

HUKUM (ਹੁਕਮ) THE LAWS OF NATURE/UNIVERSE

ARTICLE

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INTRODUCTION

The word 'HUKM' (ਹੁਕਮ = the basic word as spelled in *Gurmukhi Lipi*) has been used extensively in the Gurbani, incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). [1] 'Hukm' is an Arabic word [2], which means *command, edict, allow/permission*. According to Punjabi-English Dictionary [3], Bhai Kahn Singh [4], and Dr Gurcharan Singh [5] 'Hukm' means *order, command, decree, judgment, decision, sanction, God's Will, and Divine Law*. And 'Hukmi' (ਹੁਕਮੀ) is also an Arabic word, which means *the one who orders*. In Punjabi it also means *the one in authority to issue 'Hukm'(order), God, allow/permission*.

ਹੁਕਮ (HUKM) IN NANAKIAN PHILOSOPHY?

This word, ਹੁਕਮ (*Hukm*) starts appearing on the very first page of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) in the first stanza of JAP bani and it continues to appear again and again throughout the AGGS. It appears on the first page of the AGGS as follows:

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ¹ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ² ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ³ ॥

Kiv sachīārā hoīai kiv kūṛṛai ṭutai pāl.

ਹੁਕਮਿ⁴ ਰਜਾਈ⁵ ਚਲਣਾ⁶ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ⁷ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥

Hukam rajāī chālṇā Nānak likhīā nāl. ||1||

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 1, ਪੰਨਾ 1.

Guru Nanak has two questions in his first phrase:

1. How to become ਸਚਿਆਰਾ¹ (truthful)? And
2. How to break the line (series) of lies² (ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ³)?

ABSTRACT

ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

Hukmai andar sabh ko bahar hukam na koie. Every action and reaction in this Universe are going on under the Laws of Nature/Universe nothing is out of these laws.

Guru Nanak

Scientists aim to uncover the immutable laws that govern reality, and in doing so they must reject the notion that divine will, or for that matter human will, plays a role that would violate this cosmic causality.

Albert Einstein

The answer to these questions is given by him in the next phrase:

ਹੁਕਮਿ³ ਰਜਾਈ⁴ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥

Hukam rajāī chālṇā Nānak likhīā nāl. ||1||

There are different interpretations by different theologians. However, the most appropriate interpretation can be achieved only if we can interpret the first phrase of stanza # 1 correctly:

ਸੋਚੈ¹ ਸੋਚਿ² ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ³ ਲਖ⁴ ਵਾਰ ॥

Sochāi sochī na hováī je sochī lakh vār.

One cannot purify oneself¹ or one's mind² or attain peace of mind by physical cleansing¹ of body or by performing various rituals¹ even if one cleans the body³ for hundreds of thousands of times⁴.

Linking the above theme in the first phrase, therefore, I have interpreted the last two phrases of stanza # 1 as follows:

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ¹ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ² ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ³ ॥

Kiv sachīāārā hoāīai kiv kūrhai tūtai pāl.

ਹੁਕਮਿ⁴ ਰਜਾਈ⁵ ਚਲਣਾ⁶ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ⁷

ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥

Hukam rajāī chālṇā Nānak likhīā nāl.

॥1॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 1, ਪੰਨਾ 1.

Question:

How can one achieve purification of body and of mind¹ (achieve peace of mind¹)?

And how can one break² through the line³ (series) of lies (the vicious circle)?

Nanak answers:

Purification and peace of mind can be achieved, and vicious circle can be broken by understanding⁵ and following⁶ the Laws of Nature⁴, ordained⁷ right in the beginning of Universe.

AGGS, Jap 1, p 1.

In the first stanza of JAP bani Guru Nanak is talking about the purification of mind, which is full of illusions and delusions built up by a series (line - ਪਾਲ) of lie after lie. Once one understands the *Hukm* (Laws of Nature) then one can find the way to break the vicious circle (of illusions and delusions) built on lie after lie. This is the method, which has been recommended by Guru Nanak to achieve purification of mind and to attain peace of mind.

ਹੁਕਮ (*Hukm*) as Laws of Nature

The word '*hukm*' used in the first Stanza of JAP has further been explained as Laws of Nature/Universe by Guru Nanak in the second stanza of JAP as follows:

ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਰੇਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ² ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ³

ਜਾਈ ॥

Hukmī hovan ākār hukam na kahiā jāī.

ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਰੇਵਨਿ ਜੀਅ⁴ ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਮਿਲੈ

ਵਡਿਆਈ⁵ ॥

Hukmī hovan jīā hukam milai vadiāī.

Everything is appearing² according to the Laws of Nature/Universe¹, which¹ is not easy to explain³, how.

Similarly, different lives³ are appearing according to these laws¹ and one gets inherited characters⁵ according to these laws¹.

ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਉਤਮੁ⁶ ਨੀਚੁ⁷ ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਲਿਖਿ⁸ ਦੁਖ⁹

ਸੁਖ¹⁰ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ¹¹ ॥

Hukmī uṭam nīch hukam likh dukh sukh pāīāh.

ਇਕਨਾ¹² ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਬਖਸੀਸ¹³ ਇਕਿ¹⁴

ਹੁਕਮੀ¹ ਸਦਾ¹⁵ ਭਵਾਈਅਹਿ¹⁶ ॥

Ikṇā hukmī bakhsīs ik hukmī sadā bhavāīāh.

According to one's inherited characteristics^{1,8} one becomes a good⁶ or evil⁷ person; and pains⁹ (problems) and pleasures¹⁰ are happening¹¹ according to these laws¹.

According to these laws¹ some¹² are free¹³ from troubles with one's good actions; and some¹⁴ are always¹⁵ entrapped into the vicious circle¹⁶ because of their wrong actions

ਹੁਕਮੈ¹ ਅੰਦਰਿ¹⁷ ਸਭੁ¹⁸ ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ¹⁹ ਹੁਕਮੀ¹

ਨ ਕੇਇ²⁰ ॥

Hukmai andar sabh ko bāhar hukam na koē.

ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ¹ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ²¹ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ²² ਕਰੈ²³

ਨ ਕੇਇ ॥੨॥

Nānak hukmai je bujhai tā haūmai kahai na koē. ॥2॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 2, ਪੰਨਾ 1.

Nanak says:

*Everything¹⁸ is under¹⁷ the Laws of Nature/Universe¹, Nothing²⁰ is in outside¹⁹ the laws of Nature¹.

If one can realize²¹ the above fact of Laws of Nature/Universe¹, Then one can get rid²³ of egoism²²/egotism.

AGGS, Jap 2, p 1.

1. ਹੁਕਮੀ (*Hukm*): has been interpreted as law by Gurcharan Singh [5] and it also means 'who has the authority to issue order'. But here it means 'Laws of Nature/Universe'.

2 ਹੁਕਮੈ (*Hukmay*) also means 'Laws of Nature/Universe'.

In this stanza of JAP bani Guru Nanak has confirmed that ਹੁਕਮ (*Hukm*) is the order/law (Laws of Nature/Universe). He further emphasizes that every action and reaction (process) or anything that is happening in this Universe and in all the living beings are governed under the Laws of Nature/Universe. Consequently, nothing can happen outside of these laws. Therefore, ਹੁਕਮ (*Hukm*) means 'Laws of Nature' (also called 'Laws of Universe').

It is generally accepted that our Universe came into existence according to the Big Bang theory. Immediately after the Big Bang the laws of Nature/Universe were appearing. Now every action in the whole Universe is going on under these laws. Guru Nanak has explained ਭੈ (*Bhai*) which is generally interpreted as 'fear', in fact, it represents the ਹੁਕਮ (*Hukm*) – the

Laws of Nature/Universe as explained in the following stanza:

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਵਣੁ² ਵਹੈ³ ਸਦਵਾਉ⁴ ॥

Bhāi vich pavaṇ vahai sadvā=ō.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਲਖ⁵ ਦਰੀਆਉ⁶ ॥

Bhāi vich chalhē lakh dārī=ā=ō.

Under the Laws of Nature/Universe¹, air² always⁴ blows³, and hundreds of thousands⁵ of rivers⁶ flow.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਅਗਨਿ⁷ ਕਢੈ ਵੇਗਾਰਿ⁸ ॥

Bhāi vich agan kadhāi vegār.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ⁹ ਦਬੀ¹⁰ ਭਾਰਿ¹¹ ॥

Bhāi vich dhartī dabī bhār.

The energy⁷ performs different works⁸ and the Earth⁹ is staying¹⁰ at its place (in Solar System) according

to its weight¹¹ (its Gravity) according to the Laws of Nature/Universe¹.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਇੰਦੁ¹² ਫਿਰੈ¹³ ਸਿਰ¹⁴ ਭਾਰਿ¹⁴ ॥

Bhāi vich ind firai sir bhār.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਾਜਾ¹⁵ ਧਰਮ¹⁶ ਦੁਆਰੁ¹⁷ ॥

Bhāi vich rājā dharam du=ār.

The clouds¹² move¹³ up in the sky as if on their heads¹⁴ according to the Laws of Nature/Universe¹, and the so-called Dharm¹⁶ Raja¹⁵ (mythical king of death and judgement) is also under the Laws of Nature/Universe¹

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੂਰਜੁ¹⁸ ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਚੰਦੁ¹⁹ ॥

Bhāi vich sūraj bhāi vich chand.

ਕੋਹ²⁰ ਕਰੋੜੀ²¹ ਚਲਤੁ²² ਨ ਅੰਤੁ²³ ॥

Koh karorī chalaṭ na ant.

The Sun¹⁸ and the Moon (planets)¹⁹ are moving²² tens of millions²¹ of miles²⁰ under the Laws of Nature/Universe¹.

Please look at the following figure1 about the position of our Sun in our galaxy, Milky Way, and the speed with which the Sun along with its Planets travel around the center of the galaxy at the end of this sabd.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਿਧ²⁴ ਬੁਧ²⁵ ਸੁਰ²⁶ ਨਾਥ²⁷ ॥

Bhāi vich sidh budh sur nāth.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਡਾਣੇ²⁸ ਆਕਾਸ²⁹ ॥

Bhāi vich āḍāṇe ākās.

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੋਧ³⁰ ਮਹਾਬਲ³¹ ਸੂਰ³² ॥

Bhāi vich jodh mahābal sūr.

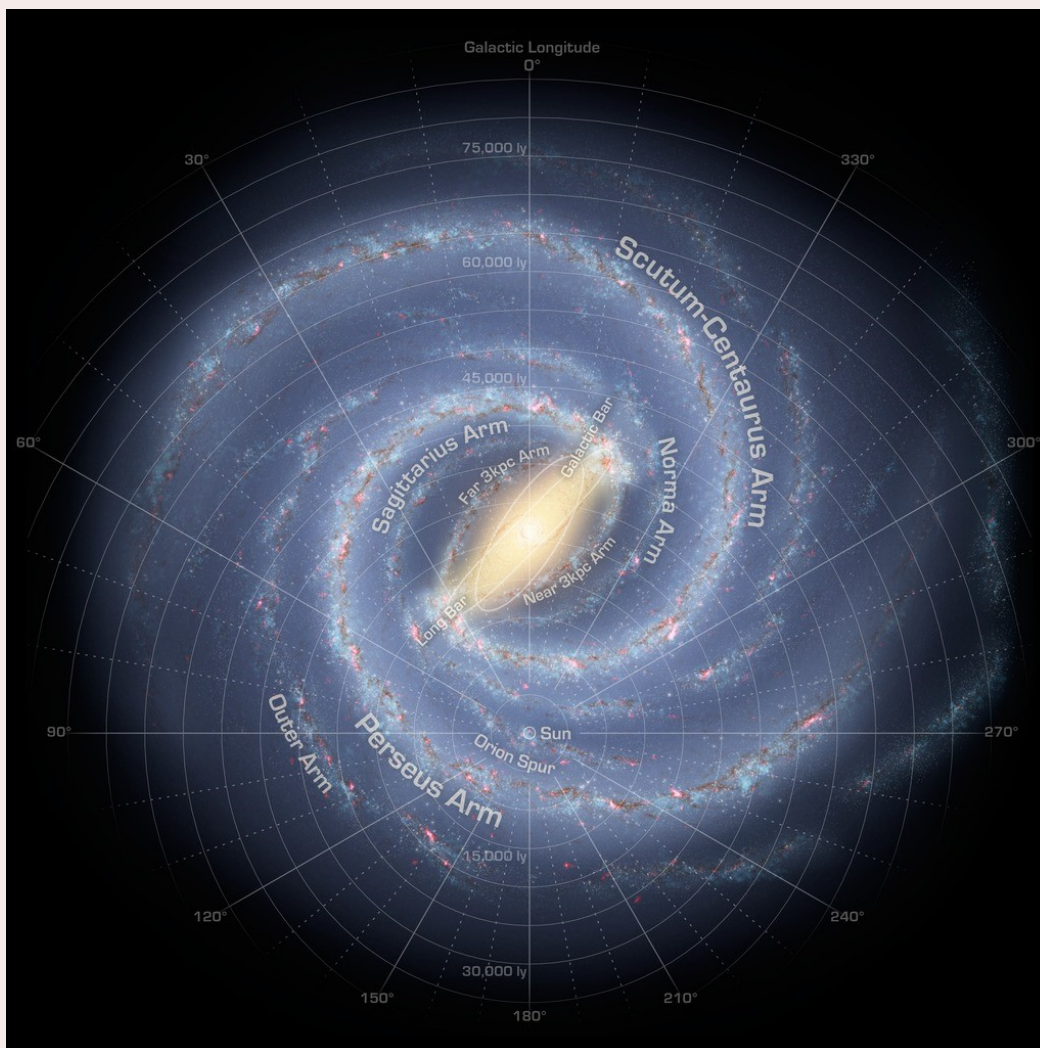


Figure 1. Our Sun in our Milky Way. Milky Way Courtesy NASAJPL-Caltech. ssc2008-10b1

The Siddhas²⁴, Buddhas²⁵, Deities²⁶ and the Naths²⁷ are all under the Laws of Nature/Universe¹.

The sky is hanging under the Laws of Nature/Universe.

(In fact, the sky is not an entity but the blue color we see is because of the Sunlight passing through a thick layer of air around the Earth.)

ਭੈ¹ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਵਹਿ³³ ਜਾਵਹਿ³⁴ ਪੂਰ³⁵ ॥

Bhai vich āvahi jāvēh pūr.

ਸਗਲਿਆ³⁶ ਭਉ³⁷ ਲਿਖਿਆ³⁸ ਸਿਰਿ ਲੇਖੁ³⁹ ॥

Sagliā bhāo likhiā sir lekḥ.

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਭਉ⁴⁰ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ⁴¹ ਸਚੁ⁴² ਏਕੁ⁴³ ॥੧॥

Nānak nirbhāo nirankār sach ek. ||1||

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 464.

Some new lives³⁵ are being born³³ and some are dying (disappearing)³⁴ under the Laws of Nature/Universe¹.

Everybody and everything (the whole world)³⁶ are under the laws of Nature/ Universe³⁷ as if these laws were written³⁸ in their head³⁹ (meaning inherited).

Nanak says:

The “One and Only⁴³, without any form⁴¹, is not under any law⁴⁰ and exists forever⁴².

AGGS, M 1, p 464.



Figure 2. This true-color image shows North and South America as they would appear from space 35,000 km (22,000 miles) above the Earth. Image created by Reto Stöckli, Nazmi El Saleous, and Marit Jentoft-Nilsen, NASA GSFC

Our sun lies near a small, partial arm called the Orion Arm, or Orion Spur, located between the Sagittarius and Perseus arms. The Sun with its planets travels at an average speed of 828,000 km/h. Even at this rapid speed, it would take about 230 million years to travel all the way around the Milky Way. Our Sun (with its Earth and other planets) is about 250,000 light years from the center of our Galaxy, Milky Way. [6]

The earth rotates once every 23 hours, 56 minutes and 4.09053 seconds, called the sidereal period, and its circumference is roughly 40,075 kilometers. Thus, the surface of the Earth at the equator moves at a speed of 460 meters per second--or roughly 1,000 miles per hour. [7]

Finally, Guru Nanak says:

ਏਕੈ¹ ਹੁਕਮੁ² ਵਰਤੈ³ ਸਭ⁴ ਲੇਈ⁵ ॥

Ēko hukam varṭai sabh loī.

ਏਕਸੁ⁶ ਤੇ ਸਭ⁷ ਓਪਤਿ⁸ ਹੋਈ ॥੭॥

Ēkas ṭe sabh opat hoī. ||7||

Same¹ Laws of Nature/Universe² are operating³ in every celestial body⁴ (including the Earth) of the Universe⁵.

And everything⁷ appeared⁸ from that One and Only the Infinite⁶ (ੴ - Singularity).

AGGS, M 1, p 223.

The most important message of Guru Nanak, to be noted in our above discussion, is that everything is happening according to the Laws of Nature in the Universe. Therefore, there is no chance of performance of any miracle by anybody on this earth since what is to be done must be done under these laws.

Carl Sagan says:

"... if by 'God' one means the set of physical laws that govern the Universe, then clearly there is such God. This God is emotionally unsatisfying... it does not make much sense to pray the law of gravity." [8]

(Dawkins, Richard. 2006. The God Delusion. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, p 19.)

It means even the Nature (the God) cannot break its laws. In this respect, Isaacson [9] reported the views of Einstein that science could not accept a deity who could meddle at whim in the events of his creation as follows:

Einstein says:

"The main source of the present-day conflict between the spheres of religion and of science lies in this concept of a personal God."

Isaacson [9] further reported that:

"For some people, miracles serve as the evidence of God's existence. For Einstein it was absence of miracle that reflected divine providence. The fact that the world was comprehensible, that it followed laws, was worthy of awe."

Einstein writes about scientists according to Isaacson [9]:

"Scientists aim to uncover the immutable laws that govern reality, and in doing so they must reject the notion that divine will, or for that matter human will, plays a role that would violate this cosmic causality."

I would ask readers to visualize the above discussion. Is it not that what Einstein (1879-1955) and other scientists are saying has been said by Guru Nanak (1469-1539) about 340 years before Einstein? The irony is that it is difficult for some Sikh theologians, who are under heavy

burden of ancient philosophy and constrained by its parameters, to accept this fact that the nature cannot break its own laws to perform miracles for any God or deity or spiritual person. Any so-called miracle is the delusion of the mind, i.e., ignorance fostered by dust of accumulated falsehood, distorting reality.

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