

The Light Divine

Guru Nanak clearly referred to spiritual attainments in this life as being akin to the experience of death: "every day do I die and every day do I come back to life...."³ This meant that the Guru could attain an NDE-like experience without actually dying physically. The *Adi Granth*, also, mentions specifically the vision of the Divine Light in the same context as "overcoming death":

*Pray to the Lord, to the True Guide,
That in Him thou mayest meet the Beloved Friend.
In this meeting the soul is happy
And death dies of its own disease
May I live in the [Divine] Name,
May the name in me be indwelling.*

*Without the Guru to teach us, we walk in darkness,
Without the Word, we have no understanding.
The Word of the Guru is light,
His Word's light leads to the Truth.
There, Death has no existence.
His light is joined with Light....⁴*

The *Adi Granth* makes frequent reference to the human encounter with a Divine Light: "God, being Truth, is the one Light of all." God "shines out in His own splendour." Moreover, "His brightness shineth forth" with "the blaze of the splendour dazzling like the sun."⁵

Guru Nanak added more on this issue in other writings. For Nanak, God is "the light of all light." The light of God "illuminates land and seas." God is "the embodiment of light; the lamps of the sun and moon and all their light emanate from Him...." God is "pure light"... the "ever pure light." This "all-wise Being of light sits on the throne eternal." God's light is "infinite," and God Himself "is immaculate and all light."⁶

The *Adi Granth* also makes it clear that this Divine Light can be found within one's self: "the Eternal Light indwells in the human mind, and the human mind is the emanation of that light." Further, "the best light is the Light of God in the heart." Ultimately, the Sikh aspirant wishes to be immersed in the Divine light, as was Guru Nanak: "as waves blend with water, so my light is blended with the Lord's Light."⁷

Nanak goes on to say that "in Thy creatures is Thy light..."; indeed, "in every heart there is the same light..." In this ultimate union, "our light blends with the light eternal," and Nanak encourages followers to "merge your light with the light eternal." As the guru himself would put it,

*Within every body
Is the Lord hidden;
Within every body
Is His light.*

*Searching his body, his home,
By the master's instructions one finds
the Name revealed within.⁸*