



The Elijah Interfaith Institute



Mr. Naginder Sehmi, a Sikh scholar:

“If you are wise, do not blacken others; look first under your own collar instead” (Farid – Adi Granth)

What is hope? The word hope has two main meanings: (1) Expectation often combined with desire, (2) A feeling of confidence.

From a practical view point, the two concepts contradict each other.

Hope as an expectation points to the future. The past has gone; we can do nothing about it. The present is with us and that's when we can do something. The future is unknown; there is nothing I can do about it.

When I'm unable to do something, or when I do not want to make an effort, hope becomes my crutch and a powerful vehicle for escaping.

The Sikh teachers are of the view that only acting now to the best of our ability can fulfill our hope and desire.

In many ways, hope is like the concept of a supervising, bountiful, eternal being we call God. Whenever I am unable to explain or do something or an extraordinary event occurs such as the death of a healthy young person or a plane crash killing hundreds, or the earthquake in Haiti or flooding in Bangladesh and Australia, it is so easy and comforting for me to put it to the will of God. I hope and expect that the Almighty would not let it happen again and within a short period I forget about it.

According to the Sikh way of thinking, for everything that I do God's grace and blessing is necessary. But I will not get God's blessing if I do not do something. That has been made very clear. This logic makes the second definition of the word “hope” meaningful and practical: feeling confident. My efforts in the present should normally fulfil my hope, my desire and expectations. There will be some result in spite of God.

Thank you