each of the months, the bani begins with four stanzas. The first four stanzas contain six lines each. Following this, there are twelve stanzas that follow that describe the months of the year, each containing six lines each.

The final padda contains six lines that summarize the entire bani.<sup>12, 13</sup> Given the pattern of six lines in each padda, it is noted that this bani is written in chhants. Chhants are derived from folk sangeet and are structured as four segments with six lines each.<sup>14</sup>

In comparison to Barah Maha Maajh, the bani in Raag Tukhari is more concise and formulaic in style. Guru Nanak Dev Ji also places more emphasis on describing nature in detail throughout the bani. Barah Maha in Raag Tukhari is also known to be more difficult in language due to its regional influence.<sup>10</sup>

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### **The Month of Chet - ਚੇਤ**

Chet is the first month of the Nanakshahi Calendar. Beginning in mid-March to mid-April, Chet signifies the Sikh New Year. The beginning of this month also signifies the start of early spring where flowers begin to bloom, trees bud, and the weather begins to warm up. This also marks the beginning of the harvest season in Punjab, especially for crops like wheat which are harvested on Vaisakhi. This month sometimes overlaps with Holla Mohalla as well as pre-Vaisakhi preparations.<sup>15, 16, 17</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Chet**

The “month of Chet” appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at various occasions in various spellings, implying grammatical and rhythmic changes. In Barah Maha Maajh, Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਚੇਤਿ. In Barah Maha Tukhari, Guru Nanak Dev Ji states the month as ਚੇਤੁ in the first line of the fifth padda or stanza, and ਚੇਤਿ in the last line of the fifth padda. The month of Chet is mentioned in the bani of Barah Maha, as well as in Raag Asa by Guru Ramdas Ji and Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. The reference of Chet by Guru Ramdas Ji in Raag Asa is as follows<sup>18</sup>:

ਚੜਿ ਚੇਤੁ ਬਸੰਤੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਭਲੀਅ ਰੁਤੇ ॥

*In the month of Chayt, O my dear beloved, the pleasant season of spring begins.*

In this padda, Chet is highlighted as the beginning of spring, as mentioned earlier. Specifically, Guru Ramdas Ji emphasizes how spring does not begin unless we focus ourselves on our Guru. Everything we do ties back to our Guru and our love for the Devine, overall portraying Chet as a month of new beginnings.

<b>Table 5: Chet in Barah Maha</b>	
<b>Raag Maajh<sup>19</sup></b>	<b>Raag Tukhari<sup>13</sup></b>
<p>ਚੇਤਿ ਗੋਵਿੰਦੁ ਅਰਾਧੀਐ ਹੋਵੈ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਘਣਾ ॥  ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾ ਮਿਲਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਰਸਨਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਭਣਾ ॥  ਜਿਨਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਏ ਤਿਸਹਿ ਗਣਾ ॥  ਇਕੁ ਖਿਨੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਜੀਵਣਾ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਜਣਾ ॥  ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਮਹੀਅਲਿ ਪੂਰਿਆ ਰਵਿਆ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਣਾ ॥  ਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਕਿਤੜਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਗਣਾ ॥  ਜਿਨੀ ਰਾਵਿਆ ਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਤਿੰਨਾ ਭਾਗੁ ਮਣਾ ॥  ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਨ ਕੰਉ ਮਨੁ ਲੇਚਦਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਆਸ ਮਨਾ ॥  ਚੇਤਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ ਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਤਿਸ ਕੈ ਪਾਇ ਲਗਾ ॥੨॥</p>	<p>ਚੇਤੁ ਬਸੰਤੁ ਭਲਾ ਭਵਰ ਸੁਹਾਵੜੇ ॥  ਬਨ ਫੂਲੇ ਮੰਡ ਬਾਰਿ ਮੈ ਪਿਰੁ ਘਰਿ ਬਾਹੁੜੇ ॥  ਪਿਰੁ ਘਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਵੈ ਧਨ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਬਿਰਹਿ  ਬਿਰੋਧ ਤਨੁ ਛੀਜੈ ॥  ਕੇਕਿਲ ਅੰਬਿ ਸੁਹਾਵੀ ਬੋਲੈ ਕਿਉ ਦੁਖੁ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਹੀਜੈ ॥  ਭਵਰੁ ਭਵੰਤਾ ਫੂਲੀ ਡਾਲੀ ਕਿਉ ਜੀਵਾ ਮਰੁ ਮਾਏ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਚੇਤਿ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਜੇ ਹਰਿ ਵਰੁ ਘਰਿ ਧਨ  ਪਾਏ ॥੫॥</p>

### **Chet in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes that if one remembers the Divine in Chet, they become truly blessed. In the month of Chet, Guru Sahib encourages us to reflect on spiritual renewal by asking whether we can end our separation from the One this year. As spring brings new life to earth, this time of natural rebirth becomes a metaphor for inner transformation. True joy doesn't come from worldly success, but from a deep connection with Ik Onkar. By engaging in the remembrance of Naam and learning from those who live in constant awareness of the Divine, we move closer to this union. Forgetting the Lord brings emptiness while remembrance brings quiet fulfillment. As the new year begins, Guru Arjan Dev Ji invites us to change not just our surroundings, but also our inner world.<sup>20</sup>

### **Chet in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji contrasts the outer beauty of spring with inner pain of separation if the Divine is forgotten. The arrival of spring is used to symbolize conscious renewal and emotional awakening. As nature begins to bloom, the cuckoo sings, the mango trees blossom, and bees hover around flowers, the seeker is invited to reflect on their own inner state. This is not a season of passive observation, but of emotional connection, where the external environment mirrors the possibility of inner transformation. If the seeker is aligned with this renewal, they prepare for the return of the Divine into their heart, entering a state of sehaj (peace). But if the mind is clouded with sorrow and disconnection, the joy of spring remains external, and the pain of separation deepens. Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasizes that seasons will change regardless, but how we respond determines whether

we remain distant or move closer to the One. The warmth of spring reminds us that, like the sun behind clouds, the presence of the Lord never disappears.<sup>21</sup>

### **The Month of Vaisakh - ਵੈਸਾਖ**

The Nanakshahi Calendar's second month is Vaisakh, beginning in mid-April through mid-May. Vaisakh aligns with the harvest festival in Punjab as the weather warms up, and crops, especially wheat, are ready for harvest. Trees become fuller, flowers continue to bloom, but by the end of the month, summer heat begins to make its way in. The formation of the Khalsa panth by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in 1699, Vaisakhi, falls under this month as well.<sup>22</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Vaisakh**

The “month of Vaisakh” appears in bani only once besides its presence in the Barah Maha in Raag Maajh. In Barah Maha Maajh, Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਵੈਸਾਖਿ in its first reference and as ਵੈਸਾਖੁ in its second reference. In Tukhari, Guru Nanak Dev Ji states the month as ਵੈਸਾਖੁ in the first line of the sixth padda and ਵੈਸਾਖੀ in the last line of the sixth padda. Besides Barah Maha, Vaisakh appears in the same shabad in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji as the month of Chet and also Bhai Gurdas Ji's vaars. In Raag Ramkali Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਵੈਸਾਖ.<sup>23</sup>

ਰੁਤਿ ਸਰਸ ਬਸੰਤ ਮਾਹ ਚੇਤੁ ਵੈਸਾਖ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਸੁ ਜੀਉ ॥

*The season of spring is delightful; the months of Chayt and Baisaakhi are the most pleasant months.*

This chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji references both the month of Chet and Vaisakh. They are shown as the most pleasant months as they capture the beginning of spring<sup>23</sup>. In more detail, the one who devotes himself to the Lord becomes joyful in the month of Chet and is full of happiness in the month of Vaisakh. The season of spring seems more delightful than ever for this individual.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 6: Vaisakh in Barah Maha**

<b>Raag Maajh<sup>19</sup></b>	<b>Raag Tukhari<sup>13</sup></b>
ਵੈਸਾਖਿ ਧੀਰਨਿ ਕਿਉ ਵਾਢੀਆ ਜਿਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਬਿਛੋਰੁ ॥	ਵੈਸਾਖੁ ਭਲਾ ਸਾਖਾ ਵੇਸ ਕਰੇ ॥

**Table 6: Vaisakh in Barah Maha**

<p>ਹਰਿ ਸਾਜਨੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਕੈ ਲਗੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਧੋਹੁ ॥  ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤ੍ਰ ਨ ਸੰਗਿ ਧਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ਓਹੁ ॥  ਪਲਚਿ ਪਲਚਿ ਸਗਲੀ ਮੁਈ ਝੂਠੈ ਧੰਧੈ ਮੋਹੁ ॥  ਇਕਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਗੈ ਲਈਅਹਿ ਖੋਹਿ ॥  ਦਯੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਵਿਗੁਚਣਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਚਰਣੀ ਜੇ ਲਗੇ ਤਿਨ ਕੀ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸੋਇ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥  ਵੈਸਾਖੁ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ ਤਾਂ ਲਗੈ ਜਾ ਸੰਤੁ ਭੇਟੈ ਹਰਿ ਸੋਇ ॥੩॥</p>	<p>ਧਨ ਦੇਖੈ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਆਵਹੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰੇ ॥  ਘਰਿ ਆਉ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਦੁਤਰ ਤਾਰੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਢੁ ਨ ਮੋਲੇ ॥  ਕੀਮਤਿ ਕਉਣ ਕਰੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵਾਂ ਦੇਖਿ ਦਿਖਾਵੈ ਢੋਲੇ ॥  ਦੂਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਮਾਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਮਹਲੁ ਪਛਾਨਾ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਵੈਸਾਖੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਾ ॥੬॥</p>
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### Vaisakh in Barah Maha Raag Maajh

Guru Arjan Dev Ji explains that Vaisakh becomes meaningful only if one engages in Simran (remembrance of Waheguru) and keeps the company of the Guru or the holy (Sangat). Guru Sahib explores the quiet pain of spiritual disconnection, contrasting the joy of the harvest season with the inner turmoil of those separated from Ik Onkar. Though life may seem full, without awareness of the Divine, it feels rootless, like a crop cut from its source. Many become distracted by material attachments and worldly routines, unaware of the deep longing within. Guru Arjan Dev Ji reminds us that true fulfillment comes not from rituals or social success, but from aligning our actions with remembrance of the Lord through Naam. Only through humble surrender and heartfelt devotion can we overcome this sense of emptiness and rediscover lasting joy. Vaisakhi becomes truly meaningful not through external celebration, but through inner transformation and reconnection with the Lord.<sup>25</sup>

### Vaisakh in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari

Guru Nanak Dev Ji reflects that despite the richness and fertility of Vaisakh, without God, the month is empty and painful. The blossoming of spring, once again, is used to reflect the seeker's longing for union with the Divine. Just as dormant branches begin to spout again, Vaisakh symbolizes personal renewal and the realization that growth happens in its own time. The season is marked by joy and celebration, yet the seeker's joy feels incomplete without the presence of the Divine. In this moment of external abundance, the seeker pleads for the Beloved to enter the heart, recognizing that without this union, all worldly gains are meaningless. The seeker knows the Beloved is close, even within, but longs to truly feel that presence. Through conscious immersion in Wisdom, the dry inner branch can blossom once more, mirroring the transformation all around. This is a time not

only of outer festivity, but of inner awakening where union with the Divine makes life truly valuable.<sup>26</sup>

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### **The Month of Jeyth - ਜੇਠ**

Jeyth is the third month of the Nanakshahi Calendar. From mid-May through mid-June, Jeyth is the month where the heat slowly makes its way in. In Punjab, the weather begins to get hotter and dry winds begin. The beginning of this month symbolizes the end of the harvest season, as after the wheat is cut in Vaisakh, the land is left ready for monsoon crops.<sup>27</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Jeyth**

The “month of Jeyth” appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji only once besides its presence in the Barah Maha in Raag Maajh and Tukhari. Both Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Arjan Dev Ji use two different spellings of the month in Barah Maha: ਜੇਠਿ and ਜੇਠੁ. Their occurrences are different, but similar to that of the month of Vaisakh. Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਜੇਠਿ in its first reference, and ਜੇਠੁ in its second. Guru Nanak Dev Ji, on the other hand, mentions the month as ਜੇਠੁ in the first line of the seventh padda, and ਜੇਠਿ in the last line of the padda. Besides Barah Maha, Jeyth appears in a chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, similar to the previous months discussed. In Raag Ramkali, Guru Arjan Dev Ji mentions the month as ਜੇਠੁ.<sup>28</sup>

ਗ੍ਰੀਖਮ ਰੁਤਿ ਅਤਿ ਗਾਖੜੀ ਜੇਠ ਅਖਾੜੈ ਘਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥

*In the summer season, in the months of Jayt'h and Asaarh, the heat is terrible, intense and severe.*

This chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji references both the month of Jeyth and Harr. They are described as months where the heat is intense and severe, and relate it back to how we are disconnected from our love for the Lord.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, it is related to an unfortunate woman whose husband doesn't look at her, which in turn causes her to burn. She forgets about her Lord-husband and continues to suffer. When she becomes fearful of her sins, she then turns to her Lord for protection.<sup>29</sup>

<b>Table 7: Jeyth in Barah Maha</b>	
<b>Raag Maajh<sup>30</sup></b>	<b>Raag Tukhari<sup>13</sup></b>
<p>ਹਰਿ ਜੇਠਿ ਜੁੜਦਾ ਲੇੜੀਐ ਜਿਸੁ ਅਗੈ ਸਭਿ ਨਿਵੰਨਿ ॥  ਹਰਿ ਸਜਣ ਦਾਵਣਿ ਲਗਿਆ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਬੰਨਿ ॥  ਮਾਣਕ ਮੇਤੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਉਨ ਲਗੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਸੰਨਿ ॥  ਰੰਗ ਸਭੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣੈ ਜੇਤੇ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੰਨਿ ॥  ਜੇ ਹਰਿ ਲੇੜੇ ਸੇ ਕਰੇ ਸੇਈ ਜੀਅ ਕਰੰਨਿ ॥  ਜੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਕੀਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੇਈ ਕਹੀਅਹਿ ਧੰਨਿ ॥  ਆਪਣ ਲੀਆ ਜੇ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਿਛੁੜਿ ਕਿਉ ਰੇਵੰਨਿ ॥  ਸਾਧੂ ਸੰਗੁ ਪਰਾਪਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਰੰਗ ਮਾਣੰਨਿ ॥  ਹਰਿ ਜੇਠੁ ਰੰਗੀਲਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਧਈ ਜਿਸ ਕੈ ਭਾਗੁ ਮਥੰਨਿ ॥੪॥</p>	<p>ਮਾਹੁ ਜੇਠੁ ਭਲਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮੁ ਕਿਉ ਬਿਸਰੈ ॥  ਥਲ ਤਾਪਹਿ ਸਰ ਭਾਰ ਸਾ ਧਨ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰੈ ॥  ਧਨ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰੇਦੀ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਰੇਦੀ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਾਵਾ ॥  ਸਾਚੈ ਮਹਲਿ ਰਹੈ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ਆਵਣ ਦੇਹਿ ਤ ਆਵਾ ॥  ਨਿਮਾਣੀ ਨਿਤਾਣੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਵੈ ਸੁਖ ਮਹਲੀ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਜੇਠਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੈਸੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਗੁਣ ਗਹਿਲੀ  ॥੭॥</p>

### **Jeyth in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji explains that even the most beautiful month becomes torture if the soul is disconnected from Waheguru. In the month of Jeyth, Guru Sahib uses the intense heat to mirror the inner restlessness and longing for union with the Divine. As nature shifts and summer intensifies, we're invited to reflect on what we truly surrender to: worldly power, possessions, or the fear-removing sovereign One. We're reminded that while material things seem valuable, only the eternal jewel of Naam brings lasting peace and fulfillment. Surrendering to the Divine brings inner stability, freeing us from the anxieties tied to impermanent things. This surrender aligns our thoughts and actions with the primal force, making our lives a reflection of divine harmony. The heat of life's challenges doesn't scorch those who are centered in this relationship. True transformation comes not only through personal effort, but also through the grace of Ik Onkar.<sup>31</sup>

### **Jeyth in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji compares the earth to a blazing pan, with the sun like fire, but the soul-bride offers loving devotion regardless of the pain. The scorching summer heat of Jeyth is used as a metaphor for the seeker's inner burning caused by the five vices: lust, anger, greed, attachment, and ego. Just as the body longs for a cool breeze or shade during this harsh season, the soul longs for relief from inner turmoil. This relief comes through the love and remembrance of Ik Onkar. Even the hope of union offers comfort, like spotting water in the distance. Guru Nanak Dev Ji explains that singing the virtues of the Beloved cools the heart and brings one closer to the Divine. True detachment, not from the world but from worldly distractions, allows the seeker to dwell in the Eternal's presence. This

detachment is emotional, musical, and rooted in the longing for the Lord. The seeker knows that union is only possible through grace, and when that grace is received, the seeker becomes virtuous. In that state, the burning separation is soothed.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Month of Harr - ਹਾੜ**

The fourth month of the Nanakshahi Calendar is Harr. From mid-June to mid-July, peak summer heat hits Punjab. The weather is severely hot and dry, and water scarcity increases as rivers shrink. Many crops dry out and trees lose their lushness. However, the rainy season begins towards the end of June. A significant event during the month of Harr is our fifth guru, Guru Arjan Dev Ji's shaheedi.<sup>33</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Harr**

The month of Harr or Aasaarh appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji only once besides its presence in the Barah Maha in Raag Maajh and Tukhari, similar to the month of Jeyth. Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Arjan Dev Ji use the same spelling of the month: ਆਸਾੜੁ. Besides Barah Maha, Harr appears in the same chhant in Raag Ramkali as the month of Jeyth. In Raag Ramkali, Guru Arjan Dev Ji mentions the month as ਅਖਾੜੈ.

**Table 8: Harr in Barah Maha**

Raag Maajh <sup>30</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>13</sup>
<p>ਆਸਾੜੁ ਤਪੰਦਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਲਗੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਹੁ ਨ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਪਾਸਿ ॥  ਜਗਜੀਵਨ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕੈ ਮਾਣਸ ਸੰਦੀ ਆਸ ॥  ਦੁਯੈ ਭਾਇ ਵਿਗੁਚੀਐ ਗਲਿ ਪਈਸੁ ਜਮ ਕੀ ਫਾਸ ॥  ਜੇਹਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਸੇ ਲੁਣੈ ਮਥੈ ਜੇ ਲਿਖਿਆਸੁ ॥  ਰੇਣਿ ਵਿਹਾਈ ਪਛੁਤਾਈ ਉਠਿ ਚਲੀ ਗਈ ਨਿਰਾਸ ॥  ਜਿਨ ਕੇ ਸਾਧੂ ਭੇਟੀਐ ਸੇ ਦਰਗਹ ਹੋਇ ਖਲਾਸੁ ॥  ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਆਪਣੀ ਤੇਰੇ ਦਰਸਨ ਹੋਇ ਪਿਆਸ ॥  ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਕੇ ਨਹੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥  ਆਸਾੜੁ ਸੁਹੰਦਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਲਗੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਚਰਣ ਨਿਵਾਸ  ॥੫॥</p>	<p>ਆਸਾੜੁ ਭਲਾ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਗਗਨਿ ਤਪੈ ॥  ਧਰਤੀ ਦੂਖ ਸਰੈ ਸੇਖੈ ਅਗਨਿ ਭਖੈ ॥  ਅਗਨਿ ਰਸੁ ਸੇਖੈ ਮਰੀਐ ਧੋਖੈ ਭੀ ਸੇ ਕਿਰਤੁ ਨ ਹਾਰੇ ॥  ਰਬੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਛਾਇਆ ਧਨ ਤਾਕੈ ਟੀਡੁ ਲਵੈ ਮੰਝਿ ਬਾਰੇ ॥  ਅਵਗਣ ਬਾਧਿ ਚਲੀ ਦੁਖੁ ਆਗੈ ਸੁਖੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਦੀਆ ਮਰਣੁ ਜੀਵਣੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਨਾਲੇ  ॥੮॥</p>

### **Harr in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes the month of Harr as a painful month for those distant from Waheguru. The intense heat is used as a powerful metaphor for the inner anguish caused by separation from Ik Onkar. Just as the earth burns under the sun, so does the heart of the seeker who feels distant from the One, consumed by restlessness and longing. This inner heat stems from being caught in illusions, such as worldly desires and attachments, that distract us from our true source of peace and joy. Guru Arjan Dev Ji reminds us that our actions and thoughts shape our path, and washing life in forgetfulness of the One leads to regret when it's too late. Like a bride who misses her moment of union, we lose precious time chasing temporary loves. However, through the guidance of the Guru and the company of the wise, we can realign ourselves with the eternal, find inner calm, and transform the heat into a time of spiritual clarity.<sup>34</sup>

### **Harr in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji explains how the month of Harr continues the emotional drought: the soul-bride feels burnt and spiritually lifeless. The intensifying summer heat is used to reflect the seeker's internal struggles with the five vices. The earth scorches under the sun, vegetation withers, and even bodies of water dry up, mirroring how hope can feel distant during spiritual drought. Yet, the month is still considered "good" because the earth continues to bear the heat, reminding us that enduring difficulty is part of life's journey. The seeker longs for shade, both physical and emotional, but unlike the previous month, even signs of relief are scarce. Still, the seeker who remains centered in love and remembrance of the Divine finds strength. This connection offers protection, even in youth, when impulses burn strongest. Guru Nanak Dev Ji reminds us that pain and comfort are cyclical like the seasons. The seeker who accepts this truth stays devoted knows that moments of separation are not permanent. With the unwavering consciousness of the One, even in suffering, the seeker finds peace and strength in the promise of union to come.<sup>35</sup>

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### **The Month of Saavan - ਸ਼ਵਣ**

Saavan is the fifth month of the Nanakshahi Calendar. From mid-July to mid-August, Punjab is known for its monsoon season. Heavy rainfall and cloudy skies follow the harsh, dry summers of Harr. The month of Saavan is also when rivers revive following droughts, fields turn green, and trees rejuvenate; however, at the same time floods may also occur. Saavan is also traditionally associated with romance, beauty, and emotional longing in Indian poetry.<sup>36</sup>

### Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Saavan

The “month of Saawan” appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at various occasions. Contributors, including Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Guru Angad Dev Ji, Guru Amardas Ji, Guru Ramdas Ji, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, and Bhagat Farid Ji have all written a bani that talks about the month of Saavan. Various banis mention this month, all in varying raags, such as Shree Raag, Raag Maajh, Gauri, Asa, Vadhans, Ramkali, Tukhari, Sarang, and most notably, Raag Malhar. Due to the vast number of shabads mentioning Saavan, no specific examples will be included like the previous months.

The 27th raag in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is Raag Malhar. It is considered a seasonal raag as it is mainly sung during the rainy season, or monsoon season, which falls under the month of Saavan. Table 9 contains the structural components of this raag<sup>37, 38</sup>:

Table 9: Raag Malhar	
<b>Aroh</b>	SRGM, MRP, nDNS'
<b>Avroh</b>	S'DnPM, GMR, RN.S
<b>Thaat</b>	Khamaaj
<b>Vadi</b>	Madhyam
<b>Samvadi</b>	Shadaj
<b>Jaati</b>	Sampooran Jaati
<b>Pehar</b>	Monsoon Season

The thaat of Raag Malhar falls under Khamaaj because Nishad (N) is the only vakrit sur. The jaati of this raag is sampooran because all seven notes are used in the ascending and descending scales. The pehar of this raag is generalized to the monsoon season, meaning it can be sung at any time of day during this time of year.<sup>38</sup>

Table 10: Saavan in Barah Maha	
Raag Maajh <sup>30</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>13</sup>
ਸਾਵਣਿ ਸਰਸੀ ਕਾਮਣੀ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲ ਸਿਉ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਰਤਾ ਸਚ ਰੰਗਿ ਇਕੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰੁ ॥	ਸਾਵਣਿ ਸਰਸ ਮਨਾ ਘਣ ਵਰਸਹਿ ਰੁਤਿ ਆਏ ॥ ਮੈ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਸਹੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਪਿਰ ਪਰਦੇਸਿ ਸਿਧਾਏ ॥

**Table 10: Saavan in Barah Maha**

ਬਿਖਿਆ ਰੰਗ ਕੂੜਾਵਿਆ ਦਿਸਨਿ ਸਭੇ ਛਾਰੁ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬੁੰਦ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੀ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਧੂ ਪੀਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਵਣੁ ਤਿਣੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਉਲਿਆ ਸੰਮ੍ਰਥ ਪੁਰਖ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਮਿਲਣੈ ਨੇ ਮਨੁ ਲੋਚਦਾ ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਜਿਨੀ ਸਖੀਏ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੰਉ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸਦ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਮਇਆ ਕਰਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਵਾਰਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ਸਾਵਣੁ ਤਿਨਾ ਸੁਹਾਗਣੀ ਜਿਨ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਉਰਿ ਹਾਰੁ ॥੬॥	ਪਿਰੁ ਘਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਆਵੈ ਮਰੀਐ ਹਾਵੈ ਦਾਮਨਿ ਚਮਕਿ ਡਰਾਏ ॥ ਸੇਜ ਇਕੇਲੀ ਖਰੀ ਦੁਹੇਲੀ ਮਰਣੁ ਭਇਆ ਦੁਖੁ ਮਾਏ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਨੀਦ ਭੂਖ ਕਹੁ ਕੈਸੀ ਕਾਪੜੁ ਤਨਿ ਨ ਸੁਖਾਵਏ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾ ਸੋਹਾਗਣਿ ਕੰਤੀ ਪਿਰ ਕੈ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਮਾਵਏ ॥੮॥
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### Saavan in Barah Maha Raag Maajh

Guru Arjan Dev Ji describes Saawan as beautiful and lush, but without Divine remembrance, all that beauty is empty. The joyful monsoon season and cultural imagery of happily married women are used to explore the inner joy of a seeker united with the Divine. As the parched earth longs for rain, so does the soul yearn for a connection with Ik Onkar. True happiness comes not from outward festivities, but from deep love and submission to the Lord. This union transforms the seeker, washing away the poisons of attachment and illusion through Naam. Just as the rain nourishes the earth, divine union allows the inner self to flourish. Those who live in this love radiate with grace and contentment, wearing the jewel of Shabad. Guru Sahib reminds us that we are all soul-brides invited into a sacred union that brings us closer to the Lord.<sup>39</sup>

### Saavan in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari

Guru Nanak Dev Ji brings us into the season of rain, beauty, and celebration. The world around the seeker comes alive: friends gather under mango trees, laughter fills the air, and the landscape feels replenished after the scorching heat. But for the seeker, this external joy brings internal turmoil. If everything is blooming and adorned, yet the mind remains dry and lonely, what meaning does celebration hold? The seeker watches others rejoice and adorn themselves, yet feels emptiness in the absence of true connection. All efforts to beautify and prepare feel pointless if the Beloved does not come. This reflection leads to a powerful realization: physical presence or rituals alone do not guarantee intimacy. True union is not performative but emotional and spiritual. The seeker does not seek material things, but instead the experience of love and presence. The lesson of Saavan is that adornment without connection is empty, and joy without presence is hollow. It is the inward embrace of the Beloved, not outward show, that brings true fulfillment.<sup>40</sup>

### The Month of Bhadon - ਭਾਦੋਂ

The Nanakshahi Calendar's sixth month is Bhadon, which spans from mid-August to mid-September. During this month, the monsoon season continues with heavy rain, thunderstorms, and dark clouds. Bhadon also serves as a transition from monsoon season to early autumn. This month is also significant, as Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji's first prakash purab falls during this time.<sup>41</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Bhadon**

The "month of Bhaadon" appears once in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji besides its reference in both the Barah Maha banis. In Barah Maha in Raag Maajh, Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਭਾਦੁਇ, whereas Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Raag Tukhari spells it as ਭਾਦਉ. Similar to the previous months explained, this month is referenced in a chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. In that bani, Guru Sahib mentions the month as ਭਾਦਵੇ.<sup>42</sup>

ਰੁਤਿ ਬਰਸੁ ਸੁਹੇਲੀਆ ਸਾਵਣ ਭਾਦਵੇ ਆਨੰਦ ਜੀਉ ॥

*The rainy season is beautiful; the months of Saawan and Bhaadon bring bliss.*

This chhant references both the month of Saavan and Bhadon. They are described as beautiful rainy seasons where the clouds fall low, filled with rain.<sup>42</sup> Guru Arjan Dev Ji creates a visual that explains that the clouds are bowing down, and everywhere only fragrant water is filled with water. In the same way, those whose houses are filled with the nine treasures of Waheguru's naam begin to see the Guru everywhere and in everyone.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 11: Bhadon in Barah Maha**

Raag Maajh <sup>30</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>13</sup>
ਭਾਦੁਇ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਈਆ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਗਾ ਹੇਤੁ ॥ ਲਖ ਸੀਗਾਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਕਾਰਜਿ ਨਾਰੀ ਕੇਤੁ ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਦਿਨਿ ਦੇਹ ਬਿਨਸਸੀ ਤਿਤੁ ਵੇਲੈ ਕਹਸਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਤੁ ॥ ਪਕੜਿ ਚਲਾਇਨਿ ਦੂਤ ਜਮ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦੇਨੀ ਭੇਤੁ ॥ ਛਡਿ ਖੜੋਤੇ ਖਿਨੈ ਮਾਹਿ ਜਿਨ ਸਿਉ ਲਗਾ ਹੇਤੁ ॥ ਰਥ ਮਰੇੜੈ ਤਨੁ ਕਪੇ ਸਿਆਹਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਸੇਤੁ ॥ ਜੇਹਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਸੇ ਲੁਣੈ ਕਰਮਾ ਸੰਦੜਾ ਖੇਤੁ ॥	ਭਾਦਉ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲੀ ਭਰਿ ਜੇਬਨਿ ਪਛੁਤਾਈ ॥ ਜਲ ਥਲ ਨੀਰਿ ਭਰੇ ਬਰਸ ਰੁਤੇ ਰੰਗੁ ਮਾਈ ॥ ਬਰਸੈ ਨਿਸਿ ਕਾਲੀ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਬਾਲੀ ਦਾਦਰ ਮੇਰ ਲਵੰਤੇ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਿਉ ਚਵੈ ਬਬੀਹਾ ਬੇਲੇ ਭੁਇਅੰਗਮ ਫਿਰਹਿ ਡਸੰਤੇ ॥ ਮਛਰ ਡੰਗ ਸਾਇਰ ਭਰ ਸੁਭਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਪੂਛਿ ਚਲਉ ਗੁਰ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਜਹ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਤਹ ਹੀ ਜਾਈਐ ॥੧੦॥

**Table 11: Bhadon in Barah Maha**

ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਰਣਾਗਤੀ ਚਰਣ ਬੇਹਿਥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦੇਤੁ ॥ ਸੇ ਭਾਦੁਇ ਨਰਕਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਰਖਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੇਤੁ ॥੧॥	
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### **Bhadon in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes turning to God and holy company for clarity and peace. The month of Bhadon's thick, humid atmosphere and rising doubts of the season are used to symbolize the seeker's inner restlessness and confusion when disconnected from Ik Onkar. Just as swarms of insects emerge after the rain, doubts cloud our minds, pulling us toward external distractions and away from true love and focus. Good deeds alone, without heartfelt devotion, are empty, like a beautifully adorned bride waiting in vain for a groom who never arrives. Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes that liberation doesn't come through counting our actions or trying to control outcomes, but through surrender, love, and trust in the wisdom of the Divine. As worldly attachments fade and the illusions of permanence unravel, we are reminded that only the boat of Naam can carry us through life's turbulent waters. In this way, Bhadon becomes not just a season of unrest, but a call to anchor ourselves in divine love.<sup>43</sup>

### **Bhadon in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji describes the turmoil of Bhadon that mirrors the soul's inner confusion and cries for God's help. The seeker grapples with deep internal doubt, even as the world around them is full of abundance and joy. Despite the beauty of nature and youthful potential, separation from the Divine (the Spouse) leaves the seeker feeling empty and lost. True fulfillment doesn't come from intellect alone, but from deep identification with Ik Onkar, which brings a transformative, all-encompassing wisdom. While external happiness may distract us, it is only through the guidance of the Guru and the gift of wisdom that this inner darkness and doubt can be dispelled. This identification becomes the nectar that nourishes and heals the soul: something we cannot obtain on our own but must receive through spiritual connection and sincere longing.<sup>44</sup>

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### **The Month of Assu - ਅੱਸੁ**

Assu is the seventh month of the Nanakshahi Calendar, spanning from mid-September to mid-October. Signifying early autumn, the month of Assu brings cooler temperatures, leaves start to change color, and harvest season for some crops begins. This is also the

time where birds from Siberia migrate to Punjab to protect themselves from the cold weather of Siberia.<sup>45</sup>

### Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Assu

The “month of Assu” only has one other occurrence in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji besides its presence in Barah Maha in Raag Maajh and Tukhari. Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਅਸੁਨਿ at its first mention and ਅਸੂ at its second, while Guru Nanak Dev Ji states the month as ਅਸੁਨਿ both times. As previously mentioned, this month is referenced in a chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. In that bani, Guru Sahib mentions the month as ਅਸੂ as well.<sup>46</sup>

ਰੁਤਿ ਸਰਦ ਅਡੰਬਰੇ ਅਸੂ ਕਤਕੇ ਹਰਿ ਪਿਆਸ ਜੀਉ ॥

*In the cool, autumn season, in the months of Assu and Katik, I am thirsty for the Lord.*

This chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji references both the months of Assu and Katak. Guru Sahib places an emphasis on uniting oneself with the Lord, as without that connection, everything is useless.<sup>46</sup> All the jewels, garlands, and bracelets seem painful. Guru Arjan Dev Ji gives a metaphor that a woman may be beautiful and wise, but without her connection to the Guru, she’s like a body without breath. She is deprived of the Lord and begins looking in all directions to meet the Lord.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 12: Assu in Barah Maha**

Raag Maajh <sup>47</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>13</sup>
<p>ਅਸੁਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਉਮਾਹੜਾ ਕਿਉ ਮਿਲੀਐ ਹਰਿ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਪਿਆਸ ਦਰਸਨ ਘਣੀ ਕੋਈ ਆਇ ਮਿਲਾਵੈ ਮਾਇ ॥ ਸੰਤ ਸਹਾਈ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੇ ਹਉ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਲਾਗਾ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਵਿਣੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਦੂਜੀ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਜਿੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਚਾਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਰਸੁ ਸੇ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਰਹੇ ਆਪਾਇ ॥ ਆਪੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਬਿਨਤੀ ਕਰਹਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਲੜਿ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਜੇ ਹਰਿ ਕੰਤਿ ਮਿਲਾਈਆ ਸਿ ਵਿਛੁੜਿ ਕਤਹਿ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਵਿਣੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਕੇ ਨਹੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਸਰਣਾਇ ॥ ਅਸੂ ਸੁਖੀ ਵਸੰਦੀਆ ਜਿਨਾ ਮਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ॥੮॥</p>	<p>ਅਸੁਨਿ ਆਉ ਪਿਰਾ ਸਾ ਧਨ ਝੂਰਿ ਮੁਈ ॥ ਤਾ ਮਿਲੀਐ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੇਲੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਭਾਇ ਖੁਈ ॥ ਝੂਠਿ ਵਿਗੁਤੀ ਤਾ ਪਿਰ ਮੁਤੀ ਕੁਕਰ ਕਾਹ ਸਿ ਫੁਲੇ ॥ ਆਗੈ ਘਾਮ ਪਿਛੈ ਰੁਤਿ ਜਾਡਾ ਦੇਖਿ ਚਲਤ ਮਨੁ ਡੋਲੇ ॥ ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਸਾਖ ਹਰੀ ਹਰੀਆਵਲ ਸਹਜਿ ਪਕੈ ਸੇ ਮੀਠਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਸੁਨਿ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਏ ਬਸੀਠਾ ॥੧੧॥</p>

### **Assu in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji explains how Assu is a time when love and spiritual longing deepen, but the pain of separation from the Divine remains. Guru Sahib speaks of the deep comfort and joy that arises from a heartfelt connection with Ik Onkar. As the climate cools and nature settles, the seeker-bride longs for a love that is not temporary, but eternal. This yearning is not just for companionship but for the embrace of the Divine-Groom, whose love brings lasting peace. While worldly relationships fade, the love for the Lord, once awakened, never leaves. We're reminded that true guidance comes from those who have already experienced this divine union, and through humility and submission to the Guru, we are gently led into the arms of the Divine. The comfort we seek comes from clinging to the hem of the Beloved, just as a child seeks refuge in a mother's embrace. This union offers not just solace, but the eternal home of the heart, where love is constant and separation dissolves. In this, Assu becomes a month of returning and recognizing that only divine love provides the comfort we truly seek.<sup>48</sup>

### **Assu in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji describes the soul-bride who reflects deeply during Assu, preparing herself spiritually for reunion. The seeker deeply longs for union with the Divine, recognizing that this connection can only happen through the will of the Beloved and not by their own effort alone. While earlier months were filled with doubt and wavering, Assu brings clarity and a plea for presence, but also an awareness that duality and distractions prevent true invitation. The seeker reflects on past struggles and the in-between space they now occupy, feeling both the urgency of time and the hope that comes from witnessing the slow ripening of nature. This season teaches patience and trust in divine timing. Just as fruit takes time to ripen, so does the seeker's spiritual journey. The green world around them mirrors their own inner growth, offering reassurance that longing itself is part of the path. In this state, the seeker hungers not for material things, but for a divine meeting, calling on the eternal wisdom to act as the matchmaker who facilitates their union with the Beloved.<sup>49</sup>

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### **The Month of Katak - ਕੱਤਕ**

The eighth month of the Nanakshahi Calendar, Katak, spans from mid-October to mid-November. The autumn season and early winter weather make up this month, with cooler temperatures, windy days, and falling leaves. Katak is full of events including the Gurburab of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Bandi Chor Diwas.<sup>50</sup>

### Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Katak

The “month of Katak” appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji twice besides its presence in Barah Maha in Maajh and Tukhari. In Raag Maajh, Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਕਤਿਕਿ in its first reference and ਕਤਿਕ in its second. In Raag Tuhari, Guru Nanak Dev Ji mentions the month as ਕਤਿਕ in its singular mention. Besides Barah Maha, Katak is mentioned in a shabad in Raag Asa by Bhagat Fareed Ji as ਕਤਿਕ, and the same Raag Ramkali chhant as the month of Assu and stated as ਕਤਕੇ.

**Table 13: Katak in Barah Maha**

Raag Maajh <sup>47</sup>	Raag Tuhari <sup>51</sup>
<p>ਕਤਿਕਿ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਵਣੇ ਦੇਸੁ ਨ ਕਾਹੂ ਜੋਗੁ ॥  ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਤੇ ਭੁਲਿਆਂ ਵਿਆਪਨਿ ਸਭੇ ਰੋਗ ॥  ਵੇਮੁਖ ਹੋਏ ਰਾਮ ਤੇ ਲਗਨਿ ਜਨਮ ਵਿਜੋਗ ॥  ਖਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਕਉੜੇ ਹੋਇ ਗਏ ਜਿਤੜੇ ਮਾਇਆ ਭੋਗ ॥  ਵਿਚੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਕਰਿ ਸਕੈ ਕਿਸ ਥੈ ਰੇਵਹਿ ਰੇਜ ॥  ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਧੁਰਿ ਸੰਜੋਗ ॥  ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਤਰਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਬਿਓਗ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਰਾਖਿ ਲੇਹਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਬੰਦੀ ਮੋਚ ॥  ਕਤਿਕ ਹੋਵੈ ਸਾਧਸੰਗੁ ਬਿਨਸਹਿ ਸਭੇ ਸੋਚ ॥੯॥</p>	<p>ਕਤਕਿ ਕਿਰਤੁ ਪਇਆ ਜੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਾਇਆ ॥  ਦੀਪਕੁ ਸਹਜਿ ਬਲੈ ਤਤਿ ਜਲਾਇਆ ॥  ਦੀਪਕ ਰਸ ਤੇਲੇ ਧਨ ਪਿਰ ਮੇਲੇ ਧਨ ਓਮਾਰੈ ਸਰਸੀ ॥  ਅਵਗਣ ਮਾਰੀ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਸੀਝੈ ਗੁਣਿ ਮਾਰੀ ਤਾ ਮਰਸੀ ॥  ਨਾਮੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਦੇ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਅਜਹੁ ਤਿਨਾੜੀ ਆਸਾ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਕਪਟ ਦਰ ਖੇਲਹੁ ਏਕ ਘੜੀ ਖਟੁ ਮਾਸਾ  ॥੧੨॥</p>

### Katak in Barah Maha Raag Maajh

Guru Arjan Dev Ji talks about how the soul continues to feel the pain of separation but also draws closer through humility and remembrance. We are urged to turn inward and take ownership of our own actions rather than blaming others. As the coolness of the season offers external relief, it mirrors the internal opportunity for reflection. While cultural practices this month often focus on ritualistic devotion, Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes that true transformation begins not with outward actions, but with inner awakening and alignment with Ik Onkar. Separation from the Divine is the root of all suffering, no matter how much we indulge in worldly pleasures or adorn ourselves. We are given a message of hope that though we must face the consequences of our choices, we are not condemned to remain in separation forever. With grace and guidance from the Guru, the path toward union is possible.<sup>52</sup>

### **Katak in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasizes that the soul experiences internal darkness without the Divine, despite the light and celebration outside. Katak represents a spiritual harvest where the seeker begins to reap the fruits of earlier efforts. This month, marked by Diwali, symbolizes lighting the lamp of wisdom fueled by love, rather than external rituals. Guru Nanak Dev Ji explains that only deeds rooted in Wisdom, the Shabad and Naam lead to true inner awakening and a natural state of remembrance. The seeker overcomes the illusion of separation from the Divine, understanding that true death is the death of ego and self-centeredness. Replacing non-virtues with virtues, each moment becomes filled with connection to Ik Onkar. Though union with the Beloved may still be awaited, the seeker is content and hopeful, having laid the spiritual foundation and lit the lamp within their body and being.<sup>53</sup>

### **The Month of Maghar - ਮੱਘਰ**

Maghar is the ninth month of the Nanakshahi Calendar. From mid-November to mid-December, cold and dry winds arrive and temperatures drop as winter settles in. Trees have shed their leaves, leaving them bare, reminding people that deep winter months are arriving. By the end of Maghar, thick fog covers roads and fields. A significant event in Sikh history that takes place during the month of Maghar is the Gurgaddi of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.<sup>54</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Maghar**

The “month of Maghar” appears only once besides the Barah Maha banis. In Raag Maajh, Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਮੱਘਿਰਿ in both of its occurrences, whereas Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Raag Tukhari spells the month as ਮੱਘਰ. The only other appearance of this month in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is in a chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, similar to the previous months. In this bani, Guru Sahib states the month as ਮੱਘਰ like Guru Nanak Dev Ji.<sup>55</sup>

ਰੁਤਿ ਸਿਸੀਅਰ ਸੀਤਲ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਮੱਘਰ ਪੇਹਿ ਜੀਉ ॥

*In the cold season of Maghar and Poh, the Lord reveals Himself.*

This chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji references both the months of Maghar and Poh. During these cold months, all my desires have been met, and I have so much love for the Lord.<sup>55</sup> While seeking the love of God, the fear of death is gone, and there is no longer an absence of the love of the Lord in their hearts.<sup>29</sup>

<b>Table 14: Maghar in Barah Maha</b>	
<b>Raag Maajh<sup>47</sup></b>	<b>Raag Tukhari<sup>51</sup></b>
<p>ਮੰਘਿਰਿ ਮਾਹਿ ਸੇਹੰਦੀਆ ਹਰਿ ਪਿਰ ਸੰਗਿ ਬੈਠੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਤਿਨ ਕੀ ਸੇਭਾ ਕਿਆ ਗਈ ਜਿ ਸਾਹਿਬਿ ਮੇਲੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਉਲਿਆ ਰਾਮ ਸਿਉ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਧ ਸਹੇਲੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਤੇ ਬਾਹਰੀ ਸੇ ਰਹਨਿ ਇਕੇਲੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਤਿਨ ਦੁਖੁ ਨ ਕਬਹੂ ਉਤਰੈ ਸੇ ਜਮ ਕੈ ਵਸਿ ਪੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਜਿਨੀ ਰਾਵਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਸੇ ਦਿਸਨਿ ਨਿਤ ਖੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਰਤਨ ਜਵੇਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਹਰਿ ਕੰਠਿ ਤਿਨਾ ਜੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਂਛੈ ਯੂੜਿ ਤਿਨ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਰਈ ਦਰਿ ਪੜੀਆਹ ॥  ਮੰਘਿਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਆਰਾਧਣਾ ਬਹੁੜਿ ਨ ਜਨਮੜੀਆਹ ॥੧੦॥</p>	<p>ਮੰਘਰ ਮਾਹੁ ਭਲਾ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਮਾਵਏ ॥  ਗੁਣਵੰਤੀ ਗੁਣ ਰਵੈ ਮੈ ਪਿਰੁ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਭਾਵਏ ॥  ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਚਤੁਰੁ ਸੁਜਾਣੁ ਬਿਧਾਤਾ ਚੰਚਲੁ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਬਾਇਆ ॥  ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਗੁਣ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਮਾਏ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਾਣੇ ਤਾ ਭਾਇਆ ॥  ਗੀਤ ਨਾਦ ਕਵਿਤ ਕਵੇ ਸੁਣਿ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਭਾਰੈ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾ ਧਨ ਨਾਹ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਅਭ ਭਗਤੀ ਪਿਰ ਆਰੈ  ॥੧੩॥</p>

### **Maghar in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes remembrance and meditation on Naam to provide warmth and shelter during the cold months. He emphasizes the spiritual beauty and peace that comes from union with Ik Onkar. He describes the seeker as a bride whose true radiance shines not through external adornments, but through deep inner connection with the Divine-Groom. This union brings freedom from worldly suffering, fear, and separation, and instead fills the heart with lasting joy and grace. Being in the company of those who have achieved this connection inspires others to awaken their own inner light. Guru Arjan Dev Ji encourages reflection on how we can seek the guidance of the wise and cultivate a relationship with the One, finding stability, love, and liberation beyond life's struggles.<sup>56</sup>

### **Maghar in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji talks about how the soul endures the cold and isolation but clings to hope through devotion. The cold month of Maghar symbolizes a natural pause and dormancy, yet Guru Sahib teaches that this time is still good if the seeker carries the virtues of the eternal Lord within. Though the world changes and fades, the seeker's inner virtues become imperishable, allowing them to embody the Beloved in thought and action. This deep identification brings forth spontaneous songs and poems that soothe the pain of separation without needing conscious effort. True remembrance is not mere recitation, but a heartfelt, cherished experience that nourishes the soul even in coldness. Having lived much of the spiritual journey already, the seeker's devotion now flows naturally. It cannot

be forced or learned, but arises from within, bringing them ever closer to the Beloved despite external conditions.<sup>57</sup>

### **The Month of Poh - ਪੋਹ**

Poh is the tenth month of the Nanakshahi Calendar, beginning in mid-December through mid-January. This month brings peak winter weather, with foggy mornings, cold winds, and short daylight hours in Punjab. Poh is usually the time of rest and preservation before the new agricultural cycle begins. This month also leads up to Lohri, a festival celebrated on the last day of Poh.<sup>58</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Poh**

The “month of Poh” appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji once besides its presence in Barah Maha in Raags Maajh and Tukhari. In Raag Maajh, Guru Arjan Dev Ji states the month as ਪੋਖਿ in its first reference and ਪੋਖੁ in its second. In Raag Tukhari, Guru Nanak Dev Ji mentioned the month as ਪੋਖਿ as well. Besides Barah Maha, Poh is mentioned in the same Raag Ramkali chhant as Maghar, and it stated as ਪੋਹਿ.

**Table 15: Poh in Barah Maha**

Raag Maajh <sup>47</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>51</sup>
<p>ਪੋਖਿ ਤੁਖਾਰੁ ਨ ਵਿਆਪਈ ਕੰਠਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਹੁ ॥  ਮਨੁ ਬੋਧਿਆ ਚਰਨਾਰਬਿੰਦ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਲਗੜਾ ਸਾਹੁ ॥  ਓਟ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਰਾਇ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਲਾਹੁ ॥  ਬਿਖਿਆ ਪੋਹਿ ਨ ਸਕਈ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਧੂ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਹੁ ॥  ਜਹ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੀ ਤਹ ਮਿਲੀ ਸਚੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਸਮਾਹੁ ॥  ਕਰੁ ਗਹਿ ਲੀਨੀ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮਿ ਬਹੁੜਿ ਨ ਵਿਛੁੜੀਆਹੁ ॥  ਬਾਰਿ ਜਾਉ ਲਖ ਬੇਰੀਆ ਹਰਿ ਸਜਣੁ ਅਗਮ ਅਗਾਹੁ ॥  ਸਰਮ ਪਈ ਨਾਰਾਇਣੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਰਿ ਪਈਆਹੁ ॥  ਪੋਖੁ ਸੁਹੰਦਾ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਜਿਸੁ ਬਖਸੇ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੁ ॥੧੧॥</p>	<p>ਪੋਖਿ ਤੁਖਾਰੁ ਪੜੈ ਵਣੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਣੁ ਰਸੁ ਸੋਖੈ ॥  ਆਵਤ ਕੀ ਨਾਹੀ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਵਸਹਿ ਮੁਖੈ ॥  ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਜਗਜੀਵਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਰੰਗੁ ਮਾਈ  ॥  ਅੰਡਜ ਜੇਰਜ ਸੇਤਜ ਉਤਭੁਜ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਈ ॥  ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦੇਹੁ ਦਇਆਪਤਿ ਦਾਤੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਵਉ ਮਤਿ ਦੇਹੇ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਵੈ ਰਸਿ ਰਸੀਆ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਸਨੇਹੇ  ॥੧੪॥</p>

### **Poh in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji shows how Poh represents spiritual coldness and the testing of faith. Guru Sahib highlights how the harsh winter symbolizes life’s challenges, but explains that those united with Ik Onkar remain protected and peaceful despite external difficulties.

While frost freezes nature and cold affects all living beings, the seeker embraced by the beloved One is shielded by divine love, which warms the heart and mind beyond physical pain or fear. This spiritual union offers an unshakable refuge that no hardship can disturb. Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes the power of joining virtuous company and singing the praises of the Divine to strengthen this connection, breaking mental and emotional bonds. Ultimately the seeker's surrender to the eternal Sovereign transforms winter's cold into inner warmth and joy, reminding us that true protection and fulfillment come from union with the One, not relying on temporary, worldly support during difficult times.<sup>59</sup>

### **Poh in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji explains how the soul experiences darkness but finds hope in Divine remembrance. The harsh winter month of Poh represents a time when nature appears frozen and paused, prompting the seeker to question whether their inner love and remembrance will also pause. Despite shorter days and feelings of lethargy, the seeker knows that the Beloved precatates all life and remains present even during this dormant season. Rather than looking outward, the seeker turns inward, asking the Beloved to reveal themselves within through the Word of Wisdom. This internal remembrance sustains the seeker, keeping their love alive and vibrant despite external harshness. Those who reach this state continuously enjoy and savor the love of the Divine, living fully immersed in that presence.<sup>60</sup>

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### **The Month of Maagh - ਮਾਘ**

The eleventh month of the Nanakshahi Calendar is Maagh, spanning from mid-January to mid-February. This month marks the end of winter and the early spring transition. During the month of Maagh, days get longer, plants and animals come back to life, and the weather begins to warm up. Farmers begin preparing their fields for the upcoming harvest season.<sup>61</sup>

### **Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Maagh**

The “month of Maagh” appears in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji only once besides its presence in the banis of Barah Maha. Both Guru Arjan Dev Ji in Raag Maajh and Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Raag Tukhari state the month as ਮਾਘ in all of its references. Besides Barah Maha, Maagh appears in the same shabad in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji as the past months. In Raag Ramkali, the month is stated as ਮਾਘ.

The 25th raag in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is Raag Basant. When the month of Maagh begins, Raag Basant is sung through Holla Mohalla. It is considered a seasonal raag as it

is mainly sung during the spring which falls under the month of Maagh. Table 16 contains the structural components of this raag<sup>62, 63</sup>:

Table 16: Raag Basant	
<b>Aroh</b>	SGMDNS'
<b>Avroh</b>	S'NDPMGRS
<b>Thaat</b>	Bilaval
<b>Vadi</b>	Shadaj
<b>Samvadi</b>	Madhyam
<b>Jaati</b>	Audav-Sampooran
<b>Pehar</b>	Spring Season

The thaat of Raag Basant falls under Bilaval because only shudh notes are used, no vakrit forms are used. The jaati of this raag is audav-sampooran because five notes are used in the ascending scale and all seven notes are used in the descending scale. The pehar of this raag is generalized to the spring season, meaning it can be sung at any time of day during this season.<sup>62</sup> Raag Basant also has a mishrat raag called Raag Basant Hindol.

Table 17: Maagh in Barah Maha	
Raag Maajh <sup>64</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>51</sup>
<p>ਮਾਘਿ ਮਜਨੁ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਧੂਆ ਧੂੜੀ ਕਰਿ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ॥  ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇ ਸੁਣਿ ਸਭਨਾ ਨੇ ਕਰਿ ਦਾਨੁ ॥  ਜਨਮ ਕਰਮ ਮਲੁ ਉਤਰੈ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਜਾਇ ਗੁਮਾਨੁ ॥  ਕਾਮਿ ਕਰੇਧਿ ਨ ਮੇਹੀਐ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਲੇਭੁ ਸੁਆਨੁ ॥  ਸਚੈ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲਦਿਆ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਕਰੇ ਜਹਾਨੁ ॥  ਅਠਸਠਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਸਗਲ ਪੁੰਨ ਜੀਅ ਦਇਆ ਪਰਵਾਨੁ ॥  ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਦੇਵੈ ਦਇਆ ਕਰਿ ਸੇਈ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸੁਜਾਨੁ ॥  ਜਿਨਾ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੁ ॥  ਮਾਘਿ ਸੁਚੇ ਸੇ ਕਾਂਢੀਅਹਿ ਜਿਨ ਪੂਰਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ॥੧੨॥</p>	<p>ਮਾਘਿ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਭਈ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥  ਸਾਜਨ ਸਹਜਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਹਿ ਅੰਕਿ ਸਮਾਨਿਆ ॥  ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਗੁਣ ਅੰਕੇ ਸੁਣਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬੰਕੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵਾ ਸਰਿ ਨਾਵਾ ॥  ਗੰਗ ਜਮੁਨ ਤਹ ਬੇਈ ਸੰਗਮ ਸਾਤ ਸਮੁੰਦ ਸਮਾਵਾ ॥  ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਪੂਜਾ ਪਰਮੇਸੁਰ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਏਕੇ ਜਾਤਾ ॥  ਨਾਨਕ ਮਾਘਿ ਮਹਾ ਰਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਜਪਿ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਨਾਤਾ  ॥੧੫॥</p>

### **Maagh in Barah Maha Raag Maajh**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji shows that Maagh symbolizes spiritual cleansing through humility, meditation, and company of the holy. Guru Sahib challenges the common belief that physical rituals, like bathing in holy rivers or visiting pilgrimage sites, alone can cleanse the mind and bring one closer to the divine. He teaches that true purification comes not from external acts, but from inner transformation, specifically through the guidance of the Guru which washes away ego, pride, and restless desires. Instead of relying on rituals, real liberation arises from cultivating compassion, humility, and love. Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasizes that purity is a matter of the heart, made possible by surrendering to the One's grade and embracing the inner light of Naam. This teaching encourages reflection on whether traditional practices genuinely serve spiritual growth or if they simply follow societal expectations, inviting us to redefine purity as an inner state nurtured by connection with the Lord.<sup>65</sup>

### **Maagh in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji describes how the soul renews hope and devotion, preparing for spiritual awakening. Marking the end of harsh winter and the beginning of new growth, the month of Maagh is symbolized as the seeker's internal awakening and renewed potential. While many undertake external pilgrimages and rituals to cleanse themselves and seek the Divine, Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasizes that true holiness comes from an internal pilgrimage. This inward journey nurtured through companionship or sangar, and living in a state of sehaj, allows the seeker to embody the virtues of the One and become dear to the Beloved. Unlike external rituals, this inner cleansing transforms the seeker from within, making them truly sacred. The month is also linked to cultural festivals celebrating union, but the seeker understands that genuine union is found through internal identification with Ik Onkar. Repetition of Naam becomes a joyful, creative act, evolving from mechanical practice to heartfelt devotion, deepening the seeker's connection to the eternal Light.<sup>66</sup>

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### **The Month of Phalgun - ਫੱਗਣ**

The twelfth and final month of the Nanakshahi Calendar is Phalgun. Spanning from mid-February to mid-March, spring makes its transition, with warmer weather, flowers blooming, and green fields. During Phalgun, farmers in Punjab prepare for the spring sowing season. Celebrations including Holla Mohalla occur during this month.<sup>67</sup>

### Gurbani Perspective on the Month of Phalgun

The “month of Phalgun” appears twice in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji besides its presence in Raag Maajh and Tukhari in the banis of Barah Maha. Guru Arjan Dev Ji, in Raag Maajh, states the month as ਫਲਗੁਣਿ in both of its occurrences. On the other hand, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, in Raag Tukhari, states the month as ਫਲਗੁਨਿ. The other appearances of the month of Phalgun are in a shabad in Raag Basant by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, and also in Raag Ramkali like the previous months. In Raag Ramkali, the month is referred to as ਫਗਣੁ.<sup>68</sup>

ਹਿਮਕਰ ਰੁਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵਤੀ ਮਾਘ ਫਗਣੁ ਗੁਣਵੰਤ ਜੀਉ ॥

*The snowy winter season, the months of Maagh and Phagun, are pleasing and ennobling to the mind.*

This chhant in Raag Ramkali by Guru Arjan Dev Ji references both the months of Maagh and Phalgun. During these snowy months, the love and connection with the Guru is made.<sup>68</sup> The woman is so engrossed by the Lord, to where she sees the world and nature around her as green. The woman who meets their husband-Lord has her wish fulfilled as long as she continues to chant his name.<sup>69</sup>

**Table 18: Phalgun in Barah Maha**

Raag Maajh <sup>64</sup>	Raag Tukhari <sup>51</sup>
ਫਲਗੁਣਿ ਅਨੰਦ ਉਪਾਰਜਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਜਣ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਆਇ ॥ ਸੰਤ ਸਹਾਈ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਦੀਆ ਮਿਲਾਇ ॥ ਸੇਜ ਸੁਹਾਵੀ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਹੁਣਿ ਦੁਖਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਇਛ ਪੁਨੀ ਵਡਭਾਗਈ ਵਰੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ॥ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਹੀਆ ਮੰਗਲੁ ਗਾਵਹੀ ਗੀਤ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਅਲਾਇ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜੇਹਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦਿਸਈ ਕੋਈ ਦੂਜਾ ਲਵੈ ਨ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਹਲਤੁ ਪਲਤੁ ਸਵਾਰਿਓਨੁ ਨਿਹਚਲ ਦਿਤੀਅਨੁ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਸਾਗਰ ਤੇ ਰਖਿਅਨੁ ਬਹੁੜਿ ਨ ਜਨਮੈ ਯਾਇ ॥ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਏਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਗੁਣ ਤਰੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਚਰਣੀ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਫਲਗੁਣਿ ਨਿਤ ਸਲਾਹੀਐ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਤਿਲੁ ਨ ਤਮਾਇ ॥੧੩॥	ਫਲਗੁਨਿ ਮਨਿ ਰਹਸੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮੁ ਸੁਭਾਇਆ ॥ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਰਹਸੁ ਭਇਆ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥ ਮਨ ਮੇਹੁ ਚੁਕਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਇਆ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਘਰਿ ਆਓ ॥ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਵੇਸ ਕਰੀ ਪਿਰ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਮਹਲੀ ਲਹਾ ਨ ਥਾਓ ॥ ਹਾਰ ਡੋਰ ਰਸ ਪਾਟ ਪਟੰਬਰ ਪਿਰਿ ਲੇੜੀ ਸੀਗਾਰੀ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਮੇਲਿ ਲਈ ਗੁਰਿ ਅਪਣੈ ਘਰਿ ਵਰੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਨਾਰੀ ॥੧੬॥

### Phalgun in Barah Maha Raag Maajh

Guru Arjan Dev Ji explains how the soul attains blissful union with the Divine, breaking free from the cycle of rebirth. The blossoming of spring is used as a metaphor for the inner joy and renewal experienced by the seeker united with the Divine-Groom. Just as nature

awakens with vibrant colors and new life, the seeker's heart overflows with bliss upon finding eternal companionship with the One. This union transforms sorrow and separation into lasting joy, likened to the joyful marriage of a bride and bridegroom, where the mind becomes a place of intimate connection and fulfillment. Unlike temporary worldly celebrations, the joy of this divine union is constant and transcends life's cycles, filling the seeker with unending praise and love. Guru Arjan Dev Ji invites reflection on how we can cultivate such deep, selfless union in our own lives, moving beyond transactional relationships toward complete merging with the beloved One, where boundaries dissolve and true companionship is found.<sup>70</sup>

### **Phalgun in Barah Maha Raag Tukhari**

Guru Nanak Dev Ji describes the soul-bride who rejoices in reunion with the Divine, celebrating the end of separation. The final month represents a time of creation and joyful anticipation, where the seeker's mind and heart fully unite in love. The seeker's mind is free from doubt, ego, and greed, completely immersed in the presence of the Beloved. Unlike earlier months when emotions fluctuated with the external environment, now the seeker experiences steady, internal happiness that no longer depends on outward circumstances. The mind, once hesitant and conflicted, is now ready and eager to invite the Divine-Groom into the heart-home. This readiness comes from the Wisdom of the Guru, which has transformed the seeker's entire being. The internal state of love reshapes the seeker's experience of the world, allowing them to perceive the deeper, invisible colors of love within themselves. The journey that began with the budding of spring is now fully blossomed, as the Spouse takes residence in the seeker's heart, completing the intimate union.<sup>71</sup>

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### **Conclusion**

The Barah Maha banis by Guru Arjan Dev Ji in Raag Maajh and Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Raag Tukhari offer two distinct yet spiritually interconnected perspectives on time as a metaphor for the soul's yearning for union with the Divine. While Raag Maajh reflects a more structured and contemplative expression rooted in intellectual clarity, Raag Tukhari leans into emotional imagery and nature-inspired metaphor, shaped by folk musical tradition. Despite their stylistic differences, both compositions work in tandem to illustrate a universal truth in Sikh thought: that the passage of time is not merely a chronological process, but a deeply spiritual journey toward self-realization and divine connection.

Each month explored in these compositions parallels the seeker's inner landscape, ranging from longing and separation to blissful union and spiritual clarity. Nature, seasons, and musical structure converge to provide a multidimensional understanding of human emotion, divine grace, and the constant invitation to remember Naam. In the wider context of Gurmat Sangeet, the raags chosen for these compositions enhance the emotional expression of the bani, aligning musical mood with spiritual message.

Ultimately, the Barah Maha teaches that every moment, every season, and every emotional state is an opportunity for transformation. The changing months remind us that while external environments evolve, the internal journey toward Ik Onkar is constant. Through remembrance, humility, and the guidance of the Guru, the seeker can transcend cycles of separation and find union with the Eternal. In this way, the Barah Maha continues to be a timeless spiritual blueprint that is grounded in Gurbani, resonant in raag, and profoundly human in its emotional depth.

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