



The Fifth Bi-Annual Meeting of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, Oxford (UK), March 2012

On the final day of the meeting, leaders were asked to reflect on what had been accomplished. They were asked to consider three questions:

- 1. What does Interreligious Friendship mean to you?***
- 2. How do you practise Interreligious Friendship?***
- 3. What messages and practices of Interreligious Friendship can you take back from this meeting to your community?***

Some chose to respond independently to each question while others integrated their answers.

Sukhbir Singh



The Sikh scripture says that the only meaningful friendship is with the One God.

My friendship is with the One Lord alone; I am in love with the One Lord alone. The Lord is my only friend; my companionship is with the One Lord alone. My conversation is with the One Lord alone; He never frowns, or turns His face away. He alone knows the state of my soul; He never ignores my love. He is my only counsellor, all-powerful to destroy and create. The Lord is my only Giver. He places His hand upon the heads of the generous in the world. I take the Support of the One Lord alone; He is all-powerful, over the heads of all. The Saint, the True Guru, has united me with the Lord. He placed His hand on my forehead. The Guru led me to meet the greatest Lord and Master; He saved the whole world. The desires of the mind are fulfilled; I have attained my pre-destined Union with God. Nanak has obtained the True Name; He enjoys the enjoyments forever. (Guru Granth Sahib p250)

All other friendships and attachments are futile.

All that what you are watching (family, friends) is not going to go with you. They shall not go along with you, so why do you focus your attention on them? (Guru Granth Sahib p918)

How will the above translate into practical action? This action is two-fold. Firstly, upon recognising that the only permanent friendship is with God alone, to increase personal efforts to get closer with Him. This may mean more concentration and focus while meditating or praying. Next, to see God in every person. This two-fold effort leads to more interconnectedness with every person, as the friendship is with the God inside each person. This will translate practically with increased interfaith friendship. From these friendships will originate and come many opportunities to foster and sustain friendships.

I have attended a few conferences and meetings where various scriptures have been studied. Personally I have learnt a lot from this. I would like to start an interfaith scripture study group that would meet every two months.