

NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY FOR WORLD PEACE

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ABSTRACT

The peoples of our globe hate each other, because of their region or religion and of differences in their economy. Science has contributed a lot for the betterment of human life but played insignificant role to keep peace in the world. Although the religions are much older than the science, they have also failed to bring peace for the humanity. I envisage that if science and religion are put together peace can be established on this globe. The Nanakian philosophy, having universal acceptability, has much to add to bring peace on this tiny planet, the earth.

INTRODUCTION

It has always been that peoples hate each other because of being inhabitants of different regions of the globe (even belonging to the same religion), because of different religions, and because of their different races. And there seems to be no solution for this big problem of hatred so far. However, the man has controlled the most dangerous diseases and has evolved nutritious food and wonder drugs through genetically engineered plants, animals and microorganisms to increase his life span. He has also created many automatic machines and robots to make his life easier. He has also advanced so much in other sciences especially in the fields of computer and space technology that he is trying to travel deep into the space, i.e., to the other planets of our solar system or to the other solar systems of our own galaxy, the Milky Way, and hoping to travel beyond our galaxy into other galaxies of the universe. Voyager I and Voyager II fired into space during 1977 have already crossed our solar system and now heading toward the unlimited space in the universe. Nobody knows where they are going to land [28]. Recent landing of a rover on the surface of Mars has shattered many mysteries about this planet. On the other hand the man has failed to create peace and global fellowship on this tiny planet, the earth, either through science or religion. It might be due to the fact that the religious people consider science as the enemy of religion, because science has challenged many religious notions in the past, and scientists undermine the role of the religion in development of morality in the human beings. However, Albert Einstein [25] had a different view about science and religion:

**"Religion without science is blind.
Science without religion is lame."**

But to me it appears that if science and the religion can go hand in hand to create one universal order, peace

can be achieved on the earth.

DISCUSSION

Sikhism

Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak during the 15th century, is the youngest, scientific, and logical religion of the world. Yet it originated at a time when the modern nations and ideas resulting from development in the fields of science, technology, economics, psychology, etc. had not yet become part of the world

Guru Nanak revolted against every type of discrimination based on the creed, color, country of origin, social status, sex, ...

consciousness. The philosophy of Guru Nanak was practised, disseminated, and was also enriched by the Sikh Gurus of the house of Nanak, Nanakian School. The philosophy of Nanakian School incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [1], the holy scripture of the Sikhs, is found to be true in the light of modern science and are applicable during the Science Age (Space Age/Information Age) [24]. The philosophy of Nanakian School is termed as *Nanakian philosophy*.

Nanakian Philosophy

I would like to present a part of Nanakian philosophy that would help to lead a moral life that would, consequently, lead towards achieving peace on the earth:

1. **The Earth:** Not going into the details of origin of the universe according to *Gurbani* - the words of the Sikh Gurus of the Nanakian School [2, 3, 4], I would come directly to the point where the man and the earth are concerned. While this earth was being formed as a planet of our solar system, the Almighty created necessary environment on the

earth to sustain different types of lives [5]. As we know at this time earth is the only planet of our solar system where life is found. However, the possibilities of similar or better type of life on other planets of other solar systems of our galaxy or of other galaxies cannot be ruled out [27], because it is beyond our all available technology to reach on such planets and beyond our comprehension to visualize life on the other planets. In this respect we should be grateful to the Almighty for giving us a chance to be a part of the life on the earth, the tiny planet in one of the billions solar systems of our galaxy, the Milky Way.

The Almighty, after creating the earth and the necessary environment for sustaining life, declared the earth as the **realm of justice**, where the actions (good or evil) will be considered. (The word, "*Dharmsaal*", used in *Gurbani* has been interpreted as the realm of justice here, because the word "*dharam*" at many places in *Gurbani* means laws of the Almighty set to control the whole universe). In this realm of justice everybody will be adjudged and honored or punished according to their deeds [5]. The importance of air, water and earth; and of days and nights have been expressed as the Guru (teacher), father, and the mother Nature, and the nurse, respectively, for sustaining life on this planet [6]

2. **Status of Man Among the Living Organisms:** In *Gurbani* the status of man among the living organisms on this earth has been declared as of the highest order developed through long evolutionary processes [7, 8]. Thus, the man is the only organism who has the consciousness to realize the Almighty and can differentiate between good and evil.
3. **Oeness and Sameness:** Guru Nanak preached the Oeness, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Omniscience of the Almighty and the sameness of all the peoples [9, 10].
4. **Truthful living:** Everybody understands that the truth is of the highest order in the morality but Guru Nanak emphasized that it is actually the truthful living that is highest of all [11].
5. **Egoism/Egotism:** According to the Nanakian philosophy egoism/egotism is the biggest factor in human nature that leads him toward his destruction. To shed or to eliminate the nature of egoism in oneself is the greatest achievement of all for self improvement and to maintain peace with others [12].
6. **Casteism:** If basically we all are same, being the creation of the only One, the Almighty, then why

should we have any hatred among ourselves. Guru Nanak realized that this hatred was mostly due to caste-system prevailing before and during his time. Most scholars say that Guru Nanak revolted against the caste-system, in fact, he revolted against every type of discrimination based on the creed, color, country of origin, social status, sex, etc. [13]. Although we may find slight morphological differences [26] in peoples of different regions of the world, which developed due to the different ecology of those regions, but we all share the same physiological processes to maintain the life and were created by the same one Father, the Almighty. Most probably we all might have one same mother originated somewhere in Africa according to the latest research on the origin of man.

7. **Jealousy:** Jealousy is another factor of hatred between two groups, between two communities, between two religions, between two races, between two nations, between two countries etc. Most of the time the jealousy is due to the economic factor that one group is more prosperous than the others because of their special traits and virtues. Instead of feeling jealous that creates hatred, that group should develop friendship with the other groups to raise them to their levels. The Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan, explained that jealousy could be controlled by keeping the company of good peoples. Once we get rid of jealousy then nobody is an enemy or a stranger for us [14].
8. **Tolerance:** Once it becomes clear about the Oeness of the Almighty and sameness of the whole humanity; and we eliminate the egoism; follow the path of truthful living; and overcome the jealousy then developing fellowship of humanity would be easier if we have a spirit of tolerance. Tolerance of the ideas of other religions is the basic characteristic of Sikhism. During its evolution from the 15th century to the early 18th century (1469-1708), Sikhism was in direct contact with two major religions, Hinduism and Islam, of the Indian subcontinent. Therefore, the tolerance of these two particular religions is one of the principles of the philosophy of the Nanakian School. Guru Nanak declared that the highest class (*Aai Panthi*) is the humanity itself [15]. Guru Nanak also instructed that one should not fall into the rituals of meditations and visit holy places but to practice the *Gurbani* to become morally a perfect citizen [16].
9. **Multiculturalism:** Guru Nanak developed a novel system of sharing with other communities that may be equated to the multiculturalism adopted in Canada. Most of the peoples take the multiculturalism in a very narrow term as taking part in folk

dances, social functions, religious holidays, etc. of other communities. Guru Nanak emphasized that one should not only share the material or cultural values of other communities, but should also adopt their virtues [17].

- 10. Non-violence:** The politeness and humility are the major factors that lead to the development of the principle of non-violence. Thus, cultivation of politeness and humility is the first and foremost characteristic of Sikhism [18, 19, 20, 21].

On the above principles the philosophy of non-violence was developed in Sikhism. This philosophy was not only developed by the Sikh Gurus merely for teaching to the Sikhs but to be practised by them (the Gurus) and by the Sikhs. Therefore, the Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan, preferred to be sacrificed to keep up the principle of non-violence rather to take up arms when he was ordered to change the teachings of Sikh Gurus incorporated into the AGGS to favor the rulers of that time. Similarly the Ninth Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur, sacrificed himself rather to take up arms to resolve the problem of human rights that the then rulers were violating. Since then, the Sikhs have maintained this tradition of non-violence. There are many examples of observance of non-violence for resolving religious issues with the government in the history of the Sikhs. Some glaring examples of observance of non-violence by the Sikhs are found during the struggle of independence of India. From a practical point of view the Sikh Gurus and the Sikhs were the first to adopt non-violence to resolve the differences between the rulers and the ruled.

- 11. Fearing of None and Threatening to None:** Sometimes the politeness, humility and practising of non-violence by a particular nation or a community are taken as their weakness to be exploited by the other deceitful nation or community. Thus, to safeguard the so-called weakness, the Ninth Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur, established the following two principles: The first principle is that one should be strong enough not to be afraid of anyone and being strong, should not threaten others [21]. The second principle is the establishment of power to keep up the above principle to maintain the politeness, humility and peace. The possession of power is also necessary to cut off the fetters of slavery if one falls into it [22].

- 12. Benign Sovereignty:** If everybody abides by the

above principles laid out in the Nanakian Philosophy, it would definitely lead to the development of the benign sovereignty as conceived by the Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan, under which the whole humanity would live in peace on this planet, the earth [23].

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded from the above discussion that Nanakian philosophy has universal acceptability. If it is adopted by every human being and sooner we all sit together to establish fellowship of the humanity by resolving our differences and hatred peace can be attained on this earth. Ultimately it would result reduction in the expenditure on arm race. The saving thus accrued, could be spent on science and religion to exploit their potentials for the welfare of the humanity. Consequently, the humanity can be easily saved from its extinction from the atomic warfare and can live peaceful forever.

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In *Gurbani* the status of man among the living organisms on this earth has been declared as of the highest order developed through long evolutionary processes.

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