

**GURU NANAK  
AND  
INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT**

# GURU NANAK AND INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

*by*

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GURU NANAK AND INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

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## INTRODUCTION

(First Edition)

In 1966, the Punjabi University instituted the Guru Nanak Commemoration Lectures. Four series of annual lectures have been delivered and in this year of the quincentenary of Guru Nanak's birth, they are being presented in one volume, entitled *Guru Nanak and Indian Religious Thought*. The scholars who have given these lectures are : Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh, Shri B.L. Kapur, Sardar Balwant Singh Anand and Dr. Niharranjan Ray. Whereas Bhai Jodh Singh gave his lecture in Punjabi, the other three scholars gave theirs in English.

Each of these series, essentially, formulates and presents a thesis. The idea central to Bhai Jodh Singh's lectures is that Guru Nanak brought a new inspiration to the Indian religious thought so as to make it more constructive and productive for life. He had contemplated upon the concepts and speculations of various systems, rejected some of them and reinterpreted and recharged some others. He resolved the conflict of the transcendent and the immanent by proclaiming the unicity of the Godhead in both the forms. Disregarding all speculations about creation, Guru Nanak said that the world of phenomena was the outcome of God's Will. God's Will is supreme ; therefore the law of *karma* is not inexorable but is subject to that Will of which grace is also an aspect. Guru Nanak, rejecting the distinction between spirit and matter, accepted the spirit to be the only reality and, hence, advocated equality of men by discarding caste and *varna*. He aimed at a classless but spiritual society and prescribed the way of meditation, action and service.

Shri B. L. Kapur's thesis is that Guru Nanak Dev rediscovered and proclaimed the ancient Vedic or Sanatanist dharma and restored to it, its pristine purity, retrieving it from the superficial "rituals of orthodox form that Hinduism felt compelled by the instinct of self-preservation to assume after it was shaken to its very roots by the Semitic fanaticism." The true concept of *dharma* is one only, but the true *dharma*

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has to be revived again and again for which purpose God sends Gurus like Nanak. But, he adds, "this should not be misinterpreted to mean that Guru Nanak said nothing new or made no original contribution."

Sardar Balwant Singh Anand has taken note of the pronouncements of the Western Indologists that the Indian philosophical and religious thought did not pay heed to the ethical aspect of life. He puts forward the thesis that, in spite of his mystic fervour, Guru Nanak gave a very high place to ethics in the realization of spiritual life. "*Bhakti* for Guru Nanak was a form of mysticism. To this mysticism, he added the ideal of ethical life. Purity of life is the first pre-requisite of spiritual advancement. Indefatigably, he stressed the message of detachment and self-surrender ; inculcation of social virtues and the pure and untroubled life. Life should be free from egoism and based on *sat*, truth. Truth and fear of God have been preached by Guru Nanak as the noblest of virtues. *Bhakti* expresses itself in life as love, compassion, freedom from fear, freedom from hate, and influences every action of human life. It is the source of man's physical and spiritual strength."

Dr. Niharranjan Ray\* stresses the point that Guru Nanak and his successor Gurus aimed at creating a casteless society as did Buddhism, the Siddhas and some of the earlier *bhaktas*. But since they could not give a new economic or productive system, the castes remained. However, the Sikh Gurus were able to carve out a well-knit and homogeneous community, especially by emphasizing that a Sikh must never renounce the world, but lead a life of the householder, and work to earn his livelihood, share his earnings with others and contribute liberally towards the common welfare of the community. So, Sikhism has a social commitment ; it contributes towards a full-blooded life and seeks the welfare of the human society as a whole. The Sikh community was thus able to make a noteworthy contribution to all fields of the national life of India. None of the other *Bhakti* cults has a comparable achievement.

In all the four series of lectures, the first quest has been to find whether Sikhism had any new philosophical system to propound. This question, in an implicit or explicit form, is present

\* *The Sikh Gurus & the Sikh Society*, published by Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, Delhi.

in all the four series of lectures. A common conclusion, however, is that in spite of certain aspects of Guru Nanak's philosophy being traceable to the Vedic and upanishadic tradition, Sikhism holds out a new vision of life and a new way to achieve that vision. The dramatic success of the Sikh Community in different fields is attributed to this new way of life propounded by Guru Nanak. The most potent levers were the sanctification of the life of the household and the creation of a casteless society—a society built upon the principles of equity and justice.

Bhai Jodh Singh attempts to bring out the distinctive character of the concepts adopted by Sikhism about God and creation. Shri B. L. Kapur suggests that the *dharma* is always the same, only it is re-enforced from time to time by such great souls as Guru Nanak. Sardar Balwant Singh says that Sikhism leans towards the Vedantic system of philosophy and establishes the cultural and theistic continuity between the Upanishads and the Sikh religion, which he defines as a mysticism of *simran*, coupled with a way of life based solidly on ethics. Dr. Niharranjan Ray believes that Sikhism shares with the *Nathas* and the *Bhaktas* many philosophical and religious terms, but puts them into practice in life in quite different contexts, conditions and ideals.

The four lectures supplement one another, and put together they present a fairly comprehensive view of Sikhism and of the Sikh society.

Sardar Wazir Singh translated into English Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh's lecture delivered in Punjabi. The English version has Bhai Sahib's approval. The proofs of that part were also read and corrected by Sardar Wazir Singh. For this work and for making the translation, I express to him my gratitude. Dr. Kishan Singh Bedi, formerly Joint Director of Agriculture (Research and Education), Punjab, Chandigarh, rendered valuable help in revising the text and preparing the press copy and I offer him also my grateful thanks.

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*B. L. Kapur*

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*Balwant Singh Anand*

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**SHRI GURU NANAK DEV  
AND  
INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT**

*delivered by*  
**DR. JODH SINGH**

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LECTURE ONE  
REVIEW OF ANCIENT INDIAN THOUGHT

What contribution did Guru Nanak make to the Indian religious thought? This is the topic on which the Punjabi University has commissioned me to place my views before this learned assembly in the course of four lectures. But this can be possible only if we make a brief survey of religions and doctrines that were prevalent in India before the advent of Guru Nanak. While going through them, I shall only state the views of the *Acharyas* well-versed in them, on the important issues of God, soul, creation of the universe, heaven or salvation and the means of knowing them in their own words as far as possible. The purpose of these lectures is not to criticize any of the religions or philosophies, nor is it considered necessary to enter into a detailed discussion of the arguments advanced by them to establish the doctrines taught by them. I would only attempt to put their views on the afore-mentioned topics, in brief, and explain the changes made in them by Guru Nanak.

The oldest religious treatises in India are the *Vedas*, four in number, viz. *Rig*, *Sam*, *Yajur* and *Atharvan*. The *richas* of the *Rig-Veda* are recited in the form of worship (or prayer). The *mantras* of *Sam-Veda* are sung at the time of *yajnas* (ceremonial and sacrificial rites). The *Yajur-Veda* contains instructions, in prose, to perform the rites, and the *Atharvan-Veda* records, besides these, magical formulas and charms. The ancient scholars divide the *Vedas* into three parts. The *Mantras*, the *Brahmanas*, and the *Upanishads*. The *Brahmana* treatises contain the methods of performing the *yajnas* rather in detail, and praise the observance of rituals. In the *Upanishads* are found doctrines of *Brahman*, the *jiva*, the origin of phenomenal existence, spiritual emancipation, etc., based on the *Vedic mantras*.

When were the *Vedas* composed? There is a lot of controversy on this point. Those who believe in tradition insist that this is eternal knowledge revealed by the Absolute Spirit to the *rishis*

(sages) at the outset of the world's creation. Max-Muller was the first to make an attempt to fix their period of composition. But many scholars do not accept his proposition as based on reliable evidence; they treat it as purely arbitrary. Max-Muller thinks that the *Vedas* were composed during 1200-600 B. C.; Bal Gangadhar Tilak, in his *Orion*, based on the astronomical references in the Vedic *mantras*, fixes their period as 4500-2500 B. C.; he says that this period could even be pushed back to 6000 B. C. The German scholar Jacobi is also in agreement with Tilak's first assertion.

The earliest Vedic *mantras* are indicative of the worship of deities. The highest among the gods are Indra, Varun, Savitri, Pushan and Vishnu. They were worshipped with the chanting of *mantras*, obeisances and oblations. To perform a *yajna*, ceremonial fires were kindled accompanied with certain rites. Then some articles of food, e. g. milk, honey, *ghee*, grains and their preparations, flesh and a stimulating juice called *soma* were offered to the fire. Agni, the fire-god, was considered the mouth of the deities and anything put into it was thought to be on its way to the gods. It was believed that if the gods were pleased, worldly wealth etc. would be granted by them, one's adversaries would be destroyed and one would even find a cosy heavenly abode after death. The earth and the sky were brought into being by these gods. The courses of big rivers were dug by them. The gods remain busy fighting the demons of drought, darkness, etc. and keep the cosmic activities in regular sequence. The cosmic order called *Rta* is maintained and kept undisturbed by the gods. At first, the *yajnas* were performed to please the gods, but gradually their performance itself came to be treated as fruitful. Subsequently, mystic powers were recognized in the *mantras*. The gods were to be praised and made happy through supplication. The *Vedas* are silent about images or temples.

Soon, the concept of *Rta* was extended to the religious and moral spheres which were also made immutable and inviolable. The gods were affectionately addressed as 'father', 'mother', 'friend' or 'comrade'. This cordial relation of worship laid the foundation of *bhakti* (devotion). Simultaneously, there were other sages too, who did not believe in the existence of deities. They used to say "Who has ever seen a god? They are only figments of the imagination."

Gradually, the trend gained currency that there existed only

one God over all other gods and it was His power that operated through all the gods. "He is one" though the sages describe him variously."<sup>1</sup>

The concepts of good and evil were also analysed. Malign intention, swearing, slander, back-biting, dishonesty, sorcery, gambling, debt, adultery, theft, violence, etc. are sins. Honesty, integrity, charity, non-violence, truthfulness, agreeable speech, continence, faith and austerity are virtues that are extolled.

Mutual love, respect and agreement, obedience to parents, salutary talk, conjugal love, sense of obligation—these are the virtues of family life. The wife enjoys a high and affectionate status. A woman could occasionally choose her husband; remarriage was also possible. Polygamy was approved, whereas polyandry was forbidden.

The virtues of corporate life were also insisted upon. Each human individual was thought to have been born with debts to seers, gods, manes, men and animals. This debt could be repaid with Vedic study, sacrifices, procreation, hospitality and offering. The society consisted of four strata—*brahmins*, *kshatriyas*, *vaishyas* and *shudras*, and the division of one's life into four stages (viz. *brahma chari*, householder, forest-dweller and *sanyasi*) had also originated during the Vedic period.

Heaven and hell were the places where the souls were sent after death. Heaven was thought of as a place with eternal light and gratification of all desires; hell was full of utter darkness and sufferings.

The Vedic seers did not hold this world to be false. They sought from the deities a healthy life of one hundred years. They prayed for physical health, an agreeable life-companion, sons and daughters, wealth and so on. They also believed that one's personality did not come to an end with the destruction of the body; as such, they cherished the desire to dwell in heaven after death, the realization of which depended upon the pleasure of the gods.

### THE UPANISHADS

The *Upanishads* constitute the basic springs of Indian thought and culture. They have inspired not only the six orthodox systems, but some of the views opposed to the *Veda* were adopted by

1. The Rig-Veda (164-64)

Buddhism from the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* have been called the *Vedanta*, as most of them constitute the concluding part of the *Veda*. Moreover, their teachings represent the goal of the *Veda*. The secret knowledge contained in the *Upanishads* was imparted only to the competent learners.

The *Upanishads* which are extant today exceed two hundred in number. The *Muktika Upanishad* gives the names of 108 *Upanishads*, out of which these 13 are well known : *Ishavasya*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Prashna*, *Mundak*, *Mandukya*, *Taittiriya*, *Aitareys*, *Chhandogya*, *Brihadaranyak*, *Kaushitaki*, *Maitryaniya* and *Swetasvātara*. Of these, the *Brihadaranyak* and *Chhandogya* are considered the most important.

In order to appreciate the teaching of the *Upanishads* correctly, we must understand first the attitude of these texts to the sacrificial cult of the *Brahmanas*. According to the *Brihadaranyak*; one who worships a divinity other than the self is described as a domestic animal of the gods.<sup>2</sup> Parodying the priestly procession in a sacrifice, *Chhandogya* describes a procession of dogs chanting : "Om, let us eat. Om, let us drink."<sup>3</sup> The *Mundak Upanishad* compares the sacrificial forms to unsafe boats, and those who value them are characterized as fools overtaken by a chain of rebirths.<sup>4</sup> Some other *Upanishads* do not oppose the ritual so openly. They give an allegorical meaning to the ritual. Another way of indicating the inferior status of the ritual is to show that its followers would be led to the world of ancestors from where they would return to the cycle of birth and death.

In our opinion, it was to reduce the opposition of the *Brahmanas* that the seers said that the secret knowledge should be imparted only to the competent seekers. A special characteristic of our country is that even if a higher mode is made available to them, the people do not abandon the established modes. The worship of deities, animals, snakes and trees went on, alongside the pursuit of the knowledge of the self, and continues even till today. This activity has been justified by saying that Brahman (the Supreme Being) is all-pervading and whatever appears portrays

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2. I. iv. 10

3. I. xll

4. I. ii. 7-10



only Him. As such, whatever form of Him is worshipped by man, ultimately it is He who is worshipped. But does the worshipper pay homage to the Brahman whom he thinks universally present, or to the very snake etc. whom he considers a deity and whose blessing he seeks ?

The existence of a unique Absolute has been conceived in the *Upanishads*; all other gods are His powers. The *Maitrayaniya Upanishad* characterizes the deities, such as Brahma, Rudra, Vishnu as the principal manifestations of the supreme, immortal, formless Brahman.

According to the *Upanishads*, knowledge is of two kinds, the higher and the lower (*pra* and *apara*). The lower type consists of all the empirical sciences and arts, as well as of such sacred knowledge as relates to things and pleasures that are short-lived. It is interesting to note that even the four *Vedas* are included in the category of lower knowledge. The *pra* or higher form of knowledge is the knowledge of *akshara Brahman*.

The *Upanishads* attempt to search the absolute essence and the basis of the phenomenal world. The word *atman* has been used for the human soul, and the inference drawn is that *atman* and *Brahman* are not two separate entities. In the ultimate sense, the *atman* and the *Brahman* are identical. Brahman is both the efficient and the material cause of the universe. He is immanent in all things, yet He is detached. Despite His creation of multi-faced world, the integrity and absoluteness of Brahman is not affected. "That is full; this is full. The full comes out of the full. Taking the first from the first, the full itself remains."

The individual *atman* has been called *jiva*. *Atman* and *Brahman* have been compared to two birds. Both live on the same tree. One bird eats the fruit of the tree; the other looks on without eating. One who eats the fruit experiences the worldly pleasures and pains and regards himself as weak. But when he looks at the other one who is worshipped by all, who is the lord of all and is great, he also becomes like that one. *Jiva* is corporeal; he is tied to the mind and the intellect. These account for his separation from the *Brahman*.

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* makes a mention of the five sheaths (*koshas*) of the *jiva*. These are *annarasmaya*, *pranmaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnanamaya*, and *anandamaya koshas*. These together constitute the

empirical home of the soul. In the end, the soul is liberated through the realization of the Reality.

In the view of the *Upanishads*, the soul is not born with the body, nor does it perish with bodily death. It is unborn, eternal and from the beginning. On death, it migrates from one physical body and enters another, until it attains release from the cycle of birth and death by obtaining the realization of the Reality. This is *moksha* (emancipation). Some sages believe that this state is possible of attainment during one's lifetime, too.

Forgetfulness of the true nature of the self is the foundation of the soul's bondage and its identification with the ego, the mind and the body. The way to release from transmigration consists in renouncing the world, and then to follow the course indicated in the scriptures with help of a spiritual teacher. Then through the process of *shravana* (the hearing of the *Upanishads* explained by a teacher) *manana* (intellectual conviction in what is heard) and *nididhyasana* (the practice and meditation to realize the knowledge so obtained), the soul gets the vision of the reality and attains its final release.

#### THE JAINA PHILOSOPHY

Religious and philosophical aspects have been discussed together in the philosophical literature of India. That is why we have to keep in view the philosophical writings while discussing the Indian religious thought. The Jaina faith was not based on the *Vedas*. According to the Jaina tradition *Rsabha muni* was the first interpreter of *Ahimsa* (non-violence). Then came twenty-three *tirthankaras*. The last of them was Shri Mahavira, who flourished from 599 to 527 B. C. Now it is admitted that the Jaina faith is older than the Buddhist faith, and it is also possible that the Ahimsa doctrine was preached before the advent of the Aryans in India. The idea of non-violence exists side by side with the sacrificial killing of animals even in the *Vedas*. It is surprising that the Ahimsa doctrine was often supported by the *kshatriya* kings, whereas the animal sacrifice, according to Vedic rituals, was upheld by the *Brahmin* priests.

The Jaina thinkers believed in pluralism. They thought that the ultimate reality could be examined from many angles. Just as we sow a seed, and if the seed maintained its identity as a seed and would not develop into a new form, the plant could not grow out

of it. The plant undergoes a number of changes, but it keeps its underlying identity, despite all the changes. A mango-tree would remain till its end a mango-tree; it would not change from mango today into orange tomorrow. Likewise, the ultimate reality has a threefold nature : *utpad*, *vyaya*, and *dhrauvya* i. e. origination, decay and permanence in the midst of appearance and disappearance.

According to Jainism, there are two types of objects in the world : conscious and non-conscious, that is *jiva* and *ajiva* (living and non-living). Among the inorganic objects are counted *pudgalas*, i. e. matter, space and time. Besides, two other substances are also postulated. Atoms constitute the physical world. The objects of the world appear in motion. If there were no steadying principle, the atoms would travel from the *loka-aksha* and spread into the infinite space; then all the objects of the world would disintegrate. That is why, a stabilizing principle has been postulated. One is called *dharma* and the other *a-dharma*. Combined with *jiva* these are six substances postulated by the Jaina thinkers.

The *jivas* possess consciousness. The highest of them, however, is man. Even the gods must be born as human beings in order to attain salvation. There are two types of men in the world : those who are free, and others who are in bondage. Through the practice of penance (*tapa*), the human soul gradually becomes purer and purer; through the process of *yoga*, it is led to spiritual isolation from the disturbing environment and material conditions, and the soul attains its pristine purity. Just as the sun, when the obstructive clouds get dispersed, shines forth in all its splendour, the soul associated with perfect knowledge, perfect faith, perfect power and infinite bliss shines in its full intensity. Each individual can, by his effort, reach this stage.

*Moksha* is attained through right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. Some schools emphasize any one of these three paths as necessary for salvation, but the Jaina system insists that salvation is not possible without all these three. The human soul, when liberated, attains to the level of godhead. The Jainas do not believe in an ever-perfect God.

For the perfection of right conduct, five kinds of vows are recommended : non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, abstinence from sexuality and greed. Ahimsa means avoiding to cause injury to others through thought, speech and action. Sweet humility

should accompany truth had one should not indulge in unpleasant and bitter talk, and should observe complete abstinence from sexual intercourse. *A-steya* (non-stealing) means not taking another's property without his consent, by force or deception. And *a-parigraha* (abstinence from greed) implies not keeping anything in one's possession.

The most important vow pertains to *ahimsa*. If by speaking the truth, someone's life is endangered, such a truth is not to be told. The householder gets certain concessions. The farmer can pull out the weeds that spoil the crop. Besides, the householder can keep in possession the things he needs, and he can maintain sex relations with his wife. But the ascetics must observe these five vows fully and completely.

The Jaina faith does not prescribe duties according to caste. All men are equal and those belonging to the lower castes are as much entitled to attain *moksha* through the adoption of this course as others.

#### THE BUDDHIST FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY

The *Upanishads* had started criticizing the ritualism and the cult of sacrifices at the time of *yajnas*; they insisted on searching one's own self. The Jaina faith too emphasized non-violence and raised a powerful protest against the sacrificial rites. According to the Jainas, gods who are to be pleased through such sacrifices are lower in status than man. Even they have to take birth as men in order to get emancipation. But the Buddha negated the existence of an unchanging self (*atman*). The soul that is desired to become qualified for heaven by means of rites and rituals undergoes transformation itself every moment just like the body. The soul of the man who is making sacrificial offering today will not be the same tomorrow. As such, the individual engaged in the *yajna* today would be a changed person the next day. How then would the reward of an action performed by the soul today be given to a different individual?

The Buddha's characterization of the soul, as a transitory existence, was a revolutionary idea. He said that the individuality is composed of five *skandhas* (aggregates), viz. *rupa* or physical form, composed of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire, and *naman* or the psychic factor that assumes four forms; sensation or feeling, perception or idea, conative disposition, and discriminative

intellecion or reasoning. These psychic factors flow inside us like a stream, and are ephemeral or short-lived, just as the water of the stream in the current goes on changing. Is there no permanent being behind these changing modes? No, there is none. Just as a chariot is composed of several parts, and these parts are themselves the chariot. If there were no parts, then nothing that is called a 'chariot' would have a separate existence over and above the parts. The soul cannot be regarded as identical with material atoms, sensations, ideas dispositions, or thoughts; nor are they contained, or reside, in the soul. The transmigration, according to this view, cannot be of an abiding soul. Out of the old ever-changing states of life, a new life takes its birth, just as a new lamp is lighted from a burning lamp, but no part of the existing lamp enters the new light, Just as an extinguished lamp cannot produce a new light, the aggregates of factors that are dead cannot produce a new individual. The idea of individuality arises on the basis of the continuous stream of consciousness. We light a lamp at night. Its wick and oil keep on changing every moment. But since the lamp constantly gives light, and the light appears to be of the same nature as it was at the time of lighting, we conclude that the same lamp has been burning. But in fact, this is not correct. No object is identical with any other object. It is identical with its own instantaneous form. '*Sarvam sva-akshanam*', i.e. each thing and state is identical only with itself.

The Buddha arrived at the conclusion that the world is full of suffering and nothing here is permanent. '*Sarvam dukkham dhukham*, (all is suffering, suffering) and '*Sarvam kshanikam, kshanikam*' (all is transitory, transitory). All world processes are marked by *anatmata* (soul-lessness), *anityata* (transitoriness), and *dukkhata* (pain). The Mahayana put it in the form 'All is void, void'—*Sarvam shunyam, shunyam*.

The Buddha was of the view that selfishness was due to the fact of individuality, both in this mundane world and in the hope of attaining pleasure in the world beyond. Man's individuality is not permanent, but the performance of one aggregate of elements produces pleasures or pain for the aggregate arising from it. That is why the individual's responsibility increases, so that he may not be a source of pain to the aggregate born out of him, by his actions. In the fructification of *karma*, the assistance of divine power or

*dharmaraja* is not required; nor does any permanent spirit stand in need of taking birth again and again. The moral law is autonomous in its operation. Its function ceases when a higher or superior law dominates. When illumination occurs, it annuls the accruing deeds, but the *prarabdha* actions, which have already started functioning in this life, are not cancelled. A Buddha or an *arhat* attains *nirvana* with *upadhi-shesha* (residue). His body continues to function, but since his desires are no more, his mental *skandha* does not acquire a momentum for rebirth. When the body ceases to be, he attains *nirvana* without a residue.

When the Buddha was asked what was *nirvana* or the final goal of all spiritual endeavour, he replied that the state of *nirvana* was indescribable in words. It connoted neither a separate existence nor non-existence; nor did it mean both, nor neither of them. *Nirvana* is the putting of an end to the ills of life. It is freedom from all desires—desires of attachment, infatuation, aversion and so on.

The Buddha said that hard physical exercises could be of no avail in reaching the state of *nirvana*. He himself had tried a number of austere disciplines. Man has to turn completely away from a false sense of individuation. i.e., the condition of existing as an individual. This goal can be brought nearer through knowledge, through moral actions and purity of mental life. In order to prevent the formation of new aggregates (*skandhas*), it is necessary to do away with the common ills, namely sensuality, love of existence and ignorance. Without discarding the three fetters of belief in the permanence of soul, doubt and moral and religious ritualism, no one can enter upon the path of salvation. These are necessary for reaching the first stage of freedom.

The Buddha emphasized the *arya ashtangika marga* (the eight-fold noble path), which comprises right views, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

The true power of man lies in his capacity to keep completely away from the impurity of life, and his mind, purpose, will and thought should be in his control. To convert others to one's faith or influence them by showing miracles is not a proper goal. These are, rather, impediments in the way of *nirvana*. It appears that the constant remembrance of the *mantra* 'I take refuge in the Buddhas

in the *dharma* and in the *sangha*', and the practice of the control of breathing were added later. The *yogic* maditation antedated the Buddha. Its purpose, too, was enabling the seeker to pass from the physical to the subtle, from the feeling to the intuitional knowledge. These traditions also aimed at attaining equanimity (peace) and *prajna*, which is nothing but the highest state of morality and contemplation. The Buddha, who had done so much to spread rationalism in dogma and rituals, himself became the centre of worship. The reason appears to be that the Buddha demanded a more pre-eminent position for himself than other seekers of truth and salvation, and claimed a unique existence for himself, as a being who was higher than all other men, gods, etc. His place of birth, the spot where he got enlightenment, the spot where he delivered the first sermon, and the place where he died, all became holy pilgrim-spots; his images were installed at many places which were turned into *pagodas*. The Bodhi missionary *sangha* made it clear that the monks and nuns could attain salvation through taking refuge in the Buddha and the *sangha*, but they could not become the Buddha. Only one Buddha could be possible during a *kalpa*.

Subsequently, Buddhism was divided into two major sects. One of these was called Hinayana. According to it, a follower of the Buddha, who would attain to the status of an *arhat*, could resolve to start the life of a Bodhisattva and ultimately become a Buddhas. This was described as *Kathina-yana* (difficult path). But the other sect, by way of sarcasm, started calling it *Shravakayana*, *arhat-yana* or *hina-yana*, because, as its rival branch alleged, it aimed at one's own emancipation only. The other sect was *Sehaj-yana*, *Buddha-yana*, *Bodhisattva-yana*, *Maha-yana*. In it, the monks and nuns after taking refuge in the Buddha, endeavoured to lead others on to this path. The Bodhi saints ferried other people across in this boat; hence its name *Maha-yana*.

### NYAYA AND VAISHESHIKA

Following a description of the main principles of Buddhism and omitting the details of later developments, we shall now take up discussion of the religious and philosophical theories of the six metaphysical systems (the *shastras*). The main ideas of the six schools of thought date from antiquity, since the author of each school has based the support to his system of thought on the *Vedas*. The period of Gautama and Kanada has been determined as third

century B. C.

Kanada and Gautma have admitted nine basic substances (*dravyas*). The atoms of four substances, viz. earth, water, fire and air, are eternal, but differ from one another in quality. *Akasha* (ether) is an eternal, all-pervading physical substance, which cannot be perceived but can be inferred from its quality of sound. *Dis* (space) and *Kala* (time) are also imperceptible; both are eternal all-pervading as well.

The soul (*atman*) too is immortal and pervades everywhere. Soul is distinct and separate from the body, the sense, the mind and the stream of consciousness. Both the systems hold that the soul too can be directly experienced through mental or internal perception. The qualities of soul, viz. desire, volition, pleasure, pain, etc. cannot belong to any physical substance. So, the soul is not a material object. Although knowledge or consciousness is an attribute of the soul, it is not an inseparable part of it. When the soul attains liberation through the knowledge of reality, and becomes free from all connections with the body, it has no experience of pain and pleasure, nor of any other kind of consciousness.

“Mind is an atomic and imperceptible substance. Mind, which is an internal organ, is meant for experience of the soul and its attributes, i.e. pains and pleasures.” The existence of the mind is also proved from the fact that, though our sense-organs come into contact with several objects at a time, we cannot have cognition of all the objects simultaneously. This shows the atomic nature of the mind and that it is an internal sense which can be in contact with one external sense at a time. That is why we are enabled to perceive only that which is the object of a particular sense, to which our mind turns or to which we are attending, even though we may have several objects around us.

All the finite, material objects of the world are composed of atoms. Besides, there are living beings, possessed of corporeal bodies, sense-organs, mind, intellect and ego. All these are located in time, space and ether, and effect one another. The individual souls do not depend for their life and existence solely on the physical principles. The moral principle of actions also applies to them. The world comes into being because of the invisible actions of the individual beings.

These two schools of thought believe in the existence of God,



God is unique, limitless and permanent. He is the omniscient and omnipotent cause of the origin, existence and annihilation of the world. He is the first efficient cause of the universe, but not its material cause. He is not the 'creator', but the governor of the world and dispenser of the rewards of actions.

#### SANKHYA SYSTEM

According to the *Sankhya* school, two categories of being are eternal : *Purusha* and *pradhana* or *prakriti* (i.e. pure consciousness and nature). *Purusha* is a mere witness; it is *kevalyaswarup* and totally distinct from *pradhana*. That is why it is *nirguna* (without attributes). It is non-attached, i.e. it has no attachments. Besides being a witness, it is the seer too, i.e. it not only looks but also perceives and understands. Its is an entity without activity. Neither has it been created, nor does it produce anything.

*Purusha* is omnipresent. Just as the magnet by its proximity produces activity in iron, the nearness of *purusha* gives rise to the same process in *prakriti*.

Consciousness is not an attribute of *purusha*, it is its essence; otherwise how could it experience the joy of deep sleep? Aloofness is its everlasting characteristic, because with the loss of sense-organs, its witnessing and non-attachment come to an end. Attention, too, is not an attribute of *purusha*. For, attention entails effort, and *purusha* is non-active. Bliss is also not its nature.

*Prakriti* is an eternal entity. No one has produced it. But the entire universe has sprung from it. The triple modes (*gunas*), viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* belong to it. *Prakriti* is the state of equilibrium of these three principles. It is the origin of the objects.

'Sattva' is the light, self-illuminating and producer of bliss. Its reign results in mental enlightenment. 'Rajas' inspires activity and makes man energetic. The result is involvement, leading to suffering. 'Tamas', as a 'heavy' *guna*, causes attachment and inertia. The result is slothfulness.

*Purushas* are countless, since the natures of all men in the world vary. The effect of *gunas* is also different on each individual. One is bondage, another is free. This goes to prove that *purushas* are different.

*Prakriti* gives effect to intellect (*buddhi*) or *mahat*. From this arises the ego (*ahankara*). From the ego, combined with *sattva*, arises the mind (*manas*); in combination with *rajas*,

it leads to five organs of activity and five organs of sense; under the influence of *tamas*, it produces five *tan-matras* (sound, touch, colour or sight, taste and smell), and from these arise five *bhutas*, viz. ether, air, fire, water and earth. All these 24 categories belong to *prakriti*. The 25th entity is the *purusha*. The *Sankhya* system is based on the principles of cause and effect. Nothing can come out of void. Whenever we want to perform an act, it is our common experience that we seek the determining causes for that act. This shows that the effect is already contained in the cause. Particular effects are brought about by the determinant causes. The potter, howsoever he may try, cannot produce cloth out of clay. If we want oil, we must put sesame seeds in the crusher. If we put sand, oil cannot come out of it. The spirit exists. Matter does not possess the potentiality of thought and experience. We are capable of having both. So, we have inside us some substance that is distinct from *prakriti*. That is the soul.

Life and death apply to the astral body (*ling-sarira*) that has been made for the *purusha*. It is made up of *buddhi* (intellect), the ego, the mind and the five *tan-matras*; it is from the very beginning and is the seat of all experience. This organism cannot exist without a concrete body; it is involved in the cycle of birth and death, according to its deeds performed in the natural order of things. On having enlightenment, this organism is destroyed and the *purusha* attains the stage of *kevalya*.

The purpose of world-creation is to enable the *purusha* to know himself through the knowledge of *prakriti* and, thus, attain salvation. Emancipation is everlasting and many a man can be emancipated during life.

Salvation results from knowledge. *Karma* (action) or worship cannot replace it. In the course of worship, the form of reality attended to is conceived on account of ignorance. But, through worship, man becomes omnipotent; and just as *prakriti* creates and annihilates, he with his intellect, associated with *sattva guna*, can influence *prakriti* to create and destroy.

Meditation purifies the mind of all its ills. All attachments are ended. The success of meditation consists in the destruction of all mental processes. Success is achieved through the control of breathing, special postures and by performing the duties of one's *ashram*. Knowledge becomes manifest by means of non-attachment

and practice. It may also be acquired through keeping company of those who are emancipated during their lifetime.

Bondage is not due to relationship with time and space, for time and space exist for the emancipated men too. Nor is the bondage of soul due to its association with adjuncts. For adjuncts are related to the body. Nor is it due to *karma*, for the *karma* or deeds belong to the intellect. The bondage does not apply to *buddhi* (intellect). Neither is the *prakriti* the cause of bondage. Otherwise no one could attain salvation. *Prakriti* is eternal. Bondage results from association with *prakriti*, just as the colour of the rose-flower is reflected through the crystal lying nearby. *Avidya* (ignorance) is not the cause of bondage. The imaginary ropes cannot tie anyone down.

The existence of God cannot be proved by argument. If you ask how the lifeless *prakriti* can perform the act of creation, the answer is : In the same way as milk becomes transformed into curd.

#### NOTE

The material relating to the traditional religions and thought has been borrowed from *History of Philosophy : Eastern and Western*, first published in 1959 by the Government of India.

## LECTURE TWO

### RAJ-YOGA

The discipline of *yoga* which Patanjali put down in his *sutras* (aphorisms) has been called *raj-yoga*. The Upanishadic thinkers made 'know thyself' the lofty ideal of human life. The triple method of *shravana, manana and nidhidhyasan* was established for its attainment. Concentration of the mind was emphasized in *niddhidhyasan*. This was, so to say, the beginning of *yoga*. The practical means for the attainment of the supreme reality has been described as *yoga*, not only by the *Upanishad*, but also by the writings of Jainism and Buddhism. The Sankhya and *yoga* patterns of thought are also depicted in the *Shrimad Bhagvada Gita*. This fact goes to establish that these ideas and means were prevalent even before the composition of the *Gita*.

The school of Patanjali has been called *Saheshvara Sankhya*. Just like Kapla, the author of the *Yoga-sutras* considers both *purasha* and *prakriti* eternal, but he also admits the existence of God, who is also ever-lasting in the fashion of *purusha* and *prakriti*. *Ishvara* (God) is a unique being, who remains unaffected by anguish, actions, their results and desires. His omniscience is boundless. He is present in living beings only in an embryonic form. He is the supreme enlightener of all ancient teachers, being immortal. The word 'Om' represents Him. The repetition of this word and concentration on its meaning constitute the way of *yoga*. The treading of such a path becomes easy through the adoption of virtues, friendly feelings, compassion (*karuna*), joyfulness, indifference, etc.

Let us now turn to the discipline of *yoga* in some detail. Patanjali in his second *sutra* says : "*Yoga* is the restraint of mental modifications." When the mind comes into contact with the objects around it, waves arise. If these waves are suppressed through the concentration of the mind, the real essence of the spirit is known, just as a tank shows its bottom when the ripples produced by air

cease to rise. When the seeker is in such a state, it is the state of *samadhi* (concentration).

The Buddha had established an eightfold system for attaining *nirvana*; in a like manner, Patanjali had laid down an eightfold path of *yoga*. The first element is *yama* (restraint); the second, *niyama* (observance); the third, *asana* (posture) the fourth *pranayam* (breath-control); the fifth, *pratyahar* (withdrawal of the senses); the sixth, *dharna* (fixed attention); the seventh, *dhyana* (contemplation); and the eighth, *samadhi* (concentration).

Non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, and non-acceptance of gifts are the five *yamas*. The Jain *munis* have also mentioned them. Such vows are meant for everyone, irrespective of caste, country or period of time. These five disciplines are the foundation of moral life, and anyone who fails to observe them cannot be initiated into the *yoga* system.

Purification, contentment, austerity (postures), self-study and devotion to God are the five *niyamas*. Purification refers to external as well as to internal purity. Cleanliness of the body alone does not lead to spiritual attainment. Contentment implies the regulation of one's desires and not letting them to multiply. Austerity (*tapa*) means resistance to heat and cold with one's body and forging ahead for the attainment of the desired goal. Self-study refers to the studying of religious scriptures and to act upon their teachings. Devotion to God means dedicating oneself to Him. These goals can be achieved through a strict observance of *yamas* and *niyamas*. When non-violence characterizes one's mind, word and deed, then in the presence of such a *yogi*, even the wildest of animals quiet down. The tiger and the lamb would sport together before him. When such events take place, it may be taken for granted that non-violence has been attained. Impregnated with truthfulness, the *yogi's* utterances never go amiss. If he blesses a patient to recover from illness, the latter would no longer fall ill. Non-stealing, when strictly observed, would make wealth to follow him. The complete observance of continence would increase his powers. The non-acceptance of gifts makes a *yogi* recall his previous lives.

Having become purified, a man would cease to be in love with his body and he would also tend to keep away from others. There would be an increase of *sattva guna* in his mind. The faculty of

concentration would develop in him. His control over his organs would increase and he would be qualified for the vision of the self. By practising contentment, he would get higher types of pleasure. Austerity would bring strength to his body and its organs. Then impurity would be wiped away. Through such a self-discipline, he would realize God. By dedicating his all to the Divine, he would attain true contemplation.

The posture that conduces to tranquillity and joyfulness of the mind is the best posture. It means the posture should not cause uneasiness if practised for long. Such a posture is mastered by means of prolonged practice and contemplation of the Infinite. On achieving stability in the posture, the conflicts of heat and cold, good and evil cease.

It is only after the stabilization of *asana* (bodily posture) that breath-control can fructify. Its method consists in inhaling the breath, holding it, exhaling it, holding it again, inhaling it, and again exhaling it. Its repetition and duration may vary according to place and time. Apart from *puraka*, *rechaka* and *kumbhaka*, the fourth device is to hold the breath and direct it towards an object, internal or external. This process removes the coverings that hide the light of *chitta*, and the mind becomes capable of performing the discipline, of *dharna*.

*Pratyahar* means to restrain the organs from external involvements and to orient them to consciousness. Yoga believes that when the eyes turn to an object, they identify themselves with it. Then our internal organ observes the object by reproducing it. *Pratyahar* makes possible the super-control over the organs.

*Dharna* (concentration) is the steadfastness of the mind on a particular object. When a *yogi* concentrates in this manner for a long time, it is termed *dharna*. When he fixes his attention only on the meaning of an object, disregarding its form, then he is said to have entered *samadhi* (trance). When *dharna*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* are practised together, it is called *sanyam*. The *yoga* system describes the fruit of *sanyam* on different things and disciplines as various kinds of supernatural attainments. Some persons are in possession of such powers from birth. Some others acquire them through use of some medicines. Austerities, *mantras*, and trances are also the means of their acquisition. In *samadhi*, the *purusha* has self-cognition. *Ishvara*, *purusha* and *prakriti* are eternal entities according to

*yoga*. *Yoga* does not mean identification with God ; it is cognition of one's true self. When the *purusha* comes to know the self, all his suffering ceases and he attains to the level of *Kevalya*, and thus, becomes distinct from *prakriti*. The play of *prakriti* is no more for him.

The *yoga* school is one with the *Sankhya* system in its theory about the origin of the universe. *Sankhya* holds 24 *gunas of prakriti* plus *purusha*, i.e. 25 entities in all. The *Yoga* admits God besides them and thus makes 26 entities.

The yogic practice is described in the second chapter of *Svetasvatara Upanishad* in the following way :

6. Where the fire is rubbed, where the air is controlled, where the Soma flows over, there a (perfect) mind is created.

8. Placing the body in a straight posture, with the chest, the throat, and the head held erect, making the organs enter the mind, the sage crosses all the fearful currents by means of the raft of Brahman.

9. The man of well-regulated endeavours controls the Prana ; and when it has become quieted, breathes out through the nostrils. The persevering sage holds his mind as a charioteer holds the restive horses.

10. In (lonely) places, as mountain caves, where the floor is even, free of pebbles or sand, where there are no disturbing noises from men or waterfalls, in places helpful to the mind and pleasing to the eyes, *Yoga* is to be practised (mind is to be joined).

12. When the perceptions of *Yoga*, arising from earth, water, light, fire, ether, have taken place, then *Yoga* has begun. Unto him does not come disease, nor old age, nor death, who has got a body made up of the fire of *Yoga*.

14. As gold or silver, first covered with earth, and then cleaned, shines full of light, so the embodied man seeing the truth of the *Atm* as one, attains the goal and becomes sorrowless.\*

### HATH YOGA-GORAKH NATH

In the *Yoga* system of Patanjali, neither the six *chakras* of *Hath-Yoga* nor the names of *irra*, *pingala* and *sukhmana* have been mentioned. But some commentators have mentioned them in their

\*Translation of aphorisms is taken from *Raj Yoga* of Swami Vivekananda 2nd Edition.

commentaries on the aphorisms of Patanjli, It appears the *nathas* promulgated this methodology. Some writers say that Machhindra Nath was born in a Brahmin family. But, according to Brahminic astrology, it was a bad omen to take birth at that hour. The Brahmin threw the baby into the sea. A big fish swallowed it. When Lord Shiva imparted yogic instructions to Parvati, they were learnt by Suka (Suka Dev). This Sukadev who was a son of Vyasa flourished towards the end of the *Dvapara Age*. It, thus, appears that the Nath sect became established during the latter part of *Dvapara*. It is then that Machhindra was helped out of the fish's belly by Lord Shiva. Gorakh Nath was a disciple of Machhindra. In the poetry of Gorakh, it is hinted that Machhindra Nath was a disciple of the Adi-Nath (Shiva).

But Rangeya Raghav writes in his book : 'Gorakh Nath aur unka Yug' :

"The available evidence, when all the different facts have been taken into account, points to the conclusion that Machhindra Nath lived during the middle of the ninth century. Since Gorakh Nath was his disciple, he must have been his contemporary during the latter part of his life."

The study of the six philosophical schools was mostly confined to the educated class in India. The general public was following the Brahminic cult. But in the Punjab, most of people at the time of Guru Nanak's advent had been under the influence of split-eared *yogis* belonging to the Natha sect. Those *yogis* used to influence people by making a show of supernatural powers, or by blessing and cursing them. They earned their livelihood through the spreading of *jantras*, *mantras* and *tantras*. Many of Guru Nanak's hymns are addressed to such *yogis* and their leaders, *pirs*, *nathas*, or they are the result of his dialogues with them. The poetry of Gorakh reveals its mixture with the poetry of Kabir, Namdev and other *bhaktas*, wherein entire stanzas, verses, phrases and terminology are common. That is why a brief account of the beliefs, activities and the faith of the Natha sect seems necessary.

#### THE BACKGROUND OF THE NATH SECT

"The Buddhist monks embarked upon the development of their mental powers through *yoga*, on the one hand; on the other, they invented thousands of new gods and goddesses, besides employing several types of austerities, hypnotic practices and *tantra-mantra* in



order to win over the devotion of their followers. Thousands of years earlier, too, we find people in Egypt, Asur, Greece etc. propagating *Bhairvi-Chakras*. These *Vajryani bhikshus* started using these devices with new practices in the name of the Buddha.”

This shows the Nath sect was only a gradually developed form of *Vajryani* monks. The names of the chief *nathas* were :

Machhindra Nath, Gorakh Nath, Jwalendra Nath, Karnipa Nath, Gahini Nath, Charpat Nath, Raven Nath, Bhag Nath, Bharthri Nath, Gopi Chand Nath.

Although it is mentioned in the *Hath-Yoga Pradipika* that the *hath-yoga* was practised in order to be qualified for the *raja-yoga* there is no such indication in the poetry of Gorakh. It seems necessary to give a few facts about *hath-yoga* in order to follow its activities. *Hath Yoga Pradipika* says that Ganga, ida or Chandrama is the nerve that controls the left nostril. *Yamuna, pingala* or *suraj* is the *nađi* (nerve) that controls the right nostril. The *Sukhmana* *nađi* has one of its ends in the *Muldhar a chakra* and the other in the *brahmarandhar* or *dasma duar*.

*Pranayam* means keeping these breathing tracks free of contamination and forcing the *prana* into the *Sukhmana*.

The breath, on its way to the ‘tenth door’, passes through the six circles (*chakras*) :

1. *Muldhar*—between the anus and the penis
2. *Svadishtan*—at the base of the *linga*
3. *Manipur*—near the naval
4. *Anahat*—inside the heart
5. *Vishudhi*—in the throat ; this is also called the *solah-dal kamal*
6. *Agya*—between the eye-brows.

The *yogis* believe that there are seventy-two thousand *nađis* in the body, but the most important is *sukhmana*. The lower part of this *nađi* is closed by the *kundilini*. This *kundilini* is a *nađi* curled like a serpent. It resembles a serpent holding its tail in its mouth. The first task of holding the breath consists in the opening of the lower end of this *sukhmana*.

*Pranayam* may be practised in many ways, but one factor common in all of them is to inhale through one nostril ; then to hold the breath inside, and exhale it through the other nostril. These three steps are called *puraka*, *kumbhaka* and *rechaka*. Then after

inhaling through the other nostril, the breath is held and eventually released through the first nostril. Some hold the breath outside instead of holding it inside ; in other words, they suspend breathing for some time after exhaling.

The method of activating the *kundilini* has been described as follows :

Pressing the anus with the ankle, contract it, so as to draw the downward breath up. This is called the *mul-bandh*. Hold the *prana* in the upper end through *khechri mudra*. The latter operates in this manner : Twist the tongue and close the inlet in the skull while concentrating on the spot between the eye-brows. In this way, the *prana* and *apana* will meet, leading to the generation of heat in the body and, thus, forcing the *kundilini* to uncurl itself. Its tail would come out of its mouth and the breath will enter the *sukhmana*.

The hole in the skull is the meeting place of *irra*, *pingala* and *sukhmana*. The western door of the *sukhmana* is located here.

Just above this hole and below the brain lies *chandrama*. It secretes an elixir (*amrit*) but this secretion is carried to stomach where the 'sun' or *jathraagni* (gastric fire) burns it down. But when the *yogi* stops the inlet by turning back his tongue, the elixir cannot trickle down and, thus, enriches his body.

*Pranayam* puts an end only to the interruption coming from outside through the sense-organs, but how to stop the conceptual activity of the mind itself ? For this purpose, the *hath-yogis* prescribe the practice of *nad-laya*.

It has four stages :

1. *Arambha* (beginning)
2. *Ghat*
3. *Parichaya*
4. *Nishpatti*

When through the holding of the breath, the *yogis* arrive at *anahat chakra* and through it, piercing the Brahma plexus, proceed further, then the *nada* (sound) starts. This is the first stage ; from here arises the sweet and soft tone like the tinkling of ornaments.

And when the *yogi*, after crossing the *visudhi-chakra* and piercing the Vishnu plexus, arrives at the great void (i.e. the space inside the throat), then the second stage of *ghat* is achieved. This point is free from *maya* ; here the soul becomes non-attached and the sound

of *bheri* is heard.

When the *yogi* reaches the point between the eye-brows, that is the third stage. Here, the music of *mardal* (an instrument like a drum) is heard.

Still further, when the *prana* (breath) reaches the *devasthan* (the abode of gods), passing through the Rudra plexus, that is the fourth stage ; and here is heard the music of *veena*.

The followers of Natha sect were not in favour of adopting the householder's way of life. Denunciation of the woman occurs at several places in the poetry of Gorakh.

For instance :

If a householder talks of the spiritual knowledge,  
 If a man addicted to drinks sits in contemplation,  
 If a man of renunciation nurses desires.  
 Says Nath, all three are well in the noose (of *yama*).

But why is Gorakh Nath so opposed to women ? One of the reasons may be the episode of his preceptor, Machhinder Nath's capture by the designing women. He went to Singhla for the *yogic* practice. The ruler of that land had died and the queen was crying. she had no issue and was afraid of losing the State. Machhindra, through his *yogic* powers, resuscitated the *raja* by putting his own soul into the dead body and started ruling the State. The *rani* gave birth to two sons. He was so engrossed in the new situation that he did not want to get away from the body. Gorakh approached him and cautioned him by his satirical remarks :

ਰੂਪੇ ਕਰੂਪੇ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਬਾਘਨਿ ਭੱਲੇ ਭੱਲੇ ।  
 ਜਿਨ ਜਨਨੀ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦਿਖਾਯਾ ਤਾ ਕੋ ਲੇ ਸੂਤੇ ਖੱਲੇ ਟੇਕ ।  
 ਗੁਰੂ ਖੋਜੋ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਖੋਜੋ, ਬਦੰਤ ਗੋਰਖ ਐਸਾ ।  
 ਮੁਖਤੋ ਹੋਇ ਤੁਮ੍ਹੇ ਬੰਧਨਿ ਪੜਿਯਾ, ਯੇ ਜੋਗ ਹੈ ਕੈਸਾ । ੧ ।  
 ਚਾਮ ਹੀ ਚਾਮ ਘਸੰਤਾ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਦਿਨ ਦਿਨ ਛੀਜੈ ਕਾਯਾ ।  
 ਹੋਠ ਕੰਠ ਤਾਲੁਕਾ ਸੋਖੀ ਕਾੜਿ ਮਿਜਾਲੂ ਖਾਯਾ । ੨ ।  
 ਦੀਪਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਪਤੰਗ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ, ਐਸੀ ਭਜ ਕੀ ਛਾਯਾ ।  
 ਬੁੜ੍ਹੇ ਹੋਇ ਤੁਮ੍ਹੇ ਰਾਜ ਕਮਾਯਾ, ਨਾ ਤਜੀ ਮੋਹ ਮਾਯਾ । ੩ ।  
 ਬਦੰਤ ਗੋਰਖ ਨਾਥ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਮਠਿੰਦੁ, ਤੁਮ੍ਹੇ ਈਸ਼ੁਰ ਕੇ ਪੂਤਾ ।  
 ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਝਰੰਤਾ ਜੇ ਨਰ ਰਾਖੈ, ਸੋ ਬੋਲੋ ਅਵਧੂਤਾ । ੪ । ੪੯ ।

O my Gurdev, woman though (outwardly) very beautiful, is in (reality) ugly ;

Seemingly innocent, but really a tigress.

Man, who was ushered into the world by a woman,  
sleeps with her, taking her in his embrace.

O my Guru, my Gurdev, Gorakh entreats you to seek the  
Guru (the truth).

What kind of Yoga is this, when you, an emancipated man,  
again have fallen into bondage ?

O my gurudev, in sexual intercourse day by day the body is  
weakened.

Man's lips, throat and palate dry up,  
his brain gets eaten up.

Gurudev, under woman's spell, man behaves like a moth  
around the flame.

You, in your old age, have taken to the ways of a ruler ;  
and have not renounced attachment to *maya*.

Gorakhnath entreats, listen O Machhindar,  
you are the disciple of Iswara,

That he alone is an *Avdhuta* who  
exercises control over emission of the semen.

Another tale that is given in the *Gorakh Bani* edited by Pitambar Barathwal, at page 137, runs as follows :

Machhindra Nath who had gone to Singhla for carrying on the  
practice of yoga among the *padminis*, was caught up there. Gorakh  
Nath, then, addressed this stanza to him :

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਐਸਾ ਕਰਮ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ । ਤਾਥੈਂ ਅਮੀਂ ਮਹਾ ਰਸ ਛੀਜੈ । ਟੇਕ ।

ਦਿਵਜੈ ਬਾਘਣਿ ਮਨ ਮੋਹੈ ਰਾਤਿ ਸਰੋਵਰ ਸੋਖੈ ।

ਨਦੀ ਤੀਰੈ ਬਿਰਖਾ ਨਾਰੀ ਸੰਗ ਪੁਰਖਾ ਅਲਪ ਜੀਵਨ ਕੀ ਆਸਾ ।

ਮਨ ਬੈਂ ਉਪਜ ਮੋਰ ਖਿਸਿ ਪੜਈ ਨਾਥੋਂ ਕੰਧ ਬਿਨਾਸਾ । ੧ ।

ਗੋੜ ਭਏ ਡਗਮਗ ਪੇਟ ਭਯਾ ਢੀਲਾ, ਸਿਰ ਬਗਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੰਖਵਾ ।

ਅਮੀ ਮਹਾ ਰਸ ਬਾਘਣੀ ਸੋਖਯਾ ਘੋਰ ਮਥਨ ਸੀ ਅਖਿਯਾਂ । ੨ ।

ਬਾਘਣਿ ਕੋ ਨਿੰਦਲੈ ਬਾਘਣਿ ਕੋ ਬਿੰਦਲੈ ਬਾਘਣੀ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਕਾਯਾ ।

ਬਾਘਣੀਂ ਘੋਖਿ ਘੋਖਿ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਖਾਏ ਭਣਤ ਗੋਰਖ ਰਾਯਾ । ੧੩ । ੪੩ ।

O my Guru, perform not such a deed

As would cause the essence of immortality (semen) to spill  
away.

The tigress (woman) enfetters the heart during the day,  
At night, she dries up the pool of energy.

As a tree on the river-bank cannot stand for long

So a man in woman's company cannot live long.  
 The desire rising in the mind would destroy the  
 noble element in man,  
 And the body of the Natha would crumble down.  
 The feet become shaky, the tummy becomes flabby,  
 The head becomes grey like heron's feathers.  
 The tigress causes the essence of immortality to dry up,  
 Her looks cause disturbance in the mind of man.  
 The tigress destroys our sleep, our semen, our body,  
 She, carefully selects and eats healthful bodies,  
 says Gorakh Rai.

Then he tells his *guru*, Machhindra Nath, that he got the  
 information about his state from the *yogi* Kanhi Pava :

ਛਾਟੈ ਤਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਛਾਟੈ ਤਜੋ ਲੱਭ ਮੱਹ ਮਾਯਾ ।  
 ਆਤਮਾ ਪਰਚੈ ਰਾਖੋ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਕਾਯਾ । ਟੇਕ ।  
 ਕਾਨ੍ਹੀ ਪਾਵ ਭੇਟਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ, ਵਿਦ੍ਯਾ ਨਗਰੇ ਸੈ ।  
 ਨਾਥੈ ਸੈ ਪਾਇਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ, ਤਮ੍ਹਾਰਾ ਉਧਦੇਸੈ । ੧ ।  
 ਏਤੈ ਕਛੁ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ, ਸਰਵੈ ਭਲਾ ਭੱਲੈ ।  
 ਸਰਬ ਰਸ ਖੋਇਲਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਘਨੀ ਚੈ ਖੋਲੈ ।  
 ਨਾਚਤ ਗੋਰਖ ਨਾਥ ਘੁੰਘਰੀ ਚੈ ਘਾਤੈ ।  
 ਸਭੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਖੋਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਘਨੀ ਚੈ ਰਾਚੈ । ੩ ।  
 ਰਸ-ਕੁਸ ਵਹਿ ਗਈਲਾ ਰਹਿ ਗਈ ਛੋਈ ।  
 ਭਣਤ ਮੁਛਿੰਦ੍ਰ ਨਾਥ ਪ੍ਰਤਾ, ਜੋਗ ਨ ਰੋਈ । ੪ ।  
 ਰਸ-ਕੁਸ ਬਹਿਗਈਲਾ ਰਹਿ ਗਈਲਾ ਸਾਰੈ ।  
 ਬਦੰਤ ਗੋਰਖ ਨਾਥ ਗੁਰ ਜੋਗ ਅਪਾਰੈ । ੫ ।  
 ਆਦਿਨਾਥ ਨਾਤੀ, ਮਛਿੰਦ੍ਰ ਨਾਥ ਪ੍ਰਤਾ ।  
 ਖਟਪਦੀ ਭਣੀਲੈ ਗੋਰਖ ਅਵਪ੍ਰਤਾ । ੬ । ੨

O my guru, eliminate and abandon the greed and attachment  
 for *maya*.

O Gurudev, involve yourself with the spirit and thus  
 maintain this fair body.

O Guru, Kanhi Pav Yogi from Vidyanagar met me,  
 He conveyed to me all the information about you.

Whatever he told me, O guru, indicates that  
 this happened under some misunderstanding.

You have lost the essence, O guru, in the embrace of a tigress.  
 Says Gorakhnath, (O my guru),

You are dancing to the tune of her anklets.

All the gains of spiritual life you have lost in the love of a tigress.

The juice has been drained off, only the husk remains.

The disciple of Machhindra Nath says—Yoga is not performed in this way.

(It appears) all yours defects have been removed,

What remains is pure substance.

Says Gorakhnath, your yoga is limitless, O guru.

The grand-disciple of Shiva and the disciple of

Machhindra Nath, Gorakh *avdhut* has uttered this *khat-padi* (a poem of six couplets).

The Sikh history makes a mention of Guru Gobind Singh coming to the rescue of Bhai Joga Sing. But the disciple rescuing the teacher is peculiar only to the *Natha* sect.

Guru Nanak had also visited Singhla. Raja Shiv Nath sent beautiful dancing-girls to him. The Guru addressed them in these words :

ਗਾਛਹੁ ਪੁੜੀ ਰਾਜ ਕਵਾਰਿ । ਨਾਮੁ ਭਣਹੁ ਸਚੁ ਦੋਤੁ ਸਵਾਰਿ ।

ਪ੍ਰਿਓ ਸੇਵਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਅਧਾਰਿ । ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਬਿਖੁ ਤਿਆਸ ਨਿਵਾਰਿ । ੭ ।

ਮੋਹਨਿ ਮੋਹਿ ਲੀਆ ਮਨੁ ਮੋਹਿ । ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਪਛਾਨਾ ਤੋਹਿ ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਠਾਵੇ ਚਾਹਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਦੁਆਰਿ । ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਮਿ ਸੰਤੋਖੇ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ।

(ਬਸੰਤ ਅਸਟਪਦੀਆ ਮ. ੧)

Go, O Princesses, my daughters, and contemplate the

True Name in the early hours of the morning.

Render service based on love to the beloved Lord and through the word of the Guru annihilate all thirst for sensual pleasures.

My heart is already bewitched by the Enchanter.

My Lord, I have cognized Thee through the Guru's word.

Take pity on me.

Nanak longs to stand at the door of the Lord content with His Name.

Here lies the difference between training the mind through *hath yoga* and bringing it under control through love.

But we need not be misled into believing that the exponents of *hath yoga* permitted such conduct. It is true, the Shakta sect was popular at the time of Gorakh or just before him. Some of the

*siddhas* or *nathas* were the propagators of this faith. Eating of flesh, drinking of wine and sexual indulgence were necessary to it. Some scholars are of the opinion that Gorakh Nath insisted on the observance of continence and denounced women in order to wean away the *nathas* and *siddhas* from this sect. Gorakh's teachings lay stress on morality, as is clear from the following compositions :

Yoga Sadhna

ਅਵਧੂ ਨਵ ਘਾਟੀ ਰੋਕਿ ਲੈ ਬਾਣਾ ਬਾਈ ਵਣਿਗੋ ਚੋਸਨਿ ਹਾਲ ।

ਕਾਯਾ ਪਲਟੈ ਅਕਚਲ ਬਿਧ । ਛਾਯਾ ਵਿਵਰਜਿਤ ਨਿਪਜੈ ਸਿੱਧ ।

O Avadhū, control the nine doors of your body. The breath would then circulate in the 64 *sandhis* (ganglions). That would bring about rejuvenation, and the seeker would turn into a *siddha* who has no shadow.

ਸੁਸਬਦੈ ਹੀਰਾ ਬੇਧਿਲੈ ਅਵਧੂ ਜਿਭਯਾ ਕਰਿ ਟਕਸਾਲ ।

ਅੰਗੁਨ ਮਧਯੋ ਗੁੰਨ ਕਰਿਲੈ ਤੋ ਚੇਲਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਸਾਰ ।

O Avadhuta, make your tongue a mint  
and repeating the *shabd* (word) pierce  
the diamond (of your heart).

In the midst of evil develop virtues.

The whole world would then bow before you.

ਗੋਰਖ ਕਹੈ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਰੇ ਅਵਧੂ ਜਗ ਮੈਂ ਅੰਸੇ ਰਹਣਾ ।

ਆਖੈ ਦੇਖਿਬਾ ਕਾਨੇ ਸੁਣਿਬਾ ਮੁਖ ਥੈ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਕਹਣਾ ।

Says Gorakhnāth, listen O Avdhū,

I tell you the way of leading life in the world :

Look through the eyes, hear through the ears,

But speak not a word by the tongue.

ਆਸਣ ਬੈਸਿਬਾ ਪਵਨ ਨਿਰੋਧਬਾ, ਬਾਨ ਮਾਨ ਸਭ ਧੰਧਾ ।

ਬਦੰਤ ਗੋਰਖਨਾਥ ਆਤਮਾ ਵਿਚਾਰੰਤ ਜਯੁ ਜਲ ਦੀਸੈ ਚੰਦਾ ।

Adopting a posture, holding the breath ;

robes and pride in them are futile,

Says Goraknāth, contemplation of the self

makes the truth evident,

Just as the moon is reflected in the water.

ਤਬ ਜਾਨਿਯਾ ਅਨਾਹਦ ਦਾ ਬੰਧ । ਨਾ ਪੜੈ ਤਿਭੁਵਨ ਨਾ ਪੜੈ ਕੰਧ ।

ਰਕਤ ਕੀ ਰੇਤ ਅੰਗ ਥੈ ਨ ਛੁਟੈ । ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹਤਾ ਹੀਰਾ ਨ ਛੁਟੈ ।

There alone the unstruck harmony is realized  
where the three worlds offer no obstruction,  
And the body does not deteriorate.

When the semen falls not,  
the diamond breaks not, says the Yogi.

ਸਬਦ ਏਕ ਪ੍ਰਫਿਠਾ ਕਹੋ ਦਯਾਲੰ । ਵਿਰਿਧਿ ਥੈ ਕਯੂ ਕਰਿ ਹੋਇਬਾ ਬਾਲੰ ।  
ਫੁਲਯਾ ਫੁਲ ਕਲੀ ਕਯੂ ਹੋਈ । ਪੂਛੇ ਕਹ ਤੋ ਗੋਰਖ ਸੋਈ :

O my gracious Guru, May I ask Thee one question ? How  
from old age to get young again ? How can the flower become a  
bud again ?

Whosoever answers this question, is Gorakh Nath.

ਸੁਣੋ ਹੇ ਦੇਵਲ ਭਜੋ ਜੰਜਾਲੰ । ਅਮਿਯ ਪੀਵਤ ਤਬ ਹੋਇਗਾ ਬਾਲੰ ।  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅਗਨਿ ਸੀਚਤ ਮੂਲੰ । ਫੁਲਯਾ ਫੁਲ ਕਲੀ ਵਿਰਿ ਫੁਲੰ ।

O Deval (Nath), listen, give up entanglements. If you take  
the nectar that is being secreted (by *chandarma*), you will return  
to childhood. By watering the flower with Divine-fire, it would  
re-assume the form of a bud.

ਅਵਥੂ ਕਾਯਾ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਨਾਲੀ ਬੋਲੀਐ ਦਾਰੂ ਬੋਲੀਐ ਪਵਨੰ ।  
ਅਗਨਿ ਪਲਿਤਾ ਅਨਹਦ ਗੇਰਜੈ ਵਯੰਦ ਗੋਲਾ ਉੜਿ ਗਗਨੰ ।

O Avadhu, this body is like a barrel and breath is like the  
gun-powder.

Thunder of the unstruck music is the fuse to fire it.

Thus, the shell of Semen goes up the body to the Tenth gate.

ਕਾਜੀ ਮੁਲਾਂ ਕੁਰਾਣ ਲਗਾਯਾ, ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਲਗਾਯਾ ਬੋਦੇ ।

ਕਾਪੜੀ ਸੰਨ੍ਹਾਸੀ ਤੀਰਥ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਯਾ ਨ ਪਾਯਾ ਨਿਰਥਾਣ ਪਦਕਾ ਭੇਵੇ ।

The *kazis* and the *maulvis* read the Quran,

The *brahmin* reads the Veda.

The *kaparis*\* and the ascetics (*sanyasis*) are beguiled by  
holy-places.

Thus they do not find the secret of the state of *nirvana*.

ਉਲਟਿਯਾ ਪਵਨ ਖਟ ਚਕ੍ਰ ਬੋਧਿਆ ਤਾਤੈ ਲੋਹੈ ਸੋਖਿਆ ਪਾਣੀ ।

ਚੰਦ ਸੂਰ ਦੋਉ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਰਾਖਯਾ, ਐਸਾ ਅਲਖ ਬਿਨਾਣੀ ।

By turning back the breath, the six *chakras* were pierced  
through. In this way, the semen was dried up in the *Brahma-*

\*A sect of ascetics.



*randhra*. When the *prana* of the left and the right nostrils meet at the *sukhmana* the seeker becomes one with the Unknowable Lord.

ਬੜੇ ਬੜੇ ਕੂਲੇ ਮੱਟੇ ਮੱਟੇ ਪੇਟ । ਨਹੀਂ ਰੈ ਪੂਤਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੌ ਭੇਟ ।

ਖੜ ਖੜ ਕਾਯਾ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਨੇਤ । ਭਈ ਰੇ ਪੂਤਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੌ ਭੇਟ ।

Those whose bodies are flabby and tummies bulging, have not met the *guru*.

If the seeker's body wears no fat, and his eyes are clear,  
Surely has he met his enlightener.

ਆਰੰਭ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਬੀਲਾ ਏਕਸਾਰ । ਖਿਣ ਖਿਣ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਰੈ ਸਰੀਰ ਵਿਚਾਰ ।

ਤਲਬਲ ਵਯੰਦ ਧਰਿਬਾ ਏਕ ਤੱਲ । ਤਲ ਜਾਣਿਬਾ ਜੋਗੀ ਅਰੰਭ ਕਾ ਬੱਲ ।

A yogi is said to be in the state of *Arambh*

When he has got equanimity.

Such a yogi thinks of his body every moment of his life and holds the semen constantly in his body.

Then alone the yogi will know the state of *Arambh*.

ਘਟ ਹੀ ਰਹਿਬਾ ਮਨ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਦੂਰ । ਅਹਨਿਸ ਪੀਵੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਵਾਰੁਣੀ ਸੂਰ ।

ਸਾਦ ਵਿਸਾਦ ਬਾਈ ਨਾਲ ਫੀਨ । ਤਬ ਜਾਨਿਬਾ ਘਟ ਕਾ ਲਫੀਨ ।

Let the mind be caged inside; let it not slip out. Through day and night, let the valiant *yogi* drink that wine. When through the control of breathing, taste and distaste disappear, then take it to be the sign of attainment of *Ghat*.

ਪਰਚਯ ਜੋਗੀ ਉਨਮਨ ਖੇਲਾ । ਅਹਨਿਸ ਇਛੱਯ ਕਰੈ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਸੰਯੁ ਮੇਲਾ ।

ਖਿਨ ਖਿਨ ਜੋਗੀ ਨਾਨਾ ਰੂਪ । ਤਬ ਜਾਨਿਬਾ ਜੋਗੀ ਪਰਚਯ ਸਰੂਪ ।

At the *Prichaya* stage, the yogi sports in the *unmani* (fourth) state. During day and night, he meets the god he longs for.

Every moment he is Him who has assumed various forms.

Then alone is the *Parichaya* stage reached.

ਨਿਸਪਤੀ ਜੋਗੀ ਜਾਨਿਬਾ ਕੈਸਾ । ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਲੋਹਾ ਮਾਨੈ ਜੈਸਾ ।

ਰਾਜਾ ਪਰਜਾ ਸਮਕਰਿ ਦੇਖ ਤਬ । ਜਾਨਿਬਾ ਜੋਗੀ ਨਿਸਪਤੀ ਦਾ ਭੇਖ ।

How is the Jogi to be known at the *Nishpatti* stage ? Just as the iron is purified by passing it through fire and water, such a one looks at king and his subjects alike. Then alone is the yogi at the *Nishpatti* stage.

But it is surprising that Gorakh Nath mentions *Vajroli* and *Amroli mudras* in his hymn 141. Success in these *mudras* is not possible to achieve without having intercourse with a woman. Its details have been mentioned in the third part of the *Hath Yoga-*

*pradi pika* (shlokas 83 to 103).

ਅਵਧੂ ਮਨ ਚੰਗਾ ਤੋ ਕਠੋਤੀ ਹੀ ਗੰਗਾ । ਬਾਂਧਯ ਮੋਲ੍ਹਾ ਤੇ ਜਗਤੁ ਚੇਲਾ ।  
ਵਦੰਤ ਗੋਰਖ ਸਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ । ਤਤ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ ਤੇ ਰੇਖ ਨ ਰੂਪ ।

O Avadhu, if the mind is pure, then water in the bowl is like the Ganges water.

When the mind engrossed in illusion is freed of it, the whole world will become your disciple.

Declares Gorakh, he who contemplates the Reality, which has no form or lines, will become the image of Truth.

ਜੋਗੀ ਹੋਇ ਪਰ ਨਿੰਦਯਾ ਝਖੈ । ਮਦਮਾਸ ਅਰੁ ਭਾਂਗਿ ਜੇ ਭਖੈ ।

ਇਕੋਤਰ ਸੈ ਪੁਰਿਸ਼ਾ ਨਰਕਹਿ ਜਾਈ । ਸਤਿਸਤਿ ਭਾਖਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੋਰਖ ਰਾਈ ।

One who becomes a yogi and then indulges in slander,  
Or gets addicted to drinking of wine and hashish (*bhang*), and eats meat,

One hundred and one generations of his would suffer in the hell.

This is the truth *par excellence* expressed by Gorakhrhai.

ਦਾਬਿ ਨ ਮਾਰਿਬਾ ਖਾਲੀ ਨ ਰਾਖਿਬਾ ਜਾਨਿਬਾ ਅਗਨਿਕਾ ਭੇਵੈ ।

ਬੁਢੀ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਨੀ ਹੋਇਗੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਭਾਖੰਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੋਰਖ ਦੇਵੈ ।

The mind should not be controlled through suppression. It should not be allowed to remain empty. The secret of *Yogic* fire should be understood. Then the old woman (*mayia*) would turn into the word of the teacher. What Gorakhdev says is the truth *par-excellence*.

ਨਾਦ ਨਾਦ ਸਭ ਕੋਈ ਕਹੈ । ਨਾਦਿਹ ਲੇ ਕੋ ਬਿਰਲਾ ਰਹੈ ।

ਨਾਦ ਬਿੰਦ ਹੈ ਫੀਕੀ ਸਿਲਾ । ਜਿਹਿ ਸਾਧਯਾ ਤੇ ਸਿਹੈ ਮਿਲਾ ।

Everyone talks of *Nad*, but rare is the man who stays absorbed in it.

The path of *nad* and *bindu* is like licking an unsavoury stone. But he who succeeds in it joins the ranks of the *siddhas*.

ਨਾਸਿਕਾ ਅਗ੍ਰੇ ਭੂ ਮੰਡਲੇ ਅਹਿਨਿਸ ਰਚਬਾ ਬੀਰੰ ।

ਮਾਤਾ ਗਰਭ ਜਨਮ ਨ ਆਯਬਾ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨ ਪੀਯਬਾ ਖੀਰੰ ।

Keep your attention fixed on the tip of the nose, in the middle of eyebrows, constantly, day and night.

You will then not enter the womb of a mother any more and drink her milk.

*In Praise of the Yogi*

ਅਹ ਨਿਸਿ ਮਨ ਲੈ ਉਨਮਨ ਰਹੈ । ਗਮ ਕੀ ਛਾਂਡਿ ਅਗਮ ਕੀ ਕਹੈ ।  
 ਛਾਡੈ ਆਸਾ ਰਹੈ ਨਿਰਾਸਾ । ਕਹੈ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਹੂੰ ਤਾਕਾ ਦਾਸਾ । ੧੬ ।  
 ਅਰਧੈ ਜਾਤਾ ਉਰਧੈ ਧਰੈ । ਕਾਮ ਦਗਧ ਜੋ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਰੈ ।  
 ਤਜੈ ਅਲਯੰਗਨ ਕਾਟੈ ਮਾਯਾ । ਤਾਕਾ ਵਿਸਨੂ ਪਖਾਲੈ ਪਾਯਾ । ੧੭ ।  
 ਅਜਪਾ ਜਪੈ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਮਨ ਧਰੈ । ਪਾਂਚੋ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀ ਨਿਗ੍ਰਹ ਕਰੇ ।  
 ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅਗਨਿ ਮੈ ਹੋਮੇ ਕਾਯਾ । ਤਾਸ ਮਹਾਦੇਵ ਬੰਦੇ ਪਾਯਾ । ੧੮ ।  
 ਧਨ ਜੋਵਨ ਕੀ ਕਰੈ ਨ ਆਸ । ਚਿੱਤ ਨ ਰਾਖੈ ਕਾਮਨਿ ਪਾਸ ।  
 ਨਾਦ ਬਿੰਦ ਜਾਕੈ ਘਟਿ ਜਰੈ । ਤਾਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਪਾਰਬਤੀ ਕਰੈ । ੧੯ ।  
 ਬਾਲੈ ਜੋਵਨਿ ਜੇ ਨਰ ਜਤੀ । ਕਾਲ ਦੁਕਾਲਾ ਤੇ ਨਰ ਸਤੀ ।  
 ਫੁਰਤੈ ਭੋਜਨ ਅਲਪ ਅਹਾਰੀ । ਨਾਥ ਕਹੈ ਸੋ ਕਾਯਾ ਹਮਾਰੀ । ੨੦ ।

One who keeps his mind day and night in the state of *Turiya*,  
 Will talk of the rigions unknown, instead of the already  
 known,

He abandons all hope, and is free from desire.

Even Brahm : says I am a slave unto such a one.

One who directs his semen upwards and stops it moving down-  
 wards, and burns up all desire of sex,

Who turns away from the embraces of a woman and cuts the  
 bonds of *maya*.

Even Vishnu washes the feet of such a one.

One who repeats the word without excercising the tongue and  
 fixes his mind in the thoughtless state.

Who controls the five (sense) organs, and immolates the body  
 in the divine fire.

Even Mahadeva falls at the feet of such a yogi.

One who hankers not for wealth, nor for youthful looks,

Who desires not the company of a woman ;

Who controls *nad* and *bindu* in his body,

Even Paravati serves such a one.

Those who practise continence both in childhood and youth,

Who speak truth on all occasions,

Who quickly partake of the food and eat lightly.

Their bodies are mine, says Nath.

*The Fruit of Yoga*

ਚ ਲਤ ਚੰਦਵਾ ਖਿਸਖਿਸ ਪੜੈ । ਬੈਠਾ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਅਗਨਿ ਪਰਜਲੈ ।

ਆੜੈ ਆਸਨ ਗੰਟਿਕਾ ਬੰਧ । ਜਾਵਤ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਵੀ ਤਾਵਤ ਕੰਧ ।

While walking, the Chandrama secretes nectar. While sitting,

the Brahma fire is intensified. In between walking and sitting, the curved posture is meant for *gotika-bandh*\*. The physical body persists so long as the world remains.

Gorakh Nath was opposed to symbolism and idol-worship, as is clear from the following hymns and stanzas :

*Anti-Symbolism*

ਪਾਵੜਿਆਂ ਪਗ ਫਿਲਸੈ ਅਵਧੂ ਲੋਹੈ ਛੀਜਤੰ ਕਾਯਾ ।  
 ਨਾਗਾ ਮੂਨੀ ਦੂਧਾਧਾਰੀ ਏਤਾ ਜੋਗ ਨ ਪਾਯਾ ।  
 ਦੂਧਾਧਾਰੀ ਪਰਘਰਿ ਚਿਤ । ਨਾਗਾ ਲਕੜੀ ਚਾਹੈ ਨਿਤ ।  
 ਮੋਨੀ ਕਰੈ ਮਯੰਤ੍ਰ ਕੀ ਆਸ । ਬਿਨ ਗੁਰ ਗੁਦੜੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਬੋਸਾਸ ।

By wearing the wooden footwear, one's feet are likely to slip, and by tying round iron-chains, the body is weakened. The Yoga is not achieved through adopting the ways of *nagas* (those who do not wear clothes), *monis* (those who observe silence) and *dudhadharis* (those who take only milk). The last-mentioned think only of other people's homes (wherefrom milk could be obtained). The *naga* remains worried about the fuel. *Moni* keeps on waiting for a friend who conveys his thoughts to others. By the wearing of robes alone, without the help of a spiritual guide, one does not get confirmed in faith.

*Anti Idol-worship*

ਤੁਝਿ ਪਰਿਵਾਰੀ ਹੋ ਅਨਘੜਯਾ ਦੇਵਾ ।  
 ਘੜੀ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਕੂੰ ਸਭ ਕੋਈ ਸੇਵੈ, ਤਾਹਿ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਭੇਵਾ ।  
 ਤੂੰ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਆਦੂ ਕਹੀਐ, ਮੋਹਿ ਕਰੋਸਾ ਪੜੀਯਾ ।  
 ਸਬ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਘੜਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇਰਾ, ਤੂੰ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਨਹਿ ਘੜਿਯਾ । ੧ ।  
 ਦਸ ਔਤਾਰ ਔਤਰੀਯਾ ਤਿਰਿਯਾ, ਬੈ ਪਣਿ ਰਾਮ ਨ ਹੋਈ ।  
 ਕਮਾਈ ਅਪਣੀ ਉਨਹੂੰ ਪਾਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਔਰੈ ਕੋਈ । ੨ ।  
 ਤੂੰ ਪੂਰਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੀ ਕਾ, ਸੂਰਤਿ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਸਾਰਾ ।  
 ਸ੍ਰਵਣਾਂ ਸੁਣਯਾਂ ਨ ਨੈਨਾ ਦੇਖਯਾ, ਤੇਰਾ ਘੜਣੈ ਹਾਰਾ । ੩ ।  
 ਤੂੰ ਤੈ ਆਪ ਆਪ ਤੈ ਹੂਵਾ, ਤੂੰ ਦੇਖਯਾਂ ਉਜਿਆਰਾ ।  
 ਗੋਰਖ ਕਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਾਂ ਤੂੰ ਹੀ ਘੜਨੇ ਹਾਰਾ । ੪ ।  
 I am a sacrifice to you, O my unsculptured God,  
 People worship chiselled idols ; they know not thy secret.  
 Thou art Eternal and from the beginning.  
 I keep my faith in Thee.

\*A miracle pill

Thou didst fashion the whole world, but none hast created Thee.

Ten incarnations of Thine are said to have appeared in this world.

But they were not Thee O God.

They got the fruit of their own actions;

But the real God, the Creator, was different from them.

Thou art the perfect, *Brahman*

Master of the earth, all forms and figures are Thine.

Ears have not heard, nor have eyes seen

One who could be Thy maker.

Thou art from Thyself, ths vision gives enlightenment.

Sayeth Gorakh, Thou Thyself coimest the words of the Guru.

Gorakh Nath used to treat all men equally. Not only those who belonged to the four Hindu *varnas*, but the Muslmans also were admitted to his fold.

It seems that the sense of humility that comes with the realization of the highest truth is not attainable through the *hath-Yoga*. The following hymns throw some light on the mental state of the *hath-yogi* :

ਅਵਧੂ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਹਮਾਰ ਚੇਲਾ ਭਣੀਜੈ ਮਛੀਦੁ ਬੋਲਿਯੇ ਨਾਤੀ ।

ਨਿਗੁਰੀ ਪਿਰਥੀ ਪਰਲੈ ਜਾਤੀ ਤਾਥੈ ਹਮ ਉਲਟੀ ਥਾਪਨਾ ਥਾਪੀ ।

O Avadhu, Shiva is my disciple, and Machhindra is the disciple of a disciple (i e. I have become identified with the Absolute, and, as such, they are not greater than I). But since the world would have gone to perdition without a spiritual guide, I became a disciple of them just to continue the tradition.

ਅਸਾਧ ਕੰਦੁਪ ਬਿਰਲਾ ਸਾਧੰਤ ਕੋਈ ।

ਸੁਰ ਨਰ ਗਣ ਗੰਧੂਬ ਵਾਯੂਪ੍ਰਯਾ ਬਾਲਿ ਸੁਗ੍ਰੀਵ ਭਾਈ ।

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਕੰਦੁਪ ਵਜਾਪਯਾ ਯੇਦੁ । ਸਹੰਸੁ ਭਗ ਪਾਈ ।

ਅਠਯਾਸੀ ਸਹੰਸੂ ਰਖੀਸਰ ਵਜਾਪਯਾ ਅਸਾਧਿ ਵਿਸ਼ ਕੀ ਮਾਯਾ ।

ਯਨ ਕੰਦੁਪ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਮਹਾ ਦੇਵ ਨਾਟਾਰੰਭ ਨਚਾਯਾ ।

ਵਿਸ਼ ਦਸ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਥਾਪਯਾ ਅਸਾਧਿ ਕੰਦੁਪ ਜਤੀ ਗੌਰਖ ਨਾਥ ਸਾਧਯਾ ।

The sex-impulse is irresistible, rarely can one sublimate it.

It has overpowered angels, gods, men and *gandharva* crowds,

Bali was (elder) brother of Sugariva (whose wife be snatched).

The god Brahma was overpowered by lust.

Indra (the king of gods) had a thousand *yonis* over his body.

Lust did not spare the eighty-eight thousand *rishis*.  
This *maya* of Vishnu (the desire of sex) is irresistible.  
This sex-impulse made Ishvara Mahadeva dance.

Vishnu assumed ten incarnations,

But it is only Gorakhnath who has succeeded in controlling the sex impulse.

I stated in the beginning that a number of stanzas and phrases, from the poetry of Gorakhnath are found in *Gurbani*. I shall end this lecture by quoting a few instances.

ਗੋਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਗਿਰਹੀ ਸੋ ਜੋ ਗਿਰਹ ਕਾਯਾ ।  
ਅਭਿ ਅੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਤਯਾਰੀ ਮਾਯਾ ।  
ਸਹਜ ਸੀਲ ਕਾ ਧਰੈ ਸਰੀਰ ।  
ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਕਾ ਨੀਰ । ੪੫ ।

ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਜੋ ਨਿਗ੍ਰਹ ਕਰੈ ।  
ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਭੀਖਿਆ ਕਰੈ ।  
ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਦਾ ਕਰੈ ਸਰੀਰੁ ।  
ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਕਾ ਨੀਰੁ । ੨ । ੧੨ ।

ਵਾਰ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ, ਸਲੋਕ ਮ. ੧

ਗੋਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਯਹੁ ਮਨ ਸਕਤੀ ਯਹੁ ਮਨ ਸੀਵ ।  
ਯਹੁ ਮਨ ਪਾਂਚ ਤਤੋ ਕਾ ਜੀਵ ।  
ਯਹੁ ਮਨ ਲੈ ਜੇ ਉਨਮਨ ਰਹੈ ।  
ਤੋ ਤੀਨਿ ਲੋਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਤਾਂ ਕਹੈ । ੫੦ ।

ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਸਕਤੀ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਉ ।  
ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਪੰਚ ਤਤ ਕੋ ਜੀਉ ।  
ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਲੇ ਜਉ ਉਨਮਨਿ ਰਹੈ ।  
ਤਉ ਤੀਨਿ ਲੋਕ ਕੀ ਬਾਤੈ ਕਹੈ । ੩੩ ।

ਗਉੜੀ ਬਾਵਨ ਅਖਰੀ, ਕਬੀਰ

ਗੋਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਧਯਾਵੈ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਮਸੀਤ ।  
ਜੋਗੀ ਧਯਾਵੈ ਪਰਮਪਦ ਜਹੈ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਨ ਮਸੀਤ । ੬੮ ।

ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਪੂਜੇ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਮਸੀਤ ।  
ਨਾਮੇ ਸੋਈ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਜਹ ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਨ ਮਸੀਤਿ । ੪ । ੩ । ੭ ।

ਗੌਂਡ, ਨਾਮਦੇਵ

ਗੌਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਉਰਮ ਧੂਰਮ ਜੁਾਲਾ ਜੋਤਿ । ੧੬੬ ।

ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਉਰਮ ਧੂਰਮ ਜੋਤਿ ਉਜਾਲਾ । ੮ ।

ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਦਖਣੀ ਮ: ੧

ਗੌਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਗਿਗਨਿ ਮੰਡਲ ਮੈਂ ਗਾਯ ਬਿਯਾਈ ਕਾਗਦ ਦਹੀ ਜਮਾਯਾ ।  
ਛਾਛਿ ਛਾਂਣਿ ਪਿੰਡਤਾ ਪੀਵੀ ਸਿੱਧਾਂ ਮਾਖਣ ਖਾਯਾ । ੧੬੬ ।

ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਕਬੀਰ ਮਾਇਆ ਡੌਲਨੀ ਪਵਨੁ ਝਕੌਲਨ ਹਾਰੁ ।  
ਸੰਤਹੁ ਮਾਖਨੁ ਖਾਇਆ ਛਾਛਿ ਪੀਐ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ । ੧੮ ।

ਸਲੋਕ ਕਬੀਰ

ਗੌਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਕਥਨੀ ਕਥੈ ਸੋ ਸਿਖ ਬੋਲਿਯੇ, ਬੇਦ ਪੜ੍ਹੈ ਸੋ ਨਾਤੀ ।  
ਰਹਣੀ ਰਹੈ ਸੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ, ਹਮ ਰਹਤਾ ਕਾ ਸਾਥੀ । ੨੭੦ ।

ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ

ਰਹਣੀ ਰਹੈ ਉਹੀ ਸਿਖ ਮੇਰਾ ।  
ਉਹ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਮੈਂ ਉਸਕੋ ਚੇਰਾ ।

ਰਹਤਨਾਮਾ

ਗੌਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਆਦਿ ਮਹੇਸਰ, ਯੇ ਤੀਨਯੂ ਮੈਂ ਜਾਯਾ ।  
ਇਨ ਤਿਹਵਾਂ ਨੀ ਮੈਂ ਘਰ ਘਰਣੀ, ਦ੍ਰੈਕਰ ਮੌਰੀ ਮਾਯਾ ਜੀ । ੩ । ੫ ।

ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ

ਏਕਾ ਮਾਈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਵਿਆਈ ਤਿਨਿ ਚੋਲੇ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ । ੩੦ । ਜਪੁਜੀ

ਗੌਰਖ ਬਾਣੀ

ਕੈਸੈਂ ਬੋਲੈਂ ਪੰਡਿਤਾ ਦੇਵ ਕੋਨੈ ਠਾਂਈ ।  
ਨਿਜ ਤਤ ਨਿਹਾਰ ਤਾਂ ਅਮੈਂ ਤੁਮੈਂ ਨਾਹੀ । ਟੇਕ ।  
ਪਖਾਣਚੀ ਦੇਵਲੀ ਪਖਾਣਚਾ ਦੇਵ ।  
ਪਖਾਣ ਪੂਜਲਾ ਦੈਸੈਂ ਫੀਟਲਾ ਸਨੇਹ । ੧ ।  
ਸਰਜੀਵ ਤੋੜਲਾ ਨਿਰਜੀਵ ਪੂਜਲਾ ।

ਬਾਹਰ ਧੰਏ ਕੈਸੈਂ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਭੇਦੀਲਾ । ੩ ।  
 ਆਦਿ ਨਾਥ ਨਾਤੀ ਮਛਿੰਦ੍ਰ ਨਾਥ ਪ੍ਰਤਾ ।  
 ਨਿਜ ਤਤ ਨਿਹਾਰੈ ਗੋਰਖ ਅਵਧੂਤਾ । ੪ । ੩੭ ।  
 ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਨ ਜਨ ਬਾਦ ਨ ਹੋਈ ।  
 ਅਣਬੋਲਯਾ ਅਵਧੂ ਸੋਈ । ਟੇਕ ।  
 ਪਤ੍ਰੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਕਲੀ ਵਿਸਨਾ ਫਲ ਮਧੇ ਰੁਦ੍ਰਸੁ ਦੇਵਾ ।  
 ਤੀਨਿ ਦੇਵੇ ਕਾ ਛੇਦ ਕਿਯਾ, ਤੁਮ੍ਹੇ ਕਰਹੁ ਕੈਂਨ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ । ੧ ।  
 ਯੇਕ ਡੰਡੀ ਦੁਡੰਡੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਯ ਦੰਡੀ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਹੂਵਾ ।  
 ਬਿਸ਼ਨ ਕੈਂ ਤਿਨ ਪਾਰ ਨ ਯਾਯੋ, ਤੀਰਥਾਂ ਭ੍ਰਮਿ ਮੂਵਾ । ੨ ।  
 ਯੇਕ ਕਾਲਮੁਹਾਂ ਜਟਾ ਧਾਰੀ, ਲਯੰਗ ਉਪਾਸਿਕ ਹੂਵਾ ।  
 ਮਹਾਦੇਵ ਕੋ ਤਿਨ ਪਾਰ ਨਾ ਪਾਯੋ, ਰਾਖਿ ਰੋਲਿ ਰੋਲਿ ਮੂਵਾ । ੩ ।  
 ਚਾਰਿ ਮਹਾਧਰ ਬਾਰਹ ਚੇਲਾ, ਯੇਕੰਕਾਰੀ ਹੂਵਾ ।  
 ਕਾਯਮ ਕੋ ਤਿਨ ਪਾਰ ਨ ਪਾਯੋ, ਜੋਤਿ ਬਾਲਿ ਬਾਲਿ ਮੂਵਾ । ੪ ।  
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*Gorakh Bani*

Girhī so jo girh kāyā  
 abhī antar kī tayāge māyā.  
 sahaj sil kā dharai sarir.  
 so girhī gangā kā nir. (45)

*Adi Granth*

So girhī jo nigrhu Karai.  
 japu tapu sanjmu bhikhīā karai.  
 pun dān dā kare sartru.  
 so girhī ganga kā nir. (2) (12)

Wār Ramkali, Salok M-1

*Gorakh Bani*

yahu man saktī yahu man siv.  
 yahu man panc tatu ka jiv.  
 yahu man lai je unaman rahai.  
 tan tīni lok kī bātān kahai. (50)

*Adi Granth*

Ihu manu sakti ihu siu.  
ihu manu panc tat ko jiu.  
ihu manu le jau unamani rahai.  
tau tini lok ki bātai kahai (33)

Gaurhi Bawan Akhari, Kabir.

*Gorakh Bani*

Hindū dhayāwai dehura muslmān masit.  
jogī dhayāwai parampad jahan dehurā  
na masit (68)

*Adi Granth*

Hindū pūjai dehurā muslmānu masit.  
Nāme soi sewiā jah dehurā na masiti. (4) (3) (7)

Gaund Nāmdev

*Gorakh Bani*

Ūram dhūram jwala joti. (169)

*Adi Granth*

Ūram dhūram joti ujalā. (8)

Onkār, Rāmkali Dakhani M. 1

*Gorakh Bani*

Gigni maṇḍal maih gāy biyāi  
kāgad dahī jamāyā.  
chāchi chāni pindta piwi  
sidhan mākhan kyāyā. (196)

*Adi Granth*

Kabir māiā ḍolni pawnu jhakolan hāru.  
santhu mākhnu khāia chāchi piāi sansār. (18)

Salok Kabir

*Gorakh Bani*

Kathni kathai so sikh boliye, bed parhai so nāti.  
raihni rahai so gurū hamārā, ham rahta kā

sāthi. (270)

*Rahitnama*

Raihni rahai uhi sikh merā.  
uh thākur main usko cerā.

Raihitnāmā

*Gorkah Bani*

Barhmā wishnai ādi mahesaur,  
ye tinyū main jāyā.

in tihwān nī mai ghar gharni  
dawaikar mori māyā ji. (3) (5)

*Adi Granth*

Ekā māi jugati wīai tini cele parwānu. (30) Japu

*Gorakh Bani*

Kaisai bolou panditā dev kaunai thāni  
Nij tat nihār tān amen tumen nāhi. (tek)  
Pakhānci dewali pakhancā dev.  
Pakhan pujlā daisain fitla saneh. (1)  
Sarjiv torhla nirjiv pūjilā.  
Pāp ki karni kaisain dutar tirilā. (2)  
Tirthi tirthi sanānan karilā.  
Bāhar dhoe kaisain bhitarī bhedilā. (1)  
Ādi nāth nāti Machinder nāth pūtā.  
Nij tat nihārai Gorakh awdhūtā. (4) (37)  
Pandit jan jan bād na hoi.  
anbolayā abdhū soi. (tek)  
patre brhamā kali visnā phal madhe rudrsu devā.  
tini deve kā ched kiyā, tumhe karhu kaun ki sevā. (9)  
Yek dandī dudandī triya dandī bhagwān hūvā.  
bishan ko tin pār na pāyo, tirthhān bharmi mūvā. (2)  
Yek kālmuhan jatādhāri, lyang upāsak hūvā.  
mahādev hau tin pār na pāyo, rākh rauli rauli mūvā. (3)  
Cāri mahādhār bāhar celā, yekankāri hūvā.  
kāyam kau tin pār na pāyo, joti bāli bāli mūvā. (4)  
Codsyanai pūnmiyān jāin brathāri tūvā.  
arhant kau tin pār na pāyo, kes launc launc mūvā. (5)  
Yek mulānnam doi kurānnam gyārah khursāni hūvā  
alah kotin pār na payo, bāng dei dei mūvā. (6)  
Nau nāth caurāsi siddhā āsandhāri hūvā.  
jog kau tin pār na pāyau, ban khandān bhram bhram  
mūvā (7)  
Panc tat kī kāyā binsi, rākhī na sakyā koī  
kāl davan jab gyān prkāsyā, badant gorakh soi. (8) (38)  
Mārau mārau srpanī nirmal jal paithi  
tri-bhuvan dasnī gorkh nath dithi. (tek)  
Māro srpanī jagāi layo bhorā.  
jini māri srapanī tākau kahā karai jaunrā. (9)

Srpani kahai main ablā baliyā  
 brahmā bishun mahādev chaliyā. (2)  
 Mārī mārī srpnī dasaun disi dhāvāi  
 gaurkh nāth gārari pavan vegi lyāvāi. (3)  
 Ādi nāth nāti machindr nāth pūtā.  
 srpnī mārīlāi gorkh avdhūta. (4) (45)

*Adi Granth*

Sarpni te upri nahī balsā  
 jini brahmā bisanu mahādeu chaliā. (1)  
 Māru māru srpani nirmal jali pāithi.  
 jini tribhavanu dasiale  
 gurprsādi dīthi. (1) rahau.  
 Srpani srpani kiā kahau bhāi  
 jini sāru pachānia tini srpani khāi. (3)  
 Srpani te ān chūch nahi avarā.  
 srpani jiti kahā karāi jamrā.  
 Ih srpani tāki kitī hoi,  
 balu balu kiā is te hoi. (4)  
 ih basti ta bast sarirā  
 gurprasadi sahj tare kabirā. (5) (6) (19)

Āsā Sri Kabir ji.

*Gorakh Bani*

Na jānon gur kahan gailā, mujh nindari na āvai. (ṭek)  
 kumhrā khai ghari hādī āchai, ahirā kai ghar sāndhi.  
 bamana kai ghari randi āchai, randi sandi hāndī. (1)  
 rājā kai ghari sel āchai, jaṅgal madhe bel.  
 telī ke ghari tel āchai, tel, bel, sel. (2)  
 ahir ke ghari mahki āchai, deval madhye lyang.  
 hātī madhe hing āchai, hing lyang syang. (3)  
 ekai sūtrai nānā banīyān, bahu bhanti dikhlāvai.  
 bhanant gorkhi triguṇīn māyā, satgur hoi lakhāvai.  
 (4) (42)

*Adi Granth*

Tini chande khelu āchai. (1) rahāu.  
 kunbhār ke ghar hāndī achai, rājā ke ghar sāndī go.  
 bāman ke ghar rāndī āchai, rāndī sāndī hāndī go (1)  
 bāniye ke ghar hing āchai, bhaisar māthai singū go.  
 deval madhe ligū āchai ligū sigū higu go. (2)

teli ke ghar telu āchai, jangal madhe bel go.  
 māli ke ghar kel āchai, kel, bel, tel go. (3)  
 sāntān madhe gobindu āchai gokal madhe shyām go.  
 nāme madhe rāmu āchai, rām, siām gobind go. (4) (3)  
 Toḍi Nām dev.

#### Machinder Gorkh Bodh

*Gorakh* : Swāmī kaun mūl kaun belā  
 kaun gurū, kaun celā  
 kaun khetar, kaun melā  
 kaun tatva le ramain akelā

#### *Machinder*

avdhū man mul pavan belā  
 sabad gurū surti celā  
 trikuṭi khetr uḷi melā  
 nirbaṅ tatv le ramaun akelā. (14)

#### *Adi Granth*

Kavaṅ mūlu kavaṅ mati velā  
 tera kavaṅ gurū jiskā tu celā  
 kavaṅ kathā le rahhu nirālai  
 bolai nāṅaku suṅhu tum bāle...(43)  
 Pavan araṅbhu satgur mati velā.  
 sabadu guru surti dhuni celā.  
 akath kathā le rahau nirāla.  
 nānak jugi jugi gur gopālā...(44)

—Sidh gosṭi rām kali M.9

Swamī Vivekanand expresses his opinion about the *hath yoga*, in his work *Raja Yoga*, in these words :

“The result of this branch of *Yoga* (the *Hath Yoga*) is to make men live long; health is the chief idea, the one goal of the *hath yogi*. He is determined not to fall sick, and he never does. He lives long; a hundred years is nothing to him; he is quite young and fresh when he is 150, without one hair turned grey. But that is all. A banyan tree lives sometimes 5000 years, but it is a banyan tree and nothing more. So, if a man lives long he is only a healthy animal.”\*

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LECTURE THREE  
MIMANSA AND VEDANTA

*Jaimini : Purva-Mimansa*

The aim of this system of philosophy is to investigate the nature of *dharma* propounded in the former section of the *Vedas*, known as *Karma-kanda*. Owing to the recognition of the *Vedas* alone by Jaimini as the sole authority on *dharma*, it is treated as an orthodox system of thought. The period of composition of the *sutras* of this school has been determined as 400 B.C.

This system admits the reality of the objective world. It is opposed to the subjectivism or nihilism of the Buddhists. It accepts Four categories of Being or Reality : substance (*dravya*), quality *guna*, action (*karma*) and generality (*samanya*).

Substance is that which possesses a size (*parimana*). Earth, water, light, air, darkness, ether, time, space, soul, mind and sound are substances.

Atoms are not imperceptible. As the sun-beams pass through them, they become visible as small particles. The relation between the effect and the material cause is not inherence. The pot is clay, but in form, etc. it is different. Mimansikas call it *sat-karya-vada*. The clay is changed into a pot, cup and other articles; these are the effects of clay.

Ether, time, space, soul, mind and sound are eternal and omnipresent and are perceptible, except in the case of the mind. Individual souls are innumerable; they are the support of knowledge, and experience pain and pleasure. They are, therefore, different from their perishable body, sense-organs and knowledge. Some of the *Mimansikas* treat the soul as consciousness and the object of mental perception. Mind, too, is eternal or all-pervasive. The contact of the two omnipresent substances, namely the mind and the soul, produces cognition. But this cognition is limited on account of the corporeal bodies. The soul is the agent of actions as also the enjoyer of their fruit.

Mimansikas accept the existence of *apurva*. The *Vedas* lay

down the heaven as the fruit of sacrifices. This fruit is not obtained immediately on the completion of the *yajana*. As such, the permanent self of the performer of sacrifices gets a subtle potency, which acts as the agent for the accomplishment of fruit at the appropriate time.

Jamini is silent about the existence of God. He does not subscribe to the view that God is the apportioner of the fruit of *karma*. The *apurva* itself possesses the capacity to distribute the fruit.

The world has no beginning. Nor has it in an end. It was, and will be always as it is as present. A part of the universe may get destroyed. But there is neither the creation nor the total dissolution of the world as a whole.

*Liberation*—The *Purva-Mimansa* deals with *dharma* which produces prosperity such as heaven. Jaimini and his interpreters, Sabar Swamin and Prabhaker, have not spoken of liberation (*moksha*). But Kumarila and Salikanatha, who followed them, could not ignore it. The system would not be complete without it. Kumarila understands *moksha* as freedom from rebirth, the cause of pain and suffering. For this, all the past *karma* should become exhausted through life-experience, without leaving a residue. The seeker of liberation should not do any prohibited action, or action for reward, as all these would generate new bondages for him. However, he should perform the obligatory and conditional acts, otherwise he would be subject to sin and suffering. It means that the practice of dispassionate actions has been prescribed.

Knowledge is not the direct cause of liberation. It takes the form of worship and meditation and, thus, leads to liberation. The liberated soul is free from all kinds of pleasure and pain and appears in its true form, that is, the potency of knowledge; since it has no body or organs and is free from their action. According to Shalikanatha, it is not a state of bliss. The *Purva-Mimansa* propagates *dharma* as expressed in the *Vedas*. *Shreya* (moral excellence) is defined in terms of *dharma*. It emphasizes the moral duties of man that he owes to himself, to his family and relations, to his community and nation, as enjoined upon him by the scriptures. It believes that *karma* is all-powerful, and even God, if He exists, cannot interfere with its fructification. It is opposed to such violence as leads to the killing of a living being.



But to kill an animal in a sacrifice is permitted, since it is enjoined upon by the Vedas and is not sinful. Violence for the sake of personal benefit is a sin, but if it is dedicated to the sacrificial observance, it is proper and in order. Obligatory acts such as *sandhya* (prayer) and conditional acts like bathing during an eclipse are compulsory. Their non performance would result in sin. Optional acts, i. e. those acts which are done for a specific purpose, are to be performed at one's will, if one has the capacity and the means for their performance.

### VEDANTA—ADVAITA

Although all the six schools of philosophy are replete with religious views, and stand in relation to the metaphysical teaching lying at the basis of the spiritual thought adopted by them, yet, fairly largely, the theories of Vedanta School, propagated by Shri Shankracharya through his sojourns across the country came to from the basis of common people's faith. Shankra flourished in the eighth century of the Christian Era, and died at the age of 32 years. However, his teachings had a devastating effect on the Buddhist faith, and the caste-system (the *varnasharm dharma*) was introduced once again. Vedanta has at its base the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagvada Gita* and the *Brahma-Sutras*. The doctrines of Shankra are known by the name of Advaita School. *Brahman* (the Absolute) is the sole reality. The world appears to be real so long as 'knowledge' has not dawned. This is *maya* (the grand illusion). Besides the Absolute, Shankra accepts the existence of *maya*. But what is *maya*? In reply, Shankra asserts that it is indescribable (*a-nirvachaniya*), that is, it cannot be expressed in words. *Maya* is neither real (*sat*), nor is it non-real (*a-sat*), nor real-non-real (*sat-asat*).

The things of the world are of an order intermediate between the absolute reality (*Brahman*) and complete non-existence (*shunya*). How can void, which is non-existent, be the object of knowledge? Shankra clarifies his view with the help of an illustration of the serpent and the rope. The serpent that is visible is not real. But it is not un-real either. So long as the reality is not apprehended, the serpent appears to be real. We cannot treat the universe either as real or as non-real. Like *maya*, it is inexpressible. Neither is it real, nor not-real, nor-real-non-real. It is *mithya*, but is eternal.

By the analogy of the serpent and the rope, Shankra wishes to suggest that the existence of the world is dependent upon the being of *Brahman*. The appearance of the serpent depends upon the existence of the rope. But the rope does not depend on the serpent for its existence. Whereas the existence of the world is dependent upon *Brahman's* existence, the latter does not depend on the world's existence. Causation applies to the phenomenal world, but the Absolute is free from the principle of causation.

The casual law may be made applicable to the realm of objects which can be perceived through the senses. *Brahman* is not the object of empirical knowledge. As such, the assertion that *Brahman* is the cause of phenomenal universe, does not stand the test of reasoning.

The world is not a dream. Whatever we see in the dream is incoherent; it is not inter-linked. But the worldly events have their interconnections.

All our knowledge is objective. Whatever we dream of is different from this. The object known in the dream is limited to the dream. But the object, e. g. a table, a chair, etc., known in the waking life, have their own identity. The empirical objects do not come to an end, as in the case of objects of the dream disappearing with the ending of the dream.

Since it is difficult to state how the world of plurality came into being out of the one undifferentiated Absolute, the world has been called the *maya* of *Brahman*. The existence of the world is dependent on the Being of the Absolute, but the Absolute is unaffected by the world.

Shankra criticizes the *vigyan-vad*. This doctrine implies that the external object exists only in our consciousness. The given object is only a 'construction', whereas consciousness is the sole reality. For Shankra, the object known is independent of the knowing act of it. To say that the self is the fundamental reality is not to say that our consciousness constitutes the reality of the object.

The individual soul (the *jiva*) is a composite of self and not-self. Through association with the limitations like the internal organs, the self functions as enjoyer, subject to rebirth and bondage. When we speak of the individual *jiva* as born or as growing, we mean that its adjuncts come into being or grow. The spirit is neither

born nor does it die. *Jiva* in its true character, as distinct from the adjuncts, is the 'witness' self. It is consciousness, pure and simple. All changes are in the consciousness, but the consciousness is unchanging. The seer is always present, whereas the changes which it witnesses come and go. The seer cannot become the object of knowledge. Nothing can be both subject and object at the same time. The eye can see other things but not itself. The pure self cannot be known as an object. But being the seer, the subject is self-revealing.

The means to liberation lies in the knowledge. When the individual soul comes to acquire the transcendent knowledge that 'I am *Brahman*', he is free from the cycle of birth and rebirth. Such enlightenment comes through meditation and reflection.

The ignorance (*avidya*) of the individual is beginningless (*anadi*). The entire world is a play of *maya*. The limitations of each person arise from the ignorance of his own individual soul. When the limitations are removed, no trace of differentiation remains between one soul and another. '*Tat-twam-asi*' (That Thou Art) does not mean that the *jiva* in his present form is *Brahman*, but that the individual soul can become *Brahman*.

#### VISHISHTADVAITA OF RAMANUJA

*Brahman* and *jiva* (individual soul) are two distinct entities, though not separated from each other. *Ishvara* (God) is present in all the *jivas* as their inner spirit, still remaining detached. Reality and value are one. And *Brahman* is so called, because by its nature it is infinite and can also infinitize the finite individual. *Brahman* can turn the individual into infinite, without destroying his individuality. *Brahman* is knowable—but He can be known through experience. "*Jiva* is a substance as well as an attribute."

The theory of *dharma-bhuta-jnana* (attributive consciousness) stipulates that the consciousness cannot be separated from the self, even though each has its own identity. The lamp and its light are indivisible, though we treat them as separate by assigning different names to them. Self-consciousness implies the existence of one self that is conscious.

*Brahman* is unique and is the absolute reality. He is *satyam jnana nam, apahata-papmatyam sandram*, and *anandam*. The word 'satyam' connotes *Brahman* as distinct from the migrating *jiva* and the perishing *prakriti*. He is the source of beings, conscious and un-

conscious.

Since *Brahman* is a reality, the universe that is dependent upon Him is also real. Inorganic existence is subject to permanent transformation and is called non-real. The self is unchanging though its consciousness goes on increasing or decreasing according to *karma*; it is real.

*Shastra* as a body of spiritual truths, verified and verifiable by seekers of the truth, furnishes the ultimate basis for valid knowledge. *Avidya* is the result of actions. It is an imperfection of the *jiva*, and when one seeks to overcome it, one becomes a seeker after *Brahman* (*mumukshu*). Creation and dissolution take place in a cyclic way endlessly; the cosmic purpose of the creative process is the liberation of souls. The evolutionary process of nature has been described after the Sankhya pattern. But, a 26th category of *Purushotma* (the Supreme Deity) has been added.

#### *Means of Liberation*

The first means is the *karma-yoga*, i.e. the practice of duty for duty's sake. Life is action-based. No living being can be non-active. Knowledge results from dispassionate actions. The individual is convinced that the foundation of his life is God. Such enlightenment leads to self-renunciation, which causes the individual to take up contemplation. It is then that devotion (*bhakti*) arises, and the individual sets himself out to serve others, realizing the presence of God in everyone. Thus, he merges himself completely in God and attains the highest form of bliss.

#### MADHVACHARYA—DVAITA SCHOOL

Correct knowledge (*prama*) and the correct source of knowledge (*pramana*) are things that grasp the object of knowledge, as it is. To say that knowledge is without the object known is meaningless. Without recognizing real silver, the superimposition of silver on a shell (in illusion) is impossible.

The difference between testimony (*saksin*) and knowledge produced by the mind is like this : testimony (witness) presents the object as it is, but knowledge that results from the mind and the sense-organs may occasionally go wrong. Knowledge of the self by itself or the pleasure in the *sukhupati* (dreamless) state can never be denied.

Testimony is also required in the knowledge produced by the mind, but the cognition of testimony takes place without the mind.

According to Madhva, the *Agmas* prescribe the mode of action. This is not a command or an authority. The knowledge of reality this is all-inclusive and self-evident can be had from the *Vedas*. Illusion has also been created by *Brahman*, so that in contrast with it, knowledge may shine forth better. Perfect knowledge results from discipline aided by the grace of *Brahman*. That is why *amrita* is the product of grace. To say that *amrita* can be had from knowledge is to misinterpret the *Upanishads*. The latter have spoken of all that exists as the creation of *Brahman*. Then, knowledge is also his creation. Action and devotion are not the basis of emancipation. Knowledge is essential for action. Action expresses the active aspect of knowledge. In the same way, devotion is the element of intensity in knowledge.

Knowledge is the result of practical discipline of understanding the texts, reflection and assimilation. It is not a passive insight. Spontaneity is an attribute of knowledge and it inclines to have more and more of it. To grasp this fact is the highest discipline, worship and realization. That is why the individual must not be without of spirit of seeking, even for a moment.

If *Brahman* is attributeless (*nirguna*), then how can He be the basis of ignorance? *Nirguna Brahman* and ignorance cannot go together. To emphasize ignorance is to turn ignorance into an independent entity. To call *Brahman* physical is an expression of duality. This is the duality of substance and quality. All attempts at relating the two confirm the idea of duality.

The sense of imperfection leads to the idea of perfection. In some cases, it leads one to doubt the existence of perfection, i. e. *Brahman*. Doubt is the source of philosophy. The doubt whether there is *Brahman*, whether there is any source of the knowledge of *Brahman*, makes philosophy indispensable. But to hold that *Brahman* is not an object of knowledge negates philosophy. But even such negation presupposes some philosophy. It contradicts itself. Desire for emancipation does not lead to philosophy. Desire is misery and illusion is its cause. Illusion and philosophy are incompatible. Philosophy in the result of *Brahman's* grace on man.

Philosophy is the process of finding out the highest source of knowledge. Its object is the highest Reality. *Brahman*, as the source of knowledge, is indispensable, defectless, self-valid, and

impersonal. It is in this sense that philosophy is called the *Veda*. *Brahman* as Reality is all-complete. The all-complete is all-powerful, which is the giver of reality to all. Reality implies the thing itself, its objectivity and its functions. *Brahman* being the creator and giver of all is called Vishnu.

*Brahman* as all-complete is beyond comprehension. But it is eternal and permanent. It is made intelligible by seeing that it is the origin of all.

The world consists of conscious souls and unconscious objects. Individual souls are many. All souls influence one another. Hence no soul is completely free. The influence of the soul on others may be very great, though each has its own separate being. To be subject to change is to be dependent. Therefore everything in the world, conscious, or unconscious, is dependent by nature.

To negate the dependent or to hold that it is illusion is to posit negation or illusion in its place. But negation or illusion is dependent. At least its source must be independent. Hence even the dependent is in some sense or other real. The independent is, therefore, the real sources of the real world. It is self-established in all its aspects. It manifests itself through its effects, from which, therefore, it can be known. It is eternal and all-powerful. It is the doer of everything. An all-doer; it is the cause of all. It has all aspects. Every aspect is independent. It is devoid of all distinctions within itself, but it is distinguishable from the dependent. To posit the dependent in its place is to negate it. The *Vedas* speak of its identity with, as well as of its distinction from the dependent.

The result of taking Vishnu as the all-doer is to take the body as the vehicle of Vishnu and not of the individual soul. Activity is life; is an expression of knowledge.

Madhva holds that even the lowest caste may study the philosophy of *Brahman*. He recognizes that even the untouchables can be the devotees of Vishnu.

#### NIMBARKA—DVAITADVAITA

Like other Vaishnava Vedantins, Nimbaraka, too admits three eternal substances, viz, *Brahman*, sentient and non-sentient. He calls the highest Reality of *Brahman* by the name of Krishna or Hari. The word *Brahman* literally means—'one which processes

greatness'. That is *Brahman* is the greatest being, who has no one superior or equal to him, who is beyond the limits of space, time etc. No one can be compared with his nature, attributes and powers, and no one can surpass him. *Brahman* alone is the cause of this vast universe of souls and matter. The universe has originated from *Brahman*, is sustained by him, and eventually dissolves in him. *Brahman* himself is the material cause and the efficient cause of the world and, as such, the world is only a transformation of *Brahman*.

*Brahman* being the material cause of the universe is immanent in it. Just as in a clay-jar there is nothing but clay, so in the universe which is the effect of *Brahman*, everything is *Brahman* through and through. All the various sentient and non-sentient objects as found in the world, though apparently different from *Brahman*, are nothing but *Brahman* in essence, being only a transformation of Him. *Brahman* is not simply an external creator of the world, as a potter is of the pot. On the contrary, although *Brahman* is higher and greater than the world and is not absolutely identical with it, since the world cannot completely manifest *Brahman*, yet *Brahman* abides in the universe and operates it as its inner soul that is omniscient.

*Brahman* is eternally perfect, eternally satisfied and eternally blissful. Then why did He create the universe? This is His *lila* (sport). This *Lila* is meant for making persons undergo the result of their actions.

*Brahman* is *sa-guna* (with attributes) and not *nir-guna* (attributeless). He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. He is transcendent yet immanent; all-powerful, yet all-merciful; all-pervading, yet abiding within the heart of man; ruler, yet helper. He can only be known through the *Agma* scriptures. The ordinary insight or inferential capacity of man cannot grasp Him.

Nimbarka holds the ordinary human reason as limited. Ordinary human beings can use reason or inference about mundane and empirical objects only. But what is extra-mundane is beyond the scope of reason. Here, *Agma* becomes our sole guide. *Agma* is nothing but the product of the sustained thinking, mature reflection, superb inspiration and profound realization of saints and prophets. To those extraordinary minds that were wiser and purer than we, everything was like an open book.

Every soul requires the acquisition of philosophical truth, reflection on it and constant meditation so that it may experience the truth revealed in the scriptures.

The essence of the sentient (the soul) is consciousness. The soul is a conscious knower, a doer of deeds and an enjoyer of their fruit. There are numerous souls which are atomic ; they are identical neither with *Brahman* nor with one another. Even the freed souls retain their individuality. They do not merge into *Brahman*. Salvation does not imply annihilation of the soul's individuality. It means the full development of its real nature and attributes. When the soul acquires such a state of supreme self-development, it acquires the divine nature and attributes and becomes similar to God. Such a state of salvation is attainable only after death. It is not possible in this world, as held by the *Advaitins*.

The means to salvation are five : action, knowledge, devotion and meditation, self-surrender of God and surrender to spiritual teacher (the *guru*). Selfless actions purify the mind and help the rise of knowledge and devotion in it. The first three means are of those who are confident of attaining the salvation through their own efforts ; the remaining two are meant for those who cannot place reliance on their own efforts.

*Achit* (the non-sentient) is of three kind : *Prakriti* (the primal matter), *a-prakirta* (that is derived from non-material but non-sentient substance) and *Kala* or time.

#### BHEDABHEDA PHILOSOPHY

The lump of clay is different from the clay-jar. The latter can be put to use for storing water, but the clay cannot be so used. However, it is still clay. In the same manner, the universe of souls and matter is different from *Brahman*, as its attributes (viz. impurity, grossness, finitude, etc.) and activity (the selfish actions) are quite different from *Brahman's*. But the universe is neither non-different from *Brahman*, because being its effect, it is one with *Brahman*. The latter is different from the universe, because it is one of the infinite powers and elements, and *Brahman* that is perfection is not exhausted in a single world. *Brahman* is also identical (*abheda*) with the world, since being its cause, it permeates the world through and through. *Bheda* or difference means : (1) difference in attributes and activities from the standpoint of



effect ; (2) transcendence of the standpoint of cause over the effect. *Abheda* (non-difference) means non-difference of essence from the standpoint of the cause; and imminence in the effect from the standpoint of the cause.

Nimbaraka does not insist that the family life must be abandoned for the sake of emancipation. A householder can also be emancipated through selfless actions.

### VALLABHA—SHUDDHADVAITA

The difference between Vallabha and Shankra in their approach lies in the fact that the former does not rely on logic in his interpretation of the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and *Srimad Bhagvada Gita*. He interprets these scriptures literally and criticizes Shankra for the use of dry logic in his discussion of metaphysical problems.

The highest reality, according to Vallabha, is Krishna known as *Brahman* in the *Upanishad* and *Paramatman* in the *Bhagvata*. He is one. He is without a second. He possesses the divine qualities of *sat-chit-ananda*. He is full of sweetness and infinite bliss in his true form. And from this point of view, Vallabha has favoured the view of God with form (*sakara*). He is eternal, unchanging, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He has got the capacity to become anything and everything at any time. And this is what is known as his *maya*-power. He possesses all the powers such as knowledge, action, etc. He is the creator of everything and is both the material and efficient cause of the world. He is not different from the souls which emanate from him. He is the enjoyer. All the attributes of God are quite natural, and non-different from Him. He is the origin of both nature and intelligence which lose their differences in him. That is why the system of Vallabha is known as *Shuddhadvaita* (pure-non-dualism). *Brahman* is absolutely pure and cannot be affected in any way by *maya*.

Vallabha accepts the forms of *Brahman* :

(1) *Para-Brahman* or *Purshotma*, (2) *Antar-yami* and (3) *Akshara-Brahman*.

*Brahman*, Krishna or *Purshotma* is the Lord in the real sense; he is full of sweetness and joy; he is the object of love and worship. He dwells in all the souls in the form of *Antar-yami* and in that form is possessed of undivided bliss. In the form of *Akshara-Brahman*, the joy is also finite. The wise ones make the *Akshara-Brahman* their object of meditation, who is the spiritual form of

*Para-Brahman*, and in the end they become one with him. The devotees look upon the *Akshara-Brahman* as the foot (*charan*) and the abode of Krishna. From the *Akshara-Brahman* emanate the souls like sparks from the fire. When the Lord desires to grant liberation through knowledge, he makes the *Akshara-Brahman* appear in four forms : (1) *Akshara*, (2) time, (3) action and (4) nature. The *Akshara* then appears as *prakriti* and *purusha* and becomes the cause of everything.

The lord of the world is one and the only one, but desires to be many. He creates the world for the sake of pleasure, and he creates it out of his own self, on the analogy of a spider. He does not create through the agency of *maya* or power, as found in the doctrines of Shankara, Ramanuja, Nimbaraka or other exponents of scriptures. Though *Brahman* assumes the form of the universe through the process of transformation, he does not suffer any change within himself. The world is the *sat* (being) aspect of *Brahman*, and the qualities of consciousness and bliss are obscured by His own will. The world is, therefore, the physical form of *Para-Brahman* and is not merely an illusion. The universe gives us an idea of the Lord's greatness, and those who realize this greatness cannot but worship him.

Everything in the world is *Brahman*, and different qualities manifest themselves in different objects at the will of the Lord. Consequently, the objects are known by different names. But ignorance obscures the vision of souls and creates in the mind another unreal form of the objects similar to the real ones. The result is that objects are seen not in their true form by souls, but in their deluding forms. And these tend to create their own world in place of the real world. The scriptural passages describing the world as *maya* really refer to this world of the individual's erroneous creation, and not to the real world which is the manifestation of the Lord.

This world of man's ignorance is the result of the sense of individuation and egotism, and with the knowledge of *Brahman* it gets destroyed.

At the time of the creation of the universe, souls come out of the *Akshara Brahman* like sparks emanating from fire. Souls are c untless. They are eternal, atomic and parts of *Brahman*. The quality of joy is suppressed in the soul at the desire of the Lord.

The two qualities of existence and consciousness are evident. The soul is an intelligent reality, a part of *Brahman*. The Shankara doctrine that the influence of *maya* on Brahman gives rise to souls is not correct. The soul is atomic but when the suppressed element of joy becomes evident, the soul, like *Brahman*, enjoys omnipresence. The scriptural passages mentioning the all-pervading nature of the soul refer to this aspect of the soul. Happiness and unhappiness of the souls are determined by the action done in the previous cycles of the world.

Vallabha has divided the souls into three classes : (1) *Pushti* (2) *maryada* (3) *parvaha*. The *parvaha* souls are those that are moving aimlessly in the world and are completely engrossed in it; they never think of the Lord. Those souls which study the scriptures understand the real nature of God and worship him accordingly—they form the second category. *Pushti* souls are the chosen people of God; they are blessed by his grace, and they worship him out of their boundless love for him.

#### CHAITANYA PRABHU (ACHINTYA-BHEDABHEDA)

In line with all other Vaishnava schools, Chaitanya rejects the illusionism and falsity of the world as adopted by Shankara. The latter holds the indeterminate (*nirguna*) Brahman as the ultimate absolute reality and accords an inferior status to the Lord (*Ishvara*) who is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. Chaitanya, who believes in the reality of the world, makes *nirguna Brahman* a stage in the progress to complete truth. According to Chaitanya Prabhu, the realization of perfect truth means believing in *Brahman* as the creator of the world and in intimate relation of love and affection with his creatures.

Chaitanya conceives the Lord and his power in the form of Krishna and Radha, which means an intimate relation of love, friendship and affection between the Lord and the devotee. He accepts the Vedas alone as authority, and holds perception, inference, etc. as correct in so far as they conform to the *Vedas*.

According to Chaitanya and his followers, the teaching of the *Vedas* regarding the ultimate reality is as follows : 'Hari' is the ultimate reality. The halo of the figure of Hari is the Intermittent Absolute of Shankara. *Paramatman* (the Supreme Self), the indwelling spirit of the created world, is only a fraction of Hari. Hari is the unity of perfect beauty, perfect majesty, perfect stren-

gth, perfect glory, perfect intelligence and perfect detachment Hari in his completeness is 'duality-in-unity', of Krishna and Radha in his apparent form. Each is bound to the other in the inseparable bond of devotion, love and affection.

The question arises how the Lord (Hari), who is the infinite 'being, consciousness and bliss', can be thought of as Krishna who is limited in space. In reply it is said that this argument of the material objects does not apply to the spiritual essence. A material body can exist only in one place at one time, but beings with un-mixed *sattva* figure, just as Hari is, can also appear in finite forms and yet be all-pervading. The unthinkable attributes of the Lord that distinguish Him from others also characterize his figure and his infinite powers. The relation between the Lord's essence and his manifold powers is one of unthinkable difference-in-non-difference. In this sense, the Lord, in a way, is not different from his powers that he uses, transcends these powers and his essence is not exhausted by the different manifestations it assumes.

The power which Hari exercises are these : *chit-shakti* (power of illumination), *jiva-shakti* (power of self-multiplication), and *maya-shakti* (power of transformation into inanimate world). *Chit-shakti* produces illumination and intelligence; *jiva-shakti* reveals itself in self-division and becoming many. *Maya-shakti* leads to the formation of material and insentient objects of the world. Thus, Hari through the use of these three powers manifests Himself in multiplicity of living beings and material objects. This is a secret which is beyond the discursive logic.

The followers of Shankara distinguish between the *sva-rupa-lakshana* (intrinsic character) and *tatastha-lakshana* (extrinsic character) of the Absolute. And the relation of it to the created world and creatures is called by them the extrinsic determination, because this character through the veil of ignorance presents it as creator, maintainer and destroyer of the world. These are only false appearances. But according to Chaitanya and other Vaishnava thinkers, the world of experience is not an unreal appearance; as such, they do not make a distinction between the essential and the relational characters. The *tatastha* (relational) characters are also the different aspects of the manifestation of the Absolute essence itself.

The relation between the Lord and the *jivas* is to be conceived

on the analogy of a burning fire and the sparks which emanate from it. *Jiva*, in essence, is not different from the Lord, but being a particle of it, shares its essence in a limited form. The *maya-shakti* of the Lord, as the controller, causes the insentient material world to exist, and in the form of *avidya* (ignorance) causes the *jiva* to forget his real nature; the *jiva* supposes himself to be an independent self-existence.

The material world, although a product of *maya-shakti* and its power of illusion, is not, however, an unreal appearance. As a product of the Lord's *sva-rupa-shakti*, in its aspect of *maya-shakti*, it shares the reality of its source, and is real share to the limited monadic *jiva*. Whereas it is true that as a real material world, it is the source of a confusion to the individual *jiva*, it is also equally true that it is not an everlasting entity, nor is its influence on the finite soul permanent. In fact, the material world is a house of correction, where the individual, in his deluded joy and forgetfulness of God, and through the failures and frustrations arising on this account, learns the vanity of earthly ways, and in the end turns to the divine way of the awareness of the truth of his own being.

This is the way of *Bhakti*, self-dedication and love. The finite soul, treading this path, awakens to a realization of his original essence, that is, the *jiva* is only a spark of the Divine Flame, and he must for ever obey its will and ordinance.

This realization, at first, appears intellectual but becomes at last an emotional pang of separation. The *jiva* under its spell realizes that his hunger and thirst would not be appeased by anything short of complete integration with the perfect essence. This is a *ragatmak bhakti* which culminates in the rise of *maha-bhava*. *Bhakti* is the true destiny of the individual's life. In the *nitya-mukats* this *bhaktis* inherently present from birth. But in the *badha-jivas* (individuals in bondage) it arises through the hard, bitter experience of life.

Here is the difference between Chaitanya's *bhakti-vada*, on the one hand, and the *Brahman Vivartavada* and *Brahman-parinama-vada*, on the other. *Vivarta-vada* regards the world as a false appearance or illusion, whereas *parinama-vada*, although it accepts the world as real, takes it to be a transformation of the Absolute. The *Bhedabheda* doctrine offers the view of *shakti-*

*parinama-vada* which does not regard the world and the finite beings as transformation of *Brahman*. There are the modifications of his inscrutable powers. The integrity of Brahman itself is not affected. However, it is the result of his supernal powers that he appears in the form of awareness, *jiva* and *maya-shakti*, and the entire play of the world is, thus, staged.

LECTURE FOUR  
GURU NANAK'S RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

The nature of the Creator depicted by Guru Nanak, definitely marks him off from most of the Indian thinkers. The Jaina, Buddhist and Sankhya systems do not even admit the existence of God. The Yoga, Vaisheshika and Nyaya treat *prakriti* and the individual soul as eternal entities, just like the Lord. The Yoga accepts the three modes of *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Sattva* in Nature, in the manner of Sankhya. If these three are balanced, no activity takes place in Nature. Such a state is called *avyakta* (unmanifest). The proximity of Purusa causes activity in Prakriti; the balance is disturbed, and the creation of the universe ensues. Nyaya and Vaisheshika consider atoms to be the material cause of the universe. The atoms, too, are everlasting. Both these systems take God as the efficient cause of the universe. Jaimini does not even make a mention of God in his aphorisms. Vedanta admits the influence of Maya in the creation of both the individual soul and the universe. Brahman is non-active and *tatstha* (unconcerned). Maya is neither real nor unreal, nor is it real-unreal. The individual and the visible world are its sport; but what is Maya? This cannot be described in words; it is indescribable. But Guru Nanak, while describing the nature of the Formless One, in his *mul-mantra* (basic creed), has called him *Karta-Purukh* (Creator, all-pervading). He had been called Satya (everlasting) even earlier too. He has been accepted as *chit*, i. e. consciousness. But God as a creator, out of whom living beings and the universe arose, has not been admitted by earlier thinkers. By symbolizing Him as 'Ik-Onkar' i. e. there is but one God, Guru Nanak has rejected the view of the world's origin from a number of Vedic gods and goddesses. On the other hand, he treats all the gods and goddesses as His creation. The Guru expresses his difference with the theory of God's incarnation by characterizing Him as Unborn. Many of the supporters of Bhakti have been worshipping Siva, Rama and Krisna, considering them as incarnations of the Deity and the worship of

their image was considered by them as a means of winning His pleasure. Guru Nanak, however, clearly states that his God does not take birth. That is why no image of His can be made. In support of the foregoing, we quote from the compositions of the Guru.

God symbolized by *Om* is one only.

Satya by name,

He is the creator, All-pervading, without fear,

without enmity, unaffected by Time, Unborn, Self-existent.

(To be realized) through the grace of the guru.

(*Mul-mantra*)

*Ik-Onkar*

My God is one. He is one,

my brother one.

(*Asa 1.4*)

When I cast my look around, I see none other.

One pervades all places, and one abides in all hearts.

(*Asa Patti 13*)

The One Supreme Lord is Unique,

He is immortal, Unborn, without

caste, without involvements.

He is unfathomable, beyond the reach of senses,

without forms or lines.

Searching for Him, I found Him in

every soul.

(*Bilawal Thitt 1*)

Thou art, the tablet, the pen,

as well as the writing thereon.

Talk of One, Nanak : why mention another ?

O Lord, Thou prevailest everywhere

and Thou hast fashioned the whole world.

Besides Thee, their is none other;

Thou alone pervadest.

Thou alone knowest the state and extent

of Thyself and Thou alone canst evaluate Thyself.

Thou art ineffable, not subject to

(sense) perception, Unfathomable;

Only through the Guru's guidance art

Thou realized.

(*Malar Var 28*)



*Satya His Name*

He was true in the beginning, true when  
the yugas (ages) began,  
True He is now and True He shall ever be.

(Japu shloka 1)

He is, He will be,  
The creation will end  
but not He  
who has created the phenomena.

(Japu 27)

Thou art the Creator-Purusa, unfathomable,  
Thou hast created the Universe of various  
colours, and in many ways,  
Thou who hast created it,  
alone knowest all about it.  
It is all Thy play.

(Majh Var 1)

The Lord who created the world  
is known through his Nature.  
Do not consider Him distant, Recognize Him  
as the word in every vessel.  
The Master hath Himself created the five elements  
He who beautifieth the body of Truth.

(Suhi-chhant 3. 25)

The three modes of Nature (*gunas of prakriti*)  
have been created by Him.  
He who hath created Himself, is Himself free of Maya.  
He himself hath fashioned the universe  
as a sport of His.  
He hath produced the three modes of nature  
and hath enhanced attachment to Maya.

(Sarang Var 1)

The three gods, who were thought of as the creator, the  
sustainer and the destroyer of the world, are also His handiwork :  
Thou hast created Brahma,  
Visnu and Shiva,  
gods and goddesses of various forms;  
What the spirit created cannot  
be counted.

He alone who hath created  
can evaluate it.

*(Bilaval Thitti 4)*

Through His decree, He created  
the ten incarnations,  
And countless gods and demons  
without end.  
He who obeys His will  
is honoured in His Court;  
Such a one is united  
with Truth and absorbed in it.

*(Maru Sohe 13.4.16)*

He created the gods  
Brahma, Visnu and Shiva.  
He gave the Vedas to Brahma  
and put him to worship according to them.  
Visnu can in ten incarnations such as  
Raja Ramchandra.  
He attacked and killed the demons.  
It was all His will.  
The Lord Shiva served the Lord,  
but could not fathom His vastness.

*(Malar Var 3)*

Brahma, Visnu and Shiva stand to serve  
at the Door of the unfathomable and infinite.  
Many others are seen wailing  
at the Door,  
I can keep not a count of them all.

*(Maru Solhe 14-2)*

All acts are performed by Him. His own powers have been  
assigned different names :

Brahma, Visnu and Shiva are contained in Him  
He Himself doth everything

*(Ramkali 12-9)*

In short, He himself has brought into being the entire crea-  
tion, and is carrying on the job. He requires no other causal  
agency.

Nanak proclaims this doctrine that  
God is able to cause all things.

Cause is under the jurisdiction of the creator  
who upholds the creation through His power.

(*Shlokas Sahaskriti 2*)

*He is Fearless*

All have His fear written on their foreheads,  
But One True Lord alone is fearless  
Sayeth Nanak.

(*Asa Var 4.1*)

*Without Enmity*

He hath been creating through numberless  
Yugas but bears malice to none.  
He is subject neither to birth nor death  
nor is he yoked to any entanglements.

(*Ramkali Dakhni, Oamkar 15*)

*His Being is unaffected by Time*

Unknowable, Infinite, unfathomable,  
unascertainable by senses,  
He knows neither death, nor is subject to  
the law of *Karma*  
He is not subject to birth, belonging to no caste.  
Self-created, He hath neither attachment  
nor superstition.  
May I be a sacrifice unto the everlasting Truth,  
Who hath no form, no colour and no lines,  
but can be traced through the True word.  
No mother, no father, no son, no relation hath He.  
He is devoid of lust and hath no wife.  
But is immaculate one, without a lineage, who is  
beyond the greatest of the great.  
Thy light shines in all.

(*Sorath 2.6*)

*Unborn*

Nanak ! the Formless one alone is fearless.  
Ramas innumerable are as dust to him.  
Numberless are the stories of Krisnas and  
Countless the speculations of the Vedas.

(*Asa Var, 4.2*)

The Hindus are altogether mistaken, and  
Have taken to the wrong path.

They worship what Narada told them and  
 they worship stones which neither see nor speak.  
 They are ignorant fools and are in total darkness.  
 When the stones themselves sink,  
 how can they ferry you across ?

(*Bihagra Var 20.2*)

Again—

He hath in his home (the images) of Naraina  
 with all his courtiers.  
 He bathes them and worships them.  
 He applies saffron and sandal, and offers flowers to them.  
 And tries to propitiate it by falling at its feet.  
 But he begs from men food and clothes.  
 Such blind follies deserve such punishment indeed.  
 The stone cannot provide food to the hungry,  
 nor can it save one from death.  
 The blind crowd is engaged in a blind contention.

(*Sarang Var 9.1*)

*Self Existent*

He cannot be installed  
 nor can He be made,  
 The immaculate God is self-created.

(*Japu 4*)

He created Himself and Himself created the name.

(*Asa Var 1*)

*By the Guru's Grace<sup>1</sup>*

Through the grace of a spiritual enlightener,  
 one can realize the Lord.  
 Without a true Guru none has attained (God)  
 None attained Him without the Guru.  
 God Himself placed (the word) in the  
 heart of the Guru.  
 who proclaimed it outwardly.

(*Asa Var 6*)

The nectar of immortality,

1. *Gur Prasadi* : Some interpreters have not rendered this phrase correctly. It is not an adjective standing for God. It means realization through the guru's grace.

for which you came into the world,  
 Is with the Guru.  
 Give up all robes, garbs, and cleverness;  
 This fruit will not be had by facing-both-ways.

(*Sorath 1.9*)

Some people trade in jewels and precious stones,  
 Others trade in glass (liable to break).  
 But if the true Guru is pleased,  
 stores of jewels are found within.  
 None have been able to find (the Divine)  
 without the help of Guru.  
 The blind and the false  
 barked in vain and died.

(*Majh Var 7*)

If one meets a true Guru,  
 one is blessed with the jewel of  
 discrimination.  
 Such a one surrenders his mind (Manas)  
 to the Guru,  
 He is endowed with love for all.  
 He is blessed with the commodity of salvation ;  
 all vice is swept away.  
 O brother, true wisdom does  
 not dawn without the Guru.  
 You may verify it from (the writings of)  
 Brahma, or Narada, or Ved Vyasa.

(*Sri Rag Ast. 1-10*)

Love springs not (in the heart)  
 without the Guru  
 and the dirt of egoism is washed not.  
 When penetrating through the word,  
 one knows the self, he becomes sure  
 that He is the real basis of his personality.  
 The self is known through the Guru,  
 all other attempts are of no avail.

(*Sri Rag Ast. 9-11*)

The Guru indicates the path leading to emancipation,  
 through his Bani (word) :  
 Know the path through the Guru's word.

Depending on the Guru  
get real strength.

One remembers the name by reciting  
his charming Bani.

If it pleases Thee  
He discovers the door.

(*Malar, Ast. 2-14*)

The goad of the Guru keeps the intractable mind on the  
right path :

Mind is the elephant

In the jungle of the body :

The goad is the Guru's true word,  
indicating the right path.

Then (the elephant) reaches the royal palace,  
and enjoys its splendour.

(*Gauri, Ast. 1-2*)

The Lord God is like a beautiful palace  
full of rubies and jewels,  
pearls and pure diamonds;

He a fort of gold that delights the heart.

How to climb into the fort without a ladder?

You can have a view of it through the Guru  
intent on the Name of Hari.

Guru is the ladder, Guru the boat, and Guru the raft,  
laden with the Name of Hari.

Guru is the ship to ferry us across the sea of Samsara.

Guru is the sacred place on the bank of the  
ever flowing river.

If the Lord wills, the soul goes to bathe in the  
pool of truth and become pure.

(*Siri Rag 3.9*)

It is natural to ask : if the significance of a *Guru* is so great, there must have been a *Guru* of Guru Nanak too. A reply to this is available in his biography and his own compositions.

It is mentioned in the biography of Guru Nanak that he got his cup of *nam* from the Divine Court. He confirmed this is his hymns :

There is no distance between us. I am one with Him,

the Reality immaculate, the light of all.

Nanak : I met the Guru, the Supreme Lord, the Supreme  
Brahman who is higher than the highest

(*Sorath* 5-11)

I met the True Guru, the author of the whole creation,

Reflecting on His works

I put my faith in him.

(*Ramkali* 14-8)

Guru Nanak considers God all-pervading but transcendent :

Thousands of eyes hast Thou, yet no eyes are Thine,

Thousands of unstained feet hast Thou

Yet no foot is Thine.

Without a nose thou hast thousands of noses.

This wonder of Thine has bewitched me.

All have light within, and that Light is He,

His light illumines all.

(*Dhanasari* 3.3)

On the earth or in the sky

I see no other (than Him),

Nor (do I see another) in women, or men,  
of all the worlds.

In the shining lights of the Sun and the Moon

I see, uninterrupted, my beloved, ever young.

(*Gauri Asht.* 9.5)

The light is in the creation and the creation  
rests in Thy light.

Thou pervadest everywhere by thy artless art.

(*Asa Var* 12.1)

After creating it Thou pervadest it.

unaffected by attachment or hate.

(*Suhi Var* 1.1)

He is inside all, yet outside all.

(*Suhi Chhant* 3-1-11)

God is infinite. The devotees by singing His praises and  
repeating His name become one with him.

But they cannot know his limits.

The singers of Thy praise extol Thee

But do not comprehend Thy glory.

The rivers and rivulets merge into the ocean,  
But they do not know its vastness.

(*Japu 23*)

Only if some one could rise as high as he is  
would he be able to know the highest.  
How great is He,  
He alone knows.

(*Japu 24*)

O great Lord of mine,  
    deep beyond depth, ocean of virtues,  
None knows Thy extent.  
All the thinkers applied thought,  
All the evaluators tried their scales,  
Men of knowledge and meditation  
    who were teachers of teachers,  
But they could not describe an  
    iota of Thy grandeur.

(*Asa 2-2*)

Even an iota of the greatness  
    of thy Name  
    they began to describe—but they failed  
    and could give no measure.  
Even if all were to combine and praise Him  
He would not become greater  
    nor (in its absence) He becomes lesser.

(*Asa 2-3*)

God is a conscious Being, He perceives,  
    comprehends, and decides.  
God is the supreme Lord who has assumed visible form.  
He sees, understands and knows everything  
    and pervades inside and outside

(*Asa Patti 32*)

The entire design of the universe is operating according to  
His will :

The Ordainer by His will directeth everything.

(*Japu 3*)

All have to obey His will,  
    none is outside its pale.

(*Japu 2*)



Life and death of living-beings are all directed by His will :  
 Know that Such a True One is unique  
 And know life and death  
 are willed by Him.

(*Asa, Asht. 1.3*)

Life and death are ordained by Him.  
 One comes and goes as He wills.

(*Asa, Var 3.18*)

But the writ of His will proceeds in accordance with actions  
 performed by living beings :

All words and all regions,  
 and all systems of yogic contemplation,  
 He directeth according to His will but  
 His pen runs according to (their) deeds.

(*Sarang, Var 2.9*)

According to the researches of modern science the dualism of matter and energy has ceased to exist. The atoms of matter have been established to consist of several kinds of electric particles. As such, matter is only a form of energy. The energy which creates the material world, life and souls is conscious. Some scientists admit it but all of them are not yet unanimous about it.

### Creation of the World

The Vedanta holds the individual soul and the world as the creations of Maya. Sankhya and all other systems describe these as the play of Nature (*prakriti*). When the individual comes to know his real self through light of knowledge, he gets emancipated from the bonds of Maya or *prakriti*. To treat the world as a bondage and always to strive for emancipation from its hold is not conducive to any enthusiasm for life in man. That is why those who desired self-development used to abandon their home and worldly occupation, sit in contemplation inside a cave on the hills or in the jungle in order to realize the true nature of self. They also become a burden on the resources of other people for food and drink.

Guru Nanak treats the individual souls and the world as a play of the Will of God. Life led according to His Will in this world destroys suffering. The individual suffers pain as long as

he does not know His will. What this 'will' is cannot be described in words. But when one knows His will, his egoism is destroyed and mineness arising from egoism leaves him, too. It is no use abandoning home or giving up worldly activity. Only stop acting from egoistic motive and suffering would cease. The Guru insisted on righteous action, regardless of its fruit. He asked men to be parasitic, but instead to earn one's livelihood through self-effort and share it with the needy.

This point of view presented the world in the form of a school to learn *dharma*, and not a snare where we have to live by following the divine will. We have to destroy egoism and mineness; instead of expecting others to serve us, we have to serve them. Enthusiasm took the place of listlessness and optimism became an instrument for making life happy. The world is the handiwork of the True One and so is real. The World though a nine day's wonder (a temporary abode), offers an opportunity to life to tread the path shown by the Guru and to play the game in accordance with the rules enunciated by him. Then not only the present life would be happy, but success would follow even after leaving the body. Says the Guru :

All forms come into being by His will,  
but it is not possible to describe that will in words  
The living beings are created by His will,  
through His will they are exalted.

(*Japu 2*)

By His decree all souls come into being  
and they engage in activity as decreed by Him  
By his decree they are subject to death  
and according to His decree they are merged in truth.

(*Sri Rag, Ash. 8.4*)

(Letter *Dhadha*) : He destroys and builds Himself,  
and does what He likes.

Creating He looks after the creation  
and directeth those whom He  
blesses with Grace.

(*Asa Patti 27*)

(Thought of) His will leads us into wonder-state  
But one who through His will recognizes it

knows the way of life and truth  
 Effacing self when one gets detached  
 and realizes the inner truth  
 Then he is to be called a Jogi.

(Ramkali, *Siddha goshti* 23)

The test that one has realized His will is :  
 Nanak, If one were to realize His will  
 his egoism would be destroyed.

(*Japu* 2)

Here, a question arises : If this universe is the creation of God, wherefrom comes the evil in it ? Sankhya considers ignorance as beginningless. Vedanta treats it as a veil of Maya. The Semitic faith postulates Devil who decoys men into evil deeds. However, the Guru believes that egoism, and delusion have also been created by the Lord. Egoism is the cause of the world. The *siddhas* put the question :

How does the world come into being, O Man,  
 and what are the pains which destroy it ?

Guru Nanak replied :

Egoism gives rise to the world, O man, and  
 suffering results from getting the Name.

(*Siddh-Goshti* 68)

Thou created the world Thyself, and  
 yoked the creatures to various tasks.  
 Thou thyself drugged it with delusion  
 and it strayed into wilderness.

(*Majh Var* 2)

Maya pervades all minds, Thou hast created delusion.

(*Asa Patti* 10)

This obstacle in the way to spiritual progress has been put up by God Himself. Man's body gets stronger by conquering the physical hurdles. Similarly, the soul attains to the Supreme State through overcoming such impediments.

Thou hast led people astray  
 by creating delusion,  
 Those, on whom Thou showereth Thy Grace,  
 meet the *guru*.

(*Asa Patti* 10)

In my opinion, the intent of thinkers like Kapila, who consider

ignorance as beginningless in everlasting souls, is also the same. Some Indian thinkers have given details of the creation of the physical universe, as mentioned earlier in the brief description of the Sankhya system. But most of the Indian philosophers say that the universe has neither a beginning nor an end. This process will go on like that. Even if a part of this world gets destroyed, creation of new parts will go on at the same time. The scientists of today, and even those among them who do not have faith in the existence of the soul, however, say that the present situation of the physical universe before us has evolved to this stage from the nebulae. This evolution is still taking place; destruction and creation are proceeding simultaneously. Guru Nanak has not discussed this issue at any great length. Yet a few of his verses throw some light on the problem :

For countless ages, there was darkness;  
 There was no heaven or earth ;  
     but only the ordainer Infinite.  
 There was neither the moon, nor the sun ;  
 Neither day, nor night; He alone was wrapt  
     in the *Nirvikalpa Smadhi*.\*  
 When it pleased Him, He caused the universe  
     and without any supports set the heavens.  
 He created Brahma, Visnu and Shiva and caused  
     the attachment to illusion grow.

(*Maru Anjalian* 14)

Again, another hymn states :

From the True one issued air,  
 and from air water.  
 From water was created the universe  
 and His light permeates all souls.

(*Sri Rag* 15)

But when the *Siddhas* put the question :  
 What are your views about the origin of all this ?  
 The Guru replied :  
 The thought of the origin leads one

---

\*Nirvikalpa Samadhi is a state of mental concentration where the thought process altogether ceases.

to wonder-state

(*Siddha-Goshti* 23)

How the genesis took place ? This is a puzzling problem.  
The Tenth Guru has also expressed the same view :  
None knows how Thou didst create  
the universe first and its extent.

And :

The Pandits did not know the period  
otherwise, there would have been a reference  
(to it) in the *Puranas*.

The Qazis did not know the time,  
otherwise it would have formed a text  
in the *Quran*.

The Solar or lunar day is not known  
to the Yogi ; none knows  
the season and the month.

The creator alone who made  
the universe, knows these.

(*Japu* 21)

Why was this universe created ? The ancient thinkers believed that the motive behind its creation was to make man understand the nature of *prakriti* or Maya and, thus, acquire knowledge of his own true self in order to get emancipated from the cycle of birth and death. Guru Nanak says the purpose of the world's creation is the evolution of the human soul.

For the saint God sustains the three worlds,  
He (the saint) knows self and contemplates reality,  
Truth and love of God are enshrined in his heart.  
Saith Nanak, I am a slave of his.

(*Gauri Asht* 9-8)

The meaning of the above is that the Lord has brought into existence this universe with a view to enabling men to attain to the status of 'saints' through their spiritual development. Who are the saints ? Those who bear the true Lord and his love in their hearts. To quote the Guru again :

The earth has been created for the God-oriented  
Birth and death play in it.

(*Siddha Ghosti*)

In other words, the soul has to pass through a number of births in order to evolve itself to the highest spiritual state. This earth has been created to evolve really God-oriented men through succession of births and deaths.

### Varanashram Dharma

There is a serious difference of opinion between the ancient Indian thinkers and Guru Nanak on another issue, and that is the Varanashram Dharma. The division on the basis of *varana* had been started during the Vedic period itself. But at that time, people were free to change their *varana*. Everyone had the right to adopt the *dharma* of a particular *varana* at his will. After some time, the *varana* came to be determined from the birth of an individual, and Manu confirmed it. This division, as some scholars now say, had been initiated for the sake of social convenience, but gradually it took the form of a religious principle. The Dharma of the *brahmins* was to study and teach the *Vedas* to perform and officiate at the performance of *Yajnas* (sacrifices) and to give and accept gifts; the *kshatriyas* were to study the *Vedas*, perform *yajnas*, give alms, learn the art of fighting, and defend the homeland. The *vaishas* could read the *Vedas*; and it was their duty to give alms, to till the land, to carry on trade and industry, etc. The *shudras* (the lowest *varana*) were required to serve all the other *varanas* without a question. Women also came to be regarded as *shudras*. When an individual or a group comes to wield some influence over the members of a community, he or it, naturally makes an effort to firmly establish such power. The *rahmin* *varana* was the highest. They tried to establish that a person, no matter whether he possessed the virtues of a *brahmin* or not if born in a *brahmin* family, was to be worshipped. In order to keep up their position they spread many superstitions among the masses. All the ceremonies and rites that were to be performed by an individual, from his birth to his death, had to be performed under the supervision and direction of a *brahmin*. Maybe, when the system was established it had some utility, but in the present day the *varanas* having been divided into castes have become very harmful. Integration of the Hindu society became impossible on account of this division. Guru Nanak said all men have been created by one God. No one is high or low among them. Says he :

(It is said)—

The Dharma of a *yogi* is to acquire gnosis,  
 That of a *brahmin* is what is ordained in the *Vedas*.  
 The Dharma of a *kshtriya* is the Dharma of the brave.  
 The Dharma of *sudras* is to serve others.  
 (But I say) the Dharma of all is the same if one knows the  
 secret.  
 Nanak is his slave. He is the image of God impeccable.

(*Shaloka Sahaskriti*)

That secret is :

“One God is the God of all gods ; from Him emanate all the  
 souls. If one knows the secret of Him, who abides in all the souls,  
 Nanak is his slave. He is the image of God impeccable.” Guru  
 Nanak taught that not only the Dharma of the four varnas of  
 Hindus was one, the way to realize the Supreme Reality for all men  
 who have come into being through His Will was the same.

There is only one Dharma,  
 let anybody practise truth,

In every age perfection is attained  
 through this teaching of the Guru  
 that God-oriented will find the unknowable  
 and the Infinite who fixes his attention on  
 the everlasting world like a continuous flow.

(*Basant Asht. 4-3*)

Even though the Hindu and the Muslim faiths are known as  
 distinct, yet :

There are two paths but He who knows the One  
 will succeed.

And infidel will rot in his disbelief.

(*Majh, Var 9*)

Elaborating the above, the Guru says :

The paths are two,  
 but know that the Lord is one.  
 Know His will through the Guru's word,  
 All forms and colours are in His mind  
 Says Nanak : Praise that One Lord.

(*Gauri Asht. 9-5*)

One may call his religion by any name of one's choice but :

For all, the same is the road,  
 same the destination.

The Guru serves as a ladder  
to reach one's own abode.  
The Lord is beautiful, O Nanak,  
and His Name holds all joys.

(*Malar Var 1-2*)

That is why the Guru said the same thing while addressing a Muslim, and imparted the same instruction when talking to a Brahmin :

There are five prayers  
and five their times  
all the five have five names.  
The first is truth,  
The second, right occupation,  
The third, charity in the name of God,  
The fourth is the right resolve  
and The fifth praise of God.  
Recite the *Kalma* of righteous deeds  
and then call thyself a *Musalman*.

(*Majh Var 7.3*)

Similar is the way indicated to a *brahmin* :

A *brahmin* is he who knows Brahman (The Absolute),  
and practises repetition (of Name),  
austerity and self-control to that end,  
He sticks to the vow of good temper  
and contentment.  
He breaks all bonds and gets emancipated.  
Such a *brahmin* is worthy of adoration.

(*Shlokas Varan ton Wadhik 16*)

Gradually, all the four varanas were classified into castes.  
Guru Nanak raised a strong protest against this, too :

Vain chatter is (the pride of) caste,  
Vain chatter is the boast of fame.  
The same God protects all beings.  
If someone maketh himself known a good man,  
Says Nanak : it will be true only  
When his faith is accepted by the Lord.

(*Sri Raga, Var 13.1*)

Caste can gain nothing, Truth within will be tested.



Poison will kill all who taste it.

(*Majh Var 10*)

Appreciate the evolution of the spirit. The pride of caste is of no avail :

Appreciate the light.

Ask not what the caste is.

here is no caste in the world beyond.

(*Asa 1-3*)

Caste and power will carry no weight,

Hereafter, no one will be honoured

on account of them

nor dishonoured for want of them.

Those alone will be deemed good

whose faith receives His approval.

(*Asa Var 18.3*)

Caste by birth will bring no gain. The real caste is determined by deeds :

Of No avail is caste by birth,

Thou canst enquire from teachers of Truth.

A man's caste and faith is

determined by the works he performs.

(*Prabhati 4-10*)

The Guru said—the women of whom we are born, in whom we are conceived, whom we marry, and through whom the human race is continued, it is a mistake to treat them as *Sudras*.

He adds further :

In a woman we are conceived;

of a woman we are born,

To a woman we are betrothed and married,

Through a woman new friendships are formed,

the woman continues the race.

When one woman dies, another is sought,

the woman carries the tradition.

Why to call her low

of whom are born men great and powerful.

“The mouth, (be it of a man, or a woman, whichever utters the praises of God, is blessed. Such faces alone will shine in the Court of the True Lord.”

### The Aim of Human Life

To cognize the real nature of one's self is the aim of the Yoga and Sankhya philosophy. When the veil of *maya* is destroyed, one realizes : "Thou art That." "I am Brahman"—this realization comes through knowledge. That is the teaching of Vedanta. Guru Nanak agrees with them to the extent of "Know thyself" but after knowing the self, one has to fix his attention on the Formless.

Saith Nanak :

What are the signs of a gnostic ?  
 He knoweth self and communeth with God  
 Through the Guru's grace,  
 he contemplates Him.  
 That gnostic will be accepted in His Court.

(*Sri Raga 4-30*)

He who knows his self  
 and remains absorbed in contemplation  
 wins the object of his life.  
 Through Guru's instruction  
 he attains victory over this life  
 and his suffering ends.

(*Basant Asht. 6-4*)

He, who gets his instruction from the Guru,  
 conquers his mind  
 and the wolf dies.  
 He cognizes his self, meets the Lord,  
 and will not die again

(*Shlokas Varan ton Wadhik 8*)

Instead of regarding nature as a snare, see in it the glory of its author :

(I am a) sacrifice unto Thee,  
 O, dweller in Nature.

(*Var Asa 12.1*)

Then, you need not abandon your hearth and home :

By contemplating the truth light dawns.  
 There amidst sensual pleasures  
 one remains detached.

Such is the greatness of the true Guru :  
 that one gets his emancipation,

even living with his wife and children.

(*Dhanasari 2-24*)

For, when egoism and mine-ness are gone, the household no more remains a bondage :

Knowing that everything belongs to Him,  
he remains detached.

He dedicates his body and mind to Him,  
whom they belong to.

He then neither comes nor goes.

Says Nanak - He merges  
in the Truth of all truths.

(*Bilawal Asht. 8-2*)

### **Pathways Leading to the Realization of the Highest State**

The ancient thinkers prescribed the *yoga* practices as a means to concentrate the mind and thus contemplating the real nature of self into the *Smadhi*. In *Smadhi* one knows the real nature of self and finds that the soul is only a 'seer'. It has no power to act. The Vedic practice of ritual had no importance; this had been clearly stated by the *UPanishads* and all other *shastras*. self-realization comes through knowledge. The Guru agrees with the earlier thinkers in condemning the Vedic ritualism. In his times, there were a number of groups of the *yogis*, *jatis*, *sanyasis*, etc. who had renounced the world. They had adopted the garbs, but their actions were not up to the mark. The Guru taught that the putting on the robes of an order could not lead anywhere, nor could the bodily purity produce the inner purity of the mind. Nor the study of religious scriptures, their interpretation and discussion on them would be of any avail, says he :

They preach renunciation to the masses,  
but establish their own *maths*,  
leaving their own abodes,  
how will they find Truth ?

Attached to mine-ness, they love women.

They are neither *Avdhuta* nor householders.

O *Yogi* ! stick to your seat to  
remove the misery of doubt.

Are you not ashamed of begging  
from door to door ?

You sing hymns but do not know yourself.

How can your suffering be over ?  
 If with love in your heart  
     you take to Guru's word  
     instead of alms obtained by begging  
     you will get the food of highest thought.  
 Those who rub ashes and practise  
     fraud will have to undergo  
     the punishment of *Yama* for their  
     the attachment to *Maya*.  
 In the broken bowl,<sup>1</sup>  
     the gift of love will not stay.  
 Bound by your ties of Karma  
     you will come and go.  
 They call themselves celebates  
     but do not practise continence.  
 When begging they call women mothers  
     but caste lustful eyes on them.  
 Cruel they have not been illuminated by light.  
 They are sunk head to foot in worldly desires.  
 Like an actor they are playing their assumed part.  
 The fire of anxiety is scorching his mind,  
 How can he go across without righteous deeds ?  
 In their ears, they wear the crystal rings.  
 But one cannot get emancipation  
     without real knowledge.  
 Their tongues covet delicious food  
 They have become beasts  
     and cannot get rid of that stigma.

(*Ramkali Asht. 6-2*)

And again  
     When truth fills the heart  
     celebracy, charity  
     and self-control result,  
     Such a Yogi is the  
     friend of all the three worlds.

(*Ramkali Asht. 8-2*)

The siddhas and pirs serve the

<sup>1</sup>Broken bowl means disturbed mind.

adepts in Yoga,  
 to achieve miraculous powers.  
 But the True Guru instructed me  
 not to forget the name of One God.  
 Why do the yogis, the pleasure-seekers,  
 the *Kaprias* roam from place to place ?  
 Why do they not reflect on Guru's word,  
 the essence of all essences ?  
 The pundits, the *Pandhas*, the astrologers  
 read the Purans daily,  
 But they fail to discover the substance within ;  
 they know not  
 the Lord hid in their hearts.  
 Some ascetics practise austerities in the jungles,  
 others live for ever on the banks of holy rivers,  
 Influenced by *Tamas*, if they do not  
 know their selves why have they become *udasis* ?  
 Some exert to control their sex instinct and are  
 called celebates  
 But without the Guru's word,  
 they will not get rid of doubt,  
 and will come and go again and again  
 A householder who has taken to  
 the path indicated by the Guru,  
 and serves the saints,  
 firm in virtue, charity and personal cleanliness,  
 wakes up in devotion to God.  
 From the Guru one knows the door to his abode,  
 and finds his true home.  
 When one's mind is reconciled to the True One  
 Will he never forget the Name.

(*Asa Asht.* 8-4)

Living in the jungle, eating roots and herbs and acquisition of miraculous powers—all are of little avail :

I may dig a cave in the golden-mountain,  
 or sit in water in nether regions.  
 I may stand upside down on my head  
 on this earth, or in the skies.  
 I may thoroughly cover my body with clothes and

ever keep washing it clean,  
 or worship the Deity whom the Vedas declare  
 of white, red, yellow and black colours,  
 or remain dirty rolling in filth  
 all these are different modes  
 of evil understanding.  
 Nanak, reflecting on the Word  
 I should destroy egoism and annihilate self.

(*Majh Var 4-1*)

There are some who feed themselves  
 on the picked up roots and herbs  
 and live in the jungles.

There are others who wear ochre-coloured robes  
 and roam about as *jogis* and *sanyasis*  
 Within them is an intense desire and craving  
 for food and clothes.

Their life is wasted ; for they are  
 neither householders, nor ascetics.

They cannot avoid death or desires arising  
 out of the three gunas.

But—

Him who follows the Guru's instruction and  
 becomes a slave of his slaves,  
 death approaches not.

He, keeping the True Word and truth in his mind,  
 becomes detached even living in his home.

Says Nanak, those who serve their true Guru,  
 get rid of all desires.

(*Majh Var 5*)

If I could clothe myself with fire  
 and build a house in snow, and eat iron;

If I could drink like water  
 all my miseries, and drive the earth  
 according to my will;

And if I could weigh the skies  
 in the balance, against a *tunk*<sup>1</sup> in the other scale

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<sup>1</sup>tunk = four *mashas*

If I were to have much power  
     in my mind as to achieve or  
     make others achieve whatever I wished ;  
 If I could increase my stature to an immeasurable extent  
     and lead all men by nose strings ;  
 Yet the gifts of the Lord are as great as He is,  
 He goes on giving them according to His pleasure.  
 But the highest of his gifts is the gift of the Name.  
 He gives the gift of the True Name  
 and singing His glory  
     to him on whom He looks with grace.

(*Majh Var 19-1*)

Adoption of the exterior symbols of a particular religion is of  
 on avail. The judgment is to be passed on our deeds :

If a Hindu comes to join the Hindu fold,  
 They put a cotton thread  
     around his neck with  
     chanting of Mantras.  
 But if after the investiture, he performs evil deeds  
     all his washings and bathings  
     would stand him in no stead.

Musalman praises his own creed  
     and says without believing in the great Prophet,  
     none would be given a place (of honour).

But very few tread the path shown by him.  
 None will enter paradise without good deeds.  
 In the house of yogis they point out  
     the way and for that purpose

They put rings in his ears.  
 With rings in ears, he roams  
     about the world,  
 but the Creator Lord is present everywhere.

All men are way-fares  
     and when the call comes,  
     they will depart without delay.

One who realizes Him here,  
     will know him thereafter.

For the rest the boast of being a Hindu  
     or Muslim is in vain.

All will have to render account at His door,  
 None would get emancipation without good deeds.  
 Rare is the man who talks only  
 of Truth of all truths.  
 From him no questions will be asked hereafter.

(*Ramkali Var 11-2*)

When the reality became manifest to Guru Nanak, on his visit to the stream Veyin for a bath, then, according to his biography, the first words that he uttered were : 'Neither is there a Hindu, not a Musalman'. This meant that simply by calling oneself Hindu or Musalman, one does not become a Hindu or a Musalman. When the Qazi complained to Nawab Daulat Khan why (Guru) Nanak was uttering these words 'are we not Muslims ?'—the Guru was summoned to the court and questioned. In reply he said :

It is difficult to call  
 oneself a Musalman; If one is, Let him, be called so.  
 The first condition is love for religion,  
 Then he should rub his heart clean of all rust (sin)  
 and give up property.  
 When one becomes a Muslim  
 and makes religion the helmsman of his boat,  
 he should cease worrying about life and death.  
 He should bow his head to the Will of God,  
 obey God and annihilate the self.  
 And when he is compassionate to all living beings,  
 he may call himself a Musalman then.

(*Majh Var, S.I.,P. 8*)

Again he says :

The basic wisdom accepted is this,  
 declares Nanak, decision will be based on our deeds,  
 whatever one may say or proclaim.

(*Sarang Var, S. 2, P. 2*)

Guru Nanak divides men into two categories only : the God-oriented (*Gurumukh*) and the self-oriented (*manmukh*). God-oriented are those who, shedding all evil, practise the truth and draw closer to the creator. The self-oriented follow the whims of their minds, practise untruth, fraud, deceit, etc. and remain involved in the worldly enjoyments. They may call their religion by



any name. The foundation of a religious life is ethical conduct. No success would be possible by adopting the external forms or through the mechanical observance of rites and rituals. He alone will attain to the light within, who develops his conduct in accordance with the Guru's instruction :

O man, abandon coveting another's woman, another's riches,  
and greed; abandon egoism, sensual pleasures and vice.

Abandon evil thought and

slandering others, renounce lust and  
the impure wrath.

In the mansion of your body

lives the unfathomable and, infinite Lord.

But the inner nectar is attained by one who moulds his  
conduct according to the jewel, *guru's* word,

He should treat pain and

pleasure a like, and treat good  
and evil that is in the world in the same way.

By renouncing all vice, one is enabled  
to fix his attention on the Name

And then one unites with the light  
that shines within.

Through the True Company

one attains love for the Guru

And through the Name of God,

he gets right understanding, insight and cognition.

Night and day he reaps the

profit of the Lord's name;  
the Guru is the benefactor of the gifts.

He alone obtains the Guru's

instruction, who is blessed within the Divine Grace.

The body is the palace, temple

and abode of the Lord; within it

He hath placed the infinite light

Says Nanak : The God-oriented

are invited to the palace and

God the unifier grants union to them.

(*Malar* 4 5)

The wearing of robes and collecting food from door to door  
with the chanting of hymns, proclaiming oneself as a spiritual

teacher and then living upon the earnings of disciples have been considered condemnable deeds. Earning one's livelihood through the performance of honest work and setting apart a portion for helping others--this has been commended as the highest way of life :

Devoid of knowledge (himself), one  
chants songs (of knowledge).

The hungry *mullah* converts  
his home into a mosque;  
Unable to earn a living,  
he had his ears split.

Becoming a medicant he lost his respect.

Do not fall at the feet of him  
who proclaims himself  
a Guru or a Pir and goes abegging.

One who earns his bread with the  
sweat of his brow, and gives a portion to others  
alone would recognize the way, Says Nanak.

(*Sarang Var*, S.1, P. 22)

The soul came into existence through His command. With the dissolution of the body, it does not come to an end. Guru Nanak has accepted the doctrines of Karm and transmigration. It is clear from his teachings that the soul is reborn after the death of the body, in accordance with its deeds and this cycle does not come to an end, until the soul, destroying the wall of egoism, identifies itself with the Divine Essence within. The fruit of his actions must be reaped by every one :<sup>1</sup>

Virtue and vice are not mere verbal expressions;

People actually carry the record  
of the deeds they perform.

They themselves reap that they sow

Says Nanak, they wander in  
transmigration according to His decree.

(*Japu*, P. 20)

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1. But Guru Nanak unlike some earlier thinkers, has not accepted the existence of 'apurva'. God is the distributor of the fruit of actions. Of those, who tread the path indicated by the Guru and abandon ego-centric activities, all the deeds of the previous births are annihilated.

Through their actions some come near Him  
and others become distant.

(*Japu, Slok 2*)

As one came, so one shall go;  
One will carry the record  
of his deeds with him.  
An egocentric loses his capital even.  
He gets punishment in the Court.

(*Prabhati, 3-13*)

'Gnosis' does not imply mere intellectual understanding. The principles that a person deems right, must be put into practice, for the deeds alone transform our nature;

As are the actions that you perform, so will you be.

(*Suhi, 1-4-6*)

Therefore, who is a gnostic ? The Guru says :  
Righteous deeds lead to perfect wisdom.  
Without deeds it is at its lowest.  
Prays Nanak, what are the signs of a gnostic.  
He knoweth self and communeth with God.  
Through the Guru's grace, he contemplates on Him.  
Such gnostic will be accepted in his court.

(*Siri Raga, 4-30*)

One does not turn gnostic simply through the reading of books and communicating to others the contents thereof. Acquisition of virtues alone can make one a truly wise individual :

The Pandits read books  
but do not follow their import.  
They preach to others  
simply to get money.  
The world is being misled by false talk;  
the real thing is to mould life  
according to the word.

(*Siri Raga Ast, 6-5*)

The word is in bondage, and the saved ones are those who annihilate the ego  
In the world, there are many who discuss gnosis, very few act upto it.  
In this world there are may learned men, very few who contemplate what they learn.

Without meeting the true guru, all wander in pride.

(*Asa Ast.* 6-3)

He alone is a gnostic who contemplates virtue, and  
through virtue attains true wisdom.

Rare is a person who bestows virtue on others.

One obtains righteous conduct through guru's thought

None can evaluate the unfathomable Lord,  
who cannot be known by our senses.

One can meet Him only if He graciously unites one with Him

The virtuous one always long for virtues.

Says Nanak, it is through the Guru's teachings that  
one meets one's friend, the Lord.

(*Oankar, Ramkali Dakhni*, 17)

Without renouncing vice and developing virtue, true wisdom,  
would not be attained :

We may dwell at holy places and  
practise silent repetitions, asceticism,  
self control, charity and other  
good deeds but without the True  
One of what avail are they ?

Whatever a man sows he will reap  
without acquiring virtue, life is wasted.

O, Seeker ! she who is slave to virtue gets peace.

She who, getting rid of  
all demerits is absorbed  
in Him is the perfect  
disciple of the Guru.

(*Siri Raga Ast*, 1-6)

Success is obtained when after giving up evil the mind is  
purified and then one contemplates the Name.

Wash the vessel, disinfect it by sunning and then gather  
milk in it.

Deeds are the milk, motive the ferment,  
expecting no reward turn it into curd.

Repeat the Name alone.

All other works are useless.

Make subjugation of mind the wooden pieces  
and constant vigilance the churning cord.

It will be churned when thy tongue repeats the Name,

thus thou will get the nectar.

(*Suhi*, 2-1)

Guru Nanak taught that unity with the inner light can be realized while leading a householder's life and performing the worldly chores. To remain sitting in *smadhi* through yogic practices could not be helpful in such a life. That is why he prescribed the means of contemplation of Name for the realization of the Supreme State. In *gurbani* (the Guru's word), the Name stands for that aspect of God by which he pervading His creation, upholds it.

Himself He created Himself,  
and, Himself He brought  
into being the Name.

The second thing He  
Created was Nature,  
pervading which He looked on it with delight.

(*Asa Var*, P-I)

Contemplation on God who pervades nature is the means of realising His presence.

Then what offering is to be made  
to get admission to His court  
What words should be spoken  
to win His love.

In the ambrosial hours of the morning reflect  
on His True Name and His glory.

Through deeds we obtain the vesture (body)  
but through His Grace we reach  
the Door of emancipation.

Nanak, know this wise that  
all around is the True one Himself.

(*Japu*, P. 4)

Let us sing (of Him), hear (of Him)  
and cherish love (for Him) in our heart.  
He will destroy our miseries and take  
us to the abode of bliss.

(*Japu*, P.5)

This remembrance of Name drives away the sins that arise from egoism, and ultimately destroys egoism itself :

When understanding is defiled

by sin, it is washed clean  
by the love of the Name.

(*Japu*, P-20)

When hunger for the Name is felt,  
it is satisfied making all the miseries as its food.

(*Asa*, 1-3)

Egoism separates us from others. Name, or remembrance of the Lord who pervades all hearts, becomes the means of love for all.

Those who are imbued with the  
love of the Groom love everybody.

(*Wadhans*, 2-1)

On this path, the first step is *santokh* (contentment). In *Japu*, it is said, 'contentment be they earring'. Then comes *seva* (service), that is, keeping aside one's own interests, to minister to the needs of others. For carrying out of service, it is essential to observe contentment, purity of conduct and to keep in view one's goal all the time. Says the Guru :

Only the contented can serve  
others. Meditating on the Truth of all  
truths, they do not step into sin ;  
and with good deeds practise their Dhrama.

They eat and drink in moderation and snap  
their ties with the world.

Thou art a great Giver, thou  
daily showerest thy blessings  
on them and they progress  
further and further. By glorifying

Thee, they attain the supreme state.

(*Asa Var*, P-7)

The influence of *Gurubani* leads one to do good to others. The truthful conduct and service help in concentrating the mind on the Formless One.

The darts (of desire) pierce the body.  
Service (of fellowmen) brings peace.  
The whole world is a passing show.  
But if one practises service in this world,  
he will get a seat in His court,

Nanak, with arms swinging in joy.

(*Siri Rag*, 3-4)

With hearts bent on service  
and with righteous deeds  
the mind will remain contented in  
remembrance of the unknowable and Inscrutable.

(*Gauri Ast*, 3-8)

Contentment, service and recitation and singing of *Gurbani*  
reshape the inner faculties of man :

There (in that stage) there is  
conscious refashioning of understanding,  
intellect and reason.

And there is moulded the intuition of gods  
and the Siddhas.

(*Japu*, P-36)

He constant practice of this effort opens up the door of His  
grace, and then the Name begins to reside in the heart. The repeti-  
tion of the Name by the tongue changes into constant remembrance  
in the heart.

Few, who without using the tongue  
make the heart repeat the Name, know  
what the Name really is.

(*Malar*, 2.1.6)

Again :

Neither do they die, nor are they led astray,  
In whose hearts resides the Lord.  
There, live devotees from several worlds  
and rejoice, enshrining true one in their hearts.

(*Japu*, P.37)

Guru Nanak has made mention of the perfect Sikh who is  
admitted into the Divine Court in words, replete with reverence :

Rare are such persons in the world,  
whom after testing He hath  
gathered unto his own treasury.  
They have transcended the barriers of caste  
and colour and abandoned mine-ness and greed.  
Engrossed in Name they became  
*Tiraths* of purity and destroyed  
the pain and dirt of egoism.

Nanak washes the feet of those  
who, through the Guru's word fixed  
their love on the True One.

*(Prabhati Ast, 8-7)*

With this clarification of the distinctness of Guru Nanak's philosophy from the thought of earlier thinkers, the present series of University lectures is brought to an end.



*The Message of*

**SHRI GURU NANAK DEV**

**in the context of the Ancient Sanatanist Tradition**

*delivered by*

**SHRI B. L. KAPUR**

LECTURE ONE  
THE PINNACLE OF GLORY

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen,

I feel highly indebted to you for inviting me to deliver lectures on the message of Shri Guru Nanak Dev in the context of the ancient *Sanatanist* tradition. My sense of gratitude is also due to the opportunity I have been afforded to sit at the feet of the great Master, have a share in his grace and feel ennobled. While reading a particular subject, one not only feels to be in the company of the author but also develops a sort of sympathy with the subject of study. This, in our traditional parlance, is a subtle and highly exalting form of *sat sang*. The deep significance of *sat-sang* has been extolled by the great saints and seers time and again. Says Goswami Tulsi Dass :

...  
संत समागम हरि कथा, तुलसी दुर्लभ दाय ।  
सुत दारा अरु लक्ष्मी, पापी गृह भी होय ।

...  
बिनु सत्सङ्ग विवेक न होई ।  
राम कृपा बिन सुलभ न सोई ।  
Sant Smagama Hari Katha Tulsi durlabha doya,  
Suta dara aru Lakshmi papi griha bhi hoya,

...  
Binu Sat sanga Viveka na hoi,  
Rama Kripa Bina Sulabha na Soi.

The place of *sadh sangat* in the Sikh tradition is equally great and significant.

The study of a subject is easier than its presentation. The greater is the subject, the more difficult is its exposition. What subject could be greater than a study of the spiritual experience and the message of Nanak Nirankari, while putting the same in a context equally great—the ancient *Sanatanist* tradition? This tradition is by no means identical with the rituals of the orthodox form

that Hinduism felt compelled by the instinct of self-preservation to assume after it was shaken to its very roots by the Semitic fanaticism—almost barbaric in action, as indicated by the atrocities committed by the ruthless invaders. This caused a sense of desolation in the minds of the Hindus whose attitude, in consequence, created artificial barriers for the protection and preservation of their beliefs and ways of living. Such miserable self-defence was only an expression of their socio-political imbecility and mental pusillanimity. However, the impact of the anarchic conditions in the country was felt by one and all. Even the third Guru in extreme anguish was impelled to exclaim :

जगत् जलंदा रखि लै आपणी किरपा धारि ।

Jagat jalanda rakh lai,

Apni kirpa dhari.

Shri Guru Nanak Dev had also expressed his awesome consternation and helpless wonder in Rag Asa in the following words :

खुरासान खसमाना कीआ हिन्दुस्तार डराइआ ।

आपे दोसु न देई करता जमु करि मुगलु चड़ाइआ ।

एती मार पई कुरलाणै, तें की दरदु न आइआ ।

करता तू सभना का सोई ।

जे सकता सकते कउ मारे, ता मनि रोसु ना होई । १ ।

सकता सीहु मारे पै वगै, खसमै सा पुरसाई ।

रतन विगाड़ि बिगोए कृत्ती, मुइआ सार न काई ।

आपे जोड़ि विछोडे आपे, वेखु तेरी वडिआई । २ ।

“It seems Khurasan got protection, O Creator, perhaps being more Thy own than poor Hindustan, which was overrun, trampled and frightened out of wits. So that the responsibility may not be fixed on Thee, Babar became instrumental in the performance of this task. There was such a slaughter that poor humanity cried and shrieked, but Thou remainedst unmoved and yet Thou art the Creator of all, and, thus, all belong to Thee as Thine own children.”

“If two persons of equal strength fight and one kills the other, it may not worry anyone. If on the other hand, a tiger is let loose on a herd of cattle, that should enrage the master and move him to act accordingly. These beastly rulers have ruined the jewel of

India.”

“Thou Thyself createst and destroyest and thus watchest Thy splendour in perfect equanimity.”

Only the profundity of Guru Nanak’s mind and vision made him produce a much more potent weapon to meet this challenge. It was the weapon of personal piety, coupled with the high ideal of becoming God’s instrument to benefit humanity.

हकमै अंदरि सभु को,  
बाहरि हकम न कोइ । (जपु)

Hukame andar sabhuko, bahir hukame na koi.

To try to come up to this task of interpreting Nanak in the *Sanatanist* context, I would invoke the great Master to enable me to understand him as well as to understand the ancient tradition correctly and, thus, bring them together for the understanding of, and appreciation by this august assembly.

राखि राखि राखि प्रभ मेरे ।  
Rakhi rakhi, rakhi, prabha mere.  
Save me, save me, save me  
मैं राखहुं कृपा धारे ।  
Main rakhahun kirpa dhare.  
Oh save me by Thine own grace, My Lord  
नानक मैं धर अवर न काई  
Nanak main dhar avara na kai  
I, Nanak, have no other refuge.  
मैं सतगुर गुर निसतारे ।  
Main Satagura gura nistare  
Deliver me my Master, my Divine Master

(Guru Ram Dass)

धनु धनु ते धनु जन (म. ४)

Dhanu dhanu te dhanu jana  
Blessed, blessed, blessed are they.

(Mohalla-4)

जो किरपाल हरि हरि भयो (म. ५)

Jo Kirapala Hari Hari bhayo.

... ..  
On whom the Lord hath bestowed His grace.

... ..  
Servants of God or Sons

Shall I not call you ? because  
 Not as servants ye knew  
 Your Father's innermost mind  
 His, who unwillingly sees  
 One of his little ones lost-  
 Yours is the praise, if mankind.  
 Hath not as yet in its march  
 Fainted and fallen and died

(Matthew Arnold)

In the scheme of Nature, the world would remain hostile to an individual, till he learns to know it, manipulate it and thus negotiate his existence through it. For sheer self-preservation, if nothing higher, Nature has invested life, even in its lower animal forms of existence, with the instinct of curiosity, which has developed into the spirit of inquiry in man. In the modern age, the method of observation, examination and experimentation has come to be accepted as the most scientific method, or, in other words, as the only reliable vehicle for the fulfilment of the fundamentals of the spirit of inquiry.

Descartes early in the seventeenth century declared, "*Cogito ergo Sum*" (I think and doubt, therefore, I am). The proof of my existence lies in the incidence of questions and doubts that arise in my mind. This came to imply that the scientific approach would be that of willingness to accept only what is convincing by means of becoming a part of experience through the sense-organs and the mind, little realizing the inadequacy of the former and the caprice of the latter. That resulted in a sort of preference for the *aposteriori* method of inductive reasoning, that is, inferring from bits of experience or facts collected and processed through critical analysis. While their half-baked admirers revel in the efficacy of knowledge through the analytical process, the scientists themselves well know the importance of the *a priori* or deductive reasoning, since that would be the starting-point or the hypothesis in the light of which they would examine their observations. Unless there is a sense of direction, a study or an examination would by itself be like groping in the dark, or knocking, hitting and kicking wildly on all sides. This may result in being completely knocked down or out. The elucidation of the *a priori* method according to Coleridge is as under :

“*A priori*, that is, from these necessities of the mind or forms of thinking, which though first revealed to us through experience, must yet have pre-existed in order to make experience possible.”

Such a manner of thinking, as indicated by Coleridge, would put reasoning very close to intuition as a source of knowledge. Discursive reasoning can by no means become a substitute for the capacity of the mind to penetrate the invisible, or the mysteries of the unknown. Even, according to Descartes, intuition is an immediate intellectual awareness. It is more valuable than deduction because of its immediacy, certainty and simplicity, and its connection with the sources of reason itself. According to Henry Bergson, “Both empiricism and rationalism are quite inadequate. We must get away from both and develop the method by which we can become aware of the dynamic nature of life. The real key to the knowledge of the ‘known’ as well as of the ‘un-known’ is our own personality, for all knowledge starts with self-awareness. Everything else is secondary and superimposed.”

“The method most suited to unravel the mystery of life and existence which is of a dynamic nature, with its essence as flux”, according to Bergson, “is intuition.” In fact, the finest and most vital form that intellect can assume is intuition. That is how a scientist working on a problem for years together, experimenting and thinking hard and deep, sometimes finds himself in a blind alley with nothing but darkness all around. He just suspends his efforts for some time. Then suddenly in a conscious waking state or in dream, an idea flashes like lightning and the tangle confronting him gets loosened and drops off. Now he comes forth with a new discovery or an invention. The world, i.e. his associates or critics who were none to sympathetic till recently, starts acclaiming him. But for this instantaneous flash, the scientist would have gone unsung, unwept, and unmourned. It may, however, be contended that the so-called flash was neither a flash nor was it so instantaneous. But surely, it is by no means the result of either physical observation or discursive reasoning. It is the product of mental activity to which no dimension or limit can be assigned. In this rare promptitude there subsists an element of faith in his own self on the part of the scientist, as also in the *idea*, which till its final fulfilment was only obscure and unknown. The element of faith would lead to intense con-

centration or complete identification. Only when the crudities of discursive reasoning dissolve in some subtle form of rarefied wisdom, that the flash occurs.

Preference for an analytical approach is one of the characteristics of scholarship in modern times. Hence, there is a tendency on the part of scholars to treat even a subject like the one under study at present in a manner more critical than appreciative. Ordinarily, one would be inclined to formulate analytically the philosophy of Guru Sahib and compare it with the tenets of the *Sanatanist* faith, not in order to co-ordinate the two, but to differentiate them. This may appear to be quite rational but the study would become more formal than substantive. The characteristic qualities of even a chemical compound vanish into thin air, the moment it is split up or is reduced to its elements. One can see water and feel wet under its impact, but its elements, namely oxygen and hydrogen, can neither be seen nor contact with them would make one feel wet. Hence, I would not repeat the parrot-cry of the ultra-modern critics that the Hindus believed, in, and worshipped many gods and goddesses, and Guru Nanak Dev revolted against such pantheism and the rituals accompanying it. If that were all, the subject would not bear any further application. On the other hand, if we were to study in *toio* (without feeling content with bits of information gathered from here and there, or, for the matter of that, with just catch-words) the two parts of the subject, first separately, and then together, we might find in both a fascinating process of arriving at the ultimate truth, in the context of the conditions prevailing during the different periods of their advent and growth. Hence, an effort would be made to study the fundamentals of the ancient *Sanatanist* traditions and the message of the Great Guru, in order to co-ordinate the two, rather than differentiate them. After all, they have sprung from the same soil and reflect in their work the genius of the country to which they both belong. This, however, should not be misinterpreted to mean that Guru Nanak Dev said nothing new or made no original contribution. As a matter of fact, the distinction between the new and the old, as far as the ultimate reality is concerned, is as elusive as the proverbial changing colours of the chameleon.

एकं सद विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति

ekam sad vipra bahudha vadanti.

'Truth is just a single entity but the learned have presented it in many forms.' No doubt, the truth is one, but its vitality presents it in diverse forms and makes it look fresh. In fact, the splendour of its freshness thrills even a casual onlooker.

न तवा रासीयामिशस्तये वसो न पापत्वाय संत्य ।

(ऋग वेद ८-११-२६)

Na tva rasiyabhisastye vaso na papatvaya santya (Rg. 8-11-26)

The word 'Santya' means 'One worthy of existence and worthy of being propitiated, which in ultimate analysis would be the Supreme Being, since who else could, in fact, be worthy enough to exist and be propitiated, but Almighty God? The one who realizes Him as such would become one with Him and also be styled as "Santya", or in Hindi 'Sant'. Another epithet for the Divine Being, as expressed in the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, is 'Satyam'.

तानि हवएतानि त्रीण्यक्षराणि सतीयमिति तद्यत् 'सत्'

तदमृतमथ यत्ति तन्मत्संथ यत् 'यम्' तेनी मे यच्छ ति

(छोन्दोग उपनिषद् ८-३-५)

Tani hava etani trinyaksarani satiyamiti tadyat sat

Tadamrtamatha yatti tanmartyamath yat yam tenobheyachati

(Chandogya Up. 8-3-5)

The word 'satyam' सत्यम् is a combination of स sa, ति ti यम् yam which respectively mean immortality, i.e. 'Jeeva' जीव the mortal जगत् *Jagat* and the one who controls the जगत् *Jagat*. In other words, one who controls and regulates the kshara' क्षर and *akshra* अक्षर i. e. the finite and infinite both, such is the Exalted Being, उत्तम : पुरुष : सतुन्य above the two as mentioned in the *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita*. Hence, the 'Sant' सन्त who identifies himself with God as the only true form of existence controlling the mortal *jagat* जगत् and the immortal *jeeva* जीव as *Satyam* सत्यम् or truth, would protect by co-ordinating rather than destroy by disintegrating. That was the exact role played by the great seer and saint Guru Nanak Dev. He was conscious of his mission which was to serve humanity by drawing people together and not driving them asunder.



The word (*sanatan*) सनातन based on *sada tanoti* means, one thriving and thus blossoming forth eternally. It has been used in the *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita* as an adjective of the Supreme Being, along with the epithets like अव्ययः (*avyayah*) inexhaustible and पुराणः (*puranah*) ancient and आदि देव (*adi deva*) the Primal Deity.

त्वमव्ययः शाश्वत धर्मं गेप्ता

सनातनसत्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे

(गीता ११-१८)

Tvamavyayah sasvata dharma gopta

Sanatanastvam puruso mato me.

When the पुरुषः सनातन अव्यय *Purusah sanatanah avya*, i. e. the eternal and inexhaustible Being is शाश्वत् धर्मगोप्ता *Sasvata-dharma gopta* (the Protector of the ageless *dharma*), naturally that शाश्वत धर्म *Shasvat dharma*, that has stood the test of time, becomes eternal like its Protector. Thus, शाश्वत धर्म being protected by पुरुषः सनातन could be styled as *Sanatam Dharam*.

While every other object is subject to the effect of change, God alone exists as the Self-same.

सनाभवः सनातनः

Sanabhavah Sanatanah,

as one who continues eternally as such.

The स्वभाव or *dharam* of that Eternal Being सनातनस्य ईश्वरस्य धर्म (Sanatanasya isvarasya dharmah.) would be सनातन धर्म (Sanatana dharmah.)

The word धर्म (*dharma*) is derived from the root धृ *dhr* which means one who bears or nurtures.

धरतीति धर्मः dhartiti dharamah.

ध्रियते असौ धर्मं deiryate asaud harmah.

सनातन करोतीति सनातनयति, सनातनयतीति सनातनः

सनातनश्चासौ धर्मः सनातनधर्मः

Sanatanam karotiti sanatanayati, sanatanayatiti sanatanah.

Sanatanascasau dharmah sanatanadharmah.

The *dharma* of the Supreme Being not only is eternal in itself, it also lifts to its own state of eternity anyone who aspiring to be so, follows it.

Maharshi Ved Vyas says :

धारणद्धर्ममित्याहुः धर्मो धारयते प्रजा :

यत्स्याद्धारणसंयुक्तं स धर्म इति निश्चय :

Dharanatmdharmamityahuh dharmo dharayate prajah

Yatsyadharanasam Yuktam sa dharma iti niscayath,

Bearing the inert and the animated all, it sustains them; hence, it is termed *dharma* or one that bears.

धर्म एव हतो हन्ति धर्मो रक्षति रक्षता : ।

Dharma eva hato hanti dharmo raksati raksatah.

One who destroys *dharma* by turning one's back on it, is himself destroyed in turn. One who protects it by pursuing the path laid down by it, is himself saved.

Ved-Vyas further says in *Shrimad Bhawat* :

धर्ममूलं हि भगवान्सर्वदेवमयो हरि :

(Dharmamulam hi bhagavansarvadevamayo Harih) and in Ashvamedha Parva of Mahabharata सनातनस्य धर्मस्य मूलमेतत् सनातनम् (Sanatanasya dharmasya mulametat Sanatanam.)

Almighty God alone, who is eternal, is the root, from where the *dharma* sprouts, and, thus, is known as eternal, i. e. *Sanatan dharam*.

Says Lord Krishna in the *Shrimad Bhagvad Gita*

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहम मृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥

(गीता १४-२७)

Brahmano hi pratishthahamamrtasyavyasya ca

Shashvafasya ca dharmasya sukhasyaikantikasya ca.

(Gita 14-27)

I am the *Brahman*, the *Amrit Tatva*, and the Primum Mobile of eternal *dharma* and of unending bliss. According to :

तेत्तिरीय आरण्यक Taittiriya aranyaka अत्रकेचिदाहुः । धर्मो विश्वस्य जगत प्रतिष्ठा Atra Kecidahuh dharmo Vishvasya Jagatah pratishtha.

*Dharma* alone sustains the dynamic force of the Ultimate Reality. In fact, *dharma* is another name for the divine स्वभाव (*svabhava*), and *shakti*, i.e. the nature and might of God. *Dharama* along with God's other *gunas* गुण namely immortality and bliss, is a manifestation of the स्वभाव (*svabhava*) of the Divine Being- His स्वभाव (*svabhava*), which is identical with His *shakti*.

The *svabhava* of *Brahma* as पुरुषः पुराणः *Purushah Puranah* or

सच्चिदानन्द (*saccidananda*, that is, immutable existence, all-embracing knowledge and interminable *ananda* or bliss may be expressed as :

नित्य (*nitya*) शुद्ध (*shudha*) बुद्ध (*budha*) मुक्त (*mukta*). This means constant, pure, fully enlightened and totally free.

Such a स्वभाव (*svabhava*) promises compassion for all, as expressed in the power to nurture the elements and the beings, living and non-living, all alike.

It is mentioned in the Shanti Parva of the *Mahabhartta* :

प्रभवार्थाय भूतानां धर्मप्रवचनं कृतम्  
यः सत्यात्प्रभवसंयुक्तं स धर्मं इति निश्चयः ।

Prabhavarthya bhutanam dharma pravacanam krtam  
Yah satyaprabhavasamyuktam sa dharma iti nishchayah.

For the growth and flowering of creation, the Divine Being is expressed in the form of *dharma* which, according to Tula Dhar while instructing Jajali जाजली, is the constant friend of all and is un-flinchingly engaged in their welfare.

सर्वेषां यः सुहृन्नित्यं च हिते रतः  
कर्मणा मनसा वाचा स धर्मं वेद जाजले ।

(२६१-९)

Sarvesham Yah suhrannityam ca hite ratah

Karmana manasa vaca sa dharma veda Jajale. (261-9)

Such a Dharma, being His own स्वभाव evidently flows from 'Narayan' himself as stated by Yudhishtira while replying to Yaksha in order to rescue his brothers वक्ष्यं सनातनं धर्मं नरायणमुखाच्छ्रुत् तम् (Vakshyam sanatanam dharma Narayana-mukhacchrutam.)

Dharma during the course of its unfolding becomes a mark of distinction between man and lower animals. Says Bhartri Hari.

आहारनिद्राभयमैथुनं च समान्यमेतत् पशुभिर्नराणाम् ।

धर्मं हि तेषामधिको विशेषो धर्मो ह्येतेः पशुभिः समानाः ॥

Aharanidrabhayamaithunamca,

samanyametat pashubhirnaranam.

dharma hi teshamadhiko vishesho dharmena

hinah pashubhih samanah.

Men and animals are just alike in eating, sleeping, shying away from danger, and in sex-gratification. *Dharma* alone distin-

guishes man from animals. Devoid of it, a man descends to the level of an animal.

During the course of time, for a large section of society *dharma* has come to mean a certain type of ritualism or a form of worship coupled with a daily routine pertaining to personal cleanliness and social relationship. This is more of a deformation than the expression of *dharma*, as understood by the sponsors of the great *Sanatanist* cult. Again, some people try to extol its tradition by claiming for it antiquity. Surely, its sustenance down the ages has added to its prestige, but that would be a formal sort of consideration, hardly having much bearing on its content. In fact, what matters is its inner vitality that has made this cult thrive and flourish and also sustain itself in the face of adversity, occasionally bordering on the calamitous. In the *Sanatanist* tradition, much importance has not been attached to the historical aspect either. Herford's remarks for the nineteenth century romantic movement in English literature can well apply to the *Sanatanist* cult as far as its attitude to the historical element is concerned.

"There grew up a poetry of Nature and of man where he most harmonizes or blends with Nature, a poetry mystical, metaphysical and indifferent history, without the accent of locality, broad and abstract in its treatment of character, excelling in profound and lofty reflection."

Our civilization and the *Sanatanist* tradition in particular has always upheld the process of integration.

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु  
avibhaktam vibhakteshu

Its chief characteristic has been a quest for unity in diversity. So much importance was attached to such an approach that one of the aphorism in the *Brahm-Sutra* assumed the form of तनु समन्वयात् (*tattu samanvayat*), meaning that one has to pursue the path of co-ordination in order to reach *tat*, the ultimate truth.

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः  
a no bhdrah kratavo yantu vishvatah (Rig Veda 1-89-1)

Let us receive noble thoughts from all quarters. Accordingly, the method adopted here to be in line with the message of the great Guru as also the *Sanatanist* tradition is that of correlation and synthesis.

*Sanatan Dharam*, in the ancient and classical literature, has been referred to as *Vedic Dharam* and only much later than that more or less in recent times, as Hinduism—a name given to it by foreigners, the ancient Persians. It came to be commonly accepted, as such, only in course of time. In fact, this religion (which in fact is hardly a religion in the sense that Islam and Christianity are) is based on the teachings of the Vedas, the most authoritative religious literature of India. The Vedic literature is very vast and the most important section of the Vedas is known as the *Upnishadas* which contain the essence of the Vedic philosophy and are, thus, also known as *Vedanta*. The *Upnishadas* contain some of the sublimest thoughts regarding the ultimate reality—the truth behind both man and nature, which is *nitya* नित्य *shuddha* शुद्ध *buddha* बुद्ध *mukta* मुक्त, i. e. constant, pure, perfectly enlightened and eternally free.

A practical application of the teachings of the *Upnishads* is provided in the *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita*—The Song Celestial—which is also styled *Brahm-Vidya* and *Yoga Shastra* since it deals with the science and reality and the art of reaching it.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।

पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

Sarvoupnishado Gavo Dogdha Gopal Nandanah.

Partho Vatsah sudhir bhokta dugdham gitamrtam mahat.

The *Upnishadas* are the milch cow and Gopal-Nandan, i. e. “Krishna, is the milkman. Arjuna is the calf, who swallowed the initial few drops of the nectar, thus drawn out in the form of the *Gita*.”

In the words of Dr. S. Radha Krishnan, the *Bhagwad-Gita* represents Hinduism as a whole, not merely Hinduism but religion, as such, in its universality without limit of time or space.

The religion of the *Upnishadas* and the *Gita*, better known as *Sanatan Dharama*, is not a set of dogmas or a creed to which all must conform. It is a way of living, thinking and believing or broadly a faith pertaining to the all-embracing Divine Being and his manifest forms. Its entire theme is that the truth presents itself in diverse ways according to different modes of approach. It covers unity and diversity, the latter elaborated in the form of six *Shastras*. This faith insists on a life determined by certain

fundamental, eternal and universal truths. It advocates the discovery of God as the all-pervading Being and also the practice of living, moving and establishing one's own being in Him. The various methods and forms of *yoga* (*Karma Yoga* कर्म योग *Raja Yoga* राज योग *Jnana Yoga* ज्ञान योग *Bhakti Yoga* भक्ति योग) expounded in it entail a conscious effort to manifest the divinity in man in order to experience it as permeating one's thought, word and deed. One established in such a state is then required to help others as well to reach it.

जो आपि जपै अवरह नामु जपावै ।

(वार, गउड़ी)

Jo api Japai awrah namu japave.

It is a way of life in God and for God. In the words of Swami Ram Tirtha, "If Vedanta is not practised in everyday life, what is the use of it? Vedanta printed in books and placed on shelves, to be eaten up by worms, won't do. You must live it." Vedanta is the whole truth. It kills, if the whole of it is not lived."

"The pursuit of this path enables one to pierce through the veil of matter and behold the self-effulgent spirit by whose light all things get illuminated and by whose presence everything lives and moves. It ensures a life of pure consciousness, where all petty notions of individuality and the ego vanish, a flight of the alone to the Alone." The individual consciousness like a drop in a reservoir of water.

यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यत् श्रृणोति नान्यत्  
विजानाति स भूमा ।

छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् (७-२४-१)

Yatra nanyat pashyati, nanyat shrnoti Nanyat vijanati as  
bhuma (Chandogya Upnishad 7-24-1)

In this state, one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, but only the Infinite, the life immortal or the *Amrit Tatva*.

In the words of Carlyle, "The hero is he who lives in the inward sphere of things, in the True, Divine and Eternal, which exists always unseen, to most, under the temporary, trivial; his being is in that; He declares that abroad, by act or speech as it may be, in declaring Himself abroad. His life . . . is a piece of the everlasting heart of nature herself."

ओम् ईशवास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्चित् जगत्यां जगत्  
Om Ishawasyamidam sarvam yat kimcit jagtyam jagat.

God alone reigns here, there and everywhere in this mobile world with its essence as flux.

According to Vedanta, the *drshya* दृश्य, as all that is seen, is illusory. The only reality is *drga* द्रुग the seer, the subject, the witness. The *sakshim* साक्षिन् or the witness, cannot become the object of knowledge. It is the witness of the entire scene in a state of perpetual flux—'Jagatyam Jagat'—the changing and moving world. The same reality as macrocosm is *Brahma*, and as microcosm is *Aatman*, *Brahma* and *Aatma* ब्रह्म ओर आत्मा are essentially one and not two, they are just identical—the same spirit which is infinite and all-pervading.

अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।  
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो वहिश्च ।  
Agniryathaiko bhuvanam pravishto  
Rupam Rupam pratirupo babhuva  
Ekastatha sarva bautantaratma  
Rupam rupam prati rupo bahishca

Just as fire, though one, having entered the wood, assumes separate forms conforming to the wooden articles presenting it the self, though one inside all beings, assumes various forms indicated in the worldly objects. It is not confined, however, therein ; it yet remains apart :

अणोरणोयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्नि हितो गुहायाम् ।  
Anorinyan mahato mahiyan  
Atma-asya jantornihito guhayam

The self, subtler than the subtle and greater than the great is lodged in the heart of every creature.

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशज्जुर्न तिष्ठति

(गीत—१८-६१)

Ishwarah sarva bhutanam hrddeshe Arjuna tishthati

(Gita 18-61)

The latest theories of science proving the unreality of space and time as well as the inadequacy of the concept of causality and uniformity exploding the myth of matter and accepting it as concealed energy, in a way confirm the fundamental theory of *Vedant*

regarding the universe. The science today has come to believe in one and the same energy, that is charging the infinitely small atoms and the infinitely large stars and planets. Only it is not inclined to invest that energy with a spiritual content, as *Vedanta* does. Yet some of the great scientists are echoing the *Vedantic* views. Says Sir Arthur Eddington "What is the truth about ourselves? We may be inclined to various answers. We are a bit of star going wrong. We are complicated physical machinery—puppets that strut and talk and laugh and die as the hand of time turns the handle beneath. But let us remember that there is one elementary, inescapable answer: we are that which asks the question."

*Brihdraranyak Upnishda* adopts a similar stance by posing a query.

विज्ञातारं कः न विजानीयात्

"Vijnataram kah na yijaniyat"

Through what should one know the knower?

Even the method through which knowledge is to be acquired, as adopted by Vedant, has a scientific form. What is learnt through श्रुती *sruti*, i. e. hearing and learning from the scriptures should be subjected to reasoning and also examined and experienced personally. It is to be accepted only after the application of युक्ति *yukti* reasoning and making it a subject of अनुभूति '*anubhuti*', i. e. one's own experience. Vedic *sadhna* or the method of self-realization (*gyan sadhna*) consists of the threefold process of श्रवण *sravan* मनन '*manan*' and निदिद्धयासन '*nididdhyasan*' hearing and learning from a teacher, reflecting on and reasoning about it and then ultimately experiencing personally the truths, thus ascertained. The process of *nididdhyasan* in one word consists in continued meditation on the truth, learnt from the teacher. All systems of Indian philosophy excepting 'Charvak', have laid stress on repeated attempts at concentration and self control for studying the truths learnt and subduing the passions that obstruct the cultivation of good conduct, which alone can be helpful for making the truths learnt above, a part of one's own life. Shankar has said in his commentary on the *Brihdraranyak Upnishad*.

"The person desirous of knowing *Brahman* must raise himself step by step from the state of mere learning पाण्डित्यम् *pandityam* to



that of childlike simplicity बाल्यम् 'balyam' and from that stage to the state of the true Brahman who sincerely renounces all possessions and pleasure" which are likely to bring about one's downfall.

The main object of *Vedanta* is to help man to recognize his own true nature :

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते येन जातानि जीवन्ति ।

यत्प्रयन्यभिसंविशन्ति तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद् ब्रह्मेति ॥

(१-३-१)

Yato va imani bhutani jayante yena jatani jivanti !

yatprayantyabhi samvishanti; tad vijijnasasva ; tad Brah meti.

Taittitya Upnishad.

(I-III-I)

"That form in which all these being take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge—desire to know that ; that is *Brahman*"

*Vedanta* tries to establish the spiritual oneness of the universe.

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥

Yastu sarvani bhutani atmanyevanupashyati ;

Sarvabhuteshu catmanam tato na vijugupste—

—Isha Upnishad

"He who sees all beings in the very self, and the self in all beings feels no hatred by virtue of that (realization).

यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।

तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

Yasmin sarvani bhutanyatmaivaibhudevijanatah,

Tatra ko mohah kah shoka ekatvamanupashyateh—

—Isha Upnishad—7

"When to the man of realization, all beings become the very self, then what delusion and what sorrow can there be for that seer of oneness ?

Some learned persons, however, have criticized the *Vedas* as advocating polytheism, and *Vedant* also to the effect that its teachings dismiss the world as non-existent. It presents, according to them, a very pessimistic picture and makes its admirers other-worldly. The two apparently different beliefs, the one presented in the *Richas* and *Sanghitas* leading to the worship of many gods and

other advocated in the latter part of the Vedas, i. e. *Upnishadas* about the flippant nature of the world and the true reality as *Brahman*, are just two stages in the quest for and the realization of reality. At the earlier or the primary stage of human development, the mind will only accept something solid, concrete and closely. Hence, the Divine *shakti* revealing itself in the various elements of nature came to be believed as if acquiring diverse forms as the presiding deities of those elements and an elaborate form of worship was, thus, evolved to propitiate these *devtas* by singing hymns of praise, extolling their might, beauty and grace. These hymns are the vedic Richas. Still one reality alone is the terra firma of the forms that the '*devtas*' assumed and also that of their activity. Their basic unity has been unequivocally stressed.

इदं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।

एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥

(ऋक् १-१६४-४६)

Idam mitram varunamagnimahuratho divyah suparno  
garutman.

Ekam sad vipra bahudha vadantyagnim yamam  
matarishvanamahuh.

(Rk. 1-164-46)

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तच्चन्द्रमाः

तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म ता आपः स प्रजापतिः ।

(यजु ३२—१)

Tadevagnistadadityastadvayustaccandramah

Tadeva shukram tad brahma ta apah sa prajapatih

(Yaju 32—1)

For an awakened soul Indra, Vauruna, Agni, Yama, Aaditya, Chandra—all these names represent only one basic power and spiritual entity.

The other objection that *Vedanta* advocates a pessimistic withdrawal from this world 'full of pain' suffering and sorrow' and is, thus, neither human nor stresses moral considerations in life, is without a sound foundation. Shri Gauda-Pada describes the knowledge of *Vedanta* as a source of bliss for one and all. This very spirit finds expression in the following prayers :

(i) सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाग् भवेत् ॥

Sarve bhavantu sukinah serve santu niramayah.

Sarve bhadrani pashyantū ma kashciddukhabhag bhavet.

'Let all be happy and free from affliction. May we see good all around and may no misery in any form whatever be experienced.

(ii) मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे ।

मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे (यजु० ३६—१८)

Mitrasyaham cakshusha sarvani bhutani samikshe

Mitrasya cakshusha samikshamahl (yajū—36—18)

May I look upon all living beings and not only men with a spirit of friendliness ! May we have the same spirit pervading among us all !

पुमान् पुमासं परिपातु विश्वतः (ऋक् ६-७५-१६)

Puman pumansam paripatu vishvatah

(Rk 6-75-16)

(iii) To help and protect one another is the foremost duty of man.

याश्च पश्यामि याश्च न, तेषु मा सुमतिं कृधि

(अथर्वः १७-१-१७)

Yanshca pashyami yanshca na, teshu ma sumatim krdhi.

(Atharv 17-1-17)

(iv) O God, be so kind that I may have nothing but goodwill for all those known to me and even those who might be not known.

तत्कृणमो ब्रह्म वो गृहे संज्ञानं पुरुषेभ्यः

(अथर्व ३-३०-४)

Tatkranamo brahma vo grhe samjnanam purushebhayah

(v) Let us pray altogether that good sense may prevail among men.

ओम् सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु ।

सह वीर्यं करवावहै । तेजस्विनावधोतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।

(तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद् १-१-१)

Om saha navavatu. Saha nau bhunaktu.

Saha viryam karvavahai.

tejasvinavadhitamastu ma vidvishavahai.

(Taittiriyopanisad 1-1-1)

(vi) May he protect us both (*guru* and *shishya*) together. May He nourish us together. May we both acquire strength together.

Let our scholarship be brilliant and may we never fall out.

ओम् शान्तिः, शान्तिः, शान्तिः ।

Om shantih, shantih, shantih.

(vii) 'Let there be peace all over this world, in the outer space and the world beyond—peace a guarantee for the complete absence of hostility towards or from any quarter.'

The *Vedas* do not advocate pessimism, since what they aim at is not liberation from pain but the salvation or the emancipation of the human soul—the return of the prodigal son, who lost his way and whom the father is ever ready to own and embrace. In the *Vedas*, there is not that type of stress on the concept of captivity—'bandh बन्ध that one comes across in Buddhism or in Jain philosophy. There is a sort of slant in that direction only in order to retrieve the lost wayfarer, who somehow or other has chosen to accept a state of helplessness as his fate, and death as the ultimate end. In the *Vedas*, there is an attempt to make the disciple aware of the relative, finite and impermanent nature of existence in the world. As opposed to this condition of uncertainty and discontentment, the *Vedas* hold the promise of constant bliss in the realization of one's trueself.

उद्वय तमसस् परिस्वः पश्यन्त उत्तरम् (यजु०)

udvayam tamasas parisvah pashyanta uttaram (yaju.)

"While proceeding from the darkness of ignorance to the light of self-realization, we may experience upliftment at every step."

उद्वयं तमसस्परिज्योतिः पश्यन्त उत्तरम् ।

देवं देवत्रा सूर्यं अगन्म ज्योतिरुत्तमम् ॥

Udvayam tamasasparijyotih pashyanta uttaram

Devam devatra suryam aganma jyotituttamam

'On our way from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge, may this  *jyoti*  shine on us with ever-increasing brilliance from the dawn to the sunrise and from that to the noontime.'

असतो मा सद् गमय । तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।

मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।

asato ma sad gamaya, tamaso ma jyotirgamaya, mrtyormra

amrtam gamaya,

'May we proceed from falsehood unto truth, from darkness unto light and from death unto immortality.'

Similarly, the 'Gayatri' and the 'Mrityunjaya' *mantras* serve

as keys unlocking the door of omniscience and immortality and lead to the boundless ocean of bliss.

तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमही धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ।

Tat saviturvorennyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah pracodyat

'We concentrate our intellect on the self-effulgent from 'savitur-dev' सवितुर्देव. May He inspire and enliven it, i. e. our intellect.

त्रयम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धि पुष्टिवर्धनं

उरवारुकमिव बन्धनात् मृत्योर्मुक्तोर्मुक्षीय मामृतात् ।

Tryambakam yajamahe sugandhi pustiwardhanam

urvarukamiva bandhanat mrtyormukshiyamamrtat

I propitiate the 'Triambakam Dev' (whose three eyes have burnt desire, anger and greed), whose grace increase excellence and power. May He by His grace liberate me from death, like a ripe fruit falling from the branch holding it ; but I may never be separated from *Amrit-tatva*, i. e. the bliss of immortality.

All the above thoughts and prayers have been quoted in order to establish that the message of the *Vedas* is one of hope and a guarantee for unconditioned absolutism and unmitigated bliss, because the ideal presented here is that of '*Saccidanada*' सच्चिदानन्द, immortality, enlightenment and bliss, which is a positive and incomparable achievement with nothing left to be desired any further.

Still the question remains if man and nature are the manifestation of the same Divine element—*Eko Brahma Dvitiyo nasti* एको ब्रह्म द्वितीयो नास्ति—that is, if there is only one basic truth without any second, then who is to realize whom ? In one word, the self has to realize its true nature which is not what is indicated by its identification with the ego.

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादेयेत् ।

अत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

Uddharedatmanatmanam natmanamavasadayet

Atmaiva hyatmano bandhuratmaiva ripuratmanah (Gita 6-5)

'Let him raise the self by the self and not let the self become depressed, for verily the self is the friend of the self, and also the self, the self's enemy.

बन्धुरात्माऽऽत्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रु वत्

Bandhuratmatmanastasya yenatmaivatmana jitah.

Anatmanastu shatrutve vartetatmaiva shatruvat. (Gita 6-6)

'The self is the friend of the self of him in whom the self by the self is vanquished ; but to the unsubdued self, the self verily becometh hostile as an enemy.'

The separation of *Jeevatma* from the *Brahma* is not a physical phenomenon ; it is only a mental illusion ; it is just the disappearance of this illusion or what exactly is known as realization. According to Shri Anand Mayee Ma :

"The mind is the slayer of the Real, and when the slayer is slain, the Real, the Eternal, comes into Being. It is usual for the mind to distinguish between thought and action, between Being and manifestation. Such polarization is the characteristic of the mental process, but in reality, Being is inseparable from a manifestation."

As stated by Sh. Sanjiav Rao :

"Ma-ever acts from Her Being, that is what she implies when she says she does not plan, does not think. There is an activity which transcends the processes of logical reasoning. Plotinus said practically the same thing. Contemplation to him was true action."

Given below are some of the sayings of Raman Maharshi, pertinent to the present context.

(a) "Know thyself is what is usually said. Even that is not correct. For, if we talk of knowing the self, there must be two selves, one a knowing self, another the self which is known, and the process of knowing. The state we call realization is simply being one self, not knowing anything or becoming anything. If one has realized, one is that which alone is and which alone has always been."

(b) Knowing the self is being the self, and means existence— one's own existence—which no one denies, any more than one denies one's eyes, although one cannot see them. The trouble lies with your desire to objectify the self, in the same way as you objectify your eyes, when you place a mirror before them. You have been so accustomed to objectifying that you have lost the knowledge of yourself, simply because the self cannot be objectified. Who is to know the self ? Can he insentient body or mind know it ? All the time you speak and think of you 'I', 'I', 'I', yet when questioned.

you deny the knowledge of it. You are self, yet you seek to know self.

(c) The *Bhagwad Gita* says : "The wise man will think the senses move among the sense objects and be unattached to the activities of the sense-organs. "I would go farther and say the *Jnani* does not think even that. He is the self and sees nothing apart from himself. What the *Gita* says in the above passage is for the *abhyasi* or the practiser.

(d) To one who is firmly established in the blissful natural state, beyond change and, therefore, is not aware of the difference, who does not think, 'I am one, and he is another'. (Who is there other than the self? If anyone says anything about him, what does it matter? For him it is just the same as if it was said by himself.)

(e) The very doubt 'Can I realize' or the feeling 'I have not realized' are obstacles to realization. Realization is nothing to be gained afresh. The self is already realized. All that is necessary is to get rid of the thought—'Have not realized'.

(f) The *Upanishadic* saying 'I am *Brahman*' simply means that *Brahman* exists as 'I' and not 'I am *Brahman*'. It is not to be supposed that a man is advised to contemplate 'I am *Brahman*'..... 'I am *Brahman*'. Does a man keep on thinking 'I am a man', 'I am a man?' He is that, and except when a doubt arises whether he is an animal or a tree, there is no need for him to assert 'I am a man'. Similarly, the self is self. *Brahman* exists as 'I am' in everything and every being.

(g) One who asks oneself 'Who am I?' and 'Where am I?' though existing all the while as verily the self, is like the drunken man who enquires about his own identity and his whereabouts.

(h) Renunciation and realization are the same. They are different aspects of the same state. Giving up the non-self is renunciation. Inheriting in the self is *Jnana* or self-realization. One is the negative and the other the positive aspect of the same single truth.

(i) It is not at all correct to say that *advaitins* or the Sankara school deny the existence of the world or that they call it unreal. On the other hand, it is more real to them than to others. Their world will always exist, whereas the world of the other schools will have origin, growth and decay and, as such, cannot be real. They only say that the world is not real but that world as *Brahman*, is

real. All is *Brahman*. Nothing exists but *Brahman*, and the world as *Brahman* is real. Sankara says *maya* does not exist. He who denies the existence of *maya* and calls it *mithya* or non-existent cannot be called *mayavadi*.

(j) A figure on the screen in the cinema show appears to watch the whole world. What is the reality behind the subject and the object in the same show? An illusory being watches an illusory world. You and the world are as real as the cinema figure and the cinema world.

(k) Illusion is itself illusory. Illusion must be seen by one beyond it. Can such a seer be subject to illusion? Can he then speak of degrees of illusion? There are scenes floating on the screen in a cinema show. Fire appears to burn buildings to ashes. Water seems to wreck vessels. But the screen on which the pictures are projected remains unscorched and dry. Why? Because the pictures were unreal and the screen is real. Again reflections pass through a mirror; but the mirror is not in any way affected by the quality or quantity of the reflections on it. So the world is a phenomenon on the canvas of the single Reality which is not affected in any manner. Reality is only one.

(l) It is said the whole Vedanta can be compressed into four words: *Deham* देहम्, *naham*-नाहम्, *koaham* कोहम्, *soaham* सोहम्. *Deham naham* means 'The body is not I'. If one enquires *koaham*, i. e. who am I? In other words, if one enquires whence this 'I' springs and realizes it, then in the heart of such a one the omnipresent God will shine as 'I' as 'so aham' or 'soham'. He will know 'that I am', i. e. That is 'I'.

The world scene, however, is not a canard, a fib, a falsehood or simply non-existent. It is only an illusion, an obliquity of vision. *Ishwari-maya* is divine energy creating the world, then also seducing it into the acceptance of the unreality of its own existence as true.

देवो ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

Daivi hyesha gunamayi mama maya duratyaya.

This divine illusion of the mind equipped with *gunas-satva* सत्त्व, *rajas* राजस and *tamas* तमस is hard to pierce. Thus the *maya* and the creation brought through it are not non-existent. It is only hard to pierce through which is essential for reaching the Divine



Entity screened by it. This *shakti* or power works, as only directed by its divine origin. Says Guru Nanak in the *Jap Ji Sahib* :

एका माई जुगति विआई तिनि चेले परवाणु ॥  
 इकु संसारी इकु भंडारी इकु लाए दीबाणु ॥  
 जिवं तिसु भावै तिवे चलावै जिव होवै फुरमाणु ।  
 ओहु वेखै ओना नदिर न आवै बहुता एहु विडाणु ॥

(जपु०)

Eka mai jugati viyai tini cele paravanu  
 Iku sansari iku bhandari iku laye dibanu  
 Jinva tisu bhavai timve calave jimva hovai phuramanu  
 ohu vekhe ona nadari na avai bahuta ehu vidanu (Japu)

*Maya*, the illusion, in wedlock Divine gave birth to three celebrated entities, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva—ब्रह्म, विष्णु, शिव. The first createth, the second nourisheth and the third destroyeth. They carry on their assignments as He in His pleasures commandeth. While He doth see them, they see Him not—A great marvel is this !

Yes, this is a great marvel but one who completely surrenders the ego to the Divine will and also merges it into that will, can successfully resolve the mystery of this marvel.

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते  
 Mameva ye prapadyante marametam tranti te

(Gita 7-14)

Says Goswami Tulsi Dass :

हरि माया कृत दोष गुण, बिन भजन न जाहि ।  
 भजिय राम सब काम तजि अस विचार मन माहि ॥  
 Hari maya krta dosh guna, vina bhajana na jahi.  
 Bhajiva Rama saba kama taji asa vicara mana mahi.

(Tulsidass)

The *gunas* of this *maya* expressed through the instincts and the emotions of the psycho-physical organism and the human mind can be subdued and sublimated only through *Hari Bhajan, Nam jap* or the recitation of the holy name.

In *Tulsi Ramayan*, Shri Hanuman Ji, when he met Bhagwan Rama for the first time and explained his inability to identify the latter, said :

तव माया बस फिरौं भुलाना ।

ताते मैं नहीं प्रभु पहिचाना ।

Tava maya basa phiraun bhulana.

Tate main nahin prabhu pahicana,

'He had been misled by the *maya*, that is how he had failed to see His Divine Entity'.

However, as a counterpart of this conversation there is another version in which Bhagwan Rama had asked Hanuman to reveal his identity and his reply had a profound significance explaining the *Jeeva-Brahma* relationship, formerly under the influence of *maya* and subsequently freed from that influence.

देहबुद्ध्या तु दासौहम् जीवबुद्ध्या त्वदंशकः

आत्मबुद्ध्या त्वमहमिति मे निश्चिता मतिः

Dehabuddhya tu dasoaham Jivabuddhya tvadanshakah.

Atamabuddhya tvamahamiti me nishcita matih.

If I limit myself to the psycho-physical phenomenon that a person thinks he is—a body-mind combination, then I would say, I am only your attendant enslaved to your will. If I regard myself a *Jeeva*, I would be only an *anash* or a part of your ownself; but in case I realize that I am the *Atma*, then it is my firm belief that you and I are one.

The first two relationships, that is, those between (a) the body and the mind and (b) the *jeeva* on the one hand, and the Divine Being on the other, are the products of the *maya*. Only when that *mayavi* influence disappears, with the grace of God, one realizes that basically all reality is one and there is no essential difference between God and His manifestation or creation.

Says Shri Hanuman again in the above context :

नाथ जीव तव माया मोहा सोई निस्तरे तुम्हारेहि छोहा

Natha Jiva tava maya moha soi nistare tumharehi choha.

The *Jeeva* wayfarer deluded and thus led astray in the Divine *maya* could hit upon or return to the right path leading to his real destination, only with Divine grace.

The Divine *maya* deludes and the Divine grace retrieves and leads one to the right path. In fact, the two are the back and the front of the same picture, or the head and the tail of the same coin. The Divine grace like the *maya* is only a form of the Divine Nature or His *svabhava* स्वभाव which is His *dharma* and His *shakti*. While

this स्वभाव or *shakti* assumes the form of *maya* when it creates (that is at सृजनकाल) and sets apace the process of evolution, it assumes the form of grace or compassion when it sponsors the process of involution or rolling back (that is at *laya kal* लय काल) into the primary state. Receiving back or allowing to merge in His ownself, a realized soul is as much a Divine act as creation itself. While one aspect of the स्वभाव of the Divine is *maya*, as another aspect it assumes the form of grace or compassion. In the words of Goswami Tulsi Dass :

ऐसे राम दीन हितकारी ।

अति कोमल करुणानिधान बिनु कारण पर-उपकारी ।

+ + (तुलसीदास-विने-पत्रिका)

तू करता सचिआरु मेंडा साँई । जे तउ भावे सोई थीसी ।

+ + +

सभ तेरी तू सबनी धिआइआ ।

जिसनो कृपा करहिं तिनि नाम रतनु पाइआ ।

गुरुमुखि लाधा मनमुखि गवाइआ ।

तुधु आपि विछोड़िआ आपि मिलाइआ (आसा म-४)

Aise Rama dina hitakari.

Ati komala karunanidhana binu karana para-upakari.

(Tulsidas-Vinay Patrika)

+ + +  
Tun karata sachiyaru mainda sain.

Jo Tau bhavē soi thisi.

+ + +  
Sabha Teri tu sabani dhiyaiya.

Jisno kirapa karahin tina Rama ratna paya.

Guru mukha ladha man mukha gavaya.

Tudhu api vichoriya api milaiya. (Asa M-4)

+ + +

Here the slant is towards and the emphasis is on grace or unconditional compassion. He is बिनु कारण पर-उपकारी because it is His स्वभाव or His Divine Nature. However, one fact pertaining to the above context should not be lost sight of. Shri Hanuman was an *ananya bhagat* अनन्य भक्त or a constant devotee, ज्ञानिनामग्रगण्यम्, i e. foremost among the *gyanis*. He alone could make such assert-

ions, i. e. देहबुद्ध्या तु दासोऽहम् etc. These three forms incidentally indicate the various aspects of the *sadhna* necessary to realize one's true self, the first and the second representing *bhakti* in *Dasa Bhava* and *Vatsalya Bhava*. (*ansha* अंश is just like an आत्मज or a son) respectively, and the third being *bhakti* reaching a climax in *Sarupya* and thus coinciding with *sampuran gyan*.

A few quotations from Sant Kabir should fit in here remarkably well.

कबिरा मन की मोहनी सुर नर रहे लुभाए ।  
 माया सब को खात है माया कोई न खाए ।  
 कबिरा माया पापनी माँगे मिले न हाथ ।  
 मनो उतारी झूट कर लागी डोले साथ ।  
 कबिवर माया रुखडी दो फल की दातार ।  
 खावत खर्चत मुक्ति दे संचित नरक द्वार ।  
 माया है दो भान्त की देखा ठोक बजाए ।  
 इक मिलावे राम सो इक नरक लै जाए ।  
 Kabira mana ki mohani sura nara rahe lubhaye.  
 maya saba ko khata hai maya koi na khae.  
 Kabira maya papani mange mile na hatha.  
 mano utari jhuta kara lagi dole satha.  
 Kavivara maya rukhari do phala ki datara.  
 Khavata kharcata mukti de sancita naraka dvara.  
 Maya hai do bhanta ki dekha thoka bajaye.  
 Ika milave Rama so ika naraka lai jae.

While in the first two couplets *maya* binds and teases, in the third and the fourth, if properly dealt with, it represents the Divine grace that can emancipate. Accordingly, therefore, the Divine grace is as much a form of the Divine Nature which is His *svabhava* स्वभाव *dharma* धर्म and *shakti*, as is *maya*. Just as the evolution or the creation of the world is a Divine action or the product of His *shakti*, the involution or rolling back into the primary state is the expression of His grace and is thus another Divine act. The *maya* and grace are the back and the front of the same picture projecting His *shakti*. Says Maharshi Raman :

“Grace is within you. If it is external, it is useless. Grace is the self. It is not something to be acquired from others. All that is necessary is to know its existence in you. You are never out of

its operation. Grace is ever there. It is not manifest because of ignorance prevailing. With *sraddha* श्रद्धा it will become manifest. *Sraddha*, grace, light, spirit are all synonymous with the self.”

“Grace is always there. You imagine it is something, somewhere high up in the sky, far away and has to descend. It is really inside you, in your heart, and the moment you effect merger of the mind into its sources, the grace rushes forth, sprouting as from a spring, from within you.”

सो जानि जेहि देहु जनाई जानत तुम्हीं तुम्हीं हो जाई ।

अतिसय कृपा राम की होई, पांव देत या मार्ग सोई ।

So jani jehi dehu janai janata tumhin tumhin ho jai.

Atisaya kirpa Rama ki hoi, panva deta ya marga soi.

(Tulsi Dass)

This couplet from the *Tulsi Ramayan* stresses the spontaneous and unconditioned flow of grace from its Divine source in order to emancipate a soul.

Shri Ram Karishna Parmhans narrating parable indicated the central point of *Brahman* and *shakti* forming one integral whole, the latter being just the former's revelation according to His will. “Once a *brahmchari* recently initiated and holding tight the belief, एको ब्रह्माद्वितीयो नास्ति was walking along a street. From the opposite direction came running an elephant, rather wild in behaviour. Its *mahavat* was all the time warning the traffic to move aside and beyond the reach of the elephant going out of control. The *brahmchari* not heeding the *mahavat's* solicitations walked straight in the elephant's path muttering.

तत्त्वमसि, सोऽहं, अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, एको ब्रह्म द्वितीयो नास्ति ।

Tattvamasi, so-aham, aham brahmasmi, eko brahma dvitiyo nasti.

The elephant stretching his trunk lifted the *brahmchari* and did no greater mischief than flinging him off its own path. The *brahmchari* was badly bruised, and with his limbs broken could not move. He cried in pain. Another *brahmchari*, finding him in that pitiable condition, carried him to the *ashram*. On being asked by the *guru* to explain the cause of his misfortune, the *brahmchari* cried back, saying it was the result of following the *guru's* instruction to see *Brahma* only everywhere. Thereafter, he narrated the incident how he walked straight into the elephant,

trying to discover the *Brahma* in him. The *guru* rather pained by the agony of the stupid disciple, posed a query, "Why did you not see the revelation of the *Brahm's* grace or compassion—His *karuna* or *daya* in the *mahavat's* warnings, while you only tried to see the *Brahma* hidden in the elephant, representing His *maya*?"

At another place, Shri Rama Krishna has brought out the phenomenon of *maya* as well as *daya* दया in the behaviour of a cat towards a mouse and its own kitten, lifting each of the two with its teeth in two different ways.

Why and how does one become many or why the primal unity or power divides itself into infinite varieties in creation is a mystery beyond the ken of a mortal. All that can be safely is that it is a divine act. However, various thinkers have tried to interpret it in so many ways. Some call it the Lord's *svabhava* स्वभाव. It could not be His desire, as He is not incomplete as to have any wish.

देवस्यैव स्वभावो ऽयमाप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा ।

Devasyaiva svabhavo-ayamaptakamasya ka sprha.

By others it is called *Krida* क्रीडा (play)

क्रीडतो बालकस्य क्रीडां तस्य निशामयं । लोकवत्तु लीला कैवल्यम् ।

or Lila

Kridato balakasya kridam tasya nishamayam lokavattu lila kaivalyam.

By others still it is called 'Will' followed by creative action (*kriya* क्रिया). It is also called the Divine Word or Logos. However, Shri Anand Mayee Ma styles it '*kheyal*' which is comprehensive enough to cover Will, Action and Logos—because *kheyal* has the Word as its most immediate vehicle.

The view that the universe arises from the Word शब्दात् प्रभवति जगत (*shabdat prabhatvai jagat*) is as old as the *Vedas*.

(*Brahma Sutra* 1-111-28)

According to Shankra, the fact that the Word precedes creation is declared by the *Shruti* and the *Smriti* both (*Shabda purvika shrishti*) शब्दपूर्विका सृष्टि ।

'It was from *vak* (वाक्)—the Word that the Maker of the Universe produced creatures.

Vagvai aja vacovai Prajah Vishvakarma yajana वाग्वै अजा वाचो वै प्रचाः विश्वकर्मा यजान । (Shatpatha Brahman)

St John in the 4th Gospel echoes a similar view.

'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God.'

'The same was in the beginning with God.'

'All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made, that was made.'

Thus, Christianity like the Vedas proclaims that the whole creation has preceded from the Word (*Vak*). The conception of the Word,..... In Hebrew, it is Memra, in Greek Logos,.....as the creative principle was prevalent among the ancient Hebrews and Greeks as is the case with the Vedic *rishis*. It is said in the old Testament-Genesis :

"And God said, let there be light, there was light." By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth—

(Psalm 33-6)

A similar thought appears in the *Gurbani*

अव्वल अल्लह नूर उपाइआ, कुदरति के सभ बन्दे ।

एक नूर ते सब जगु उपजिआ कउन भले को मन्दे ॥

Avvala Allaha nura upaya kudarati ke sabha bande

Eka nura te sabu jagu upajiya kouna bhale ko mande.

An elaborate exposition of this very theme we find in the *Attareya Upanishada* where it deals with the process of creation.

ओम् आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत्,

नान्यत् किञ्चनमिषत् । स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा इति (१)

एत्तरेयोपनिषत् १-१

Om atma va idameka evagra asit,

Nanyat kincanamishat sa ikshata lokannu srija iti.

Aittareyopanishad. 1-1

'In the beginning, there was but the Absolute Self alone. There was nothing else whatsoever that winked. He thought, 'Let me create the worlds.'

(Aittareya Upanishada)

(1-1)

and thus the Universe was created.

तमभ्यतपत्तस्याभितप्तस्य मुखं निरभिद्यतयथाण्डं

मुखाद्वागवाचो .....

Tamabhyatapattasyabhitaptasya mukham

nirabhidhyata yathandam mukhadvavgvaco.

Aitareyopanisat 1-4

'While, thus, he deliberated, from His mouth came forth speech and subsequently the entire creation.' The Islamic conception of the word 'kun' leading to the creation of the world is very much in line with the rest of the world thought as with that of the *Vedas* in which it is said एकोऽहम् बहुस्याम् *eko-aham bhu syam*.

I am one, let me be many.

The entire world process springs from one supreme reality, and that too without affecting the Divine origin in any respect whatever, either qualitative or quantitative.

ओम् पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य  
पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।

ओम् शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

Om Purnamadah purnamidam purnat purnamudacyate purn-  
asya purnamadaya purnamevavashyate.

Om shantih, shantih, shantih.

Om. That (supreme) is infinite and this (conditioned *Brahman*) is infinite. The infinite (conditioned *Brahma*) proceed from the infinite Supreme *Brahman*. (Then through knowledge) this infinite (conditioned *Brahma*) having been received back, it remains as the infinite (unconditioned *Brahma*) alone. Om, peace, peace, peace.

However, during the course of the evolutionary process with its essence as flux (*samsarati iti samsarah* सम्सरति इति संसार) complications are bound to arise. सत्यं वै देवाः अनृत मनुष्याः *Satyam vai devah anrtam manushyah*. Whereas the *devas* being so constituted pursue the path of righteousness, man being a combination of rationality and animality gets involved in falsehood of one form or another. In fact, the *prakritik gunas*, *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, i.e. principles of harmony, movement and inertia, provide all beings, with a psycho-physical organism equipped with the compulsions resulting from the primary instincts and emotions. That determines the very course of their existence. Says the *Gita*. Nature will constrain you to do, what from delusion you desired not to do.

यदहंकारमाश्रित्य न योस्त्य इति मन्यसे ।

मिथ्येष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥



स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।  
 कर्तुं न् नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥  
 Yadahamkaramashritya na yotsya iti manyase  
 mithyaisha vyavasayaste praktistvam niyokshyati  
 svabhavajena kouunteya nibadhah svena karmana  
 kartum necchasi yanmohatkarishyasoavvasho-api tat.

(Gita 18-59, 60)

The code of conduct that man evolves for his life may change from age to age and from country to country or from one social structure to another. It is likely to present a queer mixture of truth and falsehood, the right and the wrong, the good and the bad with earnest attempts at rationalization of the other counterparts—falsehood, what is wrong and what is bad. There is a saying: सत्यं अनृतं तु बाणिज्यम् *Satyam anrtam tu vanijyam*, that is, for life in the world, a combination of truth and falsehood may be condoned. While such a justification is offered for a partially moral conduct for success in the world, it makes the grave mistake of placing truth and falsehood at the same level.

Man enjoys the distinction of having been endowed with *buddhi*—the power of discrimination—that arouses in his heart the aspiration to realise his true self. The fulfilment of such an aspiration would be possible only if he does not lose sight of the fact that the entire creation is built on the foundation of truth and is also sustained by it.

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।  
 प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ उच्यते ।

(गीता १६-२६)

Sadbhave sadhubhave ca sadityetatprayujyate.  
 Prashaste karmani tatha sacchabdah partha ucyate.

(Gita 16-26)

The word *sat* सत् which stands for the Divine entity is employed for truth as well as for goodness, सद भाव साधु भाव *Sad bhava sadhu bhava*. It is also used in the sense of प्रशस्त कर्म *prashasto karma*, that is, a praiseworthy act, which can be so, only if it is good and can stand the test of being true. The epithets, सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरम् *satyam shivam sundaram*, have been used for the same ultimate Reality meaning that is the truth. Goodness and beauty which elicit praise in a spontaneous manner may be styled

true and good सत्यम् (*satyam*) and शिवम् (*shivam*). It is established therefore, that for the realization of reality, righteousness is the one and inescapable path. It is long, long road beset with many difficulties, resulting from the compulsions of life. There is no short cut to the bringing of the destination nearer.

राह रवे राहे मुहब्बत, रह न जाना राह मे ।

लज्जते सहारा न वर्दी दूरिए मंजिल में है ॥

गुल्शन परस्त हूं, मुझे गुल ही नहीं अजीज ।

काँटो से भी निबाह किए जा रहा हूं मैं ॥

Raha rave rahe muhabbata rah na jana raha main

Lazzate sahara na vardi duriye manjila main hai

Gulshana prasta hun mujhe gula hi nahin aziz,

Kanto se bhi nibaha kiye ja raha hun main.

The problem now is how to reconcile one's life in the world with the quest for truth. For that purpose, one has to seek expert guidance which is very like the Buddhistic resolve.

बुद्धं शरणं गच्छामि ।

धम्मं शरणं गच्छामि संघं शरणं गच्छामि ।

Budhan sharanam gacchami. Dhamman sharnam gacchami, sangham sharanam gacchami.

A very efficacious piece of guidance is available in the *Iso-p-nishad*.

ओम् ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम् ॥

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समा :

एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरः

Om Ishavasyamidam sarvam yat kinca jagatyam jagat.

Tena tyaktena bhunjitha ma grdhah kasyasviddanam.

Kurvanneveha karmani jijivishecchatatam samah.

Evam tvayi nanyatheto-asti na karma lipyate narah.

This entire phenomenon, i.e. whatever moves on this earth, is permeated by the Divine element. Protect yourself by detachment (by detaching yourself from the temptations presented by the world objects, which are essentially of an impermanent nature), nor have you thus to covet wealth or aim at possession.

While living for a hundred years—the span a person was expected to have here—one has to perform *karm* कर्म from which

there could be no escape.

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्व कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मण ।  
शरीरयात्रापि च ने न प्रसिद्ध येदकर्मणः ॥

(गीता ६-७)

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः  
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

(गीता ३-२१)

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन ।  
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

(गीता ३-२२)

Niyatam kuru karma tvam karma jyayo hyakarmanah.  
Sharira yatrapi ca te na prasiddhyedakarmanah. (Gita 6-7)

Yadyadacarati shreshthastattadevetarajanah.  
Saypatpramanam kurute lokastadanuvartate. (Gita 3-21)

Na me parthasti kartavyam trishu lokeshu kincana.  
Nanavaptrmavaptavayam varta eva ca karmani. (Gita 3-22)

Perform thou right action, for action is superior to  
inaction.

By remaining inactive, even the maintenance of thy body  
would not be possible.

(Gita 3-8)

Whatsoever a great man doth, that other men also do. The  
standard he setteth up, by that the people go.

There is nothing in the three worlds, O Partha, that should be  
done by me nor anything unattained that may be attained ; yet I  
mingle in action.

(Gita 3-21-22)

Thus, there can be no other way than तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथ *Tena tyaktena bhunjitha*, i. e. while living protect yourself by detach-  
ment. Otherwise, the *karam phala* कर्म फल clinging to you, would  
drag you into the dreary and interminable birth-death cycle.

पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं पुनरपि जननीजठरे शयनम्  
इह संसारे खलु दुस्तरे कृपयाऽपारे पाहि मुरारे ।

Punarapi jananam punarapi maranam punarapi janani jathare  
shayanam.

Iha sansare khalu dustare krpaya-pare pahi murare.

(Shankar's Charpat-Panjabi).

Again and again, one enters the womb of one's mother and is born, but only to die. Therefore the prayer : O God the Merciful, row me out of this awful ocean of life and death—the *sansar*. Living with a spirit of detachment, living in the world about being of it, is easier said than done. It amounts to killing or at least subduing the animal in man or, in other words, the performance of an *Ashvamedha Yajna* in a microscopic form. The difficulty of this process and the way to get over it is elucidated in the *Bhagwad Gita* as follows :

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।  
 तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥  
 असंशय महाबाहो मनी दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।  
 अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥  
 असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।  
 वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायत ॥

(गीता ६—३४ से ३६)

Cancalm hi manah krshna pramathi balavaddrdham,  
 Tasyaham nigraham manye vayoriva sudushkaram,  
 asanshayam mahabaho mano durnigraham calam,  
 abhyasena tu kounteya vairagyena ca grhyate,  
 asamyatatmana yogo dushpriapa iti me matih,  
 Vashyatmana tu yatata shakyo-avaptumupayatah.

(Gita 6-34 to 36)

For the mind is nearly restless, O Krishna ; it is impetuous, strong and difficult to bend. I deem it has hard to curb as the wind. The blessed Lord said ; without doubt, o mighty-armed, the mind is hard to curb and is restless, but it may be curbed by constant practice and by dispassion.

(Gita 6-34, 35)

Yoga is hard to attain, methinks, by a self that is uncontrollable ; but by the self controlled, it is attainable by properly directed energy.

(Gita 6-36)

For the sort of control indicated here, a balanced life is an essential pre-condition. Such a balanced life is also advocated by Aristotle in his well known theory of the "Golden Mean" as well as in the '*madhya marg*' or 'middle path' of the Buddha.

As already stated, *dharma* धर्म is the *svabhava* स्वभाव of the

Divine being, as also *His shakti*, which manifests itself in creation. The characteristic features of the *Primary dharma* are truth and immortality. When reality is revealed in creation, *dharma* confronted with a queen mixture of truth and dissimulation assumes diverse forms of morality, to match the *adhyatmika* आध्यात्मिक, i. e. micro-cosmic requirements of व्यष्टि *vyash* and the *adibhautika*, आदिभौतिक or macrocosmic requirements of समष्टि *smashti*. The former generates a process of personal excellence and self-realization, whereas the latter formulate a code of social morality. With the aid of the former, the ego sense of the mind-body consciousness will tend to lose itself in supra-consciousness of the higher self; and by pursuing the latter, individuals will collectively exert for selfless service and the regeneration of society. Thereby, they would accelerate the process of spiritual development of the individual and side by side with it they would ensure the moral-cum-spiritual stabilization of the entire social structure of which they are the parts. This in brief, becomes मानव धर्म *manava dharma* or the धर्म *dharma* of man who has been aptly styled by Aristotle 'a rational animal'. He is rational no doubt, but an animal all the same. The characteristic of animality in him has been circumscribed by rationality as well as by his instinct of gregariousness or life in society. The divine spark of rationality—and the Gayatri always prays for this divine spark or inspiration धीनही धियो यो न प्रचोदयात् *Dhimahi dhiyo yo na pracodyat*—perpetually remonstrates with man in order to wean him back from the blind animal passions and equip him for onward march towards the knowledge of the real self which, in fact, in his ultimate destination. Progress during this march towards human destiny is marked by calmness, or absence of hostility towards anyone, which becomes natural to the state of being just one, without any second.

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते

Yogarudhasya tasyaiva shamah karanamucyate. (Gita-6-3)

For the one steeped in *yoga*, serenity in the mark of distinction, it being a constant concomitant of bliss. That is how the word ओम् Om that stands for the Divine Element sustaining the three worlds, (अ) (a) earth, उ (u) outer-space, म् (m) the Heaven, has a constant companionship in the form of *shanti*-peace or bliss. *Om shantih, shantih, shantih.*

Exemplifying the descent of life from the prime state of *saccidananda* सच्चिदानन्द that is, complete equanimity, to a condition of turmoil, Swami Vivekanand states :

“A current rushing down of its own nature falls into a hollow and makes a whirlpool, and after running a little in that whirlpool, it emerges again in the form of the free current to go on unchecked. Each human life is like that current. It gets into the whirl, gets involved in this world of space, time and causation, whirls round a little, crying out my father, my brother, my name, and so on, and at last emerges from it and regains its original freedom. The whole universe is doing that whether we know it or not, whether we are conscious or unconscious of it, we are all working to get out of the dream of the world. Man’s experience in the world is to enable him to get out of its whirlpool”.

The real snag lies in running a little in that whirlpool... whirling round a little, crying out my father, my brother, my name and so on and at last emerging from it and regaining its original freedom. The human problem, thus, veers round two points : (a) how to conduct oneself while whirling round and crying out my relations and my name and fame, etc., (b) to emerge from the whirl and regain the original freedom. Either a separate effort be made for each one of the two objectives, (a) conducting oneself properly in the world and (b) emerging from the world, or a joint effort for achieving the two objectives simultaneously. In fact, in actual practice, perfection of the effort for either of the two objectives will surely ensure the one pursued. It will subsequently lead to the achievement of the other objective as well, by stimulating a chain of multiple allied activity. Man, constituted as he is, is led into activity of diverse nature. When a *karma* or action is performed in an impassioned manner, it tightens the fetters binding man to the world, like the weeds in the whirl entangling his limbs and making it increasingly difficult for him to move out. But when the same action is performed in a rational, objective and detached manner, it will stabilize his mind and will thus help a person to move out of the world. While in the whirl, one is not lost in it, if not entangled by recklessness or sunk deeper due to imbecility. One has, however, to keep one’s eye fixed on the free current beyond. This, in brief,

may be what is known by *karama yog*. The two essentials are inherent strength and serenity of the mind, which may become possible by constant practice of doing one's duty according to the circumstances without getting un-nerved or tempted by the actual or possible results. This is the essence of *nishkama karma* निष्कामकर्म or *karam* कर्म for its own sake. Says the *Bhagwad Gita* :

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।  
मा कर्मफलहेतुभू मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

(गोता २-४७)

Karmanyevadhikaraste maphaleshu Kadacana.

Ma karmaphalahetubhu ma te sango-astvakarmani

(Gita 2-47)

“The business is with action only, never with its fruit ; so let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor be thou to inaction attached.”

This effort, however, gets tremendous support when one has in view the objective of emerging from the whirlpool to regain the free current. A logical implication of that is a passionate desire to get out of the whirlpool and extreme love for the free current, as is true, say of a fish, one who is its real self only in the free current ; when in a whirlpool, it feels restless and if it is irretrievably caught in it, the fish ultimately breaks into pieces. The desire to get out of the whirlpool indicates a state of disinterestedness and detachment वैराग्यम् *vairagyam*, and love for the free current is symbolical of the devotion to the Divine Being भक्ति (*bhakti*).

Thus *vairagya* and *bhakti* are aids ‘*par excellence*’ to *nishkama karma* निष्काम कर्म in the later stages of human effort for self-realization. They constitute a joint command with कर्म *karma* to conquer the citadel of *maya* originally stormed by it (कर्म-*karma*) in the form of dispassionate action. Selfless action can, in fact, result from identifying oneself with a higher self than one's ego consisting of body-mind consciousness. The lower is the object of the ego-sense, the more narrow and crude is the object of its identification; the higher is the object of its identification, the more expansive and finer is the ego. When a person dropping his personal interest starts working for his family, the community,

the nation and humanity at large, he grows into a noble-hearted and dedicated member of the family of the community, a patriot, and a saint, as the case may be, according to the object of his identification and the evolutionary process set apace thereby. The more one has his ego expanded, the better, the nobler and more perfect has he become and proportionately more and more fit to come forth into the free current. Such form of *nishkama karma* निष्काम कर्म is aided by seeing God in all which, in fact is *gyana yoga* ज्ञान योग. Such a one whose ego has been thus, rarefied and mingled in the free current, either through *gyan yog* or *karma yog*, can neither be deflected from his path by the strongest temptation that the world has to offer, nor would he flinch or quail, even if tormented, tortured or confronted with death, voluntary or otherwise.

A king enquired of every *sadhu* he came across as to which *sadhna* was higher, *sanyas* or *karma*. Many of them could not give a satisfactory answer. At last, a sage of penetrating vision offered to find a satisfactory reply, if the king could accompany him in his rambles. They reached another kingdom when the princess, the only child of her father (the king of the State) was going round in gathering of highly accomplished youngmen, princes, warriors and powerful potentates invited there for *swayamber* or personal choice for a husband. But she could not consider anyone of them worthy of her. There happened to be a young *sanyasi*, a casual visitor, watching the fun. The princess finding him look so composed with his face radiating health of body and mind and beaming with joy, lost her heart to him—a stranger and a pauper. She rushed and quickly placed the garland—the symbol of her choice—around his neck. But he was equally quick to throw the garland off and rush out of the crowd. The princess, the king, the courtiers all beseeched him and tried to prevail upon him to accept the hand of the princess in marriage and also have half the kingdom during the life of the present king and the whole of it after. The young *sanyasi* did not waver even for a split second ; he proceeded unmoved and undeterred on the path already chosen by him. While the rest lagged behind, the princess followed him close on his heels. The *sanyasi* entered a forest and soon disappeared. The princess lost her way when the original king and the *sadhu* (with whom this parable started)



appeared near her. In the meanwhile, it was evening and it became dark. The *sadhu* offered to show the princess her way out of the forest the next morning when the darkness would be dispelled by the day-light. The three of them had to spend the night under a tree.

In the tree resided a family of birds. The male bird conferred with his mate about the necessity of offering food and comfort to the guests who had taken shelter just at the foot of their home in the tree. He flew out and brought a burning twig. It was dropped by him on a pile of hay nearby. The fire came up well enough to warm up the wayfarers. After that, the male bird looked round for food and failing to find anything dived into the fire himself to provide his roasted body to the guests. The female bird marked the insufficiency of that piece, followed by her mate's example and allowed herself to be similarly roasted. Then their three young ones also finding those two small pieces of roast flesh still insufficient for the three guests dived all together into that fire, following the example of their parents in the discharge of their duty in utter disregard of their own selves.

Such a meal, however, the guests could not swallow. At dawn, the princess was shown her way out of forest and after that the *sadhu* instructed the king that perfect *karama* exemplified by the supreme sacrifice made by the birds in the selfless discharge of their duty as enjoined upon by *dharma* was as great as the inflexible act of renunciation, indicated by the *sanyasi*, in rejecting the princess and spurning the offer of a kingdom.

If one wants to be a householder, one should make one's life a sacrifice for the welfare of others. If a person chooses the life of renunciation, he shall turn this back on finite beauty, wealth and power, since they would stand in the way of his development through the path of *tyaga* or renunciation of worldly possessions. In both the cases, however, one has to exert strenuously for ultimate success.

The caprice and the vagaries of human mind are many and tremendous.

मोह न अंध कीन्ह केहि केहि, को जन काम नचाव ना जेही ।  
तृष्णा केहि न कीन्ह वौराहा, केहि के हृदय क्रोध नहि दाहा ।

ज्ञानी तापस सूर कवि, कोविद गूण-आगार ।  
 केहि के लोभ विडम्बना, कीन्ह न यहि संसार ।  
 श्री मद बक्र न कीन्ह केहि, प्रभुता बधिर न काहि ।

(रामायण-उत्तरकाण्ड)

Moha na andha kinha kehi kehi, ko jana kama nacava na  
 Jehi.

Trshna kehi ke na kinha bouraha, kehi ke hrdaya krodha  
 nahin daha.

Gyani tapasa sura kavi, kobida gunagara

Kehi ke lobha vidambana kinha na yahi sansara

Shri mada bakra na kinha kehi, prabhvta badhira na kahi.

(Ramayana—Uttarakanda)

But man, proud man,

Drest in a little brief authority,

Most ignorant of what he's most assured,

His glassy essence, like angry ape,

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,

As makes the angels weep.

(*Measure for Measure*—Shakespeare, Act II, Scene 2)

The ancient *rishis*, therefore, the most well known among  
 them being Maharishi Patanjli, expounded a highly systematic  
 method of *sadhna*, namely the *Yog* consisting of

- (a) *Yama* यम
- (b) *Niyama* नियम
- (c) *Asana* आसन
- (d) *Pranayama* प्राणायाम
- (e) *Pratyahara* प्रत्याहार
- (f) *Dharana* धारणा
- (g) *Dhyana* ध्यान
- (h) *Smadhi* समाधि

(a) *Yama* यम means self-control expressed in अहिंसा (*ahinsa*)  
 non-violence, सत्य *satya*, truth; उस्नेय not appropriating another  
 person's wealth ; ब्रह्माचार्य *brahmacarya*, continence : अपरिग्रह  
*aparigraha*, non possession.

(b) *Niyama* नियम regulates the mind as expressed in शैच-  
 cleanliness of the body, mind and speech ; सन्तोष contentment ;

तप *tapa*, austerity ; स्वाध्याय *svadhyaya*, study of scriptures ; ईश्वर-प्रणिधान (*Ishvara pranidhana*) meditation of the Divine form and the repetition or recitation of His name.

(c) *Asana* आसन congenial and contributory bodily postures.

(d) *Pranayama* प्राणायाम regulation and control of breath.

(e) *Pratyahara* प्रत्याहार withdrawing one's attention stimulated by the sense organs from outside and turning it inward in one's own self.

(f) *Dharna* धारणा, to fix one's mind on a certain elevating object—may be a *mantra*.

(g) *Dhyana* ध्यान, to continue concentrating on that object.

(h) *Samadhi* समाधि, to merge one self completely in that object.

The un-predictable nature of the mind and its behaviour have always been kept in view by all in Indian philosophy, so much so, teacher after teacher stressed the importance not only of controlling the mind but also giving due recognition to the compulsions to which it is subjected. Manu has, therefore, advocated, for an average person, the fourfold objective of धर्मार्थकाम-मोक्ष or, in other words, one may fulfil one's desires and collect wealth, but following the dictates of *dharma* and not losing sight of the ultimate goal, i.e. *moksha* or emancipation of the soul. Lord Krishna also allowed due recognition to the human instincts and emotion by saying.

धर्मं अविर्दुहो भूतेषु कासोऽस्मि

Dharma avirudho bhutefeshu kamo-asmi. (Gita)

“Even '*kama*' काम or sex has the spark of Divinity in it, if it does not violate the principles of *dharma*”. Fulfilment of desire without violating the fundamentals of *dharma* would draw out the best in a person. It is very much like tight-rope dancing. That is why Yodhishtro replying to Yaksha styled दक्षता *dakshata* or skill as the best *sadhan* of the instrument of *dharma*. But all the same, passions have to be controlled and human energy channalized to make life, short-lived as it is, to be purposeful. Human life is a rare and precious opportunity. Therefore the best should be made of the advantages that accrue therefrom. One need not therefore, be apologetic for creating an awareness

to the effect that life is a short lease and can by no means be made endless. Again, in the words of Yudhishtira, the marvel is that men in this world are moving day in and day out to the portals of *Yama-Loka* यमलोक (the abode of Death) and those who have not yet joined in wish and hope, they will ever keep out of that.

अहन्यहनि भूतानि गच्छन्ति यमालयम् ।

शेषा स्थावरमिच्छन्ति किमाश्चर्यं महत् ॥

Ahanyahani bhutani gacchanti yamalayam.

Sheshah sthavaramicchanti kimashcharyam mahat.

If that were all to be said, there could be some justification for the charge levelled against this thought, as pessimistic or otherworldly. The fact should not be lost sight of that this *dharma* promises the divine bliss of immortality and perfection if life is led with understanding, restraint, and skill, which amounts to the sublimation of passions and harnessing the energy, thus released, for the exploration of the mysterious unknown. For that has been evolved a systematic schedule of dedicated action, clear understanding and complete surrender to the Divine Will resulting from pure love or devotion, i. e. *bhakti* भक्त coupled with *karma*.

मानं हित्वा प्रियो भवति, क्रोधं हित्वा न शोचति ।

कामं हित्वा अर्थवान् भवति, लोभं हित्वा सुखी भवेत् ॥

Manam hitva priyo bhavati, krodham hitva na shocati

Kamam hitva arthavan bhavati, lobham hitva sukhi bhavet.

सत्यमेकपदं स्वर्गः

शीलमेकपदं सुखम्

Satyamekapadam svargah

Shilamekapadam sukham.

“One endears oneself to others by giving up pride, and one does not feel sorry after subduing anger; one succeeds in life by keeping passion under control, and would feel contented only if not overcome by greed.”

“Truth alone ensures heaven just as serenity ensures happiness.”

भई परापति मानुख देहुरीआ, गोबिंद मिलण की इह तेरी बरीआ  
अवरि काज तेरै कितै न काम, मिलु साध संगति भजु केवल नाम

सरंजामि लागु भवजल तरन कै, जन्मु बिरथा जात रंगि माइआ कै  
जपु तपु संजमु धरमु न कमाइया, सेवा साध न जानिआ हरि राइआ  
कहु नातक हम नीच करमा, सरणि परे की राखहु सरमा

(आसा मः ५)

Bhai prapati manukha deuharia,  
Gobind milana ki iha teri baria,  
Avari kaja tere kite na kam,  
Milu sadha sangati bhaju kevala nama,  
Sara-anjami laga bhavajala tarana ke,  
Janamu birtha jata rangi maiya kai,  
Japu tapu sanjamu dharmu na kamaiya,  
Seva sadhu na janiya hari raiya,  
Kahu Nanak hama nica karma,  
Sarani pare ki rakhu sarma.

This *shabda* of fifth Guru confirms the helplessness of man because of the compulsions of life. He, therefore, would like one to have resort to complete surrender to the Divine Being. This is probably the strongest advocacy of the *bhakti-maraga* recognizing the difficulties that beset the path of *karma* and *gyana*.

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

(गीता १८-६६)

Sharvadharaman parityaja mamekam sharanam vraja  
Aham tvam sarvapapebhyo moksyami ma shuchah

(Gita 18—66)

Come unto me alone, for shelter; sorrow not, I will liberate thee from all sins.

ओम् शान्तिः, शान्तिः, शान्तिः :

Om Shantih, Shantih, Shanthi.

LECTURE TWO  
THE DIVINITY THAT IS NANAK

तव गुण अति ऊच अंबर समान ।  
मम अल्प बुद्धि बालक अजान ॥  
किम सको वरण तुमरे प्रभाव ।  
तव पर सरण तजि सब उपात्र ॥

Lord Krishna in the *Bhagwad Gita* stresses the Divine purpose of life and work in these words :

“Once can understand and interpret such a purpose and its expression in the life of a divine messenger with faith, alone.

सत्त्वानुरुपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।

श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरषो यच्छुद्धः स एव सः ॥

Faith is a person's true essence.

(Gita 17—3)

Since one learns only with faith, the latter should match the depth of the object. That will be possible through Divine grace, especially when the subject is Divine Mystery itself. “The one (with whom the mystics seek union)... .. is...never an object of exploration. It draws the whole being homeward, but always under the guidance of the heart. It is that heart and never the reason which leads us to the Absolute.”

(Under Hill-Mysticism)

Similarly says Rudolph Otto in his *Ideal of the Holy*, “The essence of religion is human ‘a unique original feeling response’, ‘which is logically indefinable and ethically neutral and which is wholly ‘Other’. Its essential feature is the ‘creature feeling’—the feeling of self-abasement into nothingness before an overpowering absolute might of some kind. Religion has its own category of values, namely the category of the ‘Holy’ minus of course, its usual moral and rational factors.”

At the time of Shri Guru Nanak Dev's birth, the country was groaning under the iron heel of ruthless tyranny, waves of savage butchery and continuous infliction of humiliation in all

possible forms... taxes like *jazia*, forcible conversion, the abduction of women, their dishonouring in public, and the massacre of the masses. Apart from such brutalities, every invader would take away with him many men, women and children as prisoners to be sold as slaves. For sheer physical survival, the people who were comparatively resourceful (mostly belonging to upper classes, viz. the Brahman with a following, the Khastriya with some armed strength and the Vaishya with the patronage of wealth) raised artificial barriers of caste and orthodoxy, and tried to live in isolation as much beyond the range of political oppression and social humiliation as possible. The general masses, however, were left to fend for themselves by embracing the religion of the rulers, thus, increasing their striking power in order to spread the cult of rape, rapine, massacre, demolition of places of worship, and various other forms of savagery.

“Mercy”, says Shakespeare is “twice blessed; it, blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.” Similarly, one might say oppressive cruelty is twice accursed. It is a curse for the victim as also for the perpetrator. The former, if he survives physical torture and mental torment, would be utterly demoralized. The latter having practised treachery, ruthlessness and callousness in shedding human blood becomes more and more inhuman with his attempts at continuous subjugation of the victim after vanquishing him. That is what exactly happened during the Turk, Afghan and Mughal invasions of India. The rulers as well as the subjects became utterly degraded and subhuman. The values of life and all that can possibly lend some charm to it were sacrificed to passion in the case of the former and servile dissimulation in the case of the latter. No wonder that the country lay flat at the feet of Babar since it had been only waiting for somebody to overrun and occupy it, only if he came with the intention of settling down here, rather than stike, plunder and return carrying the booty. To crush even any semblance of resistance, Babar struck with a power inflicting humiliation and savagery on the Lodhis just as they had meted out to their subjects previously. Thus, the following *shabads* found utterance spontaneously, indicating Guru Nanak’s impartial assessment of the contemporaneous occurrences. The contemporaneous scene, in fact, disgusted the Guru and made him wonder at the Divine equanimity in the

face of intolerable suffering of the people.

These sentiments found expression, thus :

जिन सिरि सोहन पटीआ माँगी पाइ संधूरि ।  
 से सिर काती मुंनोअन गल विचि आवै धुड़ि ॥  
 महला अंदरि हुदीआ हुणि बहणि न मिलन्ह हूरि ॥१॥  
 आदेसु बाबा आदेसु ॥  
 आदि पुरख तेरा अंतु न पाइआ करि करि देखहि वेस ॥१॥ रहाउ ३।  
 जदहु सो आ बीआंहीआ लाड़े सोहनि पासि ।  
 हीडोलो चड़ि आईआ दंद खंड कीते रासि ॥  
 उपरहु पाणी वारीए झले झमकनि पासि ॥२॥  
 इकु लेखु लहन्हि बहिठीआ लखु लहन्हि खड़ीआ ।  
 गरी छुहारे खांदीआ माणन सेजडीआ ॥  
 तिन्ह गलि सिलका पाईआ तुटन्हि मोतसरीआ ॥३॥  
 धन जोवनु दुइ वैरी होए जिन्ही रखे रंगु लाइ ।  
 दूता नु फुरमाइआ लै चले पति गवाँई ॥  
 ज तिसु भावै देई वडिआई जे भाविं देइ सजाइ ॥४॥  
 अगे दे जे चेतीए तां का हिर मिले सजाइ ।  
 साहां सुरति गवाईआ रंगि तमासै चाइ ॥  
 बाबर वाणी फिरि गई कुइरु न रोटी खाइ ॥५॥  
 इकना वखत खुआईअहि एन्ह्हा पूजा जाइ ।  
 चउके बिणु हिंदवाणीआ क्योँ टिके केहड़े नाइ ।  
 रामु न कबहु चेतो हुणि कहणि न मिलै खुदाइ ॥६॥  
 इकि धरि आवहि आपणै इकि मिलि मिलि पुछहि सुख ।  
 इकन्ह्हा एहा लिखिआ बहि बहि रोवहि दुःख ॥  
 जो तिसु भावै सो थोए नानक क्किया मानुख ॥७॥११॥

(अष्टपदीआ मु० १, घर ३)

“The heads of the princesses were shaven to be covered with dust, when thrown on the roadside out of their palaces. O Almighty God, I bow to Thee and Thy inscrutable intent. The Divine purpose expresses itself in diverse forms. These women under the protection of their husbands were carried in ivory palanquins and were made to feel cool with fans studded with pearls and diamonds and lacs of rupees were given in charity in appreciation of even a minor wish expressed by anyone of them. They were fed on almonds and dried dates and rested



in princely beds. They are today being dragged with ropes tied to their necks and their pearl necklaces are getting torn in the process.

“Their wealth and youth which engaged them in pleasure have today proved to be their enemies. The soldiers, as ordered, dishonour them and are carrying them off. Honour and dishonour are only certain forms of Divine dispensation.

“If the rulers had been considerate, they might have escaped such a fate. They lost their sense of duty having given themselves up to merrymaking and orgies of various kinds. That is how Babar’s sway became supreme and even the princes were facing starvation. The Muslims forgot the time for *namaz* and the Hindus their forms of worship. However, one strange phenomenon is being witnessed. Those persons who never formerly pronounced the name of ‘Rama’ are today frequently repeating the word ‘Khuda’ to pass off as devotees, in order to please their Muslim masters. Some women whose husbands have somehow survived enquire from them about their safety, while the other unfortunate ones whose husbands have been put to the sword will ever lament their loss. Says Nanak, man is helpless. God alone determines what may happen.”

कलि काती राजे कासाई धरमु पंखु करि उडरिआ ।

कूड़ अमावस सच्चु चंद्रमा दीसै नाहो कह चडिआ ॥

हउ भालि विकुनी होइ । आधेरै राहु न कोई ।

विचि हउमै करि दुख रोई । कह नानक किनि विधि गति होई ॥

(माझ की वार, महला १, श्लोक-३५)

“The present age has all the characteristics of destruction symbolized by a dagger and the conduct of the rulers is identical with that of a butcher. *Dharama* seems to have taken off after acquiring wings as it were. In the dark night of falsehood, the moon of truth does not seem to have risen. I feel like having gone mad while anxiously looking for the light of truth, since I find the path enveloped by darkness. This darkness is further intensified by an acute self-consciousness or the ego-sense. Nanak wonders how the world would be redeemed in the circumstances.”

राजे सोह मुकदम कुते । जाइ जगाइन बँठे सुते ॥

चाकर नहदा पाइन्हि घाउ । रतु पितु कुतिहो चटि जाहू ॥

जिथ जीआ होसी सार । नको बढी लाइतबार ॥

“The king behaves like a tiger and his agents as blood-hounds”. They drag the people out of their beds to get fat by robbing them. The government officials are gnawing upon the flesh of the subjects and lick the blood thus flowing from it. Where the people would be judged for their actions, the unreliable cads will lose face with their noses chopped.

Bhai Gurdas further confirms the Master’s reactions pertaining to the contemporaneous scene as follows :

कलि आई कुते मुही  
खाजू होइआ मुरदार गुसाई  
राजे पाप कर्मावदे, उलटी वाड खेत कउ खाई ।  
परजा अंधी ज्ञान बिन, कूड़ कुसतु मुखहु आलाई ॥

.....  
इसतरी पूरखे दाम हितु ॥ भावै आइ कि थाऊ जाई

(वार १, पउड़ी ३०)

“The dog faced ‘ugly time’ (*Kali-Yug*) has stepped forth feeding on the carrion of other people’s earnings. The rulers are making the subjects destitute by taking away their possessions by force. It is like the fence eating up the field. The people blindfolded with ignorance propagate just bad logic and falsehood..... Men and women do not care for one another but only for the money that may possibly be and wherever, transacted. The world has been swallowed up by sin and the *dharma* groans hard-pressed.

मुणी पुकारिं दातार प्रभु  
गुरु नानक जग माहि पठाइआ ।

“God the merciful on hearing the pathetic supplication sent Guru Nanak to the world.”

सतिगुरु नानक प्रगटिआ ।  
मिटो धुंधु जगि चानणु होआ ॥  
जिउ करि सूरजू निकलिया ।  
तारे छपे अंधेरु पलोआ ॥  
सिंध बुके मिरगावली  
भनी जाइ न धोरि धरोआ ॥

“With the advent of Satgur Nanak the darkness was dispelled and the world was flooded with light. When the earth was illuminated by the sunrise, the stars faded out and darkness

vanished in the same way as the deer run away terror-stricken on hearing a lion's roar."

(Bhai Gurdas, *Var-1-27*)

पाप गिरासी पिरथमी

(वार—२६)

"The world was swallowed by sin"

राजे पाप कमांवदे

"The Kings practised Sin"

परजा अंधी ज्ञान बिनु

"The people followed suit"

यथा राजा तथा परजा

"Like ruler, like subjects"

महाजनो येन गताः स पन्थः

"People follow the tracks beaten by the leaders"

Guru Nanak, therefore, proclaimed :

सच चंद्रमां कूड़ अधियारा ।

कूड़ अमावस वर्तया होऊ चानग चढ़िया संसारा ॥

(वार—२६)

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(वार—२६)

"Truth is the moonlight, whereas falsehood or hypocrisy is darkness, in this dark night of sin, I would launch my quest for Truth."

Thus, this challenge of the time determined the Divine mission of Nanak.

One finds a sort of similarity in the life mission of Lord Krishna who was also born at a time when the people were groaning under the oppressive tyranny and ruthlessness of tyrants, usurpers and despots like Kamsa, Jara Sindha, and Duiyodhna. The entire country was a vast prison or rather a blackhole, where the votaries of truth, goodness and justice felt suffocated. They prayed to God to redeem humanity from suffering ; thus, came forth the Divine promise :

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत

अभ्युत्थामनधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।  
धर्म-संस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

“Whenever the *dharma* is on the decline and sin is in the ascendant, then to protect the good and destroy the sinful and to re-establish the reign of *dharma*, I reveal myself from age to age.”

(Gita 4-7 & 8)

An echo of this Divine promise we may have in another form when the 4th Guru says :

हरि जगु जुगु भगत उपाइआ  
पैज रखदा आइआ  
राम राजे ।

“Rama, the Divine Ruler, has in order to exalt righteousness, revealed the saints from age to age.”

The mission of a Divine messenger in this manner has ever remained the same; i. e. परित्राणायामयसाधूना to rescue the good and to re-establish the reign of *dharma*, i.e. truth, goodness and justice. It has also to propagate the cult of love for humanity through which the Divine Being reveals Himself. This mission has also a subsidiary objective or just a step in the overall process of providing lasting solace to humanity. This subsidiary objective or a by-product of the overall Divine act of periodically recapturing the spirit of *Sanatan Dharam*, i. e. establishing the reign of law, is (विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् *Vinashaya cha dushkritam*) to uproot the evil.

For the first two objectives of the mission (परित्राणाय साधूना विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्) the various prophets, *avatars* and apostles have employed similar methods, namely personal excellence, dedicated action and devotion to the Divine. For the third and last objective (विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् *Vinashyama cha dushkritam*), uprooting the evil, while Rama or Krishna or Gobind Singh employed the surgeon's knife and launched armed expeditions. Christ, the Buddha and Nanak, to suit the exigencies of their respective ages, used the healing touch through tolerance, forgiveness and sympathy—trying to win the heart of the adversary through love. Yet a hardened criminal may feel only pampered by kindly treatment rather than allow himself to be converted. Even

Christ lashed at the money chargers to drive them out of the precincts of the temple, and Nanak, if he did not use physical violence, did castigate the oppressors and hypocrites, sometimes with biting satire.

पाप की जंज लै काबलहु धाइआ  
जोरी मंगै दानू वे लालो  
सरमु धरमु दुइ छपि खलोए  
कुडु फिरै परधानु वे लालो ।

“He has rushed from Kabul with a retinue of sin and is squeezing wealth out of the hands of rightful owners, styling it charity on their part. Both modesty and honesty have been pushed out, with falsehood reigning supreme.”

The diversity marked in the forms assumed by the methods employed are partly due to temperamental differences and partly due to the result of the peculiar nature of the circumstances in which a divine reformer works. The stimulating factor in all what has been cited above has been pity. Guru Nanak's sensitive mind feels pained to see humanity suffering on account of ruthless exploitation, inhuman tyranny and moral depravity. It reacts due to a sense of pity excited by such a sight. Even when that reaction results in the physical destruction of the evil-doer, it is not due to hatred for the sinner but because of love for the victims of vice, who can possibly be saved by the removal of the evil-doer from the scene. Lord Krishna after having inspired Arjuna to strike at the evil added : The evil had to be rooted out without any ill-will against any of the elements, hostile or otherwise.

निर्वैर सर्वभूतेषु Nirvairah Sarvabhuteshu

(Gita, 11-55)

It may, however, be contended that it is not due to any Divine initiative that a reformer appears on the scene to ameliorate the lot of suffering humanity. The circumstances spontaneously throw up such a personality to meet the challenge of the time. Just as a personal misfortune draws the best out of a man, a society, when confronted with a formidable challenge, throws up individuals who change the social conditions for the betterment of the people. For example, India saw the advent of great men in all fields—politics, reform, education, literature,

arts, etc., towards the latter part of the nineteenth century and the earlier half of the twentieth century. These great men helped to liberate the country from the yoke of slavery.

This argument, however, fails to prove that the emergence of one or more than one towering personality is only accidental and not an indication of a divine purpose at work. Apart from that, the advent of a divine messenger to shape the destiny of the world is different from the coming up of a political leader, a social reformer or a military dictator to lead the people to a certain measure of achievement. While the influence of the former will survive his own physical existence, and continue for centuries and spread over a vast area, the influence of the latter may not outlive even his own span of life and may hardly extend over even the whole of his own country. The cases of Krishna, Christ, the Buddha and Nanak, however, without undertaking the important task of specifying their spiritual gradations, form the first category. Leaders of men like Nehru and Lenin form the second category. Further, there can be a third category of strong men who, no doubt, begin by attempts at improving the lot of their respective countries, but later on, the lust for power and their habitual ruthlessness got the better of their judgement. Cases in point may be Hitler or Mussolini and possibly Mao-Tse-Tung. It is the people like those listed in the second and the third categories mentioned above who may be considered to have been thrown up by the prevailing conditions, as contended by the protagonists of emergent evolution. Faulkner, the Noble Prize winner, interestingly points out in his commencement address delivered at the Pine Manor Junior College in June 1953 that potentates like Hitler, Changez and Caesar are the *avatars* of Satan, whereas saints are the *avatars* of God.

The misery of the world moved Nanak the same way as it did the Buddha about a couple of thousand years before him. The 3rd Guru in the Divine Master's tradition said :

जगत जलंदा रख लै, आपणी किरपा धारि ।

जितु द्वारे उबरै तितै लिहु उबार ॥

“O God, by Thy Divine grace save the world in agony. Lift all unto Thee which ever way they may be raised.”

The Buddha also exclaimed :

O, suffering world  
 O ! known and un-known of my common flesh,  
 Caught in this common net of death and woe  
 And life which binds to both.  
 I see, I feel  
 The vainness of the agony of the earth  
 The vainness of its, joys, the mockery  
 of all its best, the anguish  
 of its worst.....  
 I would not let one cry  
 Whom I could save.....

(*Light of Asia*—Arnold)

The urge from within to ameliorate the lot of the suffering world came as early to Nanak as it did in the case of the Buddha, and as the call to extirpate evil came to Rama and Krishna, early in their boyhood. The parents of Rama and Krishna, not realizing in their fondness the Divine Principles in action in the lives of their sons, did their best to dissuade the leaders of public opinion not to call upon the young heroes to perform the Herculean task of fighting against renowned and unscrupulous warriors at such tender age. Kaushalya, Rama's mother, sceptically marvelled at Rama's success against Ravana, even after the triumph scored by him.

कौसल्या पुनी पुनि रघुवीरहि । चितवति कृपासिधु रनधीरहि ॥  
 हृदय त्रिचारति वारहि वारा । कवनि भांति लंकापति मारा ॥  
 अति सुकुमार जुगल मम वारे । निसिचर सुभट महाबल भारे ॥

(रामचरितमानस—उत्तरकाण्ड)

In spite of such fondness as the parents of Rama and Krishna had for their heroic sons, they relented and, even though unwillingly, allowed them to respond to public opinion and engage themselves in the eradication of the evil symbolized in the ravages and atrocities perpetrated by the hordes of *rakshas*. That was done in the royal Kshatriya tradition to take up arms against tyranny and rapine. But Nanak's father like that of the Buddha adopted all possible means to ensure his son's return from the 'diversion' of a mendicant's life to that of the householder's normal routine. They were married by their parents each at an early age. The Buddha was confined to the precip-

cts of a palace provided with comforts and temptation of all types to submerge him in the orgies of pleasure. Nanak's father fondled, cajoled and even used physical violence to make his son desist from the uncertain path of one not willing to be well-versed in the ways of the world.

There is, however, one rare example in 'Indian tradition' of a parent, and in this case a mother herself leading her children to turn their back on the snares that the pleasures of life present and to realize its (life's) true significance. That example is of queen Madalsa, who instructed three of her sons to the effect :

शुद्धोऽसि रे तात न तेऽस्ति नाम कृतं हि ते कल्पनयाधुनैव ।

पञ्चात्मकं देहमिदं न तेऽस्ति नैवास्य तं रोदिषि कस्य हेतोः ।

"Worthy son, you are a pure spiritual entity". The sons got engaged in the pursuit of pure knowledge and chose to lead a life of dedication to that end. Her husband Rita-Dhva; ऋतध्वज at last persuaded her to train at least one son to be fit enough to succeed him and rule over the kingdom. She instructed her fourth son.

सङ्गः सर्वात्मना त्याज्यः स च त्यक्त्वं न शक्यते ।

स सदिभः सङ्गः कर्तव्यः सतां सङ्गो हि भेषजम् ।

कामः सर्वात्मना हेयो हृतिं चेच्छक्यते न सः ।

मुमुक्षां प्रति तत्कार्यं सैव तस्यापि भेषजम् ।

Attachment is to be given up in whatever form it raises its head. If that were not possible one should associate oneself with the wise, because wisdom alone is a cure for the ailment of being attached to the lure of the world.

In one word, this instruction amounted to the honest performance of one's duty with a spirit of detachment. That is the cult of '*nishkam karma*' or dispassionate performance of one's duty.

Satgur Nanak alighted in this world in A. D. 1469 on Puranmashi at mid-night when the moon was at its zenith. The nurse in attendance is reported to have marked a resplendent halo surrounding the new-born babe with his face beaming with joy. During his infancy, a sight of misery would melt him and when he was able to walk he would take away edibles and clothing to bestow them on the needy. His childhood was marked



by numerous instances of supernatural intelligence.

है आरिफों को हैरत और मुनकिरों को सक्ताह ।  
हर दिल पे छा रहा है, रोहबे जमाल तेरा ॥

“Hai arifon ko hairat aur munkiron ko saktah  
Har dil pe chha raha hai robe jamal tera”

“The believers are thrilled with wonder, while the non-believers sink in a state of coma. In fact, the glory of your splendour has struck all, in one form or another.

When he was made to join a school, the *pandah* or school-teacher found that the child-pupil was much wiser and that he himself could learn from him how to unravel the mystery of life and death.

जालि मोहु, घसि मसु करि, मति कागदु करि सारु ।  
भाउ कलम करि चितु लेखारो, गुरु पुछि लिखु विचारु ।  
लिखु नामु, सालाह लिखु ॥१॥  
लिखु अंतु न पारावार ।  
बाबा एह लेखा लिखि जाणु ।  
जिथै लेखा मंगीए तिथे होई सचा नीसाणु ॥१॥ रहाउ ॥  
जिथ मिलहि वडिआईआ,  
सद खुसोआँ सद चाउ ।  
तिनु मुखि टिके निकलहि,  
जिन मनि सचा नाउ ।  
करमि मिलै ता पाईए,  
नाही गली वाउ दआउ ॥२॥  
इकि आवहि इकि जाहि उठि,  
रखीअहि नाव सलार ।  
इकि उपाए मंगते,  
इकना वडे दरबार ।  
अगै गइआ जाणिए,  
विणु नावै वेकार ।  
भै तेरै उरु अगला,  
खपि खपि छिजै देहु ।  
नाव जिना सुलतात खान,  
होदे डिठे खेह ।

नानक उठी चलिआ,  
सभि कूड़े तुटे नेह ॥४॥ ६॥

(सिरीराग महला १)

“Burn the delusion resulting from attachment. Make its ashes into ink. With the mind, thus purified, as the paper and devotion as the pen, let thy heart be a scribe, who may record, as instructed by thy enlightener the Lord’s Name and do homage to Him who is the limitless One.

“Baba, while you write, thus, you know the secret. The body during the course of the exercise of being cleansed of its cravings might be put to extreme discomfort, as if being squeezed in a press. Then you will discover the beacon-light for the onward march to excellence and joy. Those whose hearts are filled with the true Name would be marked for edification. Such a status, however, may be attained only through God’s grace; all else is sheer tall talk.

“One enters, the other exits and also someone may be designated a governor. One is born a beggar and the other holds a royal court. However, one, if not exalted by God’s Name, shall depart disconsolate after a futile existence.

“The future has a dismal prospect and is thus frightening because the body withers away inch by inch. Those bearing the titles as sultans and *khans* (rulers and masters) are seen returning to dust. Says Nanak, worldly attachments being unstable, all ties snap when one departs finally.”

This incident has a counterpart in a parable related by Parmahans Rama-Krishna :

Once, a scholar was being taken across a river in a boat. He, in order to impose himself on the unsophisticated boatman, enquired of him if he knew a particular subject, for example, history. The innocent boatman replied in the negative. The scholar retorted, one-fourth of his life had gone a sheer waste. The boatman felt rather small. The scholar named another subject. The boatman again confessed his ignorance. The scholar asserted that one-half of his life had been lost. When another question in the same strain elicited a negative reply, the scholar declared that three-fourths of his life had been just futile. In the meanwhile, a storm rose. The boat was being tossed like a leaf

from wave to wave and before it capsized, the boatman, with his characteristic humility, questioned, if the scholarly passenger knew how to swim. The scholar, evidently perturbed, expressed his helplessness, for he had spent all his time deeply immersed in studies. The boatman shook his head and humbly said that his life might be completely lost, since he had not cared to learn a fundamental skill, i.e. the art of swimming.

In due course, Nanak's father decided to perform his 'Yajnopaveet' ceremony or investing him with the sacred thread, which Nanak innocently resisted. Through young, he ever kept his mission in sight. One of its important aspects was to denounce forms, customs and conventions which, having lost their meaning, had replaced the great principles on which they were based. In the words of saint Vinoba :

"Our highest truths are but half-truths.

Think not to settle down for ever in one truth.

Make use of it as a tent in which to pass a summer night.

But build no house of it or it will be our tomb,

When you first have an inkling of its insufficiency

And begin to note a dim counter-truth looming up beyond,

Then weep not but give thanks,

It is Lord's voice whispering

"Take up the bed and walk".

Shakespeare, the great master of the fathomless depth of the human heart, enunciated a similar principle.

"It is mad idolatry to make a service greater than the good."

*(Troilus & Cressida)*

Tennyson too remarked in a similar strain :

"Old order changeth, yielding place to new

And God fulfils himself in many ways

Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

Nanak, while denouncing ceremonialism in his various utterances emphasized the necessity of recapturing the spirit behind a particular ceremony. Ordinarily, that spirit could be expressed in the conventional for assumed by it in the past. But once the principle had been swallowed up by the python of conventionalism, it was necessary to destroy the monster in order to salvage its victim from the carnage. Accosting the Pandit presiding over the *Yajnopaveet* ceremony, Nanak remarked :

तगु न इंद्री, तगु न नारी । भलके थुक पवै नित दाड़ी ॥  
 तगु न पेरी, तगु न हथी । तगु न जिहवा तगु न अखी ॥  
 वेतगा आपे वतै । वटि धागे अवरा धतै ॥  
 ले भाड़ि करे वीआहु कडि कागलु दसे राहु ।  
 सुणि देखहु, लोका, एहु विडाणु ।  
 मनि अंधा नाउ सुजाणु ।

(वार आसा महला १, स्लोक १५ (४))

“If a Pandit does not restrain his passions, his beard will be spat upon.”

‘If one’s feet, hands, tongue and eyes are not controlled, what use is the thread to him? The priest himself without such a restraint goes about investing a thread spun out of cotton on others. He solemnizes marriages just for the fees he charges. Folks would not marvel, here is one with a mind totally blind but posing as the one fully enlightened.

चऊकड़ि मुलि अणाइआ  
 बहि चउकै पाइआ  
 सिखा कनि चढ़ाईआ  
 गुरु ब्राहमन् थिआ

(आसा दी वार महला १, स्लोक १५ (१))

The priest purchased this thread from the bazaar and invested it with the conventional ceremony on the disciple, whispering into his ear that, henceforth, the former would be his *guru*.

होई पुराणा सुटीए  
 भी फिरि पाईए होरु ।  
 नानक तगु न तुटई  
 जे तगि हीवै जोरु ॥

(आसा दी वार महला १, स्लोक १५ (२))

“It may be cast off when worn out. But Nanak protests that if the thread had any vital power it would not wear out.”

दइआ कपाह, संतोखु सुतु, जतु गंठी, सतु वटु ।  
 एह जनेऊ जोअ का, हई ते पांडे घतु ॥  
 ना एहु तुटे ना मलु लगै न एहु जलै न जाइ ॥  
 धनु सु माणस नानका, जो गलि चले जाइ

“Prepare the *yajnopaweet* by spinning the cotton of compassion into the thread of contentment, rolling that into the reel of

continence and strengthening it with the twists of truth. Bring such a thread O *pande*, since that is what the human soul actually needs. It neither snaps nor gets soiled nor is burnt, nor drops off. Nanak pays homage to a person who is adorned with it.”

On account of his indifference to life (as commonly understood) and its problems. Nanak's father felt more and more anxious. Yes, in order to train him in the difficult art of trading, he entrusted his son with some money to strike a profitable bargain, away from his home where he was likely to be duped because of the known simplicity of his character. The young trader with an attendant named Bala set out for the purpose. In the way, he met a party of mendicants, who had not had any food for quite a few days. The young trader gave all the money he had with him to his attendant to buy provisions for feeding the *sadhus*. The attendant had no choice but to obey his young master and to buy provisions for feeding them. After all had had a hearty meal, the trader-apprentice started on his journey back home. The father on learning about the peculiar incident, hit his son in rage, little realizing the significance of what the son on being reprimanded styled, “the good bargain, i.e. the *khara* or *saccha sauda*.” The last straw proved to be another incident that followed soon after. The father was already exasperated by the strange ways of the son who gave away a brass jug and his gold ring to a needy mendicant, whom he met on his way while returning after this morning bath. The father in despair turned the son out of his house to fend for himself.

Rai Bular, the Muslim owner, rather the ruler of the village, had already been highly impressed by the saintly character of Nanak whom he treated with great reverence in spite of his own different religion and the later's young age. On his intervention, Nanak was sent to his sister Bibi Nanaki who had been married to Jai Ram, the Dewan of Nawab Daulat Khan, at Sultanpur. Of all the relatives, Nanaki alone was able, at least, partially to understand the rare personality of her brother. She, therefore, received him with affection and sympathy. Nanak was soon after appointed the *modi* or storekeeper in the Nawab's palace, which duty he performed in quite a normal manner. He continued working in that capacity for about ten years. That

was the period during which he led the life of a householder having been married shortly after he got the above appointment. Thereafter, he got two sons, Siri Chand and Lakshmi Chand. However, the passion for spiritual pursuits remained ever raging within him. Getting lost, while contemplating the mysterious unknown and chanting the Divine name, feeding and clothing the needy had become a part of his life and there was no abatement in those interests inspite of complaints and reports made to the Nawab by the jealous rivals or co-workers who lacked insight. But the young storekeeper was never found wanting in the performance of the duties entrusted to him.

On the 13th day of the birth of his elder son, Siri Chand, the Master found certain preparations afoot to purify the kitchen and the house from the effect of 'sutak' which was supposed to have polluted them as a result of the recent birth of the child Shri Chand. On being told the implication of that ceremony, the Master recited a *shabad* which, apart from its profound wisdom, can match the discoveries of the present-day scientific studies aided by the modern sensitive microscopes and other appliances. Surely, it could only be the result of some Divine insight and mental vision.

जे करि सूतक मंनीऐ, सभतै सूतकु होइ ।  
 गोहे अतै लकड़ी अन्दरि कीड़ा होइ ।  
 जेते दाणे अन के, जीआं बाझु न कोइ ।  
 सूतकु किउ करि रखीऐ सूतकृ पवै रसोइ ।  
 नानक सूतकु एव न उतरै । गिआनु उतारे धोइ ॥

Asa di Var, M. 1, Sh. 18. (1)

"The logical sequence of this concept would make *sutak* constant and all-embracing. There are insects in dried cow-dung cakes as in the wood. Not even a grain of corn is free from life. To begin with, water that sustains life is replete with living organisms. How can one ward off the pollution from *sutak* following birth. The kitchen and the edibles are full of life. Generating itself in various forms, says Nanak, *sutak* cannot be washed off except by (*gian*) or pure knowledge.

मन का सूतकु लोभ है जिहवा सूतकु कूड़ ।  
 अखी सूतकु वेखणा परतिअ पर धन रूप ॥

कनी सूतक कनि पै लाइतबारीं खाहि ।  
नानक हंसा आदमी बधे जलपुरि जाहि ॥

Asa di Var, M. 1 ; Sh. 18 (2)

“The actual *sutak* or the rot sets in one’s ownself with a covetous mind, a tongue blurting out lies, a lustful eye, and ears accepting unreliable evidence against others, as true. Says Nanak with such pollution one goes straight to the abode of death, with hands and feet tied.”

सभो सूतकु भरमु है दुजै लगे जाइ ।  
जमण मरन हुकमु है भाणै आवे जाइ ।  
खाणा पोणा पवित्रु है, दित्तोनु रिजकु सवाहि  
नानक जिनी गुरुमुखि बुझिआ, तिन्हें सूतकु नाहि ।

Asa di Var, M. 1 ; Sh. 18 (3)

*Sutak* in all forms is a sheer superstition resulting from accepting not one, but two realities. Birth and death, according to the Divine ordes, are an essential part of the scheme of Nature. One comes and goes as willed by Him. Food and water are Divine gifts and are thus pure. Says Nanak, those who realize Truth are never contaminated by *sutak*.

Thus, even in his early boyhood and youth, Nanak, like an instructor *par excellence*, never lost an opportunity to highlight virtuous life with special emphasis on the purity of outlook. He emphasized that virtue did not lie in outer forms, nor even in a physical act, but in the motive with which it was performed. What is required is purity of the mind not necessarily that of the body. That is why he said :

मन का सूतकु लोभु है  
Covetousness pollutes the mind.  
A parallel thought one can have in the *Isa Upanished*  
हिरणमयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम्  
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये

*Isa Upanished*—15

The face of Truth is screened by a golden lid. Therefore O Almighty God remove it to enable a full and free view of Truth, i. e. to become one with which a righteous living absolutely necessary. That is why not only Guru Nanak but all apostles and saints have stressed righteousness as an essential pre-requisite of

progress on the path of spirituality leading to ultimate salvation.

Lord Krishna identified *sadbhava* सद्भाव with *sadhubhava* साधुभाव leading to *parshast karma* प्रशस्त कम Truth according to him, is identical with goodness expressing itself in praiseworthy acts. When a Buddhist says :

बुद्धं शरणं गच्छामि

“Budham Sharnam Gacchmi.”

धम्मं शरणं गच्छामि,

‘Dhammam Sharnam Gacchami,

संघं शरणं गच्छामि

He also says

Sangham Sharnam Gacchami.”

I shall have access to the Buddha’s *sharan* only if I pursue the path of *dhamma* or righteousness which will be possible through the *sangh* or noble association.

बिनु सत्संग विवेक न होई

‘Binu Satsang viveka na hoi’

(Tulsidas)

Lord Krishna in the *Bhagwad Gita* listed various virtues and vices as godly and satanic characteristics respectively, indicating thereby that the former led to Divine Father and the latter threw a person into the infernal pit of evil. The virtues listed were :

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आजवम् ॥

(Gita 16—1)

“Fearlessness, cleanliness of life, steadfastness in the *yoga* of wisdom, alms-giving, self-restraint and sacrifice and the study of the scriptures, austerity and straight forwardness”.

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।

दया भूतेष्व लोलेष्व मादंवं हलीरचापलम् ॥

(Gita 16—2)

“Harmlessness, truth, absence of wrath, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to living beings, absence of covetousness and wildness, modesty, absence of fickle-mindedness.”

तेज क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

भवन्ति संपद दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥

(Gita 16—3)



“Vigour’ forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of envy any pride.”

The vices listed in the same context are :

दम्भो दर्पो अभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।  
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् ॥

(Gita 16—4)

“Hypocrisy, arrogance and conceit, wrath and also harshness and unwisdom, are demoniacal properties.”

It is evident that the divine properties would liberate a man, whereas the demoniacal ones would tighten his bondage.

Once, while weighing out provisions to the palace steward, Nanak as the storekeeper was counting the weighings. As is the usual practice, he started counting one, two, three, four, and so on. On reaching ‘thirteen’, he got stuck up there and went on repeating *tera*, the vernacular equivalent of thirteen.” He repeated *tera, tera, tera* and kept on weighing out instalment after instalment, completely lost in the profound concept of *tera*, i.e. all is Thine, O Lord of the Universe. That evidently is a counterpart of ‘Om Tat-Sat’ (Thee. ‘That alone is true’). While weighing an article and lingering on *tera*, Nanak was implying, all this belongs to Thee. This is very much in line with *Kasyasvid-dhanam कस्य स्वद्वनम् vakya* of the *Isa Upnishada*—‘To whom (else) does this wealth belong ? ‘Om Tat-Sat’ ओं तत् सत्, as suggested by Vinoba, is an all-embracing concept. Om’ (The Divine element permeating the earth, the outer space and the Heaven) plus ‘That’ (all is that) plus ‘Sat’ (That alone is). Hence engage yourself in the performance of good deeds in a detached manner and in dedication to the Supreme Being. The real essence of the *dharma* is contained in this pithy utterance *tera* with its counterpart as ‘Om-Tat-Sat’—‘All is his.’ ‘All is that’ and ‘That alone is’. *Braham satyam, Jagat, mithiya* ब्रह्मा सत्यं, जगत मिथ्या. Since that alone is, all experiences in true essence have their being in Divinity.

The above incident is a sort of a precursor of the phase in his life, in which Guru Nanak had to grapple with a more serious contender, i.e. the ruthless tyranny of the presumptuous victors and rulers aided by the selfish fanaticism of the priest-

craft or *mullahism* accompanying it. The foreign invader and his alien religion could vanquish the original inhabitants of the country, but they could not root out their beliefs and the way of living and thinking. Islam with its sword conquered the country but not the hearts of the people. Hence, just as the modern political systems and socio-economic dogmatists have their propaganda wings and schemes of brainwashing, the Muslim *mullahs* tried to convert on a mass scale the helpless victims of inhuman savagery, by making them recite the *Kalma* and eat beef, which was a taboo according to the religious sentiments of the Hindus.

As says Wheeler in '*His Short History of India*' :

"In the days of Mahmud of Ghazni, a Brahman was put to death by a sultan of this dynasty for maintaining that the religions of Hindus and Mohammadans were equally acceptable in the eyes of God".

In such circumstances, evidently Guru Nanak's mission which was to teach religious tolerance and the unity of God-head, was well-nigh impossible. As compared with that his effort to redeem the Hindus from superstition and conventionalism, and to chastise them for dissimulation and hypocrisy, was almost an excursion. In order to address himself to the impossible task of making the rulers and their priestcraft aware of the ruinous and degrading effect of the path of hatred, tyranny and humanity pursued by them with such wildness, and to help them to discover the road to sanity, a fresh inspiration leading to more determined effort, perhaps, became necessary.

It is held that on a particular day in 1497, Nanak went to the Baen—a stream flowing near the village for his morning bath. When he did not come out of the water for quite some time, a vigorous search was made but it was of no avail. He was given up for lost. The accounts of his charge in the store were found to be quite correct. All felt shocked by this apparent drowning tragedy, since the victim had endeared himself to all, by his quiet, simple and sincere ways and his saintly bearing. To the surprise of everybody, however, he suddenly appeared after a few days. Superstition and suspicion combined to declare him to be a ghost. The Nawab deputed the *mullah* and the *vaid* to examine him. To the *mullah* for his incantations and the written inscription, he made

bold retorts :

कोई आखे भूतना को कहै बेताला ।  
कोई आखे कादमी नानक बेचारा ॥१॥

(Rag Maru, M. 1, Sh. 7)

“Some call me a ghost and others an evil spirit. But as known to a few only, I am a humble person, Nanak.”

खेती जिन की उजड़  
खलबाड़े किया थाउ  
धृगु तिना का जोविआ  
जो लिखि लिखि वेचहि नाउ

(Var Sarang, M. 1, Sh. 20)

The farmers whose crops have been destroyed have no occasion to make threshing floors. One who sells God's name, by writing incantations is surely an accursed person, fallen out of His favour.

In other words, he reprimanded the *mullah* by saying, “You should realize how short is the span of this life. Therefore how can you afford to waste your time in such a pharisaical manner?”

To the insinuation that he had gone mad, Nanak replied :

भइथा दिवाना साह का साह नानक वउराना ।  
हउ हरि विनु अवरु न जाना ॥१॥

(Rag Maru, M. 1, Sh. 71)

“Yes, It is true Nanak has gone mad but for the Lord, since he recognizes none else.”

तउ देवाना जाणीऐ जा भे देवाना होइ ।  
एकीं साहिब बाहरा दूजा अवरु न जाणै कौइ ॥२॥  
तउ देवाना जाणीऐ जा एका कार कमाइ ।  
हुकमु पछाणै खसम का दूजी अवर सिआणाप काइ ॥३॥  
तउ दीवाना जानीऐ जा साहेब धारे पिआरु ।  
मंदा जाणै आप कउ अवरु भला ससारु ॥४॥

“Such a one is really mad who recognizes only the one Universal Spirit and His will and does not take refuge in anything else. Such a one is surely mad who centres his love on the Master, deeming himself lowly and all the rest of his creation exalted.”

Here, he enunciated the cult of humility which, subsequently, became the corner-stone of his teachings, since it would immediately disarm suspicion and resistance, which are generally the expression of the antagonist's injured ego. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Shakespeare's Hamlet was supposed to be suffering from madness. But according to a Shakespearean scholar, there was 'a method' in the madness of Hamlet. To the *void* called to cure him, Nanak talked thus :

वैदु बुलाइआ वैदगी, पकड़ि ढंढोले बाँह  
भेला वैदु न जाणार्ई करक कलेजे माहि

(Var Malar, M. 1, Sh. 3)

"Here is the *void* offering to treat me. He feels my pulse little realizing that it is the heart that is ailing."

वैदा वैदु सुवैदु तू पहिला रोगु पछाण्

"Physician, heal thyself so that thou mayest be able to diagnose the nature of my malady."

काया रोवे हंस पुकारे ॥

वैद ना दारु लाई ॥

"My body wails and the soul cries. O '*void*, do not administer to me any of your medicines."

A similar note is struck by Nam Dev, when he says :

लोभ लहरि अति नीझर बाजै, काइआ डूबै केसवा ॥

"I am sinking in the stormy water of passion. O Keshav, come to my rescue."

जाई वैद घर अपने जाने कोई मकोई

जिन करते दुखः लाइआ नानक लाहे सोई ।

"O physician better go back home. My ailment can be diagnosed only by one who has attained perfection. It can be cured only by the Creator, whose Divine gift it is," so says Nanak.

Mira expresses the same intensity of faith and supplication for Divine grace, when she says :

दरद की मारी बन बन डोलूँ, वैद मिल्या नहि कोइ ।

मीरा प्रभु पीर मिटैगी, जब वैद संवलिया होंई ।

"The heart-ache of Mira will be cured if the *void* Sanwalya (her *Isht Dev*) treats her."

The *mullah* and the *void* both concurred that Nanak was

not ailing and was perhaps in a trance. In the meanwhile, the Nawab had heard of the audacious paradox uttered by Nanak immediately after his emerging from the stream "that there was no Hindu, no Musلمان." After immediate consultation with the *Kazi*, he confronted Nanak with the proposal that he may perform the *namaz* (prayer) along with him and the *Kazi*. Nanak readily agreed but, during the course of the *namaz*, while everyone assumed the various enjoined postures of bending and bowing, Nanak remained standing upright, which was almost a sacrilege in the eyes of the votaries of Islam. When they remonstrated with Nanak, he replied, "With whom could he keep company when he found that none of them was serious about the prayer. Both of them were following the form and the convention only, since, while praying the *Kazi* was worried about his untheathered colt in the courtyard of his house where there was an open well and the Nawab was thinking of a purchase deal of horses being transacted on his behalf in Kabul".

मत्था ठोके ज़मीं पर दिल उठे अस्मान

घोड़े काबल खरीद करे दौलत खाँ पठान

"Daulat Khan Pathan, while you were bending low and touching the earth with your forehead, in your mind you were transacting a deal for purchasing horses in Kabul."

Both felt ashamed but in the heart of hearts, they were fully won over by the supernatural excellence of Nanak. Then, he declared his conception of Islam in the following words :

मुसलमान कहावणु मुसकल जां होइ ता मुसलाणु कहावै ।

अवलि अतलि दोनु करि मिठा मुसकालमाना माल सुमावै ॥

होइ मुसलमि दीन महारण मरण जीवन का भरम चकावै ।

रब की रजाइ मने सिर ऊपरि कर्ता मने आपु गंवावै ॥

तउ नानक सरब जीआ मिहरंमति होइ त मुसलमाणु कहावै ।

The title of 'true Musلمان' is difficult to earn. One has to exert hard for the necessary qualifications. First of all, one should completely surrender oneself to one's faith, rising above vanity of being well-versed in the ritual. One, if truly devoted, would be adorned with humility and would be devoid of any dread after death. One should submit to the Divine will without reservation, with the ego-sense completely obliterated. If such a one has compassion for all, then alone he would be entitled to be called a

true Muslman.

मिहर मसीति सिदकु मुसला हकु हलालु कुराणु ।  
सरम सुनति सीलु रोजा होहु मुसलमाणु ॥  
करणो काबा सचु पीरु कलमा करम निवाज  
तसबी सा तिसु भावसी नानक रखै लाज

(Rag Majh, M. 1, Sh. 10)

“In the mosque of compassion, spread the *mussallah* or prayer-mat of faith and depend on hard honest labour considering it as sacred as the study of the *Koran*. With modesty as ‘*sunnat*’ and serene equanimity as ‘*roza*’ (fasting), you may become a Muslman. The nobility of thought and action will be your ‘Kaba’ and truth your friend, philosopher, and guide ; with your rosary as cheerfully submitting to the Divine will. Such a Muslman, says Nanak, will not suffer any dishonour.” Similarly, Lord Krishna in the *Bhagwad Gita* has extolled प्रशस्त कर्म Prashasta Karma’s i e. the nobility of action. He has also assured “Na me bhakhtah pranashyati”. ‘न वे भवनः प्रणश्यतः’ “One devoted to Me would never perish.” The Lord has also further said :

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।  
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिदुर्गतिं तात शक छति ॥

(Gita 6-40)

“One following the path of righteousness does not suffer dishonour. Neither here nor there would he come to grief.”

Thus, it would be seen that the instruction imparted was always suited to the occasion and was actually necessary to convert a person to the universal principles of truth, goodness and purity. A corresponding note is struck in the *Upnished*. “The Prajapati (the Primeaval Being) had three types of children-*devtas* देवता men मनुष्य and *asurs* असुर. On the completion of their education, they went to the father-Prajapati-one after another for some special *mantra* or rare instruction for unqualified success.

On each, in his turn, the *mantra* the father bestowed was the letter (*da*) द but with three different meanings keeping in view the diversity of their respective temperaments, necessitating corresponding curatives. For the ‘*devtas*’ the letter ‘*da*’ indicated ‘*daman*’ दमन or ‘restraint’ because the ‘*devtas*’ have plenty, and an unrest-

rained living would degrade them. For men, the 'letter *da*' द meant *dan* दान because man's desire is insatiable. For his development and mental growth, giving away or sharing with others is a necessary pre-condition. For the '*asurs*' who are governed by passion, eradication of anger and aggression was necessary; hence for them this letter *da* द meant *daya* दय or compassion.

(The *Brihadaranyak Upnishad*, 5/2)

Thus, the Master advised the vanquished Hindus through the *Pandah* and the *Panda* to recapture the fundamental ethical virtues, then lost to them, as a result of degrading enslavement. They could regain confidence only if they were to lead a life of purity and moral dignity. The muslims, however, degenerated as they were in a state of beastly wildness, they were shown the way of compassion and freedom from conceit. This, rather than the path of destruction adopted by them, was a surer way to propitiate the Heavenly Father.

There is no authentic record to explain the disappearance of Nanak (when he was working as the *modi*), in the Baem (stream) and his subsequent reappearance as a prophet, a seer or Divine Messenger. There, is however, a mystical account presented by Bhai Gurdas in the following beautiful lines, sufficient to thrill a person with some faith and also possibly some experience of the esoteric.

पहिला बाबे पाया वखसुदरि  
पिछों दे फिरि घालि कमाई (बार १, पों : २४)

"The Baba first received grace at the Divine court and then performed austerities."

रेतु अकु भहारु करि  
रोड़ा की गुर करी विछाई

"He fed himself on sand and *ak* (*Calotropis procera*) and slept on a pavement covered with stones." He performed intense-*tapasya*. Such a life has been indicated by Swami Shankaracharya in the words :

सुरतटिनीतरु मूलनिवासः शया भुतलपजिनंवासः ।  
सर्वपरिग्रहभोगत्यागः कस्य सुखं न करोति विराग ॥

(चर्पट पत्रजरी—१६)

"That is sleeping on earth and wearing the skin of a deer

and giving up all possessions and comforts.”

बाबा पैधा सच —खडि

नउ निधि नाम् गरीबी पाई

On reaching the Divine Court or the ‘Abode of truth’, he was conferred the ninefold treasure of ‘Nam’ (which exhausts the concept of possession in all forms). He was then also graced with humility.

About Bhai Gurdas, it is recorded that he humbly declined to include his own compositions in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, when asked to do so by the holy fifth Guru, who had assigned to him the work of *scribing* the sacred book. However, the benign Guru with his great vision declared that Bhai Gurdas’s compositions were so profound and of instructive relevance to the work of *Guru-Ghar* that they were fit to be considered the key to open the grand vista that the *Guru Granth Sahib* presented to humanity. In the light of this record, the account of Guru Nanak’s appearance in the Divine Court, as given by Bhai Gurdas, would be only an elucidation of the following *shabad* of Guru Nanak Dev :

ढाढी सचै महलि खसमि ब्लाइआ  
सच्ची सफति सालाह कपड़ा पाइआ  
सच्चा अमृत नाम् भोजनू आइआ  
गुरमति खाधा रजि तिनि सुखु पाइआ

(Var Majh, M. 1, Sh. 27)

“The minstrel was summoned by the Master to the Royal-Court, where the truth reigns supreme. He was invested with a robe of honour by the Divine Lord and was fed on ambrosia that the recitation of *Nam* provides. Whosoever has taken this nectar to his fill under the guidance of the Guru has been blessed with Divine grace.”

हउ ढाढो बेकारु कारे लाइआ ।

राति दिहै कै बार धुरहू फुरमाइआ ॥

“The minstrel was put to work by being straightway instructed to sing hymns in the praise of the Divine Lord day and night without break.”

ढाढी करे पसाउ सबदु बजाइआ ।

नानक सचु सालाहि पूरा पाइआ ॥



‘I am feeling more and more inspired to chant His name and sing His praises and thereby disseminate the Divine message. In the same proportion I am being absorbed in the blissful Divinity of the True One.’”

This context includes quite a few profound concepts which need a careful study of the 24th *pauri* of the 1st *Var* of Bhai Gurdas along with the *Var Majh*, M. 1, placing the two side by side.

Says Bhai Gurdas :

पहिला बाबे पाया बकसु दरि  
पिछों दे फिरि घालि कमाई  
रेतु अकु, आहार, करि  
रोड़ा दी गुर करी बिछाई  
भारी करी तपसिआ  
वडे भागु हरि सिउ बणि आई

“With the Divine grace, the Baba performed difficult austerities like feeding on sand and *ak* and sleeping on the pavement, strewn with stones.” That evidently corroborates the *Upnishadaic* reference to the extreme difficulty confronting a pilgrim on the path of spiritual development which is like walking on the sharp edge to a razor.”

But, as says Goswami Tulsi Dass :

अतिसय कृपा राम की होई पांव देत यह मार्ग सोई ॥

“One sets on this path through the Divine grace alone.”

Thus, the sequence presented by Bhai Gurdas is quite logical that the Baba performed the dis-comforting austerities after having received a full share of the Divine grace at Bakas dara बकस दरा ।

A question may, however, arise : Was it actually necessary for him, fully enlightened as he was, as already indicated in his dialogues with the religious leaders and Nawab Daulat Khan, and his dealings ever since his nativity, to undergo such physical hardship ? The basic fact should not be lost sight of. He was on a divine mission of pulling humanity out of the quagmire of superstition, hypocrisy, avarice, hatred and cruelty. He had, therefore, to present the example of an ideal life, since example, is always better than precept. Therefore by his own example, he

instructed others to lead a life of restraint and sacrifice and not to feel subdued with the infliction of suffering, by man or nature. The great seers all the world over have advocated plain living and high thinking as a pre-requisite of the attainment of spiritual excellence. His mission is clearly indicated in the words :

हउ ढाढी बेकारु कारै लाइआ ।

An ilder that I was, I have been put to work  
Surely, as Milton says,  
"They also serve who only stand and wait."

But one who is deputed on a divine mission enjoys a distinction and has to pay a price for the same. "No pains no gains." Such a price is life devoid of comfort and luxury, since they produce disharmony and are likely to upset the serenity of the mind. Guru Nanak styles himself ढाढी an attendant summoned by the *khasam*-Master-to his places of Truth and Eternity. On him was bestowed the robe of homage to Divinity and he was fed on 'Amrit Nam'-the nectar of the True Name. He was further assigned the mission of disseminating the Divine message of *shabad* which to match the glory of the Master should be 'Anhad' अनहद *shabad*, known only to the advanced practitioners, a reference to which occurs in his famous *Arti* when he says :

अनहद शब्द बजत भेरी

"Anahada shabda bajanta bheri"

Says Kabir :

शब्द हमारा हम शब्द के, शब्द ब्रह्म का रूप ।

जो चाहे दीदार को परख शब्द का रूप

Such a message could not be disseminated by discursive reasoning or a fanfare of propaganda, but by the example of personal excellence of which the most potent instrument could be humility, since this virtue immediately disarms suspicion and resistance.

The assignment of a minstrel to sing praises of the Divine Master, the subsequent composition of *Gurbani* set to the tunes of the various *ragas* and repeated references to 'Anhad' *shabad* in these compositions, all indicate a preference for music, which is clear enough symbol of the bliss associated with divinity. An average person is affected by pleasure and pain and reacts accordingly, but one aspiring for spiritual excellence takes these experiences in

one's stride as a matter of routine, since they provide an opportunity for exercise in equanimity, serenity and unperturbed cheerfulness which are divine qualities :

हम वासो उस देश के  
जहां सत्यपुरुष की आन ।  
सुख दुख कुछ परसे नहीं,  
सब दिन एक समान ।

The *Bhagwad Gita* or the Song Celestial was a divine gift made to the suffering humanity, when Arjuna gave expression to the anguish of his soul in the first chapter of this holy book. The very title of this chapter is 'Vishad-Yog', विषादयोग of the tale of human agony. To these wails of ignorance, indicating lack of spiritual insight, Lord Krishna replied प्रहसन्निव, i.e. with a smile :

अशोचयानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।  
गतासूनगतासूश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥

"Thou grieveest for those that should not be grieved for, yet speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead."

(Gita 2-11)

Similarly, Guru Nanak refers to the equanimity of the 'Karta' कर्ता in the face of the sufferings inflicted by the Mogul invaders, a reference to which has already been made :

एती मार पई कुरलाणै  
तें की दरदु ना आइआ ।  
करता तू सभना का सोई ।

He also added that the Mogul was only an instrument just as Lord Krishna said : निमित्तिमात्र भव अर्जुन i. e. "Arjun, you become only an instrument of the destruction of the contenders in the battlefield."

In other words, the Supreme Being is only a witness of the world scene, where people suffer due to ignorance of the Divine Majesty. The moment an aspirant sheds that ignorance, pleasure and pain will lose their significance and he will have due share in the Divine bliss which, in fact, is the human destiny.

With regard to the disappearance of Nanak, the *Modi*, in the Bayeen, and his reappearance as Baba Nanak, Macauliffe has presented a hypothetical explanation :

“One day after bathing, Nanak disappeared in the forest and was taken in a vision to God’s presence.”

That too does not deny that Nanak had a unique experience, the content of which can be only partially followed even by a mind willing to accept the authenticity of the mystical evidence provided by Bhai Gurdas. But a person, not conversant with this highly specialized and profound domain of superamental phenomenon, will ever remain unenlightened, unconvinced, confused and ignorant. It is neither possible nor necessary to determine what actually happened when Nanak disappeared and also thereafter, till he reappeared in the village. It is as futile as probing the sun by looking straight at it. One will feel only dazzled and may injure one’s eyes as a result of persisting in that effort. It would be much more profitable to make use of the light of the sun that illuminates and dispels darkness.

Bhai Gurdas continues the above context saying :

बाबे भेख बणाइआ उदासी की रीति चलाई ।

“Then Baba adopted the garb of a monk and set upon his mission of upliftment of the people in this world, thus introducing the tradition of ‘*udasi*’ which literally means detachment and which found expression in the renunciation of worldly pleasure.”

His next confrontation was with the *hath-yogis*. From time immemorial, under the influence of the *Sanatanist* concept that the aim of human life is salvation or the realization of one’s own self, there has been a strong tradition of practising non-possession अपरिग्रह, renunciation त्याग and for that was also enjoined a system of ‘*tapasya*’ or performance of austerities since the human mind is difficult to control. But in the course of time certain alien concepts crept in and this age-old tradition was vitiated in so many ways. People lost sight of Manu’s fourfold ideal of *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moska*, धर्म, अर्थ, काम, और मोक्ष. *Artha*, i. e. the production of wealth and *kama*, i. e. the gratification of desire and the instincts, formed a part of this ideal. But to ensure that the mind is not swept off by the animal force thus unleashed. the two, *artha* and *kama* were placed in the framework of *dharma* and *moksha*, i.e. life according to the Divine law of *sadhu bhav* and *prashast karma* with its ultimate objective as salvation. Such a tradition could not approve of escapism. Lord Krishna, too, declared :

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि ।

Dharma Virudho Bhuteshu Kamoasmi.

(Gita 7-14)

“The Divine principle works even in sex-gratification only if it is duly regulated.”

The two great *avtars*, Rama and Krishna, were house-holders. Whereas Rama was known as ‘Maryada-Purshotma,’ i. e. the most exalted amongst men, whose mission was to set the norms of life, Krishna was known as ‘Solah-Kala-Sampuran’ सोलह-कला-सम्पूर्ण one who symbolized perfection in the art of living in all its details.

In the *varan-ashram dharma* of that society, the *ashram* aspect was followed with meticulous care. It meant a scientific assignment of duties in the four stages of life, according to the ascendancy of their respective or stage-wise requirements and compulsions. The first twenty-five years of life were to be devoted to education or self-culture for which continence or *brahmcharya* was a necessary condition. With that preparation for the next twentyfive years, i.e. up to the age of fifty (the period during which the instinct becomes a passion and has great sway over the mind) one was ushered in the world with all its charms, snares, pleasures and also the pain which is their inevitable compliment. This second period was known as the ‘Grihsta-Ashram’ or the life period of a householder. After the first hand experience all that life in the world means and with a sense of satiety, of achieved through personal experience though tempered with the initial preparation during the period of *brahmcharya*, one was called upon to explore newer vistas and exert for un-ravelling the mystery of life and death. This stage is known as ‘Van-Prastha Ashram’ because during this period one would live in a sanctuary located in a quiet place. Big *ashrams*, far from the madding crowd and the din and the bustle of town life, were established where the ‘Vanprasthis’ led a life dedicated to scholarship, penance and meditation. They were, however, not completely cut off from worldly obligations and rendered invaluable service to humanity by educating the *brahmcharis* who lived with them. After this 25 years’ *tapasya* तपस्या leading to enlightenment, one was required to enter the ‘Sanyas-Ashram’, which meant renunciation— not only giving up the world, as such, but getting rid of the pass-

ions that bind one to it. The ochre robe he wore was symbolical of the fire that was supposed to have consumed the dross of passions, namely : *kam*, *krodh*, *lobh*, *moh*, and *hankar*, काम, क्रोध, लोभ, मोह व अहंकार. Such a person did not have to make any effort to practise renunciation. It became a part and parcel of himself, because the very content and the shape of his mind would be transformed, as indicated by the following composition of Bhagat Kabir :

रस गगन गुफा मे अझर झरे ।

“There is a constant flow of the nectar in the ethereal cave of the soul.”

दसवें द्वार ताली लागी काम क्रोध मद लोभ जरे ।

Mind is firmly established in the serenity of *daswan dwar* दसवां द्वार (the condition above the conscious state), the passions, namely sex, anger, attachment due to ignorance, avarice, and ego are consumed in the fire of enlightenment.

जन्म जन्म की तिरखा बझानी

कर्म धर्म अब व्याधि टरे ।

“Having tasted the nectar of bliss, the thirst experienced through the circle of life and death has been quenched and the woes resulting from impulsive actions, doubt and sin, vanish.”

कहत कबीर सुनो भाई साधो,

अमर भए कबहुं न मरे ।

Says Kabir, thus having attained immortality, “One moves out of the cycle of life and death which is in perpetual motion.”

It was enjoined upon such a *sanyasi* to go about in the service of humanity, spreading the divine message of truth, knowledge and bliss.

He was required to share with others what he had achieved through God's grace, which in the words of Guru Nanak is ‘Guru-Prasadi’. A *sanyasi* could neither have anything in his possession nor could stay at one place for long. He was a constant pilgrim serving humanity through precept and example, with his heart overflowing with compassion. Thus, we find, he very much lived in the world though being no longer of it. The state of perfection attained by him did not alight from the Heaven above as a result of crushing his body with *hath-yog* which has

been roundly condemned by Lord Krishna in *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita*. He recommends only a balanced life—"The Madhya Marga"—the middle path, advocated by the Budha or the golden mean by Aristotle.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्त—स्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ।

(गीता ६—१७)

"Yoga killeth out all pain for him who is regulated in eating and amusement, regulated in performing actions, regulated in sleeping and waking."

Thus *arth* (wealth) and *kam* (sex) are not tabooed as evils. But they are to be pursued within the framework of '*dharma*' and *moksha*, forming two extremities, i. e. their pursuit is to be regulated according to certain principles that elevate, all the time, keeping in view *moksha* or self-realization as the *summum bonum* or the ultimate end of life.

To make life purposeful, 'Tap' and 'Tyaga' are also advocated as instruments for the elevation of a practican to the objective of 'Moksha'. So what in fact was enjoined upon an average person was renunciation of passion and not of the world for meriting 'Gur-Prasadi'.

"The disciplined self, moving among sense-objects with senses free from attraction and repulsion, mastered by the self is graced with peace."

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।

प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्यशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥

(गीता २-६५)

"In such divine peace, the extinction of all pain ariseth for him, for him whose heart is peaceful, the reason soon attaineth equilibrium."

But owing to the political upheaval and the resultant debacle in social organization, a large mass of the people fled from the maximum reach of ruthless aggressors. Some of those victims of fear and suspense took to self-imposed physical torture styled *tapasya*, forgetting that the same had been clearly condemned even by Lord Krishna.

अशास्त्रविहितं चारं तप्यन्ते ये तपोजनाः ।

दम्भाहृकारसयुक्ता कामरागबलान्विताः ।

कर्षयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्रममचेतसः

मां चैवान्तः शरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध यासूरनिश्चयान् ।

“The men who perform austerity, unenjoined by the scriptures, are wedded to vanity and egoism, impelled by the force of desire and attachment, as they are.”

(Gita 17-5)

“They are unintelligent enough to torment the elements constituting the body and ‘Me’ also seated in the inner self. Such people should be firmly considered demoniacal by nature and temperament.”

(Gita 17-6)

According to Bhai Gurdas :

बाबा देखै धिआन धरि,  
जलती सभि पिरथवी दिसी आई ॥  
बाझहु गुरु गुबारि है,  
है है करदी सुणी लुकाई ॥  
बाबे भेख बणाइआ ॥  
उदासी की रीति चलाई ॥  
चढ़िआ सोधणि धरति लुकाई ॥

(Var 1, Pauri 24)

“Baba, with his vision, marked the world being consumed in the fire of passion, ignorance, fear and hatred. It was confusion all around due to the lack of proper guidance and with humanity wallowing in misery. He, therefore, adopted a mendicant’s garb and set upon his mission of leading the suffering world out of the mire of passions, to peace and comfort.”

हउमै अंदिर सभि को  
डुब गुर सणे बहु चले

(Var 1, Pauri 26)

“He saw all including the guides and their followers, engulfed in the storm of ego.”

अन्धी अन्धे खूहे ठेले ।

(Var 1, Pauri 26)

“Humanity, blind with ignorance, floundering in a deserted pit” with that awareness and the resultant objective of helping people to discover themselves and their destiny, he moved from place to place. During the courses of his rambles, when he came across the ‘Nath Yogis’ in the solitude of hills and forests, he



declared :

पापु गिरासी पिरथमी  
धउलु खड़ा धरि हेठ पुकारा ।

(Var 1, Pauri 29)

“Sin has, as it were, swallowed the world, and the *dharama* carrying its load is lowing in agony.”

सिध छपि बैठे परबती  
कउणु जगति कउ पारि उतारा ।  
जोगी ज्ञान विहूणिआ,  
निसदिन अंगि लगाइनि छारा ।  
बाझु गुरु डुबा जग सारा ।

(Var 1, Pauri 29)

“The *sidh purusha* or they who have attained perfection remain hiding in the mountains. Who would then ferry the people across the stormy stream of life ?”

“The self-styled *yogis*, devoid of true knowledge, only cover their bodies with ashes, commending their example to the world which is sinking low, misguided as it is.”

Baba Nanak condemned hypocrisy and falsehood and declared that his mission then was to traverse the world, dispelling such darkness.

बाबे आखिआ नाथ जी, सच चंद्रमां कूडु अंधारा ।  
कूडु अमावसि वरतिआ हउं भालणि चाढ़िआ संसारा ।

(Var 1, Pauri 29)

“Truth is the moon and falsehood is the darkness. Since the dark night of falsehood has shrouded the light of truth, I have launched my mission of the discovery of truth for the world.”

Adi Guru Shankracharya also condemned hypocrisy resulting from the form replacing the spirit :

अग्ने वहिनः पृष्ठे भानु  
रात्रौ चिबुकसमपित जानुः ।  
करतल भिक्षा तरुतलवास—  
स्तादपि न मुञ्चत्याशापाशः ॥२॥

(Charpat, Panjari 8)

“You spend the night contracting your body, with chin resting on your knees, you ward off the cold with fire in front of you and the sun behind your back. You carry a bowl to

receive alms and reside under a tree. You, thus, claim to be leading a life of renunciation and yet you have not loosened the strings of hope for possession.”

जटिलो मुण्डी लुत्रिचतकेशः ।  
 काषायाम्बरबह कृत वेषः ॥  
 पश्यन्नापि न च पश्यति मूढः ।  
 उदरनिमित्तं बहु कृतवेषः ॥६॥

(Charpat, Panjari 6)

“You have the locks of your hair matted with ashes, and also sometimes get your head clean-shaven ; you wear the ochre coloured robe. But stupid as you are you remain blind to the fact that it is only a disguise for receiving alms to fill your belly.”

इकि कंद मूलु चुणि खाहि वणखंडि वासा ।  
 इकि भगवा वेसु करि फिरिहि जोगी संनिआसा ॥  
 अन्दर तिरसना बहुतु छादन भोजन की आसा ॥  
 बिरथा जनमु गंवाई न गिरही न उदासा ॥  
 जम कालु सिरहु न उतरै त्रिविधि मनसा ।

Says Guru Nanak in the same strain : (Var Majh, M. 1/5)

“Someone feeds on the wild growth of fruits and goes about as a *sanyassi*, wearing ochre-coloured robes, yet such a one’s heart is burning with the desire of feeding fat on dainty dishes, and with inordinate passions, especially in youth. He is neither a householder nor an ascetic in the real sense. He is leading a futile existence, because the terror of death remains hovering over his head and he also constantly feels tormented by manifold calamities.” Shri Guru Nanak further stressed :

कलिजुम नानक नाम सुखाला

(Gurdas Var 1, Pauri 31)

“In the age of darkness, concentration on and the recitation of *Nam* is the easiest and surest path to Divinity.”

The method of its pursuit is elucidated in the *Jap Ji Sahib*

जतु पहारा धीरजु सुनिआरु ।  
 अहरणि मति वेदु हथीआरु ॥  
 भउ खला अगनि तपताउ ॥  
 भांडा भाउ अमृत तितु ढालि ॥

घड़ीए सबदु सची टकसालु ॥  
जिन कउ नदरि करमु तिन कार

(जपुजी—३७)

“For minting the precious coin that *Nam* is, let continence be the furnace and forbearance the goldsmith, discrimination the anvil, the *Veda* or knowledge of fundamental truths the hammer, fear (the fact of losing earthly existence) the bellows, and the life of honest exertion the fire. Then pour into the crucible of devotion, the ambrosia of *Nam*. In such a true mint alone one may coin the *Shabad*—the Divine *Nam*. But only those who have God’s grace and kindness, adopt this path.”

His wander-lust, associated with his mission to bring hope and solace to the suffering humanity, took him from place to place in the Punjab and to all the four corners of India and even beyond up to Tibet in the north, Mecca in the west, Burma in the east and Ceylon in the south. Wherever he went, he argued with sympathy and in the language the people understood, based on the simple logic easy enough to comprehend. His talk was marked by rare simplicity and sincerity. It went straight to the heart of the listener. At Syedpur (where later on, Amenabad was built) he accepted the hospitality of Lalo, the low-caste carpenter in preference to the invitation to a *brahm-bhoj* by the Dewan of the District, Malik Bhago. This was in the well-known ‘Deen—Bandhu’ style of Bhagwan Rama and Bhagwan Krishna about whom it is said.

दुरयोधन का मेवा त्यागे साग विदर घर पाये ।  
भोलनी के बेर सुदामा के तन्दुल रुचि रुचि भोग लगाये ॥

They would accept the humble offerings of the poor and humble devotees in preference to the dainties of the rich but arrogant dignitaries. Malik Bhago, with his dignity thus injured, summoned the sage to his mansion and asked him to explain the affront to his authority and the contempt for his hospitality. The Guru Maharaj took a rich dainty of Bhago in one hand and a piece of coarse bread from Lalo in the other. On squeezing both simultaneously, drops of blood trickled from the first and milk from the other. The proud Diwan looked aghast, realizing that his wealth symbolized the blood sucked out of the poor subjects, exploited by him, and that Lalo’s coarse bread with milk flowing

from it represented his honest earnings produced with hard labour. That was an object lesson for all present there and for generations to follow. The only sound basis for a healthy social organization is hard and honest labour and the sharing of the wealth, thus, produced with others. 'किरत कर वण्ड छक', Wealth amassed by sheer exploitation does not make a person worthy of respect. This is a sure indication of the fact that socialism is not exclusively a modern idea. In fact, all through the ages the principle of socio-economic equality has been stressed by the apostles and true leaders of men. Later on, *Guru ka langar*, too, was established on the same principle. Those who gave themselves up to God were to labour hard to ensure shelter, food, and clothing, i.e. 'kulli gulli te julli' कुल्ली-गुल्ली ते जूली । क्षुधानिवारण भोजन, शीतनिवारण कपडा, by co-operative effort. Evidently, every decent society has, down the ages, been organized on the basis of socialistic approach to life.

Kabir also confirmed the same idea, when he said :

जो जल वाढे नाव में घर में बाढे दाम ।  
दोऊ हाथ उलीचिये यहो सज्जन को काम ॥  
कामी तो बहुत तरे, क्रोधी तरे अनन्त ।  
लोभी जीवड़ा न तरे कहे कबीर सिद्धन्त ॥

In the *Isa Upnishad*, it has been said :

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहित मुखम् ।  
तत्त्वं पूषन्न पावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥१५॥

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

N. T., Mathew, x i x, 24

"Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

(St. Mark 5-3)

"Blessed are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth."

(St. Mark 5-5)

"Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

(St. Mark 5-10)

(The Beatitudes—St. Matthew)

Similarly, has Nanak said :

इसु जरि कारणि घणा विगृत्ती । इनि जर घणो खुभाई ॥  
पापाँ बाझहु होवै नाहीं । मुइआ साथि न जाई ।

(आसा म० १, अष्टपदि १२)

“Gold has tempted all and made people knock from pillar to post. Wealth cannot be amassed except by ignoble means, and yet it does not keep company hereafter.”

The preference shown by Shri Rama to Shabri's humble offerings rather than to the hospitality of the high-brow intellectuals and accomplished ascetics near about Pampasar strikes a similar note.

Shabri was a low-caste *bheel* woman who, having heard of the gracious majesty of *Patit Pawan Rama* पतित पावन राम (the uplifter of the downtrodden or of the condemned sinners), and his impending visit, anxiously waited for the moment when she could have glimpse of his divine effulgence even for a short time. When Bhagwan Rama reached her cottage near Pampasar, she presented to him the *bers* (fruits of the jujube tree), already tasted by her to make sure that they were sweet. The humble offer was readily accepted. The high-caste *rishis* living near about must have felt scandalized, but they were humbled in due course. They requested Rama to purify the dirty water of Pampasar which was at that time no better than a cesspool. The water was dirty and not fit for drinking. They suggested that it could be made clean by the sheer contact of his body if he had a dip into it. Rama acceded to their request, but to their utter disappointment, the water remained as dirty as ever. Later on, as advised by Rama, they allowed the *bheelni* for the first time to have a dip into it and to their extreme amazement the water became crystal clear.

Without questioning the miracle of the purification of the water resulting from the impact of *Bheelni* Shabri, I should like to stress the point that even after that incident to maintain the purity of water subsequently it was necessary to open the tank to the *bheels* and other low-caste tribes. This must have followed after Shabri bathed in the tank, as directed by Bhagwan Rama. The most immediate result of that might have been that the silt in the water which made it unclean was removed by the working class 'shudras' periodically, as it might not have been done by the high browed intellectuals, or the ascetics, living nearby. That

is perhaps why and how Bhagwan Rama saw that the water became purified and fresh either simultaneously or subsequently, when the *Bheelni* bathed in it. In the eyes of the *gyani* ज्ञानी and more so for the divine messenger the only distinction permissible is the spiritual excellence of the person and not the incidence of one's birth and status. The superiority of the *Bheelni* was established because of her spiritual elevation resulting from her devotion. Even otherwise, as says Lord Krishna in the *Bhagwad Gita* :

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।  
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

(गीता ५-१८)

An important aspect of the miracle that Bhagwan Rama performed was to make them all understand the basic fact that the most fundamental pre-condition of a sound social organization was the co-operative effect resulting from the recognition of equal rights at least for the bounties bestowed by nature on men.

At Hardwar, seeing people offering water to the sun rising in the east, Guru Nanak turned his back on them and started pouring the water of the Ganges towards the west. He explained that strange act by stating that he was sending the water to his farm, hundreds of miles towards the west of Hardwar. The people there laughed at such naivete. How could that water travel such a long distance? He, with his characteristic, simple, though relentless logic, argued, "In the same way as it would reach the sun millions of miles from the earth." His critics became speechless. 'Those came to scoff, stayed to pray.' Similarly, at Mecca, finding him asleep with his feet towards the shrine, the pious Musalmans felt enraged by such disrespect shown to the abode of the Lord. He was firmly directed to change his posture and his terse reply was, 'You better move my feet in the direction where the Lord does not exist.' That made them bow before the majesty of Nanak's profound wisdom. The tradition, as confirmed by Bhai Gurdas, says that they forcibly moved his legs but found to their consternation a corresponding movement of the shrine.

This incident brings in the concept of miracle. Could such miracles be possible? It is not necessary to answer such a ques-

tion, since for a believer such a question simply does not arise and the non-believer would not be convinced.

Says Maha Maho Padhiyaya Gopi Nath Kaviraj in his essay on Mother Anand Mayee' :—

“In a matter like this, a correct analysis on an intellectual basis is not possible and an ordinary human judgement cannot yield any useful result.” In one word, even today there are cases on record where a *yogi* has demonstrated his miraculous powers. But much greater in efficacy and power is the miracle of bringing about a mental matamorphosis rather than a reversal or transformation of the physical order. As a matter of fact, for attaining perfection in the spiritual domain, the exercise of *siddhis* is considered to be more often an obstruction and surely not an instrument to facilitate one's growth.

Says Dr. Adolphe Jaques Wintrob (Swami Vijya Nanda) about Shri Ma Anand Mayee's miraculous powers in his essay on her entitled “My First Experience.”

“Something that has struck me from the very first day is that atmosphere of the miraculous in which one moves when one is with Her. Let me explain : In Europe (and no doubt here also) by the word ‘Miracle’ one conceives of a breaking away from the laws of Nature, something that strikes one as impossible, as absurd. But this is only its crude, objective side. Its subtle, subjective aspect is quite different. What does it matter to me if a certain *yogi* has walked across the waters or flown through the air ? The real miracle is, when that which one needs, which one desires keenly or feebly, comes at the very moment it is needed. And still better when it comes, not only as one desired it, but as one would have loved to see it in the innermost depth of one's heart. It has been for me as if I were guided on a path beset with obstacles by the hand of the most loving mother, an all-powerful Mother. As you advance she removes all the thorns, all the stones from your path and when it is necessary, she even lifts you across in Her arms. And all circumstances adjust and adopt themselves with a marvellous precision without hurt. ‘Coincidence’ I thought at first. But a coincidence that goes on repeating itself daily, cannot be called so any more. And all this happens without apparently violating the laws of Nature, for the Lord has no need to break any

laws. He is the law. Should I give examples ? No, for those who do not know Her will not believe me and those who have lived near Her, have already understood. She is like the Ganges. Her very touch purifies. In Her presence one feels oneself getting better all the time, not by the suppression of one's fault—the very fault is sublimated and becomes an aid in the search for the Divine.”

Without dilating on the views thus expressed by Swami Vijyanand about Shri 'MA', it would be enough to say that this perhaps is about the best interpretation as well as the best advocacy of the incidence of 'miracle' presenting itself in any context.

When Guru Nanak renounced the householder to proclaim his mission abroad, his relatives used all possible means to dissuade him. His own and also his wife's parents felt furious, and his wife, *Sulakhni*, was utterly disconsolate, especially because she had to bring up two children of very tender age. But he was driven by a much greater force. No one else had the awareness of the fact that he was on a divine mission which had made him so different. This is why neither supplication nor remonstrance could deflect him from the course chosen by him. That is exactly what happened when the call of duty led Krishna to give up Brinda Ban with all its charm and tender affection for facing the stern reality of life, its discomforts, suffering and formidable hostility of Kansa at Mathura. The state of the mind of such a divine messenger is indicated in :

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्घदोषा  
अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।  
द्वन्द्वैविमुक्ताः सुखदुःस्वसंज्ञै-  
र्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥

(गीता १५-५)

“Rid of pride and delusion, victorious over the weakness of attachment, living constantly in the inner self, with desire pacified, liberated from the pair of the opposites, i. e. pleasure and pain, the wise reach the state of eternity.”

Such a one alone, who has reached पदमव्यय, i.e. the state of inexhaustion or eternity, is capable of undertaking a divine mission for the performance of which one has to discard the ties and the snares of life in the world. But at the same time



it is no running away or trying to escape discomforts of suffering or hostility. Baba Nanak undertook long tours (*udasis*) one after another for providing proper guidance to the people at different places. After his second long tour abroad, he built a colony at Kartarpur to settle there. Here, he allowed his wife and children to live near him. Only he did not allow his affections to stand in the way of his mission and his personal life of devotion and dedication. According to Paramahansa Rama Krishna, milk will lose its identity when mingled with water, but when it has been processed and its essence assumes the form of butter, it may be put in water without any damage to its identity. Similarly, an uncultivated mind would be deluded by the seesaw of pleasure or pain. But once one's mind is cultivated into the state of enlightenment, it would not be affected by the instability of life in the world. It is the condition of the mind that should matter rather than the place where one chooses to live.

न सुख विच गृहस्थ दे न सुख छड गयाँ ।  
सुख है विच विचार दे सन्ताँ शरण घयाँ ।

There is peace only in a purposeful life, which one may live as guided by the sages as an act of grace on their part. Peace cannot be necessarily experienced in either of the two—the life of a householder or one of renunciation, as such.

After his tours abroad, when he permanently settled at Kartarpur, he discarded the garb of an ascetic and started living like a layman wearing the dress of an ordinary householder. This was to establish that the outer form may change to suit the environment and the nature of the work undertaken at a particular moment. What in fact matters is the spirit with which a duty is performed and the condition of the mind that determines it. As says Bhai Gurdas :

बाबा आइआ करतारपुर भेख उदासी सकल उतारा ।  
पहरि संसारी कपड़े मत्रजी बैठ किया अवतारा ॥

“It was here that he revealed himself as a divine messenger in an express, and unambiguous manner.”

At Kartarpur where he had built an *ashram* for the purpose, he established the *guru-sikh* tradition for the continuation of his message for the generations to come—the message that he

had proclaimed in the various parts of the world by undertaking four long tours one after another. Life here (at Kartarpur) was of one continuous communion with God. It started three hours before day break with prayers and *kirtan* (singing God's praises). After sunrise, the inmates would engage themselves in the various duties pertaining to cultivation in the *ashram* farm in which the master himself participated, or in the *langar* (free kitchen) as the case may be. There was the perfect community of interest not only among the inmates of the *ashram* but amongst all the votaries of the faith. The followers, whether they lived in the *ashram* or away in their own homes at a distance, brought their earnings to the common kitchen, whenever they came to the Master. One's social obligations were not to be lost sight of while exerting for spiritual development. In the words of Bhai Puran Singh :

“What is spiritual life in the temple of flesh without a full meal first.” The body, according to the ancient seers, is the ‘Anna-maya kosh’ अन्नमय कोष and its maintenance is the primary essential for any spiritual activity. *Pranayam* is preceded by *asans* most of which are conducive to physical health. It is only during the existence of the body that one can possibly cultivate the spirit, जीवात्मा the *jevatma* requires an embodied existence for *sadhna*. In fact, the main purpose for which the *jeeva* dons the physical sheath is self-realization and, thus the human form is as precious as rare.

भई परापति मानुख देहुरीआ । गोबिन्द मिलण की इह तेरी  
बरीआ ॥

+ + +  
मानुष जन्म दुर्लभ है मिले न बारम्बार । ज्यो तरुवर से  
पता झरे बाहुर न लागे डार ॥

That is why the most potent impulse in a living being is the preservation of the body. Thus, Sat Guru Nanak hit the nail on the head by establishing and highlighting the *langar* tradition. Through it, while the basic compulsion of physical existence is met, the foundation of physical growth based on righteousness is also laid. Acquisition or possession is an equally important instinct and in its compelling power it is next only to self-preservation. If not properly tempered with righteousness and skill in action, it will extend its tentacles to grab even other

people's earnings.

Hence, great stress has been laid on efficiency when Lord Krishna says :

योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् Yoga karmusu kaushalam

(Gita 2-50)

*Yoga* is skill in action in its own right. The same idea has also been stressed by Maharishi Ved Vyas in the *Mahabharata* when Yudhishtra in reply to Yaksha says :

दाक्ष्यमेकपदं धर्मं Dakshyameka padam dharma

"Skill or efficiency is one sure instrument of *dharma* or the *divine swabhava*."

Equally important in this context is *aprigrah*-non-possession, the easiest expression of which is to share one's gains with others. Guru Nanak Dev also by establishing the *langar* tradition, as indicated above firmly emphasized the importance of work as a form of *yoga* and not for appropriating the gains accruing therefrom. The well-known tenet in the *guru-sikh* tradition is : *Kirat kar, vand chhak, nam jap* किरत कर, वण्ड छक, नाम जप, i. e. 'Work hard honestly and efficiently, share the gains accruing therefrom with others. Then alone one can acquire a proper mood for concentrating on the recitation of 'Nam'.

Carefully examined, this pithy statement '*Kirat Kar, vand chhak, Nam jap*' is found stressing *karma yoga* कर्मयोग and *Nam jap* advocates *bhakti yoga* भक्ति योग with all their profound philosophical implications. The *langar* tradition, therefore, gave due recognition to the necessity of the following :

- (a) Keep the body and soul together.
- (b) Providing an opportunity for earning one's own livelihood which means, "First deserve then desire."
- (c) Produce community interest and create a sense of social obligation.
- (d) Organize the elevating institution of *satsang* and the noble example of constant meditation as the ultimate end of human life. Thus, it ensured '*hath kar wal, dil yar wal*; हाथ कार वल दिल यार वल. Man is the slave of habit and for habit formation, example set by one's associates proves to be a highly potent influence. The life process itself, to a large extent, is based on

imitation. One learns even a language better by hearing it spoken by others.

- (e) Make it easier for the devotees to remain in the constant presence of the 'Sat-gur', the fountainhead of Divine inspiration. The importance of this factor cannot be overemphasized. Success at all stages in the path of self-realization, whether it may be leading a life of restraint and continence or practising non-possession, or intensifying humanism, or the contemplation of Nam, would entirely depend on God's Grace—"Gur prasadi", which one may have in ample measure if one lives near the *Satgur*.

What a wonderful community it might have been, working for the common good, serving humanity, reciting *shabad kirtan* and remaining in attendance on the Master, and when left to oneself alone, contemplating Nam? When the time for Satgur Nanak's ascension came, once, Bhai Lehna, clad in a beautiful silk garment, was asked to carry a bundle of wet grass from the farm to the *ashram*. The disciple forgot all else in the ecstasy of being completely absorbed in the 'command'. The mud dripping from the wet grass stained his beautiful dress, Mata Sulakhani remarked, out of sympathy, that his clothes had been stained with mud. 'Mud', exclaimed the Master, 'He bears the burden of suffering humanity. They are not mud stains. Heaven has anointed him. They are marks of consecration. He is the Guru. Bhai Lehna was then seated on the *Manji*—the sacred seat of the Guru. Then the master made him an offering and bowed before the disciple and thus acclaimed him as the Guru. Lehna was transformed and emerged as Guru Angad—the master made of the Master's essence. Thereafter, Guru Nanak showed an utter disregard of the mortal coil and discarded it, treating it no better than just an old worn-out garment.

वासंसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय,  
 नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।  
 तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्य—  
 न्यानि संयाति नवानि देह ॥

(Gita 2—22)

"i. e. discarding an old worn-out garment for a new one."

The fact that he himself in his own lifetime installed Bhai Lehna in his place was an act of grace shown to the disciple, and as an act of extreme renunciation on his own part, indicative of complete absence of any sense of the ego or attachment. This, in fact, to me was the real miracle performed by him, a miracle much greater in its power and influence than even the one traditionally propagated to the effect that after his ascension his body vanished leaving a heap of flowers behind. Half of the flowers were cremated by the Hindu disciples and the other half were buried by the Muslim disciples.

थापिया लहना जीव दई,  
 गुरयायी दा छत्र सिर फराया ।  
 ज्योति जोत मिलाइ के,  
 सत गुर रूप बटाइआ ।  
 लख न कोई सकै,  
 आचरज ऐ आचरज दिखाइआ ।  
 काया पलट रूप बनाइआ ।

(Var—1, Pauri 45)

(Bhai Gurdas)

Dhan Satgur Nanak !

धन सतगुर नानक ।

Dhan Satgur Nanak !

All homage to the Divine Master ! So great was his glory and so majestic was his splendour ! Wherever he went, he took sunshine in his wake. He was light personified and illuminated whosoever he graced with even a glance. His mission, though highly exalted, was extremely simple in expression. It was to make humanity aware of its present degradation and ultimate exaltation which, in fact, was its destiny. Man suffers because of ignorance and passion arising from his animal instincts. He further gets stuck up in the mire of superstition and conventionalism, thinking them as the instruments of his liberation. When he becomes aware of his potentialities and the capacity to shake off the dross of passion, once his initial ignorance about the reality and purpose of human life is dispelled, he realizes how glorious is his real self. To reach the destination he has to convert his life into a labour of love and not allow it to remain a pleasure-hunting expedition. Pleasure is a mirage. The more hotly it is

pursued, the farther it recedes, leaving its seeker frustrated, disconsolate and desperate.

Hence, through instruction as well as through his own example, Guru Nanak for the regeneration of humanity stressed the importance of work, service, humility, surrender to the Divine Will and concentration on 'Nam'. For him, the virtue of humility is of cardinal importance, because it alone is a sure guarantee for the elimination of the ego.

सुखो वस मसकीनोआ आपु निवारि तले ।

बडे बडे अहंकारीआ नानक गरबि गले ।

(गउड़ी सुखमनी, मः ५, पन्ना २७८)

बाबा पैधा सच खंडि, नउ निधि नामु गरीबी पाई ।

Bhai Gurdas also confirms that Guru Nanak was bestowed with *Nam* along with humility, when he appeared before the Divine Father. The complete elimination of the ego is a necessary pre-condition for merging oneself in *Nam*—*Nam* which is One, which is Truth, which is the single creative element, which is eternal, which is self-revealing and which, to a person, can only be a divine-gift, bestowed with the grace of the Guru.

१ओ सतिनामु करता पुरखु निरभउ निरवैर अकाल मूरति अजनी  
सैभं गूर प्रसादि ॥

*The Message of*  
**SHRI GURU NANAK DEV**  
Religion and Ethics

*delivered by*  
**BALWANT SINGH ANAND**  
*M.A. (Cantab.)*

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## PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen.

I feel deeply honoured by having been invited by the Punjabi University to deliver commemorative lectures on the philosophy of Guru Nanak. I am fully conscious of my limitations. I am neither a philosopher nor a scholar of any repute. In my usual enthusiasm for life and literature, I accepted this assignment without realizing that I had taken upon myself a task of considerable magnitude. I can only claim that the acceptance of this invitation led me to fields of study and intellectual enclaves hitherto partially or vaguely comprehended by me and what I shall present in these lectures are only the first steps of an old man with a young heart towards the great truths enshrined in the works of Guru Nanak. I hope you will bear with me and overlook my failings during the course of these lectures as one would justifiably expect from a university audience.

Did Guru Nanak propound a new system of philosophy or was he concerned only with a system of ethics and a new way of life which ultimately culminated in a new faith and a new church? This is almost begging the question : What is philosophy ? Philosophy is a Greek word which means love or pursuit of wisdom. Philosophy has also been used to mean a search for knowledge. Pythagoras was the first to call himself a philosopher, but we know so little about him that we do not appreciate the nuances of the word, as applied to him. Socrates used the word philosophy to mean speculation about the nature of the physical world, especially concerning the human conduct and human character. In the West, at present, it is used primarily for three things : one, the search for truth through logical reasoning; secondly, an analysis of the grounds of and concepts expressing fundamental beliefs; and thirdly, for all learning exclusive of technical studies. In the East, it is applied to the fundamental questions relating to the nature of life and existence, spirit and matter, being and thinking. It deals with the



origin of the universe and the nature of man and his role on earth. It mostly concerns itself with man's quest for the meaning and purpose of life in meta-physical terms.

Life or the reality of life can be studied in two ways. One way is to study the external world and, through this investigation of the external phenomena, try and reach the problems of the inner reality. This is a logical system based on reason and critical analysis of human reactions. It does not permit the use of the supernatural, or God for solving the problems of life. The other way is to start with the inner experience and reach out to the world of phenomena. This is the approach of Hindu philosophy. It believes that one cannot achieve the knowledge of reality through the intellect or the senses but only through inner experience. In Sanskrit, philosophy is termed "Darsana" which means seeing or experiencing. It means concepts as God and soul are not to be understood through abstract reasoning but through spiritual experience. To the Western philosopher, God and soul are concepts, speculative and problematic, but to the Hindu philosopher they are facts to be known and realized through ethical or *yogic* disciplines. Moreover, the Hindu philosopher implicitly believes that this kind of knowledge can be gained not through the normal processes of the mind but through the transcendental state known as *smadhi*. It is obvious that in this approach, certain elements of mysticism are introduced. The Western mind does not accept mysticism or revelation as a part of philosophy but regards them as a part of religion, but the Indian philosopher accepts them as philosophical problems. Revelation, no doubt, deals with something unknown and probably with the unknowable, yet it is related to experience undergone by many people. In the West, religion and philosophy have pursued distinct paths, whereas in India, their paths cross and recross and influence each other.

This difference of approach between the East and the West to philosophy can be studied in another way. Socrates, one of the earliest Greek philosophers, believed in the inner voice and oracles and, like many of the deeply religious persons in India, was often in a state of trance. On many occasions, he openly admitted that he was guided by the inner voice in his actions. Yet his followers, unlike people in India, did not form themselves into a religious community after his death. They did not even set him up as a saint.

In fact, the Greek philosopher Aristotle, while formulating his system of philosophy, chose to completely ignore the inner voice and mysticism. He built his system on the basis of logic and dialecticism. Here, philosophy was strictly kept aloof and was not permitted to be turned into a religion in spite of its beginning in the inner voice and oracles. It is interesting to note how different was the approach of the Indian people in a similar case from that of Gautma Buddha. There is no denying the fact that the Buddha was a philosopher. He was an intellectual who was worried by the problems of old age, pain and suffering. He was a religious man in the ethical but not the spiritual sense. He did not seek God ; in fact, he turned his face away from the numerous gods that were worshipped in India at that time. His quest was in no way connected with the nature of God or the problem of the creation of the universe. And when he solved the problems that worried him, he did away with the idea of God altogether. He refused to accept the existence of God and broke completely with the religious life in India. His eightfold path constituted only a way of life by which one could escape pain and suffering through the elimination of desire and attachment. At best, it was a philosophy of humanism with its emphasis on kindness, charity and non-violence. And yet, after his death, his followers transformed his teaching into a full-fledged religion and in place of God, set up the Buddha himself.

Plato rejected religious beliefs and propounded a rational system of philosophy, whereas the Buddhists rejected philosophy and adopted a religion, which, except for its ritualism and renunciation, is still nearest to the philosophy of humanism. Such is the difference between the Indian and Ionian temperaments.

The beginnings of Indian philosophy can be traced to the vague mystic musings of the Vedic thinkers. Generally speaking, the early Aryans were extroverts, more interested in the conquering the country they had invaded and making their life more comfortable on the earth than in meditation or mysticism. They were full-blooded people who enjoyed the good things of life and blazed a trail over continents, looting and destroying their enemies. They were proud of the superiority of their weapons and were proud of themselves and their way of life. And when they prayed to their gods, they asked for victory over the Dasyus and for more wealth

and more land and more head of cattle. They were thorough materialists and passionate lovers of life. But, essentially, they were ignorant people and were struck with awe and wonder at the vast uncontrollable forces of nature. The sun and the moon, light and darkness, drought and floods, life and death appeared as unsurmountable forces and were, therefore, vested with divinity and were worshipped. This is how gods like Indra, Varuna, Surya, Agni and Soma were created. Like the Greek gods, the Aryan gods were conceived of as magnified human beings, who, though mighty and powerful, could be propitiated and invoked to bestow gifts such as material prosperity, long life and plenty of children on their worshippers. Their worship consisted in the singing of hymns which were, as Tagore puts it, "the poetic testament of a people, collective reaction to the wonder and awe of existence—a people of vigorous and unsophisticated imagination, awakened to the dawn of civilization, to the sense of inexhaustible mystery that is implicit in life". They believed that the chanting of hymns at the sacrificial fire made the gods bestow on them the favours which they desired. The central idea of their religion was based on a moral obligation to the discharge of one's duty to oneself, to the members of the clan and to the gods. It was supposed to be a part of the *rita*, which was explained as the moral order which governed the universe. It was due to the *rita*, that the sun, the moon, the stars, the day and the night kept to their scheduled tasks, and the appointed cycle of the universe worked unceasingly. It must however, be remembered that the Vedic literature was vast and the hymns had been composed over a large period of history. Naturally, all manner of beliefs were embodied in it. It also borrowed a good deal from the primitive and pre-Aryan religions. But as time passed and more stable conditions came to be established under a chieftain or a king, the idea of one God superior to other gods emerged. This was a great advance over the earlier polytheistic or pantheistic conception. But the one God was conceived at various levels. On the one hand, he was represented as a concrete being with infinite heads, infinite hands, infinite eyes and so on, and on the other as the highest abstract concept, "beyond all predicates" (*nirgun*). God was presented as the ultimate energy in and behind all creation. Here, pantheism is rejected and the concept of transcendental God emerged. This concept was so im-

personal that they could find no word to describe Him and he was called TAD EKAM, which means "THAT". In the Hymn of Creation, known as Nasadiya hymn, he is described as :

Whence the unfettered world and from what cause ?  
 Nay even the gods were not ! who, then, can know ?  
 The source from which the universe has sprung,  
 That source and that alone, which bears it up—  
 None else, THAT, THAT alone, Lord of the worlds  
 In his own self contained, immaculate  
 As art heavens, THAT alone knows  
 In truth of what itself hath made, none else :

This was the beginning, but the sure foundation of Indian philosophy was laid by the *Upanishads*. They ushered in the true renaissance of Indian thought. No one can exaggerate their importance. Whatever schools of philosophy pertaining to the Hindu religion have emerged since the time of the *Upanishads*, they have either supported or rejected the concepts contained in them. But in all cases, they supplied the basic material, the fundamental concepts about the creation of the world, about *Brahma*, *Atma*, *samsara karma* and *moksha*.

The Upanishadic age was the age of enquiry; an age when the most difficult and abstruse questions were asked boldly and fearlessly and answers were sought through logic, reason and inner experience, unfettered by dogma, mythology or superstition. The Vedantic philosophers or seers were not concerned with the evolving of systems of philosophy but they reported thoughts or visions just as they occurred to them. Since there were so many *Upanishads*, the extant ones being 108 they were full of variations and even contradictions and yet the spirit of equality pervades them all and provides a kind of homogeneity. The Upanishadic seers asked all manner of questions. To give but a few example : Whence this life ? Who commands it ? What is its purpose ? Why does the human mind not keep still ? What makes the eye see, the ear hear ? What happens when we sleep; nay, what happens when we die ? Who created the world ? Was it God or someone else ? Is matter the original cause of all things ? What is the relation between the mind and the matter ? Is the world real or imaginary ? And so on and on.

From these questions and subsequent discussions, two schools

of philosophy emerged : one was known as the Idealistic School, and the other the Materialistic School. The idealistic believed that *Brahma* or God was the creator of the Universe and the materialists, who denied the existence of *Brahma*, claimed that matter *per se* was the basis or original cause of all things. In later ages, a great many commentaries were written on the *Upanishads* and from them emerged the six schools of Indian philosophy, viz. Lokayata Samkhya, Vaiseshika, Nyaya, Yoga and Vedanta.

It cannot, however, be denied that the Upanishadic seers were thrilled with the discovery of *Brahma* and *Atman* and their relationship. Most of their discussions centred on five concepts : (a) The creation of the world, (b) *brahma*, and (c) *Atma*, (d) *karma* and *samsara*—the transmigration of the soul and (e) *moksha*. Whatever be the system of philosophy, it could not but examine these five aspects of Upanishadic philosophy and give its views on them.

During the gap of some two thousand years between the Upanishadic period and the emergence of Guru Nanak as the torch-bearer of new faith, a great many things happened on the Indian stage. Some of them are so important that they merit at least a mention in this lecture. They were the rise of Buddhism and that of Jainism and the consequent decline of Hinduism; the epic age of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and the emergence of the *Bhagvat Geeta* and the revival of Hinduism; the golden age of the Guptas and the worship of Vishnu, Shiva, & Shakti; the decline of Buddhism during the age of later *puranas* and the growth of the six schools of Indian philosophy and finally the rise of the Bhakti Movement and the advent of the Muslims in India. These events constituted mighty revolutions, and changed the face of India and yet the underlying current of faith continued to flow uninterruptedly and the five problems raised by the Upanishadic seers continued to be the main topics of discussion by various schools of philosophy. The *Upanishads* have, in a way, given a continuity and a sense of national heritage to the Indian people and in spite of all the diversity, this unity has kept the people together. In terms of the changing fortunes of these concepts, it would be interesting to examine how Guru Nanak interpreted them as compared with the different schools of Indian philosophy.

Guru Nanak had his schooling first from a *pandit* who proba-

bly taught him Sankrit and Praktit and then from a *maulvi* at a *madrasah* where he learnt Persian. But his real schooling he had from the *sadhus*, *fakirs* and mendicants whom he visited during his younger days in the forest around Talwandi. He must have learnt a great deal about the Hindu and Muslim faiths during his *udasis*—the travels he undertook all over India and Tibet and on his way to and back from Macca. During those travels, he met all manner of people, *sadhus*, *siddhas*, *sanaysins*, *mullahs* and *maulvis*, *pundits* and *pandas*, princes and paupers, thugs and thieves, petty officials and people at different levels of society. This, indeed, was the real school of life, when he rubbed shoulders with the true and the false, the genuine and the fake, and watched, was amused and sometimes distressed by the professions and practices of the innumerable religious sects in India. At some places, he was questioned about his own faith and he explained its tenets and at other places he discussed with the leading religious leaders and sages of his time the concepts and beliefs held by them. And since a strong fire of faith burned within him he learnt fast all about the philosophies and mythologies of various sects and his inner light guided him to separate the grain from the chaff. And what is more, he was selected vessel in which the Lord poured the true knowledge of faith, and since for most of the time, he was in an ecstasy—a state of direct communion with the Lord—a situation demanding, a song burst forth from him as though it were the divine answer to the question raised. Such people do not have to learn; they come to teach and convey the message of the Eternal One. Many of his hymns, Guru Nanak composed during the course of his travels but most of his works, he wrote during the last eighteen years at Kartarpur in the fullness of his experience of the world and from the depth of the mystic faith with which his life had been enriched.

Let us now turn to the questions which excited the Upanishadic seers and were the subject of discussion for the various schools of philosophies and the innumerable commentaries written in subsequent ages.

The foremost question that disturbed every philosopher concerned the creation of the Universe. How did the Universe come into being? This was the question and every school of philosophy attempted to answer it and on its answer hinged its system of beliefs.

It would be best to start with few schools of materialism, Lokayata, Samkhya, Vaiseshika and Nyaya systems. The materialists denied the existence of God and the concept of the immortal soul. They only believed in the existing world. For them, there was no other world. From such notions, it followed that they were not concerned with renunciation, transmigration of the soul or *moksha*. As regards the creation of the world, though they differ in details, yet generally speaking, they believed that the universe was created through the process of evolution from the primal matter, which was eternal and uncreated. From this matter emerged various elements such as earth, air, water and fire and from the permutation and combination of these elements, life emerged. They went a step further and claimed that not only the objects in the world but the human body, mind, intellect, senses and consciousness resulted from a transformation of the matter. The question how the matter was transformed is answered in a variety of ways by different schools of philosophy. Lokayata does not go beyond the four elements, viz., earth, fire, water and air, but Samkhya, Vaiseshika and Nyaya believed that the atom was the invisible part of matter and when two or more atoms combined, they give a visible form to the matter. The Samkhya system of Kapila termed the primal matter *prakriti* and out of *prakriti* evolved not only the objective world but also the mind, intellect, senses, etc. The ultimate *prakriti* had no origin; it existed from eternity. At first, the *prakriti* was undeveloped, unformed and non-intelligent. The process of evolution was the result of the inter-action of the three *gunas* or qualities inherent in the matter. These qualities were called *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, representing illumination, activity and inertia. When the three *gunas* were in equilibrium, the matter or *prakriti* remained in the unaltered primeval state, but once the imbalance occurred, the process of evolution started and the world emerged. All material and spiritual factors were the result of this change in *prakriti*. At first, the five elements, i.e. ether, air, fire, water and earth, were formed and then from their combination, the whole world in its present form came into being. Whereas Lokayata described that consciousness was the result of the combination of four elements, Samkhya regarded the emergence of man, with his intellect, ego and the five senses at a certain stage of the evolution. To the

“gross” body, Kapila provided a *linga* or spiritual and psychological apparatus which was named the “subtle” body, which alone felt pain and pleasure but it had no existence separate from the body; it died with the body. The Vaiseshika system of Kanada also explained the creation of the universe on the basis of the atomic theory. He called the matter as *dravya*, a substance possessing inherent qualities of cause and effect. He increased the number of elements to nine, viz., earth, water, fire, ether, time, space, soul and the mind. Everything in the universe was formed from the combination of these elements. It is interesting to note that the soul and the mind are also included among the basic elements and, therefore are not concepts but material objects. The atoms, called *paramanus*, were permanent, eternal and indestructible. The quality of combination among themselves was inherent in them. Thus, the atoms became dynamic without the help of any outside force or agency. Kanada assigned different functions to the soul and the mind. The soul was concerned with intelligence, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, effort, virtue, vice, tendency, number, dimension, separateness, conjunction and disjunction, whereas mind was concerned with number, dimension, conjunction, disjunction, priority and faculty. The Nyaya system of Gautama Akshapada also subscribed to the atomic structure of the world and attributed different characteristics to the mind and the soul. But he introduced logic and dialectics as means of attaining true knowledge.

In a scientific age like ours, the atomic theory of creation has a tremendous appeal, but unfortunately most of these schools introduce two elements, the *gunas* and the soul or *purusha* as they sometimes call it, which vitiate their systems and make them unscientific. If the creation is the result of the imbalance of the *gunas*, how does this imbalance occur? And the soul is too subtle a concept to be derived from matter and accepted as a material object, or as one of the basic elements.

The Yoga system does not deal with the creation of the world. It was a system for the realization of the self through spiritual and physical discipline. On the spiritual side, it started with *dhyana*, which consisted in the holding of attention on a single object and ended in *samadhi*. Then the mind became still and connections with the external world ceased and the man emerg



from it in a state of perfect beatitude. Unfortunately, Patanjali's Yoga system has slowly ended up as a system of physical culture.

The Vedantic system was edited and systematized by Badarayana in his well-known work entitled *Brahma Sutra*. Because of the multiplicity of the *Upanishads* written at different times, they were full of contradictions.

Badarayana sifted the material and reorganized it to present the various facets of *Vedanta*, viz. *Brahman* and his relation with the world, the way to realise *Brahman* and soul and soul's relationship to *Brahman*.

The basic concept of *Vedanta* is that matter becomes active or alive only when it is directed by intelligence. And *Vedanta* declared *Brahman* to be the Supreme Intelligence, the primal cause of everything. So *Brahman* was in all things ; He dwelt in His creation and manifested Himself through it. He produced the universe and permeated through it. Here the matter and spirit become one. God and *prakriti* are identical. Though Badarayana accepted the material entity of the world, the later *Vedantists* regarded it as an illusion. Shankara was the greatest exponent of the doctrine of *maya* or *mithya*. God and the world were one, but it was the illusion that gave them separate entities. And this illusion could be removed through *Jnan*. Through *Jnan* could one identify oneself with *Brahman*. But about the creation of the world, the *Vedanta* was clear and unambiguous : God created the Universe out of Himself and the simile of the spider which spins its web through its own substance was used.

Guru Nanak rejected the materialistic view of the creation of the universe. He accepted the Vedantic view that God created the world and all that it contains. He not only created it but also keeps a watch over it. It is His plaything : it is His *lila*.

Let us listen to the words of Guru Nanak :

ਤੂੰ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਗੰਮੁ ਹੈ ਆਪਿ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਉਪਾਤੀ ।

ਰੰਗ ਪਰੰਗ ਉਪਾਜਨਾ ਬਹੁ ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਭਾਤੀ ।

ਤੂੰ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਇਐ ਸਭੁ ਖੋਲ੍ਹੁ ਤੁਮਾਤੀ ।

ਇਕਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਇਕਿ ਜਾਹਿ ਉਠਿ, ਬਿਨੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਤੀ ।

Thou, the Creator, art unknowable,

But Thou (alone) createdst the Universe

Of various kinds, colours and qualities.

Of this Thou alone knowest ; for all this is Thy play.

One cometh and another goeth! Without Thy Name all perish.

Guru Nanak is certain beyond all doubt that it is the Lord who created the Universe; it is His plaything. The comings and goings of people are a part of this play. But as everywhere else, whatever the subject, a longing and an attachment with the Lord are consistently associated with the hymns of Guru Nanak. However colourful the world, without His name, it is like the very death itself. And again :

ਤੁਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ।

ਸਿਰੇ ਸਿਰਿ ਧੰਧੇ ਲਾਇਆ ।

ਵੇਖਿਹਿ ਕੀਤਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਕਰਿ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਪਾਸਾ ਢਾਲਿ ਜੀਉ ।

ਪਰਗਟਿ ਪਾਹਾਰੈ ਜਾਪਦਾ । ਸਭੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਨੋ ਪਰਤਾਪਦਾ ।

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਓ ਸਭ ਮੋਹੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਜਾਲਿ ਜੀਉ ।

Thou createdst the world and assignedst tasks to all,

Thou seest Thy own creation in nature, casting the die as it pleaseth Thee.

Thou art immanent in the world ; all crave for Thy Name,

Without the true *guru* Thou art found not and all are enticed away by *maya*.

In this passage, too, God is described as the Creator and He expresses Himself through His creation. Three new concepts are added in this passage. They are God's name ; the *guru* and the *maya*. Name is pre-eminently the mode of worship, through which one meditates on Him and ultimately merges in Him. The *guru* is the preceptor and guide, who not only initiates the devotee into the true faith but also guides him to traverse the path successfully. *Maya* is not the illusion which is stressed by Shankara but the attachment and love of the world and worldly things which entice man away from God.

Here is another description of the creation of the world presented by Guru Nanak in his usual concentrated language, pregnant with ideas.

ਆਪੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ ਆਪੀਨੈ ਰਚਿਉ ਨਾਉ ।

ਦੁਜੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸਾਜਿਐ ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ ।

ਦਾਤਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਤੂੰ ਤੁਸਿ ਦੇਵਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਸਾਉ ।

ਤੂੰ ਜਾਣੋਈ ਸਭਸੈ ਦੇ ਲੈਸਹਿ ਜਿੰਦੁ ਕਵਾਉ ।

ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਡਿਠੋ ਚਾਉ ।

The Lord created Himself and assumed He Himself the Name,  
And then He created nature, abiding within it,  
He revelled in His wonder.

Thou, O Lord, art the Creator, the Beneficent One,  
in Thy pleasure Thou blessest all,  
Thou knowest all, giving life Thou takest it in a moment, too.  
Yea, abiding in Thy Creation,  
thou keepest all under Thy eye and art pleased.

Here, again, the main point stressed is that He created Himself and also created nature and then abided in it. This presents two aspects of God, the *nirguna* or without attributes, as he is in Himself and *sarguna* or with attributes, as he expresses Himself through nature. Earlier in this hymn, the two aspects of Brahma, the creator and Vishnu, the preserver, had been described; here, the aspect of Shiva as the destroyer is presented. Guru Nanak conceived God as One entity playing all the roles of these three deities and in this passage, he presents the Lord as the beneficent One but also the One who gives and takes away life and as the Creator who watches happily the play that he has staged.

But much more than the theory of the creation of the Universe, Guru Nanak was concerned with defining the concept of God and man's relationship to Him. The two together provided the basis of his philosophy and gave meaning to the objective of life.

During the Vedic age, the plurality of gods came to be rejected and the idea of one God began to emerge. Pantheism gave place to monism, the supra-intelligence that expresses itself in all things. But it was still a personalized god like Prajapati. In the *Upanishads*, a new tendency developed to elevate some impersonal force or entity as the supreme principle. Later, the concept of *Prahma* was developed; He came to be accepted as the fine essence that pervades the Universe and "grows into all the points of the compass." Thus, *Brahma* became omnipresent and was considered immortal. And since man co-existed with Him, he too had something of the immortal in him. *Brahma* was one and yet many: this was taught in the *Brahmanas*. The greatest achievement of the Upanishadic period was the relationship of *Brahma* and *Atma*, the identification of the individual soul with God. It was a discovery of something in the individual soul which was immortal

and was identical with *Parmataman*. This was called *Atman*. As the Universe was in a flux and in an endless motion, and at its heart there was peace and rest which constituted the permanent, unchanging reality, the *Brahma*. So in man, ever restless, always in quest and commotion, there abided the reality, the *Atman*. For the first time, the *Upanishads* defined God and, what is more, found him in the heart of man. From this notion, they concluded that when man left the world, he became one with Him. In the words of *Chandogya Upanishad*. "This myself within the heart is *Brahma*. I depart from hence and merge in him".

The identity of *Brahma* and *Atma* is explained in several ways in the *Upanishads* but nowhere so profoundly and artistically as in the famous saying *Tat Tvam Asi*. "That art Thou", in the *Chandogya Upanishad* in the dialogue between Uddalaka and his son Svetaketu. It is one of the most fascinating pieces of literary writing in which the father explains to the son, through the use of several similes, the nature of Reality or the Truth (*Satya*). Reality is one, the rest is only form, just as everything made of every clay is essentially clay and yet is given different names. In the same way, all things are transient; only the true and permanent is *Brahma*. Through several parables, expressed in passages of superb artistic beauty, coupled with logic and deep understanding of life, Uddalaka explains to Svetaketu how the individual soul merges into God and loses its individuality as rivers do in the sea, as salt does in water, as the taste of honey collected from different flowers mixes inextricably and as the subtle essence lives in the seed from which sprouts the tree, so does the subtle essence live in Svetaketu and "That art Thou"! That is how the father taught his son to know the unknowable and to see the unseeable and recognize that the human soul was one with God.

Guru Nanak had his own concept of God, very much in line with the Upanishadic concept though he defined it in his own way. His concept is best described in *Mul-Mantra*, the fundamental formula of the Sikh faith. "The one and only one God, whose name is True, the Creator, the all pervading, without fear, without hate, immortal, unborn, self-existent, enlightener, gracious, true in the beginning, true in primeval age. True He is and true He shall be". This is a comprehensive definition covering so many facets of the Lord. This is very near to the definition in *Mundaka Upanishad*,

which describes Him : "Self-luminous is that Being and formless. He dwells within all and without all. He is unborn, pure, greater than the greatest, without breath, without mind."

Guru Nanak still goes farther in his abstract definition of God and in Rag Sorath says :

ਅਲਖ, ਅਪਾਰ, ਅਗੰਮ, ਅਗੋਚਰ ਨਾ ਤਿਸ ਕਾਲ ਨ ਕਰਮਾ ।

ਜਾਤਿ, ਅਜਾਤਿ, ਅਜੋਨੀ, ਸੰਭਉ, ਨਾ ਤਿਸ ਭਾਉ, ਨ ਭਰਮਾ ।

Invisible, infinite, incomprehensible, unperceivable, timeless, without action, without caste, without birth, self-existent, without attachment and without illusion.

And again in the *Japji* :

ਬਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ

ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ ।

He can neither be set up (like an idol in a temple) nor can He be created. He himself is the Immaculate One.

And again in the *Japji* :

ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਸਦਾ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ, ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਚੀ ਨਾਈ,

ਹੈ ਭੀ, ਹੋਸੀ; ਜਾਇ ਨਾ ਜਾਸੀ, ਰਚਨਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਰਚਾਈ ।

God is ever true, He is the true Lord and of true Name. He who made the Universe, is and will be, is neither seen nor will He pass away.

We could present many more examples in which God is presented both as *sarguna* (with attributes) and as *nirguna* (without attributes), but Guru Nanak's object was to bring God nearer to man, so he presented Him in human and personal terms so that He should be appreciated by the non-philosophical mind. He takes his similes from domestic, social and political life of the time. His mystical and poetical gifts make it possible to present, with great acumen and sensitivity, those aspects of God which make it easier for a man to comprehend and love Him.

Taking a parallel from political life, Guru Nanak describes God as the king of kings. As a king was the symbol of authority on the earth, and was also the law-giver and dispenser of justice, and punished the sinners and rewarded the loyal subjects, so the True King (*Sacha Sahib*), nay the King of the Kings, was the Lord of the whole Universe and his law (*hukam*) prevailed everywhere. The greatness of the True King was beyond description. He was the store-house of all virtues ; He was immortal, just pure, unim-

peachable and enjoyed unlimited powers. The earthly kings were born and they died and were often dethroned and beheaded but the True King enjoyed supreme authority unquestionably. Many examples could be collected from his works where the Lord is presented as the King of Kings, but two or three would do.

ਸੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸਾਹਾ ਪਾਤਿ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਹਣੁ ਰਜਾਈ ।

OR

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਪੂਛ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਬੀਚਾਰ ।

OR

ਵਸੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਾਤਸਾਹ ਸੋ ਕੇਵਡ ਹੈ ਥਾਉ ।

But the most fascinating aspect of Guru Nanak is the loving way he describes Him. The Lord is so near, so dear to him that Guru Nanak is filled with great emotional upsurge.

ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮਾ ਮੈ ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ।

ਮੈ ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਭਾਵਈ ਤੂੰ ਭਾਵਹਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ।

O my Love, I have no one but Thee,

Except Thee, I like none : and by loving Thee,

I am at peace.

And again :

ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ ।

If I remember Him, I live : If I forget Him, I die.

And who can forget the long hymn in Sri Rag which begins with the following words :

ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰ ਜੈਸੀ ਜਲ ਕਮਲੋਹਿ ।

ਲਹਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਛਾੜੀਐ ਭੀ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਅਸਨੋਹਿ ।

ਜਲ ਮੈ ਜੀਆ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਬਿਨ ਜਲ ਮਰਣੁ ਤਿਨੋਹਿ ।

O my mind, Love thy Lord, like the lotus loveth water.

The waves shake it to the roots ; but it blossoms forth in love.

The creatures living in water die without it.

Guru Nanak is not satisfied with this one simile alone but added more of them to express his great longing for the Lord. He loves his Lord as the fish loves water, as the *Chatrik* loves rain and wants to mingle with the Lord as water does milk and finally as *Chakvi* loves the sun and would not sleep for a moment, and even though he is far, she thinks he is near to her.

And again :

ਅਨਹਦੋ ਅਨਹਦੁ ਵਾਜੈ ਰੁਣ ਬੁਣਕਾਰੇ ਰਾਮ ।

ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੋ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਰਾਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਰਾਮ ।

In my mind ringeth the unstruck music (of bliss)  
Yea, my mind is imbued with the love of my Lord.

Here the love of his Lord brings to Guru Nanak the music of the spheres. There is no limit to His devotion to his Master.

There is a deep sense of intimacy between Guru Nanak and his Lord. Much of his longing is described in the first person and there is a sense of belonging to Him. God is not only omnipotent but a dear friend whom he refers as ਸਜਨ or ਮੀਤਾ as in the following lines :

ਹਉ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਸਾਜਨਾ ਮੀਤਾ ਅਵਰੀਤਾ

Sacrifice am I unto Thee, my stainless friend.

ਆਵਹੁ ਸਜਣ ਹਉ ਦੇਖਾ ਦਰਸਨ ਤੇਰਾ ਰਾਮ

Come, come, O my Friend, come to me so that  
I may see Thy vision.

But the most passionate love of the Lord is described through the symbolism of conjugal love. In human terms, there is no higher passion than man's love for woman or the husband's love for his wife. Guru Nanak uses this symbol to bring God nearest to human understanding. This love is described in some of the most impassioned and poignant verses. In the style of the Sufis, man is the beloved and the Lord is the lover and 'she' looks to Him not only for love, but protection and kindness and all the gifts of life. With Him everything is consummated ; without him, life has no meaning. There are so many such hymns, but for want of time we can study only one and get into the spirit and passion pervading them. Each one of them is a poetical gem, rare and precious, but the love and devotion and utter self-abnegation are expressed in all of them. The hymn, so well known, begins with these lines but I venture to give the English translation in full.

ਮੌਰੀ ਰੁਣ ਬੁਣ ਲਾਇਆ ਭੈਣੋ ਸਾਵਣੁ ਆਇਆ

ਤੇਰੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਕਟਾਰੇ ਜੇਵਡਾ ਤਿਨਿ ਲੰਭੀ ਲੋਭ ਲੁਭਾਇਆ ।

The peacocks dance ; lo, the rains have come  
O Lord, Thy dagger-sharp eyes are alluring like a  
woman's, and I am beguiled by their lure.

I am a sacrifice to Thy vision, O God,

Yea, dedicate I myself to Thy name.

It is on Thee that I pride ; Yea, without Thee  
on whom can I lean ?

Break thy cosy bed and thy ivory bracelets, O woman,

and thy arms, yea and the arms of thy bed ;  
 For, even though thou bedeckest thyself so,  
 the spouse enjoyeth with others.  
 Thou neither hast true bracelets, nor bangles,  
 nor thou knowest the pedlar who hawks them.  
 But the arms that girdle not the Lord's neck,  
 O burnt be those arms.  
 All my mates have gone out to enjoy their union with their  
 spouses,  
 but I the wretched one, know not whither to go ?  
 O my friend, I wear beauteous looks, but the Lord loveth me  
 not.  
 I have woven my hair in lovely plaits and put vermillion in  
 their parting  
 But when I go to the Lord, I am approved not,  
 and so in the anguish do I grieve.  
 When I weep in distress, the whole world weeps with me,  
 Yea, and also the winged birds in the woods,  
 But my sense of separateness weeps not,  
 which had torn me from my Lord.  
 I saw my Lord come and go in a dream and weep for joy,  
 But I can go not to him, nor send him word through a  
 courier.  
 Come then, O beloved sleep that I may see my Lord  
 at least in my dream.  
 What shall I then offer him, Nanak,  
 who telleth me about my Lord ?  
 Yea, cut thy head off and make that His seat and serve  
 Him  
 thou then surrendering to Him thy head.

Oh, how shall I live, if the Lord be a stranger to me ?

It is a long hymn portraying the anguish when the Lord is not there and the infinite longing with which Guru Nanak prays to the Lord to come to him. It is sublime poetry at its best and it contains the deepest feelings of human love for God.

Every aspect of conjugal love has been described in it ; the wish of the woman to be desired by her master, the effort she makes towards that end, the happiness and fulfilment on being accepted, the pangs of waiting, the frustration of being denied and every



change of mood the woman undergoes with the change of the season. The study of such deep love is, indeed, rewarding.

It must be remembered that these hymns portray the relationship of God and the human soul. The relationship of *Atman* and *Parmatman* is described in a few incisive words.

ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਜੋਇ ।

ਤਿਸ ਦੇ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਇ ।

Thou art the light that pervadeth all,

'Tis thy light that lights all hearts.

It means that the soul is just a spark of the fire that is God. Man partakes that fire and this is what makes the soul immortal. Here the microcosm and macrocosm meet together.

Guru Amar Dass has also clearly stated this relationship of *Atman* and *Parmatman*.

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ

O my mind, thou art the embodiment  
of Divine Light ; know thy essence.

Here, the word ਮਨ is not so much as mind, as translated by Dr Gopal Singh. It refers to the soul which is advised to find its true essence, which is nothing other than *Parmatma*. This is the oneness of the soul and God, the Ultimate Reality.

Let us now examine the concepts of the transmigration of the soul and *samsara* and their correlated concept of *karma*.

When Brahmanism accepted and modified the primitive beliefs and turned them into dogmas, it rationalized the animistic belief that the soul of man, after his death, migrated to another person or animal. Once this concept was accepted, it was turned into the theory of *karma* and the transmigration of the soul, because it provided the simplest and in some ways the most acceptable or plausible explanation of the inequalities of life, particularly inequalities imposed on man at the time of his birth. Why are some people born high and some low ? Why are some people prosperous and others miserably poor ? The answer is that all this is the result of *karma* or actions performed in the previous lives. It is just the inexorable law of good or bad effects resulting from one's actions. As you sow, so shall you reap. This provided an excellent explanation of the destiny of each person.

Man is endowed with a personality and this permits him a certain amount of freedom. He has the privilege to commit mis-

takes and also to rectify them. He is placed in a much higher stage of evolution than beasts and birds. Whereas animals and birds react instinctively, man is endowed with reason and judgement and his actions are voluntary. But his freedom is limited. His conduct in the present life and the cumulative effect of several lives lived in the past influence his actions. One's past is not like a cloak that could be discarded and thrown away; it is always there, influencing the present as the present will influence the future. Each successive life permits him to grow and improve his chances of ultimate freedom. This is the law of *Karma* and this provides a continuity to life and a vision of the final goal.

Out of the concept of *karma* evolved the idea of *samsara*, the unending cycle of births and deaths. Though it did provide a sense of continuity to life and the possibility of ultimate *moksha*, the prospect as such was frightening. This endless world of *samsara* or perpetual flux must be ended and liberation sought from it. Life in terms of *samsara* became a crushing burden and caused a sense of revulsion and loathing among the Upanishadic seers. The human body, once considered divine, came to be looked upon as something foul and evil-smelling and given to sorrow, decay and death. It resulted in the most pessimistic philosophy of the world and life negation. Jainism has the distinction of presenting in a parable the most frightful picture of man's life on earth. He is presented as hanging upside down in a well, with a gigantic serpent waiting below to devour him, and an elephant above to crush him. At the edge of the well is a tree with a honeycomb from which drops of honey fall into his mouth and give him some comfort, but the roots of the tree are being eaten up by two black and white rats (which represent day and night) and the all-consuming time must send him down the well. This is, indeed, the most dreadful picture that could be painted and represents the most pessimistic outlook on life and presents the world as a place of terror and agony. This was the reason that Jainism recommended renunciation of the world and the mortification of the body.

Guru Nanak accepted the three ideas of transmigration, *samsara* and *karma* and wove them into his system. Transmigration he taught, was based on *karma*, the actions of the present and the past lives. He, however, does not subscribe to the *karma* of caste, to which, besides others, Krishna gave so much importance in the *Bhagvad Geeta*. No actions are binding on a man because of his

birth in any particular caste. A man is free to act, but he will be judged on the basis of his actions. Guru Nanak was of the view that a great deal of his *karma*, man brought with him but he also had the freedom to change his destiny in this world through leading an ethical life, through service of mankind and finally through *simran*. But at no place did Guru Nanak portray this world as a vale of tears, misery and unhappiness. He subscribed to the philosophy of the world and life affirmation : it is a world in which the Lord Himself lives and, therefore, life should be rich, full of work and activity. He condemned renunciation and monasticism and, through his own example, advocated the life of a householder and taught that salvation could be attained through a life of noble actions. Metaphorically, he presented Yama in the next world weighing in a balance the good and bad actions performed in one's life and rewarding and punishing each soul accordingly. But essentially this was a picturesque way of laying stress on ethical life.

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀਅ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਲਿਖਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ।  
 ਓਥੈ ਸਚੇ ਹੀ ਸਚਿ ਨਿਬੜੈ ਚੁਣਿ ਵਖਿ ਕਢੈ ਜਜਮਾਲਿਆ ।  
 ਬਾਓ ਨ ਪਾਇਨਿ ਕ੍ਰੁੜਿਆਰ ਮੁਹ ਕਾਲੋ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਚਾਲਿਆ ।  
 ਤੇਰੈ ਨਾਇ ਰਤੇ ਸੇ ਜਿਣਿ ਗਏ ਹਾਰਿ ਗਏ ਸਿ ਠਗਣ ਵਾਲਿਆ ।  
 ਲਿਖਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ।

Nanak, creating the world of life and implanting the  
 Name within it, God made it the *dharmā's* seat.

Before it only the truthful are judged to be true ; the sinners  
 are picked and marked out as such.

The false ones find no refuge ; their faces are blackened ;  
 Yes, they are marched off to hell.

They who were imbued with Thy Name, O Lord, won  
 (the game of life) and the deceivers were deceived.

Thou implanting Thyself in our bodies  
 makest them the seat of *dharmā*.

It would be noticed that the world is presented as the seat of *dharmā* and is, therefore, invested with goodness and nobility. It is not something evil to be despised. Men will be judged on the basis of truth in them and there is no refuge for the sinners. They will be judged and punished in hell. But those who are imbued with the Lord's Name will be saved. This is how the law of *karma*

operates in Guru Nanak's vision of the world.

Finally, we come to what is *moksha*. *Moksha* means release, liberation or escape. Once we accept that escape from the cycle of births and deaths is desirable, *moksha* of release automatically becomes the desired end. It can be achieved through one's own efforts, through the help of a *guru* and finally through the grace of God.

The Samkya School of Philosophy, which did not believe in God, regarded *moksha* as the total merger of the soul in its own eternal and timeless essence. It did not regard *moksha* as the merging of the soul into the Eternal Soul. *Yoga* described various stages, two of ethical living and six of contemplation to achieve *moksha*. But *Yoga* insisted on the help of a *guru* and its *guru* and its *modus operandi* was meditation. *Moksha*, according to *Yoga* was detachment from the world and other souls. According to the *Upanishads*, particularly as presented by Shankara, the founder of *Advaita*, *moksha* was the identification of the individual soul with the Absolute. Guru Nanak regarded *moksha* as the highest development of mystic consciousness : it is the merging of the infinite into the infinite. Life for Guru Nanak begins with ethics and ends with mysticism. Guru Nanak believed that not only is individual effort essential, but the guidance of a *guru* is inescapable. He laid great emphasis on the *guru*. Finally, the grace of God is necessary for achieving *moksha*. Though he stressed ethical actions, the *marga* of salvation was the *bhakti marga*. And *bhakti* at the spiritual level is nothing but meditation. Neither through *Jnan*, nor through actions, but it is through *bhakti* that man could achieve *moksha*. The purpose of life, according to Guru Nanak, was the realization of God. And his philosophy of religion, coupled with the way of life that he advocated, was meant to achieve only one thing : man's soul should merge into the Supreme Soul ; *Atman* and *Parmatman* should become one and inseparable.

Guru Nanak described the Grace of God in a few, significant and memorable words :

ਕਿਆ ਹੰਸੁ ਕਿਆ ਬਗੁਲਾ ਜਾ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੋਇ ।  
ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਕਾਗਹੁ ਹੰਸੁ ਕਰੋਇ ।

Whether thou be a swan, or a heron thou art saved  
only by the Lord's grace.

Nanak, if the Lord so willeth, He turneth even a  
crow into a swan.

The purport of the hymn is crystal clear. It indicates how complete a transformation can be brought about by the grace of God. It does not matter what is the actual state of man ; when the Lord is pleased, nothing can come in the way of complete salvation. Sometimes, years of hard labour and dedicated service are required and sometimes, one simple act is enough to win the Lord's blessings. Such is the unlimited scope of His kindness. Without His grace, man's efforts are of no avail. And once his grace is granted, this is what happens :

ਸੁਚੈਂ ਭਾਡੈ ਸਾਚੁ ਸਮਾਵੈ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਸੁਚਾਰਾਰੀ  
ਤੰਤੈ ਕਉ ਪਰਮ ਤੰਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਰਣਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ।

In the clean vessel is the Lord's Truth contained, but how  
many are clean from within ?

Yea, the Light of the individual soul mergeth in the light  
of the Oversoul,

and so Nanak seeks the refuge of God, his Lord.

This is the glorious end to which a man can aspire. The individual soul merges into the Infinite. Soul and becomes part of that Supreme Reality.

We should now look back and have a bird's-eye view of Indian philosophy and assess Guru Nanak's contribution to it. Guru Nanak belonged to the Idealistic School and though he was profoundly influenced by the Upanishadic concepts, he gave his own interpretation of the concepts of God and *moksha*. He subscribed to the view that God was the Supreme Intelligence and He created the Universe, but Guru Nanak sought to bring God nearer to mankind and regarded the Universe as the manifestation of God. In this way, world and life became sacred and profoundly acceptable. Life was necessary for religious experience which in, its turn, was the mystic way to *moksha*, God became a friend and lover of man. *Karma* was defined in ethical terms and *samsara* was resolved through the grace of God. Devotion and meditation were the means of salvation. It was a complete and comprehensive philosophy which gave meaning and purpose to life. And what is more, the message of Guru Nanak was couched in hymns of rare simplicity, beauty and profundity.

## LECTURE TWO

### RELIGION AND ETHICS

It is said that on August 20th, 1507, Guru Nanak, at the age of thirty-eight, underwent the great mystic experience on the bank of the Rivulet Wayyain at Sultanpur. It is true that he had been mystically inclined for some years before the crucial date; His parents had complained of his long spells of silence at Talwandi. Having been disturbed by his unwillingness to adopt any profession for earning his livelihood and owing to his habit of seeking the company of *sadhus* and medicants, they sent him to Sultanpur to serve as the store-keeper of Nawab Daulat Khan. He spent three years at Sultanpur and, besides distributing grain at the *modikhana*, spent the rest of his time in prayer and meditation. The great mystic experience referred to above changed the course of his life; he decided to give up his job and devote the rest of his life to what has been described in his *janamsakhis* (biographies) as "showing the true path to the suffering humanity."

What was the nature of that mystic experience? That people undergo mystic experience cannot be denied in a country such as India where since the significant pronouncement of *Tat Tvam Asi* (That art thou), there have been many people belonging to different faith who took to the mystic way of life. Buddhist religion centres on the fact of the enlightenment of the Buddha. Mohammed underwent many mystic experiences; in fact, the writing of the whole Quran is believed to have happened under mystic conditions. Jesus is supposed to have heard the words, "Thou art my beloved son and I have chosen thee." This was the direct experience of God that Jesus underwent and this is the basis of the whole of Christianity. Moses saw God in the burning bush and St. Paul experienced a vision on the road to Damascus. The sense of having felt the presence of the Divine have been mentioned by Socrates, Plato, Augustine, Dante and many more in the West, but in the East, besides the innumerable seers

and saints in the past, Ramakrishna Parmahansa and Aurobindo in the present age have given a fair account of their experiences in the state of trance when they were face to face with the Universal Soul. The fact is that all religions began with the divine experiences of the prophets who founded them. The Hindu religion, though it has no founder originating prophet, has been characterized throughout its long history by the belief that there is a living spiritual Reality or Power which could be sought by everyone according to his capacity. There is a firm belief in the existence of the inner spirit, which has to be realized and, through it, the Supreme Being or Universal Soul has to be reached. The whole aim of life, expressed by the Vedantic seers, and, in one form or other accepted by subsequent thinkers, is that self-realization and realization of the existence of God are correlated experiences and that the Infinite is in Itself the justification of the finite. The followers of Vishnu, Shiva, Shakti, Krishna and Rama may have disputed their respective importance or expressed the superiority of one cult over another, yet the governing idea of life in all these faiths has been that through the various stages of development, through ethical living, *yogic* exercises or through the help and guidance of a preceptor the individual soul should raise itself to the plane of the Universal Spirit. This, it is believed, is attained by an inner experience and not through learning or intellectual investigations. The enlightenment or spiritual awakening comes through the divine yearning of the soul for consummation with the Ultimate Reality. This yearning has been expressed in one of the *Upanishads* as follow :

From appearance lead me to Reality.

From darkness lead me to Light.

From death lead me to Immortality.

Self-realization is absolutely necessary ; this constitutes the flowering of the inner spirit and starts the quest for the Eternal with the full belief that God is the centre of all existence and it is He who has to be reached.

Guru Nanak lived his younger days steeped in the feeling of the presence of the Divine Spirit but the experience on that significant date was the realization of the Absolute, the feeling of standing face to face with Him and accepting the mission assigned to him. The first stage of this kind of experience is known as

*dhyana* and involves concentrated attention on one particular object. When the mind is deeply involved in one thing, it becomes unconscious of the existence of other things. In our daily work, too often we get so absorbed that we lose consciousness of our surroundings. But in all such activities, undivided attention of one's mind is taken up by one particular work or exercise or idea. These activities are related to concrete things, subject to the response of our senses. The next stage consists in concentrating on an abstract entity through the help of an image or idol, preferably through the name of any of the *avatars*, e.g. Vishnu or Shiva or Krishna or Rama or the one of the Gurus. Here, though the idea is abstract, the object or personality is concrete, and with deep effort and concentration, it leads us to the threshold of spiritual life where we lose our own consciousness and begin to feel the presence of these saints or *avatars*. Meditation, however, is a higher stage, where all consciousness of the external world ceases, where the past, the present and the future become extinct, time ceases to exist and the finite merges in the infinite. The being and becoming coalesce and the individual is no longer an individual but a part of the Universal Soul. The result is eternal peace, a kind of light pervades the mind and all fears, tensions, bodily ailments, all restrictions and limitations disappear. This is an experience which is the be-all and end-all of all spiritual effort.

It is true that very few persons and only the selected ones undergo such an experience. Even with them, it is not a continued state of being : it is intermittent and comes at intervals. After a while, the *samadhi* ends and with it the experience is over. But with that the spirit gains freedom and new kind of life begins. Indeed, it is difficult, if not altogether impossible, to describe this experience. We, who have only heard of it, and have not come anywhere near it, are only presumptuous when we write and talk about it. But so many mystics have given us insight into it in their own subtle ways that we take up the courage to write about it. And with in the limitation of words, because words are so imperfect in themselves, we seek to do the best we can. Didn't the poet say :

I sometimes take it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel,  
For words, like nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the soul within.



The nearest approach by the common people to mystic experiences comes in those rare moments when they are thrilled by the beauty of the dawn or the sunset, by the expanse of the sea, by the magic of poetry, by the impact of great works of arts, by the pure innocence of a child or by the deep human love where their personal selves are not involved and the joy is untouched by any sense of personal gain or loss. It is possible to express the thin and evanescent quality of these human experiences, but the type of the experience Guru Nanak underwent is best described by silence. There is no conceptual image to describe that experience. Here is what Kabir says about it :

“There is an endless world, O my brother, and there is the nameless being of whom naught can be said.

Only he knows it who has reached that region ; it is other than all that is heard or said.

No form, no body, no length, no breadth is seen there ; how can I tell you what it is ?”

But there is another side of this experience. The mystic experience proves the presence of a transcendent self in man. It is a revelation of God in man. Our powers of apprehension are undeveloped but if we develop them, we not only discover ourselves but we establish a contact with the deeper reality which is God. This is the exact meaning of *Tat Tvam Asi* (That are thou).

Having undergone that great mystic experience, Guru Nanak sought through his teachings to make people conscious of the inner-self within them and help them to overcome the barriers that lie between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. In the *mul-mantra*, he gave his concept of the “One and only God, whose name is true, who is the Creator, all-pervading, without fear, without hate, immortal, unborn, self-existent, enlightener, gracious, who is true in the beginning, true in primeval age, true who is and true who shall be.” He developed the idea of the abstract God into *sarguna* and *nirguna*, i. e. God with attributes and God without attributes, and finally he formulated a concept of a personal God in the forms of a lover, a father, a mother, a brother, a companion and a friend, the God who can be won over through love and devotion. This is how he brought us, by stages, nearer to God. But it would be noticed that in the *Japji*, immediately after the *mul-mantra* he expressed deep concern about the mercurial and restless mind

which is one of the main impediments in the way of human advancement on the spiritual path. That he refers to this restlessness so early in the *Japji*, is a measure of the importance he placed on the control of the mind. He mentions four aspects of the mind, ਮਨ ਦੀ ਸੁਚ (the purification of the mind), ਮਨ ਦੀ ਚੁਪ (silence as a means of controlling the mind), ਮਨ ਦੀ ਭੁਖ (the unappeasable hunger of the mind) and finally ਮਨ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਣਪ (the subtle ingenuity of the mind.) It has to be admitted that ਸੱਚੇ ਸੱਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ has been interpreted in two ways : first, that God cannot be conceived through the intellect or that enlightenment is not an intellectual state of the mind, and secondly that not all the waters of the world can cleanse the mind, or that bathing is not a means of purifications so far as the mind is concerned. Both the aspects have been stressed by Guru Nanak in his writings. He did not trust learning and intellect as the means of spiritual advancement. Learning does widen the range of our interests, it does increase our knowledge of the world. But the type of knowledge needed for knowing the One who cannot be known through the senses and seeing the One who cannot be seen by these eyes cannot be learnt through books. Books certainly have their value but if we have a hunger within us for realizing the Absolute, for sensing the Infinite within ourselves, and for seeing His presence in all things, then not all the learning in the world is going to help us. In fact, for all things connected with the spiritual world, intellect is not adequate. It may, generally speaking, be a hindrance rather than help. It raises doubts, questions the veracity of spiritual concepts and insists on some kind of logical proof for such beliefs. It refuses to accept the idea that spiritualism is supra-consciousness, supra-intellect and, therefore, does not come within its ken. Mysticism begins where intellect ends. It does not deal with facts but with a state of consciousness where the conscious mind does not play any part. It is a much higher state of existence where this world, conceived by the sense organs, is left behind and the mystic reaches a new world, a world of pure light. Light makes things bright ; intellect is satisfied with the illuminated objects but is unable to conceive the source of light. Intellect conceives the human eye in terms of lenses and images, but unable to understand the power that makes the eye see. Yes, it offers its hypothesis of the sensory nerves and the messages of

the brain, but beyond the hypothesis, it has nothing to offer. The mystic goes beyond all senses, to the living force within us and seeks to merge this spark into the Eternal Fire of which it is but a part. In matters spiritual, the mind must become still, cease its endless wanderings and learn to concentrate on one single object which will serve as the gateway to regions much higher than the playthings of this world.

Guru Nanak's main objection to learning was that it served to increase egoism. The well-known verse in *Asa di Var* beginning with ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਰਾਡੀ ਲਦੀਅਹਿ, ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਭਰੀਅਹਿ ਸਾਥ indicates that learning unless it helps in understanding the purpose of life and in the singing of the Lord's praises, only feeds egoism which increases the inner restlessness. Again he says : ਲਿਖਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਪੜਿਆ ਰੋਤਾ ਕੜਿਆ which means that the more one is intellectually inclined, the more one is lost in mental gymnastics. It can also mean that learning is not an essential pre-requisite of spiritual experience or of the grace of God and in some cases like that of Marlow's Dr. Faustus, it can lead them astray.

ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਭੂਲਹਿ ਚੋਟਾ ਖਾਹਿ ।

ਬਹੁਤੁ ਸਿਆਣਪ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਹਿ ।

The more a man readeth, the more he goeth astray.

The more he sharpeneth his wits, the more he cometh and goeth.

If, on the other hand, we regard ਮਨ ਦੀ ਸੁਚ as pertaining to the purification through bathing at pilgrim-spots, Guru Nanak has condemned it in no uncertain terms :

ਨਾਵਣ ਚਲੇ ਤੀਰਥੀ ਮਨਿ ਖੱਟੇ ਤਨਿ ਚੋਰ ।

ਇਕੁ ਭਾਉ ਲਥੀ ਨਾਤਿਆ ਦੁਇ ਭਾ ਚੜਿਅਸੁ ਹੋਰ ।

ਬਾਹਰਿ ਧੋਤੀ ਕੁਮੜੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵਿਸੁ ਨਿਕੋਰ ।

ਸਾਧ ਭਲੇ ਅਣਨਾਤਿਆ ਚੋਰ ਸਿ ਚੋਰਾ ਚੋਰ ।

People go to bathe at pilgrim-spots which evil minds and with the bodies of thieves. So, while one part is washed the other parts are soiled twice over. From outside, they are clean like a *toomri* (a bitter species of gourd) but from within they are full of poison. Blessed are the saints even without bathing, and the thieves remain thieves even after the ceremonial bathing at sacred place.

And again he says :

ਅਠਸਠਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਹਰਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਕਾਟਣਹਾਰਾ ।  
 ਜਲੁ ਬਿਲੋਵੈ ਜਲੁ ਮਥੈ ਤਤੁ ਲੋੜੈ ਅੰਧੁ ਅਗਿਆਨਾ ।  
 ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਦਧਿ ਮਥੀਐ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪਾਈਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨਾ ।  
 ਮਨਮੁਖ ਤਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਨੀ ਪਸੂ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਨਾ ।

The Lord's Name hath the merit of a pilgrimage to the sixty-eight holies ; yea, through it one is rid of all one's sins. The blind, unwise one churneth water and seeketh to find the quintessence ; but if one churneth the curd of virtue led by the Guru's word, one attaineth the elixir of the Lord's Name. The wayward man is ignorant of the reality and is like an animal.

The world is so constituted that its glamour and glitter are associated with wealth, wine, women and war. They are supposed to provide the so-called greatest thrill and pleasures of life. Literatures of all languages have romanticized them and made them appear as the most-sought-after things. They are looked upon as the best gifts the world has to bestow upon us. Wealth alone has the capacity to buy anything sold in the market, besides making available services that make life richly enjoyable. It is not surprising that the minds runs after them and in order to achieve them willingly commit one sin after another. Sins run on the convey or belt system ; one leads to another. The resulting impurity of the mind cannot be washed by visits to pilgrimage and by having baths there. Guru Nanak says that it is only the *simran* of the name of God that will help to cleanse the mind. The mind is attuned to sin and under one pretext or another turns to sinful ways. It is only the elixir of the Lord's Name that is strong enough to overcome all sinful temptations. Guru Nanak has given a clear-cut answer to this problem :

ਭਰੀਐ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਪਾ ਕੇ ਸੰਗਿ  
 ਓਹੁ ਧੋਪੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਰੰਗਿ

When the mind is depraved by sins,  
 it can be cleansed by the love of the Lord's Name.

Let us now turn to ਮਨ ਦੀ ਚੁਪ. It is an idea made popular by the *Yogic*. Silence is a great virtue if utilized for contemplation. In itself, it is a fraud to cheat the untutored, common folk. Today, there are some so-called spiritual leaders whose fame rests on their having maintained silence for years. The mind does not cease its wanderings, and its imaginative

flights are not curtailed simply because one has shut one's mouth. In fact, inactivity makes it more active. It becomes the devil's workshop. The mind must be occupied in fruitful activity ; otherwise, it seeks the devil. Silence will not help, it cannot bring peace to the mind. It is the disciplined mind that runs on the purposeful course.

Not many comments are required on the unappeasable hunger of the mind. There is no end to the demands of the mind. No amount of wealth seems to satisfy man ; he wants more and more and still more. His race is like that of the peasant in Tolstoy's story, "How much land a man needs". A certain peasant was permitted to own as much land as he could encircle on foot in the course of one day. He ran the whole day long to cover as wide an area as he could but when, at the time of sunset, he reached the starting-point, he was so exhausted and done up that he collapsed and died. A piece of land, just big enough for his grave, was marked out on the ground and assigned for his burial. In the end, that is all the land a man needs ! As for the wealth and the precious articles so feverishly collected by man ; does he carry any of them with him ? Truly, what we carry with us are own *karmas*, i.e. our good and bad deeds, At one place, Guru Nanak describes the mind in a rich and wholesome language :

ਮਨ ਮੇਰਾ ਦਇਆਲਾ ਸੇਤੀ ਥਿਰ ਨ ਰਹੈ ।

ਲੱਭੀ ਕਪਟੀ ਪਾਪੀ ਪਾਖੰਡੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਧਿਕ ਲਗੈ ।

My mind, to my Beneficent Lord sticketh not,

For it is lured away by greed and deceit and hypocrisy and sin and is to *maya* deeply bound.

With a mind like this, inclined to greed, deceit, hypocrisy and sin, is it surprising that its insatiable hunger cannot be appeased by worldly goods ? Actually, its appetite increases as you feed it. Something more potent is required to discipline such a mind.

And lastly ਮਨ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਨਪ, the subtle ingenuity of the mind, which can always offer a plausible excuse or explanation for whatever actions we do. There is a built-in system of justification within us and whatever the magnitude of our sins, however heinous or odious or atrocious the crime, we can always rationalize it. But whom are we trying to deceive ? Ourselves

or God, the Undeceivable ?

Guru Nanak has some superb comments to make on the mercurial mind and how it can be turned into a temple of God.

ਅਸਟਮੀ ਅਸਟ ਸਿਧਿ ਬੁਧਿ ਸਾਧੈ ।

ਸਚੁ ਨਿਹਕੇਵਲੁ ਕਰਮਿ ਅਰਾਧੈ ।

ਪਉਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਬਿਸਰਾਉ ।

ਤਹੀ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸਾਚੈ ਨਾਉ ।

ਤਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਮਨੁਆ ਰਹਿਆ ਲਿਵਲਾਇ ।

ਪ੍ਰਣਵਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਾਲੁ ਨਾ ਖਾਇ ।

If one disciplines the mind, endowed with eight psychic powers and through deeds contemplates the True One, the Ever-detached, and overwhelms the humours born of wind, water and fire, then within his heart abideth the immaculate and true Name of God, and death catcheth him not.

Guru Nanak not only tells us how to discipline the mind through the contemplation of the True One but also how to escape death and the cycle of *samsara*.

And again, he says :

ਇਹ ਮਨੁ ਚਲਤਉ ਸਚ ਘਰਿ ਬੈਸੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰੈ ।

ਆਪੇ ਮੋਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ ਕਰਤਾ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਾਚਿ ਪਿਆਰੈ ।

The mercurial mind can be held and made to abide in Truth, its real home, when the Lord's Name is its support, and it loveth the Lord truly. Then the Creator-Lord uniteth it with Himself.

Guru Nanak further advises how this very restless mind can be used to serve the soul for its union with the Lord :

ਮਨੁ ਸੰਪਟੁ ਜਿਤ ਸਤਸਰਿ ਨਾਵਣੁ ਭਾਵਨ ਪਾਤੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤ ਕਰੈ ।

ਪੂਜਾ ਪ੍ਰਣ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜੇ ਸੇਵੇ ਇਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਰਵਤ ਰਹੈ ।

Let thy mind be the abode (of God) washed in the pool of Truth and make loaf-offerings of devotion and dedicate to him even thy life ; thus, wilt thou enjoy union with thy Lord.

Apart from insisting on the mind for a true approach to religion, Guru Nanak sought to tear the veils of ignorance which had encrusted the minds of men in the shape of rites and rituals and which were vehemently supported by the priests. Reference has already been made to pilgrimages and bathing at pilgrim-spots. But much more important was the need to

denounce the legacy of the past, which, through the authority of the *Atharva Veda* and the *Brahmanas*, had imposed magic rites and sacrificial rituals on the Hindu society. The *Brahmanas* had made the rituals so important that they came to take the place of religion itself. The rituals were supposed to have the power to influence gods and produce results sought by the devotees. Guru Nanak waged a war against rituals and exposed their hollowness.

It is interesting to note that many of these rituals were adopted, with suitable modifications, from the religion of the primitive people. The primitive man conceived religion as something 'sacred' which, for him, was synonymous with what is secret or mysterious. His religion was the outcome of fear, fear of the elemental forces, fear of darkness, demons, ghosts and spirits. For him, religion was something forbidden, requiring mystic sanction, without which fearful punishment was imposed upon those meddled with it. So, it was confined to the few, known as magicians. Because they were endowed with mystic powers, the magicians were the most powerful and feared people in the primitive society. They could manipulate the potency of the 'sacred' through rituals in the shape of curses or blessings. The potency was transferrable through the help of supernatural beings, through blood or corpses or animals and even plants. They believed in the cult of the ancestors who had to be propitiated through offerings. Rituals were of primary importance because through them the magician had power over men, women, demons and witches. The second most important element was the sacrifice, which was a religious act and consecrated everyone involved in the ritual, including the animal sacrificed. Sacrifice involved complicated rituals and all joining in them had to undergo purification. From them emerged the idea of purification and defilement. In the primitive society, magic was a living reality and it could be utilized to do anything; bring rain, inflict pain and suffering, ensure victory in love and war, secure better crops. Indeed, it covered the gamut of life.

When civilization had sufficiently advanced, and the primitive society had given place to an agrarian and more stable form of society, reflecting the growth of man's inner life, new gods came to replace the vague spirits and demons. They were

gods such as Surya, Indra, Varuna, Agni, Soma, etc. with specialized duties and they dominated the Vedic age. With the establishment of States and cities, minor gods were forgotten and only the important ones like Prajapati, Vishnu, Shiva and Varuna came to be worshipped. With cities came temples ; and with temples, priests. The priests, known as Brahmans, were holy people, known for their piety and learning. They enjoyed special status and even the kings needed their blessings when assuming reins of power.

But with kingly presents and other endowments, priests became rich and were more concerned with retaining their power and status than with worship. At the time of the *Brahmanas*, the priestly class became very powerful and with the increase of the importance of rituals, they assumed the position which the magician enjoyed in the primitive society. They organized worship in such a manner that at every stage of life, from the time of his birth to the day he left this world, every member of the society needed their services.

The cult of ancestor-worship suited the Brahmin admirably. He was the medium through whom the necessities of life could be transmitted to the ancestors in the other world. It was he who decided what were the things required by the dead ancestors and at what intervals. And what would be the punishment inflicted here and hereafter on those who forgot to perform the necessary rituals for the benefit of their ancestors. Things could not be more advantageously arranged ! Guru Nanak not only debunked that concept at Hardwar when he attempted to irrigate his fields at Kartarpur by throwing water in the direction opposite to that in which the people at Hardwar were offering it to their ancestors but, in fact, he was against all kinds of pilgrimages and against bathing at sacred places. Instead of these ritualistic baths, he had other suggestion to make for cleansing and purifying the inner-self.

ਜਲਿ ਮਲਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਮਾਜੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਭੀ ਮੈਲਾ ਤਨੁ ਹੋਇ ।

ਗਿਆਨਿ ਮਹਾ ਰਸਿ ਨਾਈਐ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਇ ।

O brother, if thou washest thy body thoroughly only with water, thy mind cannot be cleansed of sins. But if thou bathest in the ambrosial pool of knowledge, both thy mind and thy body will be rendered clean.



And again :

ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਣ ਜਾਉ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ।

ਤੀਰਥੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਹੈ ।

ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਥਾਨੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਦਸ ਪੁਰਬ ਸਦਾ ਦਸਾਹਰਾ ।

ਹਉ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸਦਾ ਜਾਚਉ ਦੇਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਧਰਣੀਧਰਾ ।

ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਰੋਗੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਰੂ ਮੈਲ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਚ ਬਿਨਾ ।

ਗੁਰ ਵਾਕੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਨਿਤ ਸਾਚੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਮਜ਼ਨਾ ।

Why should I go to bathe at the pilgrim-spots ? I will bathe at the fount of the Lord's Name,

For the holy of holies is the contemplation of the Word and the inner wisdom.

The Guru-given wisdom is the only eternal pilgrim-spot where one washeth off all one's sins.

O my God, supporter of the earth, I seek but Thy name alone.

Bless me Thou with it.

The whole world is sick : Thy name is the cure-all ; without truth one's mind is stained.

But pure ever is the Guru's word ; it illuminates all, it is a pilgrim-spot for one to bathe in the Truth.

In this one hymn, a whole lifetime's wisdom is contained. It epitomizes almost all the philosophy of Guru Nanak. It is, indeed, very rich in its contents and needs careful study and analysis rather than the passing reference I am obliged to make.

Sacrifice, on the other hand, except at the temple of Kali at Calcutta, had disappeared from the Hindu temples by the time of Guru Nanak, but the ideas of purification and defilement had not only been borrowed from the primitive religion but refined and extended to many aspects of life by the Brahmin. Guru Nanak, in *Asu Di Var*, attacks these concepts vigorously and exposes their hollowness. In one of the hymns, he severely criticizes the *qazis* and other law-givers, who suck the blood of the poor and live the life of falsehood, but he is much more critical of the Brahmins who assisted the Muslims in their nefarious activities and shared with them their profits and yet publicly insisted on the purification of their lives and their hearths, In a satirical mood, Guru Nanak writes :

ਅਭਾਖਿਆ ਕਾ ਕੁਠਾ ਬਕਰਾ ਖਾਣਾ ।  
 ਚਉਕੈ ਉਪਰਿ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ।  
 ਦੇ ਕੈ ਚਉਕਾ ਕਢੀ ਕਾਰ ।  
 ਉਪਰਿ ਆਇ ਬੈਠੇ ਕੂੜਿਆਰ ।  
 ਮਤੁ ਭਿਟੈ ਵੇ ਮਤੁ ਭਿਟੈ ।  
 ਇਹ ਅੰਨੁ ਅਸਾਡਾ ਫਿਟੈ ।

And they eat the goat over which the Kalma had been  
 breathed.

And allow no one to enter their kitchen square.  
 They mark off the square and plaster it with cow-dung.  
 And upon it seat themselves the false ones.  
 "Lest it should be defiled, lest it should be defiled.

And lest our food should be polluted, come not near," they  
 cry out.

Here is a full-throated condemnation of all false people  
 who give importance to symbols and are unaware of the true  
 purport of religion.

The Brahmin carried his concept of purification and defile-  
 ment to many other aspects of life. Among other things, he  
 called the woman defiled under certain conditions. Guru Nanak  
 condemned such ideas and pointed out that the woman is not only  
 our wife and our mother but she is our only bond with the  
 world and is responsible for the future of the human race. How  
 dare we call the woman devil, when she gives birth to kings?  
 In Raga Asa, Guru Nanak points out that if one reflects deeply  
 on the question of defilement, then one will find that the very  
 wood and cow-dung burnt in the hearth is full of insects, every  
 grain is alive and even he points out wherein lies the real defile-  
 ment :

ਮਨ ਕਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕੂੜੁ ।  
 ਅਖੀ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਵੇਖਣਾ ਪਰ ਤਿਆ ਪਰ ਧਨ ਰੂਪੁ ।  
 ਕੰਨੀ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕੰਨਿ ਪੈ ਲਾਇਤਬਾਰੀ ਖਾਹਿ ।  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹਸਾ ਆਦਮੀ ਬਧਾ ਜਮ ਪੁਰਿਜਾਇ ।

The mind's impurity is covetousness, the tongue's impurity  
 is falsehood.

The impurity of the eyes is coveting another's woman, her  
 beauty and riches.

The ear's impurity is to hear and carry tales.

Nanak, even the purest of men, thus bound, go to the city of the Yama.

To the concepts borrowed from the primitive religion, the Brahmin added many of his own. The most important among these concepts were the caste-system, the sacred thread and the rites and the rituals, of temple worship. Whatever be the justification of Chaturvarnya, whether it be the purity of race, or the need for the division of labour on the basis of specialization, the fact remains that it condemned thousands of people for generations to the life of degradation and slavery. It has been a curse and a blot on our national life and continues to remain the same. It was the greatest means of exploitation of society by the Brahmin and the cleverest way of maintaining his own supremacy and exclusiveness.

There was no place for casteism in the scheme of Guru Nanak. Didn't he say :

ਫਕੜ ਜਾਤੀ ਫਕੜੁ ਨਾਉ ।

ਸਭਨਾਂ ਜੀਆ ਇਕਾ ਛਾਉ ।

Vain is the pride of caste, vain is the pride of glory. The Lord alone giveth shade to all.

ਜਾਤੀ ਦੇ ਕਿਆ ਹਥਿ ਸਚੁ ਪਰਖੀਐ ।

ਮਹੁਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਥਿ ਮਰਿਐ ਚਖੀਐ ।

What merit is there in one's caste ? Know thou the truth within (of whatever caste one may be), he who tastes the poison will die.

ਅਗੈ ਜਾਤਿ ਨ ਜੋਰੁ ਹੈ ਅਗੈ ਜੀਉ ਨਵੈ ।

ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਲੇਖੇ ਪਤਿ ਪਵੈ ਚੰਗੇ ਸੋਇ ਕੇਇ ।

Hereafter, one's caste and power are of no account, for men are born anew in the world of God.

Yea, they whose honour is of any account to the Lord, they alone are men of honour.

For Guru Nanak, there was no supremacy of caste and no worldly honour except the honour one could win in the Court of the Lord.

Guru Nanak was once asked, "Art thou a Brahmin ?" He replied, "A Brahmin is who batheth in the waters of God's wisdom and knoweth the One alone whose light permeates the

three worlds.”

The investiture of the sacred thread was and is an important ritual in the life of a Hindu, but it is surprising that no one before Guru Nanak commented upon the utter futility of it. He observed that men indulged in all manner of sins but to please the society, they put on the sacred threads, while in their hearts they knew how corrupt their souls were. And when that cotton thread was broken, they replaced it by another. The thread had no influence on their actions or character. Guru Nanak had his own ideas about the sacred thread, a thread made of compassion, continence and truth.

ਦਇਆ ਕਪਾਹ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਸੂਤੁ ਜਤੁ ਗੰਢੀ ਸਤੁ ਵਟੁ ।

ਏਹੁ ਜਨੇਊ ਜੀਅ ਕਾ ਹਈ ਤਾਂ ਪਾਡੇ ਘਤੁ ।

ਨ ਏਹੁ ਤੁਟੈ ਨ ਮਲੁ ਲਗੈ ਨ ਏਹੁ ਜਲੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ।

ਧੰਨ ਸੁ ਮਾਣਸ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜੋ ਭਲਿ ਚਲੇ ਪਾਇ ।

Make compassion the cotton, contentment the thread, continence the knot, truth the twist. This is the sacred thread of the soul. If you have one of this kind, offer it to me, for it breaks not, nor is it soiled nor is it wasted nor is it burnt. Says Nanak, fortunate is the man who weareth such a thread.

In another hymn, Guru Nanak says that if the sacred thread were effective it would be best for the Pandit to put it on his own inner urges, his hands, feet, eyes, ears and tongue, so that they would not commit sins. He also adds that the poor Brahmin is spiritually ignorant, though he regards himself as a learned man.

All symbols and rituals must have a purpose and a meaning in ethical or spiritual terms, otherwise they have no place in religion. Guru Nanak regarded all such rituals as hypocrisy (ਪਾਖੰਡ) and advised the people to discard them.

ਛੋਡੀਲੇ ਪਾਖੰਡਾ ।

ਨਾਮਿ ਲਇਐ ਜਾਹਿ ਤਰੰਦਾ ।

There is an expression of utter disgust in these words. Do away with all such hypocrisy. Recite the Lord's name which will help you to cross the sea of life.

It will be observed that Guru Nanak so organized the future development of the Sikh religion that once for all he did away with priests, temples and temple rituals. He cleared the

deck thoroughly. There is no priestly class, as such, among the Sikhs and certainly no one is born a priest. And even if one is not professionally a priest, he is permitted to perform all religious functions. It is a remarkable thing that the Guru raised the status of every Sikh to that of a priest, while he abolished priesthood. It is true that a priestly class has come to establish itself among the Sikhs through the backdoor and because of the immense resources of the *gurdwaras*, they are very influential not only in religious affairs but also in the political life of the community. This, indeed, is unfortunate. With power, wealth and privileges, corruption comes in and therein lies the danger. When too much money comes in through one door, worship and devotion walk out of the other. And, therefore, we have to be watchful and keep the *gurdwaras* free from priesthood and all its implications, as desired by Guru Nanak.

Let me say a word or two about the *gurdwaras*. There are hundreds of them and some of them are sacred spots hallowed by the memory of our Gurus. But they were set up as places of congregation, for *satsang* and community singing of hymns and perhaps for listening to the discourses of the learned ones. Otherwise, every house is a *gurdwara*. Every conceivable religious service is permitted to be performed there. Isn't it wonderful that our homes became *gurdwaras* and the spirit of the Lord came to live with us? What a revolution and what a reformation Guru Nanak ushered in!

And what about rituals? There is no must about any ritual in the Sikh religion and none is ordained as such. Even *arti*, the most exquisite of rituals, with the lighted earthen lamps and the rose petals and the incense sending up its curling, fragrant smoke, has not been admitted by Guru Nanak. When Guru Nanak witnessed the *arti* in the great temple at Puri and was probably moved by the beauty of it, he asked himself what *arti* he should offer to his Lord. His own response is couched in the incomparably beautiful hymn that he sang at that time!

ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ  
ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ ।  
ਪ੍ਰਧੁ ਮਲਆਨਲੋ ਪਵਣੁ ਚਵਰੋ ਕਰੇ  
ਸਗਲ ਬਨਰਾਇ ਫੁਲੰਤ ਜੋਤੀ ।

ਕੈਸੀ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ । ਭਵਖੰਡਨਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਆਰਤੀ ।

ਅਨਹਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਵਾਜੰਤ ਭੋਰੀ ।

The sky is the salver ; the sun and the moon are the lamps, and the galaxies of the stars are the pearls in it :

The sandalwood on the Malya mountain scatters fragrance across and the wind wafts the scents of all the flowers of the earth :

Thus, is Thy worship performed, O Thou destroyer of fear,

And the unstruck melody of Thy Word ringeth through all Thy Universe.

How noble are these lines : how they uplift their singer and how deeply he feels the Lord's presence in the Universe !

What place is there for rituals, sacrifices, priests, castes and all the signs and symbols in the worship of such a Master ?

When we view things historically, we notice that at the time Guru Nanak set out to preach his new concepts of God and his message of universal brotherhood, the Muslims had been in India for over three hundred years. The impact of the advent of the Muslims in India on the life of the people cannot be minimized. They were not like the earlier invaders who were absorbed or who merged in Hinduism. Islam had a distinct culture ; it was aggressive, individualistic, iconoclastic and theocratic. Its approach was that of a conqueror, displaying a sense of superiority in all things and it believed in converting the infidels by force, if necessary. It drove the Brahmin into his conservative shell as a protective device and the result was that he became more conservative and his emphasis on caste, rituals, pilgrimages, defilement and purification increased all the more. The Hindu faith was at its lowest ebb and the great golden sun of the pure and radiant faith had yet to rise.

Before we deal with the role of Guru Nanak as the prophet of a new faith, a word or two may be said about the *yogis* and *sadhus*, who, at that time, had a great hold on the people and supported an undercurrent of faith among them. It matters little from our point of view whether they were Vaishnavites or Shaivites, or they were the ordinary *sanyasis* who admit-

ted one and all to their order. They were essentially people who had renounced the world and wandered from one place of pilgrimage to another, from one monastery to another, carrying their staffs, rosaries and pipes of hemp or *ganja*, with their bodies smeared with ashes and marked with sectarian symbols. They were ascetics and believed in austerities, abstinence and *tapas* which they believed, gave them miraculous powers. They frightened people with the power to inflict *saraps* and *vars* (curses and blessings) and though they claimed to be mystics, many of them had taken to drinking and immoral ways.

It was not possible for Guru Nanak to ignore the three religious groups, *sanyasis*, Brahmins and *mullahs*, who, in their own individual ways, influenced the life of the people. Guru Nanak held several discourses and discussions! with the *sanyasis*, some of which are recorded in the *Siddha Gosat*. He found them so tied to rituals and formalities in religion that in a forthright hymn in Raga *Suhi*, he denounced the empty formalities to which they attached so much importance and gave them a true definition of the concept of *yoga*.

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਖਿੰਬਾ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਡੰਡੈ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਭਸਮ ਚੜਾਈਐ ।  
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਮੁੰਦੀ ਮੂੰਡਿ ਮੁਡਾਇਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਸਿੰਝੀ ਵਾਈਐ ।  
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ ।  
 ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ।  
 ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ ।  
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਮੜੀ ਮਸਾਣੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤਾੜੀ ਲਾਈਐ ।  
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਏਸਿ ਦਿਸੈਤਰਿ ਭਵਿਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਇਐ ।  
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ ।

*Yoga* is neither in the patched coat, nor in the *yogi's* staff, nor in besmearing oneself with ashes, nor in the wearing of earrings, nor in the close-cropping of the head, nor in the blowing of the horn. If one remaineth detached in the midst of attachments, one attaineth to the (true) state of *yoga*. One becometh not a *yogi* by mere talk. If one looketh upon all creation alike, that one alone is acclaimed as a true *yogi*. *Yoga* does not consist in abiding in the cremation grounds and among the tombs nor in entering pseudo-trances. *Yoga* consists not in roaming the world nor in bathing at pilgrim-spots. If one remaineth detached in the midst of attachment, then verily, one attaineth to the (true) state of *yoga*.

Guru Nanak's catholicism was liberal to tell the *Qazi* to be a true Musalman and to the Brahmin to be a true worshipper of God. "If compassions be the mosque, faith the prayermat, honest living one's Quran, humility one's circumcision, and continence one's fasting, then verily, one may be called a Musalman." That was indeed a comprehensive definition of a Musalman. And to the Brahmin, he said, "O Brahmin. make God the object of thy worship and right conduct thy necklace of the beads of *tusi*, and ride the boat of the God's Name with prayer in thy heart for His mercy and you will be ferried across the ocean of life."

We must now define the purpose of Guru Nanak's mission. He has given us a true concept of God in His various manifestations ; he has impressed upon us the imperative need of controlling our mercurial minds and finally he has cleared the undergrowth of rites and rituals to provide us with a clear vision and perspective of religion. He states the objective clearly, unambiguously :

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੇ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ।

How can we become a true and worthy mansion for the Lord to live in and how can we break down the veil of falsehood that exists between us and the Lord ?

There are two aspects of the problem : (1) How can we make ourselves acceptable to our Master, and (2) how can we break down the barriers that separate us from Him ? The one is a question of ethics and the other of mysticism. Guru Nanak was no theoretical arm-chair philosopher ; he was primarily concerned with life, the way it should be lived on earth. Pure, untainted life, lived in the service of mankind coupled with the grace of God was the only way of attaining *moksha*. It is for this reason that Guru Nanak has repeatedly stressed the ethical way of living throughout his works.

The first pre-requisite of ethical living is the ability or the desire to distinguish the false from the true, the virtuous from the wicked and the abiding from the transitory. In Raga Gauri Bairagan, half humorously and half seriously, he expresses surprise that men call the counterfeit true, the blind gifted with sight, the dead living, the bitter sweet. They call the night the day and serve the maids rather than the master, and ends his hymn with the words ਗੁਰੁ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਤੇ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਸਭ ਬੁਹਮ ਸਮਾਇਆ, i. e. it is only through the kindness of a *guru* that the veil of falsehood is removed. In short,



this discrimination to judge things for their real value has to be developed and utilized as the first step towards a moral way of life.

The next important step is the suppression of egoism. Ego has been described by Guru Nanak as an unbridled elephant roaming in the forest.

ਮਨੁ ਕੁੰਚਰੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਉਦਿਆਨੈ ।

ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਕੜੁ ਸਚੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨੀਸਾਨੈ ।

The mind is the wild elephant roaming in the woods.

The Guru is the goad, which bears the stamp of the True Word.

In *Asa Di Var*, two complete hymns have been devoted to egoism : one begins with ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਇਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਗਇਆ । ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੇਮਿਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਮੁਆ and the other begins with ਹਉਮੈ ਇਹਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਹੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਹਿ, ਹਉਮੈ ਏਈ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਫਿਰ ਫਿਰ ਜੋਨੀ ਪਾਹਿ'

Briefly, the hymns teach us that ego is primarily responsible for keeping man away from God and for his unending cycle of births and deaths. It taints his judgement and leads him to wicked ways. It is the cause of his illusion and his misunderstanding of the true significance of events. Ego is an odious disease and can only be cured through the grace of God. It is only when man overcomes ego that he finds the way to salvation. Guru Nanak has given much importance to the suppression of ego, because he feels that ego makes a man conceited and renders him incapable of submitting to the will of God.

For ethical living, humility and service (*seva*) have been strongly recommended by Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak sets an example when he calls himself the lowest of the low.

ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੁ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ।

ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸੁ ।

ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲਿਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸੁ ।

Nanak seeks their company. The friendship of the great is vain.

For, where the weak are cared for, there doth Thy Mercy rain.

Again, in another hymn, he says ਮਿਠਤ ਨੀਵੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਗੁਣ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਤਤੁ, i.e. the sweetness of tongue, and humility constitute the essence of all virtues and ਧਰਿ ਤਰਾਜੀ ਤੋਲੀਐ ਨਿਵੇ ਸੁ ਗਉਰਾ ਹੋਇ

which means that if you consider it carefully, the pan of the balance which is weighty bends lower. In other words, greatness and humility go together.

And service to mankind has had a high place in the Sikh religion. It is evident from the fact that three Gurus attained guru-dom only through *nishkam seva* (selfless service). The whole history of the Sikhs is replete with the praise of those who devoted their lives to the service of the people.

Ethical life did not end with humility and with the service of the people, but it meant the complete dissociation of man from falsehood, avarice, cheating and other sins. In a passage in Sri Raga, Guru Nanak mentions a number of vices and, after vigorously condemning them, concludes that only the virtuous ones are acceptable to God and sinners cry and repent of their evil deeds.

ਲਬੁ ਕ੍ਰਤਾ ਕ੍ਰੜੁ ਚੂਹੜਾ ਠਗਿ ਖਾਧਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ।  
ਪਰਨਿੰਦਾ ਪਰ ਮਲੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸੁਧੀ ਅਗਨਿ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਚੰਡਾਲ ।  
ਰਸਕਸ ਆਪੁ ਸਲਾਹਣਾ ਏ ਕਰਮ ਮੋਰੇ ਕਰਤਾਰ ।  
ਬਾਬਾ ਬੋਲੀਐ ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ।

ਉਤਮ ਸੇ ਦਰਿ ਉਤਮ ਕਹੀਅਹਿ ਨੀਚ ਕਰਮ ਬਹਿ ਹੋਇ ।

Avarice is the dog, falsehood is the sweeper, cheating amounts to the eating of a carcass,

Slander is the dirt that my tongue tasteh,

The blazing fire of anger within me is like the fury of a *chandal*.

I indulge in nothing but self-esteem.

See, these are my doings, O Lord.

Friend, speech is that which bringeth honour,

And, good are they who are judged good at the Lord's door.

The rest are evil-doers who have to cry.

Another virtue which Guru Nanak has repeatedly stressed is the fear of God. In fact, Guru Nanak conceived the very functioning of the cosmos in a definite way as a result of the fear of God. But, generally speaking, the fear of God serves as an ever present policeman watching a man's actions. It is the sense of His eternal vigilance which, when accepted, serves to keep him on the right path. In its own way, it can serve as the basis of ethical life.

Lastly, I cannot resist the temptation of mentioning the most ordinary aspect of human life and that is the use of sweet

speech or expression. The essence of human speech is its artistic expression ; it can be used in a harsh and vulgar manner, and it can also serve as the basis of sublime poetry. In this connection, Guru Nanak said :

ਨਾਨਕ ਫਿਕੈ ਬੋਲਿਐ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਫਿਕਾ ਹੋਇ ।  
ਫਿਕੋ ਫਿਕਾ ਸਦੀਐ ਫਿਕੇ ਫਿਕੀ ਸੋਇ ।

Rude speech signifies the absence of love and sweetness and the men who use it are known as crude persons. It should never be forgotten that sweetness is an essential constituent of noble life.

Guru Nanak justifies his insistence on ethical living, because he considers it the first step towards higher stages of spiritual life. This is the only way we can make ourselves acceptable to the Lord.

The question now arises : How shall we break down the wall of falsehood that exists between us and God ? The answer is :

ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ।

This can be done by surrendering ourselves to God's will which is inherent in all of us.

*Hukam* means the acceptance of the will of God i. e. a complete confidence and trust in the order of things established by Him. It is an explicit faith in His judgement and a sincere belief that what He does is best for mankind. In this way, one's life is laid at His mercy and one serves as the instrument of His will. In a wider context, *hukam* became *rita*, the moral order which governs the cosmos, which ensures that planets and stars move according to a fixed order and that the life of man and those of all other living beings are governed by Him. The cycle of birth for each individual, too, is ordered by Him. He is the judge of our actions (*karmas*), but He gives us the freedom to perform good actions, which enable us through successive lives to reach a higher place where we may be favoured with the grace of God. *Hukam*, therefore, means living a life acceptable to Him, i. e. so moulding our actions that we get nearer to Him.

In the *Japji*, Guru Nanak has suggested three stages by which one can attain the status of men known as *panchas* or *braham-gyanis*, who through *samadhi* can become one with God. The three stages are listening, believing and *simran*. Listening is not merely a physical action ; it is a complete absorption in the *Shabad* and *Nam*. It leads to the destruction of sin and suffering and raises the status of a man to that of Shiva, Indra, Brahman, a

*pir*, a king, a *siddh* or a *bhagat*. Such a one is not only able to understand the sacred writings, but can plumb the depth of the secret of life. His restless mind achieves peace and he shows the path of salvation to the ignorant and the blind. Believing is a still higher stage. It leads to the acceptance of God's will or *hukam* and so high becomes the spiritual status of the believer that none can put it in black and white. Such is the inner awakening of the believer that he suffers neither pain nor sorrow, nor does he face the angel of death. He not only himself achieves salvation but becomes the means of salvations for others. His faith is firm and he is never assailed with doubt.

Listening and believing, as explained above, lead to *simran*. *Simran* means the singing of God's Name, and through it, getting attuned to Him. It is not merely the singing but becoming one with the name of the Lord. *Simran* is a form of ecstasy in which one lives in intimate companionship with God's Name. But this is a very high stage of spiritual advancement. It has been described as *Sach Khand* in the *Japji*. One reaches it through several stages of mystic experience. They have been defined as *Dharam Khand*, *Gyan Khand*, *Saram Khand*, and *Sach Khand*. These stages describe man's journey from the first inkling of spiritual knowledge to the highest stage of beatitude through hard discipline. It is an uphill task and demands all the patience and power at our command ; it is nothing short of *tapas*. In the last stage, the infinite merges in the Infinite. That is the meeting-place of ethical life and spiritual mysticism. *Simran* is the mysticism of the Sikh religion and its *marga* is the *bhakti marga*.

Let me end this lecture with a few significant words of the great Master :

ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਰਹਹਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੇ ਏਕਾ ਏਕੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰ ।

ਜਲੁ ਥਲੁ ਧਰਣਿ ਗਗਨੁ ਤਰੁ ਨਾਚੀ ਆਪੇ ਆਪੁ ਕੀਆ ਕਰਤਾਰ ।

They who are attuned to Thee in a ceaseless trance, dwell  
on nothing but Thy Word.

For them there is no earth nor water n r sky, and all that is,  
is the Lord alone.

### LECTURE THREE

## GURU NANAK AND THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

It will be recalled that in the first lecture I presented Sikhism and its philosophy as a cultural and theistic continuity of the Upanishdic tradition, and the interpretation that Guru Nanak gave of the concepts of *Brahman*, *Atman*, *samsara*, *karma* and *moksha*. In the second lecture, I described Sikhism as the mysticism of *simran* coupled with an ethical way of life, far removed from the formalism and rituals to which Hinduism had tied itself. In the present lecture, I hope to trace the growth of the concept of *bhakti* and the extent to which Sikhism subscribed to its ideals and the way it differed from it and marked out for its followers new paths which ultimately gave rise to a new religion and a new way of life.

Let me recapitulate for a minute or two the philosophical ideas that gained currency and then disappeared in the web of time until Lord Krishna expounded his philosophy of action to Arjuna on the battlefield of Krukshetra and, for the first time, gave expression to the concept of *bhakti*, now handed down to us in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The Vedic age was the age of great poets who sang magnificent hymns in praise of natural forces and worshipped them as half-personified deities. There were also rumblings of the dim perception of the Absolute Spirit behind the natural phenomena. As a philosophy, the Vedic philosophy was a queer mixture of pantheism, polytheism and monism, a contemplation of the Universal Spirit in and beyond the world. The vedic age was succeeded by the age of *Brahmans*, an age when the ritual at the sacrificial fire gained such ascendancy that they assumed the place of worship itself. Worship took the form of spiritless, unemotional and mechanical performance of rituals. This was also the age that gave rise to the four *varnas* and the supremacy of the priest, the Brahmin. As day follows night, the age of *Upanishads* followed the decadent age of the *Brahmanas*. This was the age of mystics, who were drunk with the thought of the Divine Spirit and gave expression to the concepts of *Brahman*, *Atman*, *samsara*, *karma*

and *moksha*. This age has been truly called the first renaissance of Hinduism when contemplation and *samadhi* were regarded as the true forms of worship and the acquisition of knowledge about the relationship of the finite to the Infinite replaced rites, rituals and ceremonies. It should be noted that *Jnan*, the *marga* of knowledge, came to be regarded as more efficacious than *Upasana* or devotion for gaining *moksha* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death. The twin doctrines of *karma* and *samsara* had become the firm basis of philosophy. There were no temples, no image-worship because the *Upanishads* advocated the individualistic attainment of *moksha*.

There is a long gap between the age of the *Upanishads* and the rise of Buddhism during the reign of Asoka. Somehow, the age of the *Upanishads* was followed by a dark period when the spirit of enquiry died down and men relapsed into beliefs in old gods and rituals. With the rise of Buddhism, Hinduism shrank within its shell and as a protecting armour took shelter behind orthodoxy and Brahminism. There was a return to casteism and to the old, narrow and parochial ethics as through the *Upanishads* had never existed. It was during this age that temple-worship and the worship of images came to establish themselves firmly.

Buddhism, although it flourished during the Mauryan Empire and carried its message to the far corners of the then known world, had in itself the seed of its destruction. Originally, it was not a religion; it assumed the form of a religion two hundred years after the Buddha's death. It was a way of life which promised escape from human suffering through renunciation and monastic life. It lacked the warmth and sunshine of life and the consequent will to live; it was cold and austere, and subscribed to world and life negation and, therefore, was unacceptable to the populace. It was turned out of the land of its birth by the re-emergence of orthodox Hinduism and by the rise of *Bhakti* movement.

The five hundred years between the fall of the Mauryas and the rise of the Guptas gave birth to two great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and no one can deny that in spite of much that is fantastic and incredible in them, they had a tremendous educative influence on the masses. They also served as the basis of Hindu revivalism. Moreover, the birth of the epics coincided with great intellectual fervour and physical expansion when Indians colonized Java, Borneo, Malaya and Indo-China. The epics painted

the heroes in the Homeric fashion and presented pictures of the ideal king, the ideal husband, the ideal wife, the ideal brother and the ideal warrior. The Hindu *dharma* once again gained the paramount position and reigned unchallenged.

Contained in the *Mahabharata* is the *Bhagavad Gita*, the greatest gift of the epic age, and one of the noblest poems in religious literature. It has influenced millions and continues to do so even today. It is here for the first time that Krishna preached the message of devotion to a personal God and upheld the *Bhakti marga* as superior to *Jnan marga* and *karam marga*. The settings of the *Gita* is, indeed, panoramic : the two opposing armies of Kauravas and Pandavas stand arrayed on the battlefield of Krukshetra ready to fight, waiting for the word of command. Arjuna has Krishna as his charioteer. Krishna has told Arjuna that he will not fight but will accompany him throughout the battle. Krishna drives Arjuna to the noman's land between the two armies. Arjuna looks at the two armies and, finding his relations, friends and all those whom he loved better than life itself in the two opposing armies, is assailed with doubts about the righteousness of the war and the part he is called upon to play himself. He refuses to fight. Krishna exhorts him to fight. He solves not only the letter's immediate problem, but also expounds the whole nature of action, the meaning of life and the aim for which man must struggle during his earthly existence. The dialogue gave birth not only to a new philosophy but to a superb piece of ethical literature.

I must resist the temptation of examining the *Bhagaved Gita* in detail; the time at my disposal, with its winged chariot, is hurrying and will not permit me to tarry long, Krishna, while clinging to orthodoxy and dogmatism, presses into service different schools of philosophy to further his own argument. Primarily, it is the Vedanta and Samkhya Schools of philosophy that are lumped together in spite of the basic difference between them. He believes in the theory of *karma* and *Jnan* and at the same time subscribes to Kapila's ideas of *prakriti*, the primordial matter of the *purusha*, the sentient principle along with the theory of the three *gunas*, i.e. *satva* *rajas*, and *tamas*. He also believed that the three *gunas* existed independently and that it was through their interaction that the world of matter, along with the ego and the intellect, was created. Thus, he explains, came into being all the animate and inanimate

things. To these systems, Krishna adds the *yoga* system with its emphasis on action. In a way, he contradicts himself when at one place he admits that the world is born out of *prakriti* and at another he does so by saying that the Supreme Soul is the source of all creation. He, however, adds that matter is perishable, whereas the soul is imperishable and eternal. Again, Krishna combines the Upanishadic idea of the Absolute with the concept of monotheistic deity in the human form, which, when appealed to, responds and affords salvation. Krishna also reinterprets the Vedic injunctions, caste system, ancestor-worship and the performance of sacrificial rites, and the synthesis of various philosophies. The popularity of the *Gita* lies in the two messages of action and *bhakti* that it propagates. Krishna denounced renunciation and the life of the hermitage; salvation lay in action, disinterested action, without any expectation of reward. Disinterested action can be performed only by controlling the restless mind through *Yoga* and self-abnegation. *Yoga*, thus, becomes a discipline by which one develops the powers to resist pain and pleasure. *Yoga*, in mystic terms, means the attainment of God through the concentrated effort of the mind, heart and soul. And this fellowship of God is attained through disinterested action, selfless devotion and constant meditation. Krishna's *Karma Yoga*, therefore, came to mean the attainment of union with God through discipline, dynamic action and doing of one's duty without attachment. Disinterested action, teaches Krishna, will lead one to the true wisdom of the knowledge of what lies behind action, behind all life. And what can that be? The answer is, "The Ultimate Reality".

Krishna was an apostle of *Jnan Marga* and *Karma Marga*, but when he presents himself as a personal God, he declares his preference of the *bhakti marga* to the other two *margas*. Here, he propagates the idea of *bhakti* or devotion and accepts devotion from one and all, irrespective of caste or creed. He even accepts the devotion of the sinners and promises them salvation.

Though a man be soiled  
 With the sins of a lifetime,  
 Let him but love me,  
 Rightly resolved  
 In utter devotion.  
 I see no sinner,



That man is holy,  
 Again : The man that loves me,  
 He shall not perish.

And Krishna adds, "Even those who belong to the lower castes, women, *Vaishyas*, *sudras*, too, can reach the highest spiritual realization, if they will take refuge in me." It was a tremendous advance over earlier concepts of religion. Again he says, "Fill your heart and mind with me, adore me, make your acts an offering to me, bow down to me in self-surrender. If you set your heart on me, thus, and take me for your ideal above all others, you will come into my Being."

Such was the message of Krishna and no wonder that it served as a clarion call to all the downtrodden and neglected ones to gather round him and offer him their love and devotion. It must, however, be added that Krishna established no school of philosophy, gathered no followers, generated no movement and his message lay locked up for ages in the pages of the *Bhagavad Gita* for only the scholars to study and write commentaries upon it. The credit of reviving the *Bhakti Movement* goes to Alvar and Nayanar saints in the South. But it cannot be denied that Krishna's concept was revolutionary and set into motion forces that bore fruit later.

Before we go further, I would like to make a comment or two on the *Gita* from the view-point of *Sikhism*. Sikhism does not believe in casteism and the duty imposed upon men because of belonging to certain castes, as in the *Gita* in which Krishna demands that Arjuna should fight because he is a *Kshatriya*. Duty for us is the voice of God because when once it is morally and ethically just and devolves upon us, it has to be performed, irrespective of its consequences. Sikhism does not believe in image-worship or ancestor-worship, nor does it subscribe to the idea of the creation of the world through *prakriti* and the three *gunas*. Materialistic ideas have no place in it. We agree with the Vedantic view that the world was created by the Supreme Reality and it is He alone who keeps it in motion. He not only created it but also manifests Himself through it. Life begins in Him and ends in Him. The being and becoming, in the ultimate analysis, are one and the same thing. We believe in the *yoga* of discipline and non-attachment and fully sub-

scribe to the *bhakti marga*. But we do not accept the concept of God in the human form. Krishna was a historical figure and the details of his earthly sojourn are too well known to be ignored. He could be a saint and seer or a prophet, but God he certainly could not be. We believe in a personal God, who has to be served with love and devotion, but it is the one Supreme Being, unborn and self-existent, who can be conceived as a father, a brother, a friend, a lover or whatever you may conceive him to be. His presence is felt every where and in everything. It is His constant companionship we seek in thought and action and it is to Him alone that we pay our homage and it is through His mercy alone that we expect to attain *moksha*.

And what is *bhakti*? It is love and devotion at the mystical level. We have all been bitten by the bug of love and have known its all-absorbing power, its ecstasy, its pain and pleasure. We all have experienced how it engulfs us completely. We see our beloved in every beautiful face; may, in the sky, in the stars, in the winds; everything reminds us of the loved one and what exhilaration we feel when we meet and what pangs we suffer when we part. I do not have to tell you these things, probably you know more about love than I do ! And yet in the human love, however deep and rich, there are elements of ego, passion, jealousy, personal attachment, fear, anger and disappointment. But in the mystical devotion, it is the complete self-surrender; we shed our ego, our personality and all that constitutes the "I". Leaving behind this body and this world, we ascend towards the Divine Being, our inner-self realizes itself as a part of Divine Self and we arrive at a state of complete bliss or *ananda*. Mystic experience has, according to Hindu seers, three characteristics, *Sat, Chit, Anand*, which mean reality, awareness and perfect bliss. This, in short, is the mystic devotion and it has its rewards; they are eternal peace and an awareness of the Lord.

The *Bhakti* movement started in the South among the Vaishnavites and Shaivites and flourished during the seventh and eighth centuries. Though the fountain-head of *bhakti* was the *Bhagavad Gita*, it was spread among the people in the South by the Vaishnavite saints known as the Alvars. They were wandering singers, mad with the ecstasy of love and devotion to

Vishnu. There were ten Alvars and they came from the Tamil-speaking part of the country. Their hymns were collected in four volumes and they contain some of the most poignant devotional poetry. In the South, these songs are known as "Divine Compositions". The one important point to be noticed among the Alvar saints is that they came from all classes, Brahmins, non-Brahmins, *Shudras*, beggars and, among them, there was a king too. The most outstanding feature of their faith was that they offered the right of worship to one and all. They made God accessible to the rich and the poor, to the prince and the pauper. For the first time, religion was given a democratic character. The Alvar saints believed that with intense devotion and selfless prayer, God came to live in the hearts of men. Often in their hymns, they pictured God as the lover and the devotee, and as the beloved. This is a kind of symbolism, the highest that a man can offer within the limited range of his experience. They condemned all kinds of rituals and idol-worship; they expressed themselves through ecstasy and deep devotion. Here is an example: "To me, who am filled with God, all the people are just mad men; (to them) I am a mad man. What is the use of speaking about this to anyone? I call out, 'O Krishna, O Ranganathan!', and it is with my Lord that I have gone mad!"

The Shaivite saints, on the other hand, were known as Nayanars. They were sixty-three in number and offered their devotion to Shiva. Shiva to them was the supreme Reality who appeared to his devotees as a personal God. The hymns of these saints have been collected in eleven volumes. Apart from their philosophical and devotional content, they are composed in the form of a music, which is considered by the knowledgeable ones to be among the finest devotional music ever written. They sang and they danced from temple to temple and filled the sky with the praises of Lord Shiva and converted thousands to their faith. The most important of their saints are Appar, Jnan-Sambandhar and Sundarar and their images can be found in most Shaivite temples. Here is an example of a hymn from the words of the saint Appar :

"We are not the subjects of any; we are not afraid of death;  
we will not suffer in hell; we live not in illusion; we

are proud; we know not ills; there is no dejection; for we have become servants, never to turn back, of that Lord who is subject to none, and have become one with the flower-strewn feet of that Lord of the white-conch ear-rings."

From the South, the *Bhakti* Movement spread to other parts of India. Everywhere, the devotional hymns came to be written, not in Sanskrit, but in the language of the people and, generally speaking, they were sung as *kirtan* in the temples or among congregations.

At this stage, we must mention the appearance of a work entitled *Bhagavata Purana*, which, along with the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, had a tremendous effect on the mode of life of the people and on the growth of the *Bhakti* Movement in India. The *Bhagavata Purana* dealt with the early life of Krishna and presented it with such delicacy and touching beauty that it endeared itself to millions of men, women and children for generations. It not only helped the Krishna-cult of devotion in a big way, but it influenced all the existing art forms and was responsible for the inspiration which resulted in the writing of innumerable songs, stories and plays about the childhood and youth of Krishna, and in the endless stream of paintings that have continued to appear till today about the various facets of his life, whether caught stealing butter as a child, or frolicking with *gopies* at the bathing-ghat, or as a cowherd playing on his flute.

The *Bhakti* Movement in the South and the spread of its ideology gave birth to theistic religions. The most important theistic religion that appeared in the twelfth century was that of Ramanuja. He called it *Vishishtadvaita* to distinguish it from *Advaitism* of Shankara. It will be recalled that Shankara was a mystical colossus of the ninth century and in the short life-span of thirty-two years, he not only established four monasteries at Shringiri, Puri, Dwarka and Badrinath, wrote commentaries on the *Brahama Sutra*, the *Upanishads* and the *Gita*, but also demolished Buddhism, refuted the materialistic concepts of the Samkya and Mimamsaka systems of philosophy and re-established the orthodox religion based on Vedanta. Such was the mastery of his eloquence, the force of his argument, the subtlety of his intellect that his doctrine of *Advait* was accepted

by the elite and the intellectuals and has enormous following even today. Ramanuja attacked Shankaracharya's *Advaitism* or absolute non-dualism and particularly his concept of *maya*. We cannot, in the course of this lecture, study the differences of the two system : they are, indeed, fascinating as intellectual exercises. What is important from our point of view is that thought Shankara propounded the doctrine of the one and only Reality, the *nirguna*, the Infinite and Formless, yet he justified the worship of idols and of finite gods. Moreover, for *Moksha*, he advocated *Jnan marga*; he taught that through knowledge alone the duality of man and God would disappear. Ramanuja based his system on the distinct and separate existence of God, soul and matter, but advocated that God had created the world out of Himself. What interests us most in Ramanuja's way of thinking was his stress on the *bhakti marga*. He believed that *jnanmarga* made *bhakti* deeper and *karam marga* purer, but it was the *bhakti marga* which, through absolute devotion and detachment from the world, brought about man's communion with God. *Karma* and knowledge could not give spiritual satisfaction which could be had only through *bhakti*. Ramanuja's concept of *bhakti* is constant meditation. He accepted people of all castes to his fold. It may also be mentioned that he introduced the practice of common meals (*langar*) among his followers.

From the South, the *Bhakti* Movement spread all over the country as though it satisfied the inner urge of the people everywhere. It indicated a universal hunger which demanded appeasement through personal devotion. A great deal of devotional poetry came to be written in the vernaculars of the whole country, in this religious revival, Brahmins took little part : it was the work of the common people, and the saints of this moment belonged mostly to the lower castes like weavers, carpenters, potters, barbers of even out-castes. In Karnataka appeared Lingayats and Haridasas as groups which subscribed to the *Bhakti* Movement; in Maharashtra the leaders of the *Bhakti* Movement were Jnanesvara, Namdeva, Tukaram ; in Gujarat, Nirsimah ; in Rajasthan, Mirabai ; in Uttar Pradesh, Kabir and Tulsidas ; in Bihar, Vidyapati ; in Bengal, Chaitanya and Jayadeva ; in Assam, Sankradeva ; and in the Punjab, Guru Nanak. It was veritabably a national movement, providing national integration on a scale unknown in the ancient

or medieval history of India.

During the Middle Ages, there were two schools of the *Bhakti* Movement : those who offered devotion to Rama and those who offered it to Krishna, both the *avatars* of Vishnu. Ramanand was the leader of the *Bhakti* Movement that centred on Rama. He is supposed to have had twelve disciples. It is surprising that among other names such as Ravidas, Dhanna, Sen, Kabir, Dadu, Tukaram and others, the name of Nanak is also included. Obviously, this is incorrect and unacceptable, because Guru Nanak who laid tremendous stress on the role of a *Guru*, did not mention Ramanand's name even once. Nor does Guru Nanak mention the name of Kabir in his hymns who, too, has been mentioned as Guru Nanak's preceptor. However, Ramanand, and Tulsi Dass (the author of the well-known *Ram Charitar Manas*) were the two *bhagats* who popularized the cult of Rama over the whole of northern India. Those who offered devotion to Krishna came to be divided into two groups : the devotees of Krishna and Rukmini, and the devotees of Krishna and Radha. Jnaneshvar, Namdev, Eknath and Tukaram worshipped and sang of the purer love of Krishna for his wife Rukmini, whereas Nimbakara, Vishnuswami, Vallabh and Chaitanya sang of Krishna's love for his beloved Radha. Their devotion to Krishna and Rukmini can be easily understood by most of us, but it is not clear how Radha, who was only one of the *gopis* came to assume such importance that her love for Krishna became the subject of a large number of songs and dance-dramas. A distinction must be made between the two groups of devotional poetry : the former were the *bhakti* hymns and the latter constituted pure and simple literature. When Mira sings "*Pug hunguru bandh Mira nachi re*" or "*Gunghat ke pat khol tohai pia milaingai*", it is romantic poetry at its best and should not be confused with religion. This is poetry of love and not religious hymns. I am afraid there is a lot of confusion among the people about poetry that forms a part of religion and poetry which helps to create a devotional mood. Both are valuable in themselves, but are distinct genres of writing.

Kabir is a class by himself. He was the son of a Brahmin virgin widow and his foster parents were Muslims. He was deeply aware of the two cultural currents Hindu and Muslim, flowing side by side, influencing each other but never coalescing. He was also

influenced by Sufism. He was a disciple of Ramanand and admitted that he obtained illumination "by the grace of Guru Ramanand." He described God as loveable, most compassionate, omniscient, omnipresent and the saviour with whom man could establish personal relations. *Bhakti* according to Kabir, is the easiest and best way to realize the Infinite. Kabir condemned idol-worship, pilgrimages and other obscurantist formalities of ritualism. As a poet, he is incomparable and with homely imagery, idiom and expression, he wrote devotional poetry of surpassing beauty. Here is a passage of Kabir translated by Tagore.

"I have known in my body the sport of the Universe ;  
I have escaped from the errors of the world.  
The inward and the outward are become as one sky ;  
the infinite and the finite are united. I am drunk with  
the sight of all."

Here is another passage.

I have met God who dwelleth in heart.

When a stream is lost in the Ganges, it becomes the Ganges itself. Kabir was a mystic and he sang his songs in great ecstasy. He was an individualist and belonged to all sects and that is why he was claimed both by Hindus and Muslims as their saint.

Let us now turn to Guru Nanak and ask ourselves the crucial question : did he or did he not belong to the *Bhakti* Movement ? The answer is yes and no. This does sound paradoxical, but it is not so, because it means that Guru Nanak navigated in the same stream of *bhakti* but hoisted a different flag on his ship. His ship did not belong to the flotilla ; it was a ship ploughing a lonely furrow and followed a path of her own.

It has to be noted that Guru Nanak subscribed to many aspects of *bhakti*, as preached and practised by the earlier *bhagats*. Before we examine some of the aspects, it must be stated firmly that the *marag* that Guru Nanak advocated was the *bhakti marag*. He believed that the Supreme Reality could be realized through *bhakti marag* alone and not through *karam marag* or *jnan marag*. Good actions, he regarded as the basis of ethical life, but ethical life was only the first step towards mystical experience. In itself, it was not a satisfactory goal. As regards *Jnan marag*, Guru Nanak was of the view that erudition or collection of information from books was not a necessary concomitant of spiritual

experience. He often declared that not all the study of the Vedas and the Puranas would lead one on the path of spiritual life. Spiritual life is so distinct from intellectual pursuits. They do not go together. Inner wisdom does not come out of books or discussions.

ਗਿਆਨੁ ਨ ਗਲੀਈ ਦੂਢੀਐ ਕਥਨਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਾਰੁ ।

ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਾ ਪਾਇਐ ਹੋਰ ਹਿਕਮਤਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਖੁਆਰੁ ।

Wisdom, one cannot find through discussion ; to describe its essence also is hard.

By His grace alone are we blest with it : all other devices are of no avail.

And again :

ਕੁੰਭੇ ਬਧਾ ਜਲੁ ਰਹੈ ਜਲ ਬਿਨੁ ਕੁੰਭੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ ।

ਗਿਆਨ ਕਾ ਬਧਾ ਮਨ ਰਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ ।

Water can be held in a pitcher, but a pitcher cannot be made without the use of water.

So the mind is held by wisdom, but how can one gather wisdom without a *guru* ?

In the first quotation, wisdom that leads to inner light is described as the gift of God. It is the result of His grace and does not come through discussions and other similar exercises, and in the second, the stress is on the *guru*, the preceptor who initiates the disciple into this world and informs him of the disciplines necessary for its realization. Religion for Guru Nanak was not merely the knowing of things but undergoing in experience of a special kind. This experience is mystical in nature; it is a feeling and knowing at a level beyond the sensory one. It is the feeling of the constant companionship of the Supreme Being. *Bhakti* is essentially self-surrender through love and devotion and its disciplines are *simran* and meditation. But notwithstanding *simran* and meditation, Guru Nanak has given a high place to *nadir*, the grace of God. *Moksha*, which is the ultimate goal of human life, is obtained through the grace of God. Patiently one must be wait ; the Infinite One will find His own way to emancipate him.

ਸੁਰਿ ਨਰ ਨਾਥ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਅਜੋਨੀ ਸਾਚੈ ਮਹਲਿ ਅਪਾਰਾ ।

ਠਾਨਕ ਸਹਜਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਗ ਜੀਵਨ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਨਿਸਤਾਰਾ ।

Usher me into Thy boundless abode,

That Nanak may attain Thee, the life of all life,



through equipoise, and by Thy grace, he is emancipated.

ਅਮਰ ਅਡੋਲੁ ਅਮੋਲੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਈਐ :

ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪੇ ਜੋਗ ਸਜੋਗੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈਐ ।

Immortal is He, ever-in-poise, invaluable, infinite : through, perfect *guru* is the True One attained.

Nanak, He Himself uniteth the bride with Himself ; and, in His mercy, she is attuned to Him.

Like other *bhagats*, of the *Bhagti* Movement, Guru Nanak believed that the human soul was a part of the Divine Soul and the aim of each successive life was to rise higher and higher spiritually untill the human spark was absorbed in the Eternal Fire of which it was a part. Here, too, it was only the grace of God that could bring together *Atma* and *Parmatma* and end the cycle of birth and death.

ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਤਾ ਸਿਮਰਿਆ ਜਾਇ । ਆਤਮਾ ਦ੍ਰਵੈ ਰਹੈ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ।

ਆਤਮਾ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਏਕੋ ਕਰੈ । ਅੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਮਰੈ ।

When the Lord has mercy, one contemplates Him :

And tender becomes one's soul, and one is attuned to Him.

And then one's soul merges in the Absolute One,

And the complexes of the mind are re-absorbed in the mind.

and again :

ਧਾਤੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਫੁਨਿ ਧਾਤੁ ਕਉ ਲਿਵ ਲਿਵੈ ਕਉ ਧਾਵੈ :

ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਤਉ ਅਨਭਉ ਪਾਵੈ ।

A metal blendeth with another metal, love mingles with love,

And when one knoweth Him through the grace of one's *guru*, one is intuitively awakened.

True to the tradition of *bhakti*, there was no place for rituals, pilgrimages and other soulless and mechanical formalities in the religion of Guru Nanak. Nor did he advocate renunciation or monasticism. On the contrary, he regarded human life as a great gift of God, because it provided an opportunity to a man to achieve salvation.

ਮਾਣਸ ਜਨਮੁ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਇਆ ।

ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਜੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਾਇਆ ।

Precious is the human birth : only those turned God-ward attain to it ;

Yea, if a true enlightener so willeth, one's body and mind are cooled with tha Lord's love.

And in the same *kafi*, Guru Nanak adds :

ਹਉ ਜੀਵਾ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਰਿ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤੂੰ ਵਸੈ ।

ਤੂੰ ਵਸਹਿ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਹਜੇ ਰਸਿ ਰਸੈ ।

I live if I cherish Thy merits, O Lord, and Thou abidest within me ;

Yea, if thou comest into my mind, it reveals in joy spontaneously.

In consonance with the tradition of the *Bhakti* Movement, Guru Nanak rejected the caste system and opened the doors of his faith to one and all. He preached that men were acceptable to God not because they were high or low, rich or poor, but purely on the basis of their actions in life. In the mansion of God, no distinctions were made on the basis of caste, creed, nationality or sex. Guru Nanak believed in democracy and socialistic pattern of society. Towards the end of his life, when he settled at Kartarpur, he put them into practice. It was a glorious consummation ; here, people came to live steeped in the mystic atmosphere generated by his presence, busy in the simple demands of community life and tasted the peace and quiet, so essential to the functioning of the inner life.

The two important concepts of the *Bhakti* Movement were the doctrine of the holy Name of God and extreme reverence paid to the Guru. No other *bhagat* gave such importance to God's Name as Guru Nanak did. To Guru Nanak, His name was the fountain-head of all inspiration, the mystic formula for meditation, the talisman that helped man to cross the sea of *samsara*, the comfort of all souls, the medicine for all ills and the one and only link with the Ultimate Reality.

ਤੂੰ ਵਡ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਗੰਮ ਤਰੰਵਰੁ ਹਮ ਪੰਥੀ ਤੁਝ ਮਾਹੀ ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਦੀਜੈ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਲਾਹੀ ।

Thou, O Lord, art the Supreme Person, Infinite Tree on which is perched the bird of my soul ;

Bless Nanak with Thy immaculate name that he may praise Thy Word ever.

And again,

ਐਸਾ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਨਾਮੁ ।

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਰਸਿ ਰਸਿ ਮਾਨੁ ।

The Lord's name is a precious object, a gem of wisdom :

And attuned to the Guru, one enjoyeth its relish.

Ang again,

ਦੀਵਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਤੇਲੁ ।

ਉਨਿ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਓਹੁ ਸੋਖਿਆ ਚੂਕਾ ਜਮ ਸਿਉ ਮੇਲੁ ।

Lord's Name is my luminous lamp, in it is the oil of pain.

As the lamp burns bright it sucketh up the soil,

And no more thereafter is my meeting with the Yama.

And again,

ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਥਾਪਿਆ ਤਿਨ ਮੰਟਿ ਨ ਸਕੈ ਕੋਇ ।

ਓਨਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਹੈ ਨਾਮੋ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ।

ਨਾਉ ਪੂਜੀਐ ਨਾਉ ਮੰਨੀਐ ਅਖੰਡੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਚੁ ਹੋਇ ।

Those whom the true enlightener has appointed, no one  
can degrade ;

For in their hearts they treasure the Lord's Name,

And through it are they known.

They worship His Name, believe in nothing but His Name  
which is eternal truth.

Such is the merit of God's Name, it is the one and only means of *simran* ; it is a gem of wisdom ; it helps one to attune one's mind to the Lord ; it dispels pain and suffering ; it saves one from death itself and lastly through His Name, a man discovers the eternal truth.

The importance of spiritual enlightener was high-lighted by Guru Nanak at every opportunity. The enlightener was the ship by which one crossed the sea of life ; he served as the ladder for achieving spiritual heights ; he was essential for guidance in *kal yug*. He helps not only by precept and example but much more by a power to communicate his own experience to others. There are several references to the *guru* or enlightener in Guru Nanak's hymns : I will just mention four of them :

ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਿਉਹਾੜੀ ਸਦ ਵਾਰ ।

ਜਿਨਿ ਮਾਣਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਕੀਏ ਕਰਤ ਨਾ ਲਾਗੀ ਵਾਰ ।

I am a sacrifice unto my *guru* a myriad times a day,

Who made angles of me: and, yea, without delay.

ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਜੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਾ ਨਦਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ।  
 ਏਹੁ ਜੀਉ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਜਨਮ ਭਰੰਮਿਆ ਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ ।  
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਕੇ ਨਹੀ ਸਭਿ ਸੁਣਿਅਹੁ ਲੋਕ ਸਬਾਇਆ ।  
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ।  
 ਜਿਨਿ ਸਚੇ ਸਚੁ ਬੁਝਾਇਆ ।

If Lord's grace is there, one receiveth the  
 true *guru* in one's heart.

The soul had wandered through many births,  
 before the true *guru* imparted to it the Word.  
 By meeting the *guru*, we attain to truth and  
 lose ourselves.

Yea, through him the essence of truth to us is revealed.  
 ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਕਉ ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਬਪੜੇ ਇਨਿ ਦੂਜੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਵਿਸਾਰੀ ਜੀਉ ।  
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਸਾਕਤ ਬਾਜੀ ਹਾਈ ਜੀਉ ।  
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬੰਧਨ ਤੋੜਿ ਨਿਰਾਰੇ ਬਹੁਤਿ ਨ ਗਰਭ ਮਝਾਰੀ ਜੀਉ ।  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਗਿਆਨ ਰਤਨੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿਆ ਹਰ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਜੀਉ ।

The world but cometh and goeth, and lured away by *maya*  
 forsaketh the worship of the Lord.

When the true *guru* is met, one becometh wise  
 by his wisdom, but the worshipper of *maya*  
 loseth the game of life.

The true *guru* has snapped my bonds ;  
 I will not be cast in the womb again.  
 For within me is the illumination of wisdom,  
 and the formless Lord has come to abide in me.

ਗੁਰੁ ਪਉੜੀ ਬੋਝੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਤੁਲਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਉ ।

ਗੁਰੁ ਸਰੁ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਬੋਹਿਬੋ ਗੁਰ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਦਰੀਆਉ ।

ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਉਜਲੀ ਸਤਸਰਿ ਨਾਵਣ ਜਾਉ ।

To attain to His Name, the *guru* is the ladder,

The *guru* is the boat, the *guru* is the raft,

Yea, the *guru* is the ship, the place of pilgrimage, the river.

If He, the Lord, willeth, I become pure and

I go to bathe in the pool of truth.

What tremendous importance has been given to the *guru* !

A true enlightener can make angels of men, reveal the essence of truth, end the cycle of birth and death and serve as a ship to cross the ocean of life.

While studying the works of various leaders of the *Bhakti* Movement, I was struck with the similarity in their style of writing. They wrote in the language of the people, making full use of similes, idioms and metaphors. They cared little for arguments, logic and ratiocination. They lived and moved among the people and naturally picked up all kinds of homely analogies such as the wasp and the woof, the spider and the web, the seed and the tree, the river and the boat, the stage and the acting, and so on. They also used long and sustained metaphors based on the tilling of the land, on the working of a goldsmith, a weaver, an iron-smith, a shopkeeper and men of other professions. They also used human virtues and emotions as figures of speech such as compassion, patience, virtue, love, fear, truth, falsehood and used them symbolically. To give but one example from the *Japji* :

In the forge of continence,  
 Let patience be the goldsmith.  
 On the anvil of understanding.  
 Let him strike with the hammer of know'edge.  
 Let the fear of God be the bellows,  
 Let austerities be the fire,  
 Let the love of God be the crucible,  
 Let the nectar of life be melted in it.  
 Thus, in the mint of Truth,  
 A man may coin the Word,  
 This is the practice of those  
 On whom God looks with favour.  
 Nanak, our gracious Lord  
 With a glance makes us happy.

(This is the translation of hymn starting with the line *Jat pahara dhiraj suniar*).

It will be observed that the language and content are richly woven and yet the message goes straight to the heart, because all the similes have been taken from the life of rural people.

Let us now turn to the other side of the matter. Notwithstanding all the similarities and points of contact. I believe that Sikhism does not belong to the *Bhakti* Movement. Devotion to a personal God coupled with meditation are characteristics of

several religions in the East and in the West. After the Vedantic concept of the Ultimate Reality or *Brahman* was popularized, it became the subject of one commentary after another and with the hairsplitting and sophisticated analysis of the same idea over and over again through the ages, the idea became so rarefied that men could hardly understand it. At that stage, it was refreshing to come across a simpler, direct faith in a personal god which asked nothing more than love and devotion. Moreover, it opened the gates of the temple to one and all and rescued religion, and much more so, worship from the clutches of the haughty and too exclusive *Brahmin*. The *Bhakti* Movement in India was closely related to Vishnu, Shiva and Shakti in the first phase between the seventh and thirteenth centuries and Krishna and Rama in the second phase during the period between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is a certain overlapping of the two schools, but the distinction is quite clear. Historically, Guru Nanak belonged to the second phase of the *Bhakti* Movement but the movement during that period is distinctly associated with two personalities, Krishna and Rama, and is closely woven round the incidents and episodes of their lives. Moreover, a great deal of poetry and drama are mixed up with mysticism and the two are nowhere distinctly defined. Krishna is pictured as God Himself; he is also the divine lover and his life is associated with all facets of romanticism. Similarly, Rama is a devoted husband, an obedient son, an ideal brother and Almighty God. Sikhism, in the first place, does not accept Krishna or Rama as God or the Ultimate Reality. Secondly, Sikhism does not believe in the appearance of God in the human form. Men can be saints, seers, *bhagats* but certainly not God. This is the reason that Guru Gobind Singh laid down a strict injunction against his being called God. This is the fundamental difference the two Hindu deities were personified as God in the *Bhakti* Movement whereas in the Sikh religion, there is only one God, the transcendent. One who is not born, and who does not die. Hence Guru Nanak's faith stands alone and separate: and is not part of the *Bhakti* Movement.

In both the Hindu schools of the *Bhakti* Movement, it is enjoined that there is no place for idol-worship, yet idols of Krishna and Rama have been set up in all temples without

exception and are worshipped. Guru Nanak is quite definite on this point.

ਬਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ।

ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਜੋਇ ।

God cannot be set up like an idol in the temple.

He cannot be created. He is Himself the immaculate one.

In place of deities and idols, what do the Sikhs worship or, in other words, to whom do they offer their devotion? They offer their devotion to the *Shabad* or Word and God's Name. The *Shabad* is the treasure-house of all mystic knowledge; it provides the meaning and purpose of life and its relationship to God. The ultimate goal of life is the merging of the finite into the Infinite and God's Name serves the means to that goal. His Name is the finest expression of *bhakti*, for it embodies in itself *simran* and devotion. We agree that mysticism of His name is much more difficult than that of idol-worship, but this is the way of Guru Nanak and, therefore for us the only way. Here, His Name became synonymous with *Bhakti* and devotion.

*Bhakti* expressed itself in another way in the Sikh religion. Since *bhakti* is devotion to God alone, it generates respect and regards for all those who are occupied in similar pursuits, whatever be their religion. The mind is rid of fanaticism; it is free from hate and anger; it becomes catholic in its approach to other faiths. Guru Nanak was conscious of the two cultural streams, Hinduism and Islam that flowed side by side in the country and he sought to build bridges between them. He also advised members of both the communities to become better Hindus and better Muslims; he never sought to convert them to his own faith. Kabir was the only other *bhagat* who had a similar approach to the two religions.

Some schools of the *Bhakti* Movement indulged in dance and dramatic performances to evoke the ecstasy and frenzy among people. Guru Nanak felt that dance and drama had no place in spiritual mysticism. Though considerable importance is given to *sangat* and *sangeet* in the Sikh religion with a view to establishing a separate existence of the organization and evoking a feeling of brotherhood among its members, essentially *bhakti* and meditation are individualistic in character. In the final analysis, each man must seek his own salvation.

Bhakti for Guru Nanak was a form of mysticism. To this mysticism, he added the idea of ethical life. The purity of life is the first pre-requisite of spiritual advancement. Indefatigably, he stressed the message of detachment and self-surrender ; the inculcation of social virtues and the living of a pure and untarnished life. Life should be free from egoism and be based on *sat* or truth. Truth and fear of God have been preached by Guru Nanak as the noblest of virtues. *Bhakti* expresses itself in a life as love, compassion, freedom from fear, freedom from hate, and influence every action of human life. It is the source of man's physical and spiritual strength. The whole history of the Sikhs is a witness to this aspect of *bhakti*; the martyrdoms of some of the Sikh Gurus and the willing martyrdoms of innumerable Sikhs later was an expression of the belief in the potency of God's Name, which is synonymous with *bhakti*. So long as *bhakti* and the virtues associated with it express themselves in our lives, we shall rise in the estimation of the world, but when we falter from this truth, our decline will begin. In short, *bhakti* is a complete integration of spiritual and physical force, a combination of action and contemplation. Permit me to end this series of lectures with the worlds of Guru Nanak which, in a nutshell, give us a complete philosophy of life. how life can be made happier, richer, nobler by deeply dyeing ourselves in the colour of the Lord's Name, by leading an ethical life, by destroying the ego and by our love and devotion to the Lord. This will bring to an end the cycle of births and deaths and merge the finite into Infinite.

ਜਪ ਤਪ ਕਾ ਬੰਧੁ ਬੰਡੁਲਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਲੰਘਹਿ ਵਹੇਲਾ ।  
 ਨਾ ਸਰਵਹੁ ਨਾ ਉਛੁਲੈ ਐਸਾ ਪੰਥ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ।  
 ਤੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੰ ਜੀਠੜਾ ਰਤਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਚਲਾ ਸਦ ਰੰਗ ਢੋਲਾ  
 ਸਾਜਨ ਚਲੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ ਕਿਉ ਮੇਲਾ ਹੋਈ ।  
 ਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਗੰਠੜੀਐ ਮੇਲੇਗਾ ਸੋਈ ।  
 ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੋਇ ਨ ਵੀਛੁੜੈ ਜੇ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੋਈ ।  
 ਆਵਾਗਉਣੁ ਨਿਵਾਰਿਆ ਹੈ ਸਾਰਾ ਸੋਈ ।  
 ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰਿ ਨਿਵਾਰਿਆ ਸੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਚੋਲਾ ।  
 ਗੁਰਬਚਨੀ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸਹ ਕੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬੋਲਾ ।  
 ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹੈ ਸਹੇਲੀਹੋ ਸਹੁ ਖਰਾ ਪਿਆਰਾ ।  
 ਹਮ ਸਹ ਕੇਰੀਆ ਦਾਸੀਆ ਸਾਰਾ ਖਸਮੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ



Build thou the boat of contemplation and self-control that thou goest accross unobstructed.

As if there were no sea to cross, nor no tide to contend with; such would be thy easy path.

O Love, Thy Name, like madder, dyeth the skirt (of my body) in Thy eternal colour.

Friends have gone out in search of their love; O how shall they meet their love ?

Yea, only if they have gathered merit, the Lord will unite them to Himself,

Lo, then one is separated not, if one is really united :

And then cease one's comings and goings; Yea, such is the truth of our Lord.

He who overcometh his ego; he sticheth such a robe :

And he, through his *guru's* word, gathereth the

Nectar-Word of the Lord.

Sayeth Nanak, "O my mates, our Lord is loveable forsooth.

And, we are His maid-servants, and eternally true is our Lord.

In the end, let me express my grateful thanks to you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, and to your colleagues and all my friends here for the patient hearing given to me during the course of these lectures. Mine is the beginning of a journey on a long road and I hope God will grant me courage to travel some distance. But it is a university like yours that I look forward to the production of good books throwing light on the philosophy and compositions of Guru Nanak. May you all succeed in the task you have taken upon yourselves.