

The IUS Research Monograph #6

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

by
Prof. Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD
Dr. Kulbir Singh Thind, MD

Edited by
Mr. Jesse Schell



INSTITUTE FOR UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM
4418 Rue Martin-Plouffe
Laval, Quebec, H7W5L9
Canada

Institute for Understanding Sikhism

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Conduct research on Sikhism and Sikh Scriptures (Gurbani).**
- 2. Promote intellectual exchange of ideas and research through seminars conferences and invited talks.**
- 3. Publish peer reviewed research journal, "Understanding Sikhism -The Research Journal" online.**
- 4. Publish books and monographs on Sikhism and Gurbani.**
- 5. Collaborate with other non-profit educational institutions on research on Sikhism and Gurbani.**
- 6. Engage with inter-faith organizations to promote a better understanding among different faith groups.**

The IUS Research Monograph #6

JAP
The Verses of
Guru Nanak

by
Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD
Dr Kulbir Singh Thind, MD

Edited by
Mr Jesse Schell



INSTITUTE FOR UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM

4418 Rue Martin-Plouffe
Laval, Quebec H7W 5L9
Canada

Copyright © Devinder Singh Chahal

All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without permission

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

Key words:

*Jap, Japji, Sikhism, Gurbani, Nanakian
Philosophy*

ISBN 978-0-9734291-5-2

First Electronic Edition: 2016



Published by:
**INSTITUTE FOR
UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM**
4418 Rue Martin-Plouffe,
LAVAL, Quebec, Canada, H7W5L9

Phone: +1 450-681-1254
Email: Sikhism@iusCanada.com
Website: www.iusCanada.com

*Dedicated to
The Inquisitive
Minds to explore the
Philosophy of
Nanak – the founder
of Sikhism.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr Kulbir Singh Thind allowing the production of Gurbani and its transliteration in Roman alphabet from his Web site, www.srigranth.org that facilitated me in preparing this monograph for the interpretation of Gurbani. I would also like to thank Dr Parminder Singh Chahal's efforts for formatting the manuscript in a book form and making it available online at www.iuscanada.com/books/books.html .

Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD
Laval, Quebec, Canada

Table of Contents

FOREWORD	I
INTRODUCTION	V
PREFACE	IX
METHODOLOGY	XIX
SUMMARY	XXXIII
AUTHORS AND EDITOR	XLI
JAP The Verses of Guru Nanak	1
THE COMMENCING VERSE	3
JAP	5
SECTION I	7
STANZA 1	7
STANZA 2	8
STANZA 3	9
STANZA 4	10
STANZA 5-1	11
STANZA 5-2	12
STANZA 6	13
STANZA 7	14

SECTION II	15
STANZA 8	15
STANZA 9	16
STANZA 10	17
STANZA 11	18
SECTION III.....	19
STANZA 12	19
STANZA 13	20
STANZA 14	21
STANZA 15	22
SECTION IV	23
STANZA 16-1	23
STANZA 16-2	24
STANZA 16-3	25
STANZA 16-4	26
SECTION V	27
STANZA 17	27
STANZA 18	28
STANZA 19-1	29
STANZA 19-2	30
SECTION VI	33
STANZA 20	33
STANZA 21-1	34
STANZA 21-2	35

SECTION VII	39
STANZA 23	39
STANZA 24	40
STANZA 25	41
SECTION VIII	43
STANZA 26-1	43
STANZA 26-2	44
STANZA 26-3	45
STANZA 27-1	46
STANZA 27-2	47
STANZA 27-3	49
SECTION IX	51
STANZA 28	51
STANZA 29	52
SECTION X	53
STANZA 30	53
STANZA 31	54
SECTION XI	55
STANZA 32	55
STANZA 33	56
STANZA 34	57

SECTION XII	59
STANZAS # 35-37	59
STANZA #35-1	60
STANZA 35-2	61
STANZA 36-1	62
STANZA 36-2	63
STANZA 37-1	64
STANZA #37-2	65
SECTION XIII	67
STANZA 38	67
SECTION XIV	69
SLOKA 1	69
Sloka	69
JAP The Verses of Guru Nanak	71
COMMENTARY & NOTES THE COMMENCING VERSE.....	73
JAP.....	75
SECTION I	77
STANZA 1	77
STANZA 2	78
STANZA 3	79
STANZA 4	80

STANZA 5-1	81
STANZA 5-2	82
STANZA 6	83
STANZA 7	84
SECTION II	85
STANZA 8	85
STANZA 9	86
STANZA 10	87
STANZA 11	88
SECTION III	89
STANZA 12	89
STANZA 13	90
STANZA 14	91
STANZA 15	92
SECTION IV	93
STANZA 16-1	93
STANZA 16-2	95
STANZA 16-3	97
STANZA 16-4	99
SECTION V	101
STANZA 17	101
STANZA 18	102
STANZA 19-1	103
STANZA 19 -2	104

SECTION VI	105
STANZA 20	105
STANZA 21-1	106
STANZA 21-2	107
STANZA 22	108
SECTION VII	109
STANZA 23	109
STANZA 24	110
STANZA 25	111
SECTION VIII	113
STANZA 26-1	113
STANZA 26-2	114
STANZA 26-3	115
STANZA 27-1	116
STANZA 27-2	117
STANZA 27-3	118
SECTION IX	119
STANZA 28	119
STANZA 29	120
SECTION X	121
STANZA 30	121
STANZA 31	122
SECTION XI	123
STANZA 32	123
STANZA 33	124
STANZA 34	125

SECTION XII	127
STANZAS # 35-37	127
SANTZA 35-1	128
STANZA 35-2	129
STANZA 36-1	130
STANZA 36-2	131
STANZA 37-1	132
STANZA 37-2	133
SECTION XIII	135
STANZA 38	135
SECTION XIV	139
SLOKA 1	139
Sloka	139
REFERENCES	141

FOREWORD

Jap is the most translated *bani* (words). There are some 150 translations of this *bani* in mostly Indian languages and English. Why then do we need yet another translation? Because despite being the most translated, *Jap* remains the least understood *bani*.

Many reasons can be advanced for such a lament, but the primary cause is that the Sikh masses themselves have shrugged their spiritual duty to understand *bani*. Sikhs have by and large mistranslated “*Jap*” to mean “chant.” They have thus reduced spirituality to meaningless chanting of *bani* while waiting for miracles to happen, for Guru Nanak to appear in person or for liberation from the cycles of births and deaths – three outcomes that are ironically alien to the divine wisdom of *Gurbani*.

Sikh academics, theologians and preachers share the rest of the blame. Their contributions notwithstanding, they have generally been unable to free themselves of the powerful hold and lure of Vedic thought in their translations and discourses. There can be no greater dis-service to our Gurus than to see *Gurbani* as being a stamp of approval for Vedic philosophy, concepts, beliefs and rituals.

This is where Prof Devinder Singh Chahal’s work stands out. This book is yet another of his intellectually courageous and spiritually authentic attempts to interpret the *bani* of Guru Nanak scientifically and

logically in order to create an accurate understanding of the Guru's messages. It is refreshing in that the reader is spared even the slightest whiff of Vedic or other *puratan* thought influence throughout the pages of this book.

Professor Chahal applies the rigor of logic, reason and argument as the basis of his interpretation of Jap. His own scientific background and professional life as a scientist have undoubtedly influenced his choice of paradigm and perspective. And in doing so, Professor Chahal makes what I think is the biggest contribution to our understanding of Jap – that this *bani* is a convincing and sound argument (for the human being to link with the Creator) that is presented within the highest precincts of logic and reason.

In his choice of paradigm, Prof Chahal sees and presents Guru Nanak as a philosopher-scientist, a man of Godly wisdom who is in possession of, and applies the full faculties of logic and reason, and one who believes in winning over the hearts and minds of fellow humans through sound, scholarly and convincing discourse. Herein lies, what I think is Prof Chahal's second biggest contribution: he is telling us that Guru Nanak, his philosophy, his Sikhi, his *bani* and the Guru Granth Sahib as a whole is substance that makes for spirituality befitting the 21st century.

For readers who may find it difficult to accept the basic paradigms of this book because they contradict their mystical and magical beliefs about Guru Nanak and Jap that remain deeply embedded in their spiritual

psyches, I ask them to muster their spiritual courage, open their minds and read this book. While such a reader may suffer the shattering of many a long held and cherished belief, such would constitute no real loss, for they would undoubtedly be replaced by intellectually refreshing, spiritually elevating, sacredly sound and believable beliefs about our Guru and Jap. The ultimate result would be an understanding of Guru Nanak and Jap that a modern human mind can relate to, identify with, appreciate, accept and follow in one's daily life.

Jesse Schell in the Introduction chapter of this book opines that the corruption of the original message of *bani* is so deeply imbedded in the current form of Sikhism that there is no hope for reformation.

I tend to disagree. Three reasons can be advanced for such optimism. The first has to do with the collective personas of Generation Y and Z particularly those living outside Punjab whose spiritualities are generally uncorrupted by Vedic influences in the way such influences were intertwined within the DNA of Sikhs of earlier generations. These new generation Sikhs are ready to accept, and indeed demand scientific, rational and logical discourse of Gurbani and one that is devoid of Vedic / *puratan* stuff.

The second has to do with the advent of the internet and the slow but sure replacement of Punjabi with English as the lingua franca of Sikh spiritual discourse. A great deal of Gurbani translations that are Vedic-based are in Punjabi and will become increasingly

unread. The internet allows for the spread of modern spiritual discourse. It also allows for widespread critique of the mystical and un-relatable stuff that is presented as the core of Sikhi.

The third is the advent and growing convictions of scholars like Prof Chahal who recognize such trends and have strived to fill the gap admirably and commendably. And with courage, one must add.

Karminder Singh Dhillon, PhD (Boston)
Head of Expertise Development
National Institute of Public Administration
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
December 6, 2015

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

Guru Nanak was the first guide of what later would become Sikhism. In this role, he would set out his theology and principles for living life effectively.

There is little credible information about Guru Nanak's life; almost everything purported to be about him comes from suspect hagiographical accounts. We have to depend on a scant amount of historically verifiable information. The most important things to know about Nanak are to be found in the *Aad Granth* (*Adi Granth*) the scripture which contains his compositions. Here we find what Guru Nanak thought, believed and taught.

Did Guru Nanak set out to found yet another religion or sect? I seriously doubt it, given the fact that he adamantly preached against religion and religious practices. He spent much of his life travelling, preaching his philosophy to those who would listen. He mixed with the followers of the many different religions of the time, debating, exchanging ideas and refining his own thinking. Later, he founded the Kartapur commune, which operated according to his teachings.

Because of Nanak's preeminent status, the *Aad Granth* begins with his works, first with the *Commencing Verse* and then with *Jap*. These are like the chief jewels in the Aad Granth crown. All that follows in the scripture is often said to be nothing more than an

elaboration on, and exposition of, the Commencing Verse and the Jap bani (verse).

In the Commencing Verse, the Guru outlines a radically new way of looking at what then was known as “God” (having different names in the different religions). Under Guru Nanak’s hand, this God is transitioned from the anthropomorphic deity of the Semitic and Hindu religions to a transcendent/immanent Primal Reality. Guru Nanak’s new description of this deity changes the entire relationship between Creator and creation.

In Jap, Guru Nanak presents two messages. The first is a description of the nature of the Primal Entity, elaborating on the adjectives used in the Commencing Verse. The second message is the explanation of the purpose of life and how to live to achieve it.

The Jap bani is considered by scholars to be a much later composition of Nanak. The theology he expresses in Jap is sophisticated and well thought-out. Such a work as this could only have come from the Guru’s own personal experiences gained over his lifetime and not from any supposed divine revelation. The importance of Jap cannot be overlooked because it contains the summation of Nanak’s philosophy. From the early days of the Sikh movement, it appears that Jap held a prominent place in the daily liturgical life of the community (see the Aad Granth, pages 1- 8).

It continues to hold this same place in the life of devout Sikhs, being recited daily in the morning. It is often

memorized and repeated during the day and night. Without a doubt, in this bani Guru Nanak teaches the futility of religion and religious practices. Yet, today, there are many Sikhs who believe that merely chanting Jap can bring about miracles, and cause other amazing things to happen. In fact, it is said that one doesn't even need to know what the original words in Punjabi and Sanskrit mean; just chanting the original language is enough to work magic. Other Sikhs hold the opinion that just chanting Jap will bring about enlightenment and the release from the rounds of rebirth. Some of this comes from a misunderstanding of the original meaning of Jap; other comes from the Vedic and Semitic religious influences which have overtaken and corrupted Sikhi. If you don't believe me about this, just have a look through the many Sikh Internet sites to prove my point.

There are many, many translations and commentaries on Jap in many different languages. Into this muddle, Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD, has jumped, feet first, in a whole-hearted attempt to bring Sikhi back to the intentions of its first Guru. Relying on his long life as a Sikh, his training as a scientist and his love of the Guru, Prof Chahal has dedicated an enormous amount of energy trying to reform Sikhi by demonstrating the incorrect interpretations of the Aad Granth, and in this case, the Jap of Guru Nanak. Using a sound scholarly approach, he offers both a modern translation, devoid of myth and superstition as well as a short commentary on each section. His dedication to this cause of ridding Sikhi of its false and corrupting parts has put Devinder Chahal on the firing line, but still he soldiers on.

I am proud to have made a contribution – albeit a very small one – to this work. For my part, I think that the corruption of the original message is so deeply imbedded in the current form of Sikhism that there is no hope for a reformation of the current membership. It is my sincerest wish that this humble work will be a welcoming beacon of modern spirituality to the English speaking people in the West, who will then restore the pristine humanistic philosophy of Guru Nanak to its rightful place in the sunlight of today’s world.

Jesse Schell
October 20, 2015
New Zealand

* * * * *

PREFACE

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) laid the foundation of a universally acceptable philosophy for humanity, called “*Sikhi*” (anglicized as “Sikhism”). Today, Sikhism is considered as the fifth-largest faith in the world but it is continuously being misrepresented under the influence of Vedanta and ancient philosophy. Guru Nanak is usually described as a mystic and a miracle worker, who had a mystical experience at the age of 29 when he came out of Vayein rivulet after being missing for three days. Emerging from the water, he proclaimed, “*There is no Hindu; there is no Muslim*”. Chahal et al [1] have refuted such stories in the book, *Nanak: The Guru – Founder of Sikhism*. In this book they emphasize that Guru Nanak was a very keen observer of Nature and human behavior and right from an early age he had started to formulate his philosophy. They also recommend that if someone wants to know about Nanak and his philosophy then one should look for it in his bani (hymns/verses).

Today, Sikhi (Sikhism) has become mystical, esoteric, enigmatic, and ritualistic religion. Because of the misrepresentation of Guru Nanak and his philosophy, Sikhism is either rarely mentioned in discussions of world religions, or, if discussed, it is grouped with Hinduism as one of its sects.

Ishar Singh [2] noticed that the philosophy of Guru Nanak had not been presented to the world prior to 1969, the time of the celebration of his 500th birthday anniversary. He further says that the responsibility perhaps lies on the shoulders of Sikh scholars

themselves who have failed to make adequate efforts to understand his philosophy. If one looks into the efforts of the Sikh scholars during the celebration of the 500th birthday of Guru Nanak one would hardly find any literature propagating the philosophy of Guru Nanak in its true perspective. Chahal [3] was the first who tried to interpret the bani of Guru Nanak scientifically and logically in order to bring out his authentic philosophy. He also gave an academic term, *Nanakian Philosophy*, to the philosophy of Guru Nanak embodied in his bani incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [4].

The Institute for Understanding Sikhism (IUS) has initiated a series of books to present Nanakian Philosophy. In this series, the first book, *Nanak: The Guru – Founder of Sikhism*, provides a short life-sketch of Guru Nanak and some of the basic principles of his philosophy [1].

The second in this series is the current work on the summary of Nanakian Philosophy described in *Jap* of Guru Nanak. *Jap* is such an important part of the verse (*bani*) of Guru Nanak which has been placed at the beginning of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) [4] by Guru Arjan in 1604. Due to its importance in the lives of the Sikhs, *Jap* has been interpreted and translated into many languages by many scholars of various faiths. It is estimated that there are hundreds of such translations since its expression by Guru Nanak sometime during the 15th or 16th century. The irony is that none of these works have convinced the English speaking people of the world, not familiar with the

Punjabi language and culture, of the universal acceptability of his philosophy.

Joginder Singh [5] has listed over 150 such translations mostly in Punjabi and some in Hindi, Urdu, and also many in English about 34 years ago. Joginder Singh has divided early interpretations into five major categories:

1. **School of Meharbaan:**

The main writer is Sodhi Mehrbaan. First interpretation started around 1650-1652. The available interpretation is by Har Ji. First copy appeared in 1707 during Guru Har Rai's time and then second copy appeared in 1827. Interpretations of this school are based on Vedas and *Puranas*.

2. **School of Odasis:**

The main writer is Swami Anand Ghan, the successor of Baba Sri Chand, son of Guru Nanak. They never taught anything other than the bani of Guru Nanak. The interpretation of bani of Guru Nanak started around 1795. His interpretations are also based on Vedas and *Puranas*. *Gurmantra* is "Sat Naam".

3. **School of Nirmalas:**

Kavi Santokh Singh and Pundit Tara Singh Narotum are the main authors. Interpretations are based on Vedas. This school has introduced customs of *Sanatana Dharma*. One sentence is interpreted with more than one different meaning. Rama and Krishna are accepted as *Avtars* (incarnation of God). Burning of incense and

lighting of *ghee* (butter) lamps are considered important in worship.

4. **School of Gianis:**

Interpretations of Bhai Mani Singh and Giani Badan Singh (known as *Faridkot Vala Teeka*) are important ones. Which is fully interpreted according to Vedanta and nothing goes against Vedas in their interpretations.

5. **School of Modern Scholars:**

Interpretation by Bhai Vir Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Prof Sahib Singh, Principal Teja Singh, Dr Mohan Singh and many more contemporary scholars are included in this school. Although these interpretations are much better, still there is a lot of influence of Vedas and *Puranas*.

6. **School of Scientists:**

Dr Hardev Singh Virk, himself a famous scientist, wrote in the FOREWORD for Professor Devinder Singh Chahal's book about this new category of Sikh scientists as follows:

“I may add that Professor Chahal's interpretation falls into the **sixth category** which may be categorized as: **School of Scientists**. His interpretation is unique in some respects and may create reactions in orthodox circles not familiar with scientific approach.” [6]

Now, some Sikh scientists are writing about Sikhi (Sikhism) scientifically and logically for the people of the 21st century. However, Virk is right to say that such work is not easily accepted by those not familiar with the scientific approach. Consequently, many scientists hesitate to interpret the bani of Guru Nanak with the application of scientific information and logic because

the draconian sword of excommunication is always hanging over the heads of Sikh scholars.

Macauliffe [7] was the first Englishman to translate *Jap* and other selected verses from the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS) into English for those not familiar with Punjabi language and culture. He described Guru Nanak's contributions as follows:

“Now there is here presented a religion totally unaffected by Semitic or Christian influence. Based on the concept of unity of God, it rejected Hindu formularies and adopted an independent ethical system, ritual, and standards which were totally opposed to the theological beliefs of Guru Nanak's age and country.” ([8] p- Liv)

Macauliffe took the help of the following professional scholars to interpret selected verses of the AGGS: Bhai Kahn Singh of Nabha as the Chief along with Bhai Nihal Singh and Sant Singh of Sialkot; Bhai Ditt Singh, Gurmukh Singh, Rajinder Singh and Nihal Singh of Lahore; Bhai Sardul Singh Giani, Prem Singh, Fateh Singh and Darbara Singh of Amritsar; Bhai Sant Singh of Kapurthala, Bhai Bhagwan Singh of Patiala and Dasaudha Singh of Ferozpur (14 in number). The proofs of his final work were read by Bhai Kahn Singh, Diwan Lila Ram, Bhai Shankar Dayal, Bhai Hazara Singh, Bhai Sardul Singh, Bhai Ditt Singh, Bhai Bhagvan Singh and others from 1901-1903. [9]

Although he accepted the help from all expert theologians of that time, still he noticed that their

opinions were often widely at odds with one another. At times this situation provoked him to annoyance, anxiety, irritability or distress. Macauliffe's opinion regarding the differing opinions among Sikh theologians was further confirmed when his work was widely acclaimed by the general Sikh community but there were other *gianis* who called the whole thing into question: "*I have met so-called gianis who could perform tours de force with their sacred work, and give different interpretations of almost every line of it.*" [9]

As one can see from the example of Macauliffe, no matter how competent an interpretation and translation of the Gurbani may be, there are always some *gianis* who will find objections to it.

Since there are already many interpretations / translations of *Jap* in Punjabi as well as in English and other languages, the question may be raised: What is the need of another interpretation of *Jap*? Critical analyses of most of the current interpretations of *Jap* indicate that they are heavily dominated by ancient and Vedic philosophies, and mythology to the point that the authentic Nanakian Philosophy [3] has been lost altogether. Even the recent interpretations are based on the old interpretations from the above first five categories. In a couple of interpretations some scientific information and logic have been used to interpret *Jap*, however, we feel that full justification has not been done to represent its originality and uniqueness.

Our first attempt, *Jap: The Essence of Nanakian Philosophy*, published by the Institute for Understanding Sikhism (IUS) in 2003, was based on a scientific and logical interpretation, turned out to be a great success [3]. The current version is being published by keeping in view the increased interest of English speaking people who want to know Guru Nanak and his philosophy.

In 1969, it was the idea of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to bring the philosophy of the *Adi Granth* (Aad Granth) to the notice of English speaking peoples during the celebration of the 500th birthday of Guru Nanak. Thus, UNESCO entrusted this task of translation of selections of the sacred writings of the Sikhs to the Sahitya Akademi (Indian Academy of Letters). Dr Trilochan Singh was the convener of the translators - Trilochan Singh himself, Jodh Singh, Kapur Singh, Bawa Harkrishan Singh and Khushwant Singh. The English translation was revised from the point of view of English style by G. S. Fraser. ([10] – in Preface, UNESCO Sahitya Akademi).

The resulting book, *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, is the part of the Indian Series of the Translations Collection of the UNESCO [10]. Arnold Toynbee, historian and philosopher of history, said that this publication is an important event in the history of the now rapidly increasing contact between different peoples and civilizations in the field of literature, religion, and other provinces of the spiritual life. He further emphasized that it is important that it

should be brought within the direct reach of as many people as possible. ([10] - in Foreword)

If we look into the book of Macauliffe and that of UNESCO, specially designed for the English speaking people of the world, it would appear that both books are also based on Vedantic and ancient philosophies and failed to portray the universal acceptability of Nanakian Philosophy to world philosophers and religious leaders.

We have adopted the same system of presentation of *Jap* of Guru Nanak in a style used by Macauliffe [8] and UNESCO [10] but our interpretation is based upon the specific methodology (explained later) including the application of scientific information and logic.

It is envisaged that some researchers, scholars and general readers may find it difficult to accept certain interpretations because these contradict the well-established concepts which are strongly imprinted on their minds. This is due to the inherent human weakness to react strongly when accepted concepts/interpretations are challenged. People will defend such concepts at all costs even when proven wrong by testing with science and logic – the touchstones of truth.

This occurs because in general, people easily accept to be true that is false, do something that is wrong, and follow the path that is crooked due to lack of genuine and proper information.

ਖੇਟੇ ਕਉ ਖਰਾ ਕਰੈ ਖਰੇ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ॥

Kḥote kaᵋo kḥarā kahai kḥare sār na jāṇai.

ਅੰਧੇ ਕਾ ਨਾਉ ਪਾਰਖੂ ਕਲੀ ਕਾਲ ਵਿਡਾਣੈ ॥੩॥

Andḥe kā nāᵋo pārkhū kalī kāl vidāṇai. ||3||

AGGS, M 1, p 229.

In general people are unable to distinguish between wrong and right.

They call the ignorant person as the appraiser, who determines the authenticity,

This is a practice of this time.

Similarly, Guru Arjan explains same human behaviour as observed by Guru Nanak:

ਝੂਠੁ ਬਾਤ ਸਾ ਸਚੁ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਤੀ ॥

Jḥūṭḥ bāt sā sach kar jāṭī.

ਸਤਿ ਹੋਵਨੁ ਮਨਿ ਲਗੈ ਨ ਰਾਤੀ ॥੨॥

Saṭ hovan man lagai na rāṭī. ||2||

What is false, one takes it to be true. What is truth is not imbibed in one's mind.

AGGS, M 5, p 185.

Due to the above-explained inherent human weakness, Sikhs largely accept the information given in the old writings of the Sikh theologians and historians as true. Moreover, discontented people in general are more inclined to believe in mythical works coated with various allurements for a quick remedy of their problems. There was no dearth of such people then and even now. Now the information given in such writings have been imprinted permanently in their minds. If any tradition, belief, or code, given in such writings, are challenged by some researchers then many devout

Sikhs, *Sants*, *Babas*, *Raagis*, traditional preachers, Sikh theologians, and the Sikh authorities - the so-called custodians of Sikhism, declare such action as a blasphemy of *Gurbani* and Sikhism.

Here *Jap* has been interpreted scientifically and logically for humanity especially for English speaking people who are not familiar with Punjabi language and culture. We also admit here that this is not an ultimate interpretation. Devinder Singh Chahal, the senior author, takes the responsibility if there is anything which goes against the basic principles of Nanakian Philosophy. Nevertheless, we hope someday, someone or some group of scholars in various fields: physical and natural sciences; philosophy, psychology, medicine, astronomy, biology, language, history, law, etc., will bring out better interpretations than this one.

Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD
Kulbir Singh Thind, MD
October 15, 2015
Laval, Québec, Canada

* * * * *

METHODOLOGY

For a proper understanding of *Jap* – the first verse (*bani*) of Guru Nanak, it is necessary to study the methodology; he used to compose his verses to represent his philosophy. The various methods used by Guru Nanak are described briefly as follows.

A. Allegories, Metaphors and Similes:

Guru Nanak has extensively used in his verses allegories, metaphors and similes from ancient epics and mythical works. Therefore, understanding these terms is important for correctly interpreting his verses:

Allegory: the expression, by means of symbolic fictional figures and actions, of truths or generalizations about human existence; an instance (as in a story or painting) of such expression; a symbolic representation.

Metaphor: a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them.

Simile: a figure of speech comparing two unlike things that is often introduced by *like* or *as* (as in cheeks *like* roses).

In many interpretations of Gurbani by some scholars, allegories, metaphors and similes have been considered literally rather than as figures of speech expressions.

Such interpretations take away its real perspective. Thus, the allegoric and metaphoric expressions, and similes used by Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus were considered very carefully while interpreting *Jap* in this book.

Daljit Singh and Kharak Singh [11] also expressed almost the same view on this aspect, when I asked about the *bani* of *Bhagat* and the *bani* of the Sikh Gurus through the Editor, S. Saran Singh, of the Sikh Review, Calcutta:

“The third question is about the myths and stories which find mention in the Guru Granth Sahib. Without meaning any disrespect to anyone, it is known that Ramayana and Mahabharata are among the great epics of the world in which most mythical stories have hardly any historicity. And, yet, these stories being current have their values for the purpose of clarifying religious propositions and making them linguistically understandable to the people who are conversant with them and the concerned idiom. Their reference is mostly symbolic, idiomatic or allegoric, and involves no acceptance of their historical reality.”

For example, in the following phrase the use of allegories and metaphors have been accepted as the fact:

ਗੁਰੁ ਦਰੀਆਉ ਸਦਾ ਜਲੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮੈਲੁ ਹਰੈ ॥
Gur dārīāo sadā jal nirmal miliā dūurmaṭ mail harai.
ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਪਾਇਐ ਪੂਰਾ ਨਾਵਣੁ ਪਸੁ ਪਰੇਤਰੁ ਦੇਵ ਕਰੈ ॥੨॥

Satgur pā^{ai}ai pūrā nāvaṅ pasū pareṭahu dev karai. ||2||
AGGS, M 1, p 1329.

If one does not keep in view the metaphoric and symbolic expressions in the above phrase, the interpretation would be different from its real theme. Interpretation of the above phrase is the best example, where the use of allegories and metaphors used by Guru Nanak were not considered properly by many interpreters. For example, it has been interpreted by Sant Singh Khalsa [12] as follows:

The Guru is the River, from which the Pure Water is obtained forever; it washes away the filth and pollution of evil-mindedness.

Finding the True Guru, the perfect cleansing bath is obtained, which transforms even beasts and ghosts into gods. ||2||

Such interpretations are almost word-by-word literal translations. Therefore, the real message of the verse is lost. Now let us see what would be the interpretation of the same phrase if allegories, metaphors, and similes used by Guru Nanak are considered properly.

ਦਰੀਆਉ (*dariao*), literally means a 'river', is a metaphor for wisdom/philosophy of the Guru (Nanak).
ਨਾਵਣੁ (*navan*), literally means 'bathing' is a metaphor for 'adopted / precticed' the above wisdom/philosophy.
ਪਸੂ ਪਰੇਤਹੁ ਦੇਵ (*Pasu, praet, dev*) are the allegoric/symbolic expressions for persons having instincts of animal, demons, and nobility, respectively.

Now it can be interpreted as follows:

*The Guru's wisdom/philosophy when
adopted/practiced removes evil thoughts.*

*The Guru's wisdom/philosophy when
adopted/practiced*

*completely converts the person, having animal and
demon instincts, into the noblest person of all.*

AGGS, M 1, p 1329.

B. Use of Questioning-Answering System

Guru Nanak often poses a question or a question posed by somebody else in first phrase and then an answer is given in the second phrase. Sometimes the question is in the first part of the verse and then answer is given in the second part of the same verse. However, much of the time it is difficult to distinguish whether a phrase is a question or a normal phrase since such questioning phrase/verse is in poetical form. If this questioning-answering system were not understood properly then it would be difficult to interpret the Gurbani correctly. For example,

Question:

ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਅਾਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ॥

Kiv sachīārā hoīai kiv kūṛhai tṭai pāl.

Question:

*Then, how can one achieve purification (peace) of
mind?*

*And how can one break the vicious circle of lies
(building falsehood over falsehood).*

Answer:

ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥

Hukam rajāī cḥalṇā Nānak likḥiā nāl. ॥1॥

AGGS, Jap 1, p 1.

Nanak says:

One can achieve purification of mind or peace of mind by breaking the vicious circle of lies and by understanding and abiding the established Laws of Nature.

Note: ਹੁਕਮਿ = Laws of Nature/Universe.

Dr Thind [13] has shown this questioning-answering system in *Jap*, and Dr Parminderjit Singh [14] has shown that this system has been used throughout the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS).

C. Use of Practical Methods

Many times very simple methods used almost every day are quoted to explain the philosophy. For example,

ਭਰੀਐ ਹਥੁ ਪੈਰੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ ॥ ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਉਤਰਸੁ ਖੇਹ ॥

ਮੂਤ ਪਲੀਤੀ ਕਪੜੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਦੇ ਸਾਬੁਣੁ ਲਈਐ ਓਹੁ ਧੋਇ ॥

ਭਰੀਐ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਪਾ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ॥ ਓਹੁ ਧੋਪੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ* ॥

Bḥarīai hath pair ṭan deh. Pāṇī dḥoṭai uṭras khēh.

Mūt palīṭī kaparḥ hoē. De sābūṇ laīai oh dḥoē.

Bḥarīai maṭ pāpā kai sang.

Oh dḥopai nāvai kai rang.

In this stanza various practical methods have been explained to cleanse the pollution according to the nature of the objects:

If the hands are soiled with dust, then the cleansing method is the use of simple water.

If clothes are soiled with urine, then the cleansing method is the use of soap.

If the mind is polluted with sin, then the cleansing method is imbibing Naam.*

AGGS, Jap 20, p 4.

*ਨਾਵੈ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ (*nāvai kai rangi*): It is usually interpreted as ‘imbibing in God’ by many authors. But here it means practicing righteousness*.

D. Use of Established Concepts / Ancient Philosophy

There is another method in which Guru Nanak uses pre-established old concepts or notions or ancient philosophy in the beginning of the verse and then at the end of the verse he explains his own philosophy. For example,

ਪਾਤਾਲਾ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਲਖ ਆਗਾਸਾ ਆਗਾਸ ॥

ਓੜਕ ਓੜਕ ਭਾਲਿ ਥਕੇ ਵੇਦ ਕਹਨਿ ਇਕ ਵਾਤ ॥

ਸਹਸ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਕਹਨਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਅਸੁਲੁ ਇਕੁ ਧਾਤੁ ॥

ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੇ ਹੋਇ ਵਿਣਾਸੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਵਡਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪੁ ॥੨੨॥

Pāṭālā pāṭāl lakh āgāsā āgās.

Oṛak oṛak bhāl thake ved kahan ik vāt.

Sahas aṭhārah kahan kaṭebā asulū ik dhāt.

Lekhā hoᵉ ta likīᵉai lekhai hoᵉ viṇās.

Nānak vadā ākhīᵉai āpe jāṇai āp. ||22||

There are hundreds of thousands of netherworlds, and hundreds of thousands of skies.

After great research the Vedas have said it definitely! The Semitic books say that there are eighteen thousand worlds and that is the fact.

However, Nanak says:

It cannot be possible to count (the number of the celestial bodies in the universe) because the accounting person may reach the end of his life during counting, it will still be incomplete.

He further says that (Entity) is the Great who knows the account (of the celestial bodies in the universe). 22. AGGS, Jap 22, p 5.

ਪਾਤਾਲ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਲਖ ਆਗਾਸ ਆਗਾਸ ॥ (Pātālā pātāl lakh āgāsā āgās.)

The above phrase has been literally translated by Manmohan Singh [15] as follows by ignoring the above methodology used by Guru Nanak.

“There are nether worlds below nether worlds and lacs of skies over skies.”

‘ਪਾਤਾਲ’ (*pata*) has been translated as ‘nether worlds’, i.e. the mythical worlds of dead persons. Scientifically, there is no such world of the dead in our solar system or anywhere else. Logically there is also no need for hundreds of thousands (*lacs*) of nether worlds to hold the dead people of this tiny planet, the Earth. The ‘ਆਗਾਸ’ (*agas*) has been translated as ‘sky’. Scientifically there is no sky. What is called sky is an upper atmosphere of the Earth appearing as blue in sunlight. One can divide this atmosphere into different

strata but definitely not into hundreds of thousands (*lacs*) of skies around our planet.

In fact, what one sees out there is space. Scientifically space is: *the three-dimensional expanse in which all matter is located and all events take place, extending in all directions and variously described as extending indefinitely or as finite but immeasurably large* [5]. Therefore, the literal translation of the above phrase does not lead us to the truth. Moreover, this is not the philosophy of Guru Nanak as is erroneously ascribed to him by some scholars. In fact, Guru Nanak is quoting the myth reported in the Vedas as is clear in the next phrase

ਓੜਕ ਓੜਕ ਭਾਲਿ ਥਕੇ ਵੇਦ ਕਹਨਿ ਇਕ ਵਾਤੁ ॥

Oṛak oṛak bhāl thake veḍ kahan ik vāt.)

Similarly, Guru Nanak quotes the Semitic ideas about the worlds in the next phrase:

ਸਹਸ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਕਹਨਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਅਸੁਲੁ ਇਕੁ ਧਾਤੁ ॥

(Sahas aṭhārah kahan kaṭebā asulū ik dhāt.) “Semitic books say that there are 18,000 worlds in the universe.”

After quoting the ancient concepts, notions, or myths available in the literature on the subject, Guru Nanak explains his own philosophy as follows:

ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੇ ਹੋਇ ਵਿਣਾਸੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਵਡਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੈ ਆਪੁ ॥੨੨॥

It cannot be possible to count (number of the celestial bodies in the universe) because the accounting person may reach the end of his life during counting, it will still be incomplete.

He further says that (Entity) is the Great who knows the account (of the celestial bodies in the universe).

AGGS, Jap 22, p 5

DIFFICULTIES UNDERSTANDING BANI

Jap is in poetical form with the minimum number of words without any punctuation; therefore, it becomes difficult to interpret it in its real perspective. Sahib Singh [16] has tried to interpret Gurbani keeping in view this fact and he usually adds extra words in a parenthesis to make the interpretation understandable. Thus, in this book, to make the interpretation easily understandable extra words have also been used and many times they have been put in parentheses.

APPOPRIATE MEANINGS OF WORDS

Before interpreting any phrase, it is necessary to know the most appropriate meanings of the words that convey the theme or philosophy of the whole stanza or verse. To find out the most appropriate meanings of the words the following sources were consulted:

- (i) *Mahan Kosh* by Kahn Singh [17]; GGS [12]
- (ii) *Sri Guru Granth Kosh* by Gurcharan Singh [18];
- (iii) *Sabd Arth* (meanings of words) from *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Darpan* of Sahib Singh [16]; and from *Aad Sri Guru Granth Sahib* of Giani Harbans Singh [19] without being influenced by their interpretations.

1. Use of Etymology

Interpretation of ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ ॥

(Kīṭā pasāo eko kavāo.) ਤਿਸ ਤੇਹੇਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥ (Fis te hoᵉ lakh darīāo.) ਅਗਰਸ, ਜਪੁ16, ਪੰਨਾ 3 is usually interpreted as follows:

You created the vast expanse of the Universe with one word! Hundreds of thousands of rivers began to flow.
(Sant Singh Khalsa)

However, Chahal [20] reported that if we look into the etymological meanings of ਕਵਾਉ (*kawao*) as ਕਵਾ (*Kawa*) which means ‘energy’, or ‘power’ according to Bhai Kahn Singh; ਏਕੋ (*eko*) as ‘one source’; ਦਰੀਆਉ (*Daryao*) as a metaphor for ‘things’; and ਪਸਾਉ (*pasao*) as ‘expansion’ then the above phrase can be interpreted as follows:

The Universe exploded from one source of energy (Singularity) and started to expand. Thereafter many things appeared.

One would notice that it is quite different than that usually accepted by many Sikh theologians.

2. Use of Ontology

Use of ‘ontology’ is another approach to interpret hymns/verses of Guru Nanak.

Ontology is defined as:

The study of existence - the most general branch of metaphysics, concerned with the nature of being.

Encarta Dictionary

The branch of metaphysics that studies the nature of existence or being as such. Dictionary.com

The available literature indicates that no theologian or scientist has been able to prove the “ontology of God”. Almost all the prophets, including Guru Nanak, admit that it is difficult to describe God; however, some have conceptualized the essence of God in various forms of a personal God, which can only be experienced but cannot be described. On the other hand, many scientists and philosophers, plus many Buddhists and Jains, do not accept the existence of God. Guru Nanak is of the view since it is difficult to describe God, therefore, no specific /descriptive name (*Kirtam Naam*) could be assigned to God although he himself has used many such descriptive names as metaphors in his hymns.

According to the study of Chahal [21] Guru Nanak uses a logo to represent God, **ੴ**, which means ‘Singularity’ or as **ਸੁੰਨ** (*Sunn*) or **ਨਿਰਗੁਨ** (*Nirgun*), the state of God in a highly concentrated form of ENERGY which became **ਸਰਗੁਨ** (*Sargun*) – the Nature and/or Universe after the Big Bang. Chahal [21] further says that this leads us to believe that **ੴ** which represents God, is energy. This energy existed before time and space appeared, existed in the past, exists now and will exist in the future- forever (**ਅਿਦ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੇਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥**) Einstein also made a similar statement about energy 400 years after Guru

Nanak: “*Energy cannot be created or destroyed; it can only be changed from one form to another.*” Therefore, ontologically Guru Nanak describes the nature of God as energy and its existence forever and everywhere.

ADDRESSING GOD

For Guru Nanak God is Transcendent Entity. That is ineffable, incomprehensible / un-fathomable (ਅਗੋਚਰ), inaccessible (ਅਗਮ), formless (ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ), infinite (ਬਾਅੰਤੁ), without any fault (ਨਿਰੰਜਨ), etc. Due to these characteristics of God Guru Nanak has not assigned any descriptive/specific name to God [3, 6, 22]. Therefore, in this book God has been represented as an Entity. Guru Nanak has omitted the use of any descriptive/specific name to address God in majority of his verses wherein it is difficult to know whom is being addressed. This method of referencing to God is quite prominent especially in *Jap* and in the rest of his verses. For example, in first sloka of *Jap* no name has been used in describing ever-existing Entity as follows:

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥

Ād sach jugād sach.

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

Hai bhī sach Nānak hoī bhī sach. ||1||

Was in existence before the beginning of time and space;

Was in existence in the past (throughout the various ages);

*Is in existence in the present; and
Will remain in existence forever (in the future).*

However, in many of his verses some ਕਿਤਮ ਨਾਮ (*kirtam Naam* - descriptive/specific name) like, Allah, Gobind, Gopal, Rahim, Ram, Swami, etc. have been used by Guru Nanak as metaphors for that Entity. Guru Nanak has further explained that ‘Ram’ used as metaphorically for that Entity in his many of the verses is not that ‘Ram’, the king, who was son of Dasharatha in the ancient history (AGGS, M 1, p 464-465). This is the ‘Ram’, which means that ‘Entity’, which pervades everywhere. Therefore, all such ਕਿਤਮ ਨਾਮ (descriptive/specific names) of God have been used metaphorically to denote that Entity thereby making his verses more easily understood. Here in this book, the God has been either represented without any name or as ‘Entity’ and adding (God) in parenthesis or by its pronouns, e.g. ‘It’ or ‘Its’ or You (*Tu*) but not as ‘He’ or ‘She’ to avoid indicating any gender.

Presentation of Punjabi or Other Words

The Punjabi and other foreign words when used in the text are italicized. These words are spelled as they are spelled and pronounced in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib except other such words, e.g. Ram as Rama, Mantar as Mantra, Raag as Raga, Sabd as Sabda, Slok as Sloka, etc. which have been accepted in classical scholarly transliteration system

INTERPRETATION OF VERSE (BANI)

All the stanzas of *Jap* were interpreted after a critical analysis of the words to ascertain the most appropriate meanings in the context of the theme of the verse; all the while keeping in view the scientific information on that theme and the application of logic. Special precautions were taken not to cite mythical or inauthentic work to support a concept or to formulate a principle. Nevertheless, before interpreting the phrase or verse, the mythical work, and allegories, metaphors and similes, quoted in the verses were studied very carefully to determine in which context these have been quoted.

Once the use of mythology and ancient concepts as allegories, metaphors, and similes in each stanza are understood properly, then it was easy to achieve a consistent and accurate interpretation. A very appropriate title has also been assigned to each stanza based upon the main theme. Some stanzas have been broken into more than one parts based upon their themes, thus such stanzas have more than one title.

After following this Methodology, consequently, our interpretation may appear quite different from that of traditional interpretations of others. However, suggestions for further improvement in interpretation are welcome.

* * * * *

SUMMARY

Jap is the verse (*bani*) of Guru Nanak which outlines in brief the basic principles of his philosophy which we have termed “Nanakian Philosophy”. Guru Arjan placed this verse in the beginning of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). *Jap* begins with the Commencing Verse (erroneously called the Mool Mantra) as do all the major sections of the AGGS.

Jap starts with a sloka which proclaims the ever-existence of that Entity (God), which was present as “Singularity” or in the form of “Nothingness” (called as ਸੁੰਨ - *sunn* by Guru Nanak) even before the appearance of time and space. One can easily see that Guru Nanak has not assigned any specific/descriptive name to that Entity in this sloka or anywhere else in his verses. Nevertheless, he has used many specific/descriptive names (ਕਿਰਤਮ ਨਾਮ - *Kirtam Naam*) such as Ram, Gobind, Har (Hari-Krishna), Allah, etc. metaphorically to refer to that Entity.

Jap, composed of 38 stanzas (*pauris* – steps of a ladder), is considered to be a summary of the philosophy of Guru Nanak. Some theologians consider it as a summary of the entire Aad Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS), but this cannot be possible since *Jap* was written before the AGGS was compiled by Guru Arjan in 1604, about 65 years after Guru Nanak passed away.

Jap has been divided into sections, depending upon the nature of subject matter discussed.

SECTION I

- Stanza 1 describes the method of the purification of the mind to attain peace.
- Stanza 2 explains that every action and reaction in the Universe and on this Earth is going on according the Laws of Nature (ਹੁਕਮੁ - *hukm*); nothing can happen outside these laws.
- Stanza 3 tells us that that Entity cannot be pleased with any type of praise.
- Stanza 4 states that that Entity is pleased if we follow the Laws of Nature and perform good deeds.
- Stanza 5 is divided into two parts. In first part Guru Nanak says that that Entity cannot be represented by any human form as is being done by many people. The second part explains that that Entity cannot be described and that is why it cannot be represented by any form.
- Stanza 6 explains that bathing at holy places is of no avail.
- Stanza 7 affirms that having long life and fame are also nothing without righteous and virtuous conduct.

SECTION II

- Stanzas 8-11 are about “listening” (*sunni ai*). Here Guru Nanak explains that by listening and comprehension of sabd (enlightening idea/philosophy/vision) as described in stanza 38 of Jap, one understands many things about humans and Nature.

SECTION III

- Stanzas 12- 15 explain that by “accepting” (*manne*) enlightened vision/philosophy, one can live a successful life.

SECTION IV: It is divided into 4 parts.

- Stanza 16-1 indicates that nobles (persons having high morality) are honored.
- In stanza 16-2 the myth of bull carrying the Earth has been disproved by saying that the Earth stays in its orbit by mutual gravitational pull (*santokh*) between the Earth and the Sun.
- Stanza 16-3 explains the existence of countless living beings.
- Stanza 16-4 describes briefly the origin of the Universe, which is comparable to the theory of the Big Bang, although some refute this theory.

SECTION V

- Stanza 17 describes that devotees are trying to describe that Entity and are repeating Its various names.
- Stanza 18 lists the activities of countless fools, ignorant and wicked people. Certain people exploit others and force their will upon them.

Stanza 19 is divided into two parts. First part tells of the innumerable creations in the Universe. The second part explains the importance of the alphabet to write about one's experience and to write songs. Even that Entity writes the destiny of living beings with the alphabet on their deoxtribonucleic acid (DNA): A – Adenine, C – Cytosine, G – Guanine, and T – Thymine

SECTION VI

- Stanza 20 explains various methods of purification of the different types of pollutions and the purification of the mind polluted with various types of sins.
- Stanza 21 is divided into two different parts. The first part explains that there is no reward for bathing at different places of pilgrimage. The second part tells us that the various sacred books (*granth*s) are not aware of the exact date of origin of the Universe.
- Stanza 22 exposes the fallacy of the various religious concepts about the vastness of the Universe. Guru Nanak says that its vastness cannot be explained since there is an infinite

number of galaxies and each galaxy contains billions of suns and their planets.

SECTION VII discusses that Entity which is commonly called God in English.

- Stanza 23 discusses that Entity (God) is incomprehensible.
- Stanza 24 explains the infiniteness of the Universe which appeared from that Entity. (This is an extension of Stanza 22.)
- Stanza 25 tells us that that Entity is bounteous.

SECTION VIII

- Stanza 26 is divided into three parts which discuss the virtues and the bounteous nature of that Entity which are priceless. That Entity and Its greatness cannot be described.
- In Stanza 27-1 Guru Nanak asks about the dwelling place of that Entity where It controls the whole Universe and its living beings.
- In Stanza 27-2 Guru Nanak does not tell us It's dwelling place but poses another question: Is that dwelling place where various musical instruments are playing and where various living beings are praising that Entity?
- Finally, in Stanza 27-3 Guru Nanak answers the first and second questions that that Entity lives forever and everywhere and in everything (living and non-living) in this Universe.

SECTION IX

- In Stanza 28 and 29 Guru Nanak advises Yogis about the correct type of yoga and also accuses them that there is no such thing like miracles they claim to possess. Since every action and reaction in this Universe is going on according to the Laws of Nature, nobody can change these laws to perform any miracle. Guru Nanak further explains that there are two type of energy sources in this Universe, i.e. fusion and fission.

SECTION X

- Stanza 30 discusses that that Entity (God) does not exist in Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva).
- Stanza 31 tells us that that Entity exists everywhere.

SECTION XI

- Stanza 32 explains that the repetition of various specific/descriptive names (ਕਿਤਮ ਨਾਮ - *kirtam naam*) of that Entity does not help anyone to reach/approach/comprehend It.
- Stanza 33 emphasizes that no one has any power to change the Laws of Nature to perform any miracle.

- In Stanza 34 Guru Nanak tells us that that Entity has provided all the natural resources and phenomena necessary for all living beings.

SECTION XII

- In Stanza 35-37 Guru Nanak discussed different realms: 1. Realm of Righteousness, 2. Realm of Wisdom/Knowledge, 3. Realm of Initiative, 4. Realm of Deeds, and 5 Realm where one realizes that Entity, Its existence forever and the vastness of the Universe.

SECTION XIII

- In Stanza 38 Guru Nanak explains how to coin (construct/develop) *Sabd* (Enlightened idea/philosophy/vision) through self-control, patience, use of knowledge and wisdom.

SECTION XIV

- In this Sloka Guru Nanak explains the respect for natural resources by metaphorically describing air as the Guru, water as the father, and Earth as the mother which provides all the resources needed by all living beings. Keeping in the view the respect given to these resources by Guru Nanak, we need to preserves these resources and environment around this Earth for the next generations of humanity.

* * * * *

AUTHORS AND EDITOR

THE AUTHORS

Professor Devinder Singh Chahal

Professor Devinder Singh Chahal obtained his PhD (Microbiology) from the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio and University of Southern Illinois, Carbondale, Illinois, USA in 1966. He established a new Department of Microbiology at the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. He left this institute in 1974 from the position of Professor and Head and joined as a Visiting Scientist in the Department Food and Chemical Engineering at the prestigious institution, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, Massachusetts as a Fulbright Fellow, a prestigious award, for one year. In 1975 Professor Chahal came to Canada as an immigrant. He served for 5 years at the University of Waterloo, Ontario as a Visiting Professor and then as Visiting Scientist in the Department of Biochemical Engineering. Then he moved to the Institut Armand-Frappier, Université du Québec, Laval, Québec, and retired from there as a Professor of Industrial Microbiology in 1996.

He discovered two new species of fungi: *Agaricus basiannulosis*, an edible mushroom and *Chaetomium cellulolyticum* Chahal & Hawksworth, a very active microorganism to convert cellulosic matter into useful products. The later has been studied by many MSc and PhD students in the world. During his professional life

he wrote three scientific books and one laboratory manual as well as many chapters in various scientific books and many research articles in international scientific journals. He has presented his research, especially on Bio-energy and Enzymes Production at many international conferences held in various parts of the world. During his scientific professional life, he developed a few processes to produce valuable chemicals from waste biomass. He has five patents on these processes in Canada, the USA and India.

Outside his busy professional life, he has written many articles on the *scientific and logical interpretation of Gurbani* (Word of the Sikh Gurus) with special reference to the *universally acceptable philosophy of Guru Nanak*, these having been published in various international journals and in many multi-authored books. He has also written critical analyses of some works on Sikhism and *Gurbani*. He continues this service through the *Institute for Understanding Sikhism*, as its President and the Editor-in-Chief of *Understanding Sikhism: The Research Journal* which is published twice a year.

He is a member of the Advisory Committee of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Study Centre at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar since 2011.

He was at 77th and 67th position in the list of *The Top Most Influential Sikhs of the World* of 2012 and 2013, respectively, as the author for his writings on science and on the Universally Acceptable Philosophy of Guru Nanak. He has been honoured by the SGPC, Amritsar;

by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Management Committee, New Delhi on Khalsa Fateh Divas held at Red Fort, Delhi on March 8-9, 2014; and by the Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University, Fatehgarh, Punjab.

He has published 4 books and many articles about Nanakian Philosophy and thirteen (13) DVDs, about 45 minutes each on '*Discussion on Sikhism*'.

Dr Kulbir Singh Thind, MD

Dr Kulbir S Thind, MD is a medical doctor who is a staff physician at the VA Medical Center, San Francisco, USA, since August 1981. He has made a number of contributions to Punjabi/Sikh causes. Since 1984, he has been producing and distributing, free of charge, Gurmukhi/Hindi fonts for computers (Macs & PCs). In the early 1990's, he spearheaded the development of the Gurbani-CD project which led to the computerization of the text of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and a number of its translations. He also developed computer databases relating to the Sri Guru Granth Sahib along with many other specialized files of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib text to assist Sikh scholars to use Gurbani text on the computer as well as on the internet. He converted the Sri Guru Granth Sahib files to Devnagri (Hindi) and did a phonetic transliteration of the text of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. He has also contributed to the making of many Guru Granth Sahib-related web-sites and formatted the translations of the Bhai Manmohan Singh and Dr Sant Singh Khalsa sentence by sentence.

Dr Thind has made major contributions to the <http://www.srigranth.org> web-site which is maintained by his son, Jasjeet Singh Thind. This web-site is an advanced search engine and a repository of many translations and *teekas* of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib in an interactive format.

Dr. Thind has received many awards relating to his Gurbani projects, from a number of different organizations, including SGPC, Amritsar.

THE EDITOR

Mr Jesse Schell

Mr Jesse Schell, born and raised in the West, values the importance of scientific enquiry and freedom of thought. Trained and educated in the sciences, he holds two degrees in nursing. He is also trained as English as a Second Language teacher with a CELTA degree from Cambridge University. This background and experience in science and language has allowed him to contribute to this work of Dr Chahal. A religious/spiritual seeker all of his life, Mr Schell has studied a number of religions and spiritual practices over the years. After much study, questioning, and serious thought it was clear that sound reasoning overcomes blind faith and so he always found himself abandoning each religion. He now describes himself as a secular humanist with Deist leanings, a free-thinker while being ‘iconoclastic for good reasons’.

He finds that the current state of Sikhism is deplorable, demonstrating all the reasons why religion is evil. None-the-less, he feels a strong attraction to the original teachings of Guru Nanak (not current Sikhism) and it is for this reason that he has given generously of his time and abilities to further Dr Chahal's most important and greatly needed scholarly work. Currently, he lives in rural New Zealand, practicing self-sufficiency with his husband and their five dogs.

* * * * *

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

THE COMMENCING VERSE

Definition of that Entity commonly called God



The One and Only - That is Infinite.

Exists;

Source of the origin of every thing and every being;

Without fear (not governed by any other);

Without enmity;

Timeless (without effect of time);

Neither takes birth nor dies

(never comes into an anthropomorphic form);

Originated by Itself;

Enlightener /Enlightening; and Bounteous.

Page 1

For further details, please see commentary and notes for each verse/stanza of Jap bani starting at page 73

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

SLOKA

**THERE IS NO SPECIFIC NAME OF THAT
ENTITY (ੴ)
WHICH EXISTS FOREVER**

*Was in existence
before the beginning of time and space;
Was in existence
in the past (throughout the various ages);
Is in existence in the present;
and
Will remain in existence forever (in the future).*
Page 1

SECTION I

STANZA 1

PURIFICATION OF THE MIND TO ACHIEVE PEACE OF MIND

One cannot purify oneself or one's mind or attain peace of mind by the physical cleansing¹ of the body (or by performing various rituals) even thousands of times.

(Similarly) One cannot achieve peace of mind even by keeping silent and by sitting in a trance for long periods of time.

Even by collecting loads of valuable worldly possessions (including storehouses full of food) one cannot satisfy the hunger (for peace).

Even having thousands of types of clever ideas cannot be helpful to obtain peace of mind.

Question:

Then, how can one achieve purification (peace) of the mind?

And how can one break the vicious circle of lies (built by falsehood over falsehood)?

Answer:

Nanak says:

One can achieve purification of the mind or peace of mind by breaking the vicious circle of lies and by understanding and abiding by the established Laws of Nature.

Page 1

STANZA 2

LAWS OF NATURE

*Everything is created according to the Laws of
Nature;
And these Laws of Nature are not easily described.
Life is created according to these laws
And one achieves honor also according to these laws.
These laws (circumstances) make one an evil person
while another is honored;
Pleasures or pains in one's life are also happening
under these laws.
Some are glorified while others remain forever in a
vicious cycle according to these laws.
If one can understand the Laws of Nature, then one
will not boast about one's pride.
Because every action and reaction is going on under
these laws
and
Nothing happens outside of them.*

Page 1

STANZA 3
THAT ENTITY, ॴ ,
IS ABOVE ALL PRAISES

*One can sing about the power (of that Entity)
according to one's own power of thinking.*

*Some sing about the bounties and
attributes of that Entity.*

*Some sing about Its beautiful characteristics and
grandeur.*

*Some sing how difficult it is to teach about that Entity
even with their best knowledge.*

*Some sing about Its power to create and Its power to
reduce Its creation to ashes.*

*Some sing that It takes away life and then gives it
back.*

Some sing that It appears to be far away.

Some sing that It appears to be very near.

*One cannot describe the number of Its attributes
because these are beyond any count.*

*Millions of people have tried millions of millions of
times to describe It.*

*(Some think that) The Giver (that Entity) continues to
give all the bounties of nature and the recipients
become weary of receiving them.*

*One has partaken of Its bounties from time
immemorial.*

*That Entity stays carefree
(does not interfere in human affairs)*

*Since every action and reaction or every process in
this Universe is happening exactly according to the
already established Laws of Nature.*

Page 2

STANZA 4

HOW TO PLEASE THAT ENTITY?

That Entity is Ever-existing and so Its Laws of the Universe are ever-existing;

And people think that there are unlimited ways to communicate with and to love that Entity.

When the devotees ask for something (that Entity) gives whatever is asked for Since (that Entity) is bounteous.

(Since all the bounties are from that Entity) then What could be placed before It So that I could see Its court.

What words (of praise) shall I utter with my mouth that on listening to them that Entity starts loving me?

Answer

During the early morning or at any suitable time, one should deliberate on the working of the Laws of Nature/Universe, ordained by the Ever-Existing (that Entity).

The robe of honor is achieved only when good deeds are performed.

Consequently, one reaches the gateway to salvation - the right way of life.

Understand it as if that that Entity prevails everywhere.

Page 2

STANZA 5-1

THAT ENTITY CAN NEITHER BE STRUCTURED NOR CREATED

*That Entity (God) can neither be structured
nor be created.*

*That Entity is without any flaw and
came into being on Its Own.*

Try to understand That Entity;

*Those, who have understood that Entity,
have attained honor.*

That Entity is the treasure of many attributes. 5-1...

Page 2

STANZA 5-2
THAT ENTITY IS BEYOND ANY
DESCRIPTION

*Make up your mind to understand that Entity
by singing and listening (to the enlightening
philosophy).*

*(Then) all the pains (delusions in the mind) are
replaced with pleasure (intellect in the Mind).*

*Enlightening teachings are the vibration and
the wisdom and enlightening teachings explain that
that Entity pervades everywhere.*

*Is Siva, Vishnu (Gorakh), Brahma, Siva's consort
Parbati, or Vishnu's consort Lakshmi that Entity?*

Do I know?

*No, I cannot say or discuss it since
that Entity is beyond any description.*

*The Guru (Enlightened vision)
has enabled me to understand*

That I should not forget That One (that Entity).5-2.

Page 2

STANZA 6

BATHING AT HOLY PLACES IS A FUTILE ACT

*I would bathe at holy places, if it pleases that Entity.
If this practice is not accepted,
then bathing at holy places is of no avail.*

*All the bounties that I see on this Earth,
cannot be obtained without hard work.
By listening (accepting and practicing) even one of
the basic principles of the Guru (enlightened vision)
One's mind becomes intellectually rich
as if with gems, jewels, and rubies.*

*The Guru (enlightened vision) has enabled me to
understand that
I should not forget that Entity
since that Entity has provided
everything to sustain life on this Earth.*

Page 2

STANZA 7
LONG LIFE AND FAME ARE NOTHING
WITHOUT RIGHTEOUS AND VIRTUOUS
CONDUCT

*If one's age is the four mythical ages and it may be
increased to tenfold;
If one is known in the nine continents and everybody
follows him (without reasoning);
If one assumes a good name and receives praise and
is known in the world;
If one is not seen as a person of righteousness
Then nobody cares about such a person.
Such a person is considered as some vermin amongst
the worms and Even the sinners accuse that person.*

*Righteous conduct converts a non-virtuous person
into a virtuous person
and a virtuous person into a more virtuous one.
I cannot think of any way other than righteous
conduct to make a person virtuous. 7.*

Page 2

SECTION II

STANZA 8

LISTENING MAKES ONE UNDERSTAND...

By listening,¹ one understands spiritual persons like, Sidh, Pir, Sur (the Great), and Naath (Yogi), and what they really are.

By listening one understands the truth about the Earth and the mythical bull, which carries the Earth; and about the sky, and what they really are.

By listening, one understands about the continents, different worlds and the Mythical nether worlds, and what these really are.

By listening one understands about death (Means there is no fear of death since it is evident). The devotees always stay in an exalted state since by understanding the reality about the above various subjects one gets rid of all sins (quits committing bad deeds). 8.

Page 2

STANZA 9

LISTENING MAKES ONE UNDERSTAND ABOUT DIFFERENT GODS

*By listening, one understands about the different
gods like, Isar, Brahma, and Indra,
And who they actually are.*

*By listening, a bad person starts to praise (realize) the
real Entity
instead of different gods.*

*By listening, one understands the secrets of the body
and the methods to maintain it in its proper condition.*

*By listening, one understands about the ancient
philosophy in the
Sastras, Simritis and Vedas - the ancient holy books.*

*The devotees always stay in an exalted state
Since by understanding the reality about the above
various subjects*

*One gets rid of all sins
(quits committing bad deeds). 9.*

Page 2

STANZA 10
**LISTENING MAKES ONE UNDERSTAND
CONTENTMENT AND WISDOM**

*By listening, one understands
the Truth, contentment, and wisdom.
Listening has been equated to bathing
at the 68 places of pilgrimages.*

*By listening and reading one attains
wisdom and honor and attains honor (in society).*

*By listening, one understands
one's consciousness and attains tranquility.*

The devotees always stay in an exalted state.

*Since by understanding the reality about the above
various subjects*

*One gets rid of all sins
(quits committing bad deeds). 10.*

Page 3

STANZA 11
LISTENING MAKES ONE TO ATTAIN
WISDOM

*By listening, one understands/comprehends the
innumerable virtues (of that Entity).*

*By listening, one understands
about the sheikhs and peers –
the holy persons, and the ruling persons.*

*By listening, even the mentally blind (ignorant)
person understand the real way (path) of life.*

*By listening, the Immeasurable (that Entity)
comes within one's comprehension.*

*The devotees always stay in an exalted state
Since by understanding the reality about the above
various subjects*

One gets rid of all sins (bad deeds). 11

Page 3

SECTION III

STANZA 12

ACCEPTING¹ MEANS TO UNDERTAKE...

*It is hard to describe
the higher mental state of the one,
Who has accepted (the enlightening philosophy).
If someone tries to describe that state,
he will repent afterwards.*

(The people who sit down to ponder upon and to write about that state of acceptance will repent.)

Because

*There will not be enough paper, pens and writers,
who have the ability to write about the one,
who has attained the state of acceptance.*

*Only one who has accepted
the enlightening philosophy,
Comes to know that Entity (Naam)
Who is flawless. 12.*

Page 3

STANZA 13

THE EFFECTS OF ACCEPTING

*By accepting, consciousness and wisdom are
awakened in one's mind.*

*By accepting, one becomes aware
of the whole Universe.*

*By accepting, one is saved from the hurts of shame,
uncertainty and frustration.*

*By accepting, one does not go to the way of death
(towards sin, which leads to death).*

*Only the one who has accepted
the enlightening philosophy
comes to know that Entity (Naam²)
Who is flawless. 13.*

Page 3

STANZA 14

THE EFFECTS OF ACCEPTING

*By accepting, one does not have any obstacles in
one's way (of righteousness).*

*By accepting, one leaves this world
with fame and honor.*

*By accepting, one does not fall
into the trap of any cult, sect, creed and their
meaningless religious rituals/rites.*

*By accepting, one firmly binds
oneself to righteousness.*

*Only one who has accepted
the enlightening philosophy,
Comes to know that Entity (Naam)
Who is flawless. 14.*

Page 3

STANZA 15

THE EFFECT OF ACCEPTING

By accepting, one achieves salvation.

By accepting, one uplifts one's family (for salvation).

*By accepting, one passes own life successfully and
also helps other Sikhs of the Guru
to make their lives successful¹.*

*By accepting, one does not go begging from house to
house to sustain one's life.*

*Only one who has accepted
the enlightening philosophy,
comes to know that Entity (Naam)
Who is Flawless. 15.*

Page 3

SECTION IV

STANZA 16-1

THE REWARD FOR THE NOBLE ONES

*The noble¹ ones are accepted and become leaders
(to lead the public on the right path).*

*Such noble ones attain honor
in the Court of Righteousness².*

*Such noble ones are the glory of the civil courts of
earthly governments.*

*All the noble ones follow (keep in mind) the same one
philosophy of enlightenment (righteousness)...*

Page 3

STANZA 16-2

THE MYTH OF THE WHITE BULL DISPROVED

*If one tries to comprehend the
vastness and varieties of the creations of that Entity
That one will not be able to do so.*

*The mythical white bull that supports the Earth
in fact is the mutual gravitational attraction between
Sun and Earth under the Laws of the Universe.*

*This gravitational attraction
holds the Earth in its orbit.*

The one who discovers this order

(Laws of the Universe)

becomes enlightened and understands that:

*How could that mythical white-bull carry that much
load of Earth?*

*(Moreover) it means this bull will need another Earth
to stand on and then another bull is needed to carry
that Earth and so on.*

*If anybody can find this power
(with which the Earth is staying
in its orbit around the Sun)
then call that one an enlightened person.*

Page 3

STANZA 16-3

COUNTLESS LIVING BEINGS

Living beings are of innumerable kinds and varieties

And there are innumerable names for them.

The nature of the growth and development of all of them has been written in great mystic words (DNA).

Very few people can decipher

that nature (heredity) of living beings.

If someone can make an assessment of these written codes

Then that one would know that every living being will grow accordingly to its heredity.

It is difficult to evaluate the potential of creation of that Entity.

And how many types of beautiful forms are in Its creation?

How bounteous is that Entity?

No one has any power to know how much! 16

Page 3

STANZA 16-4

THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

*The Universe exploded from one source of energy
(Singularity) and started to expand.*

Thereafter, many things¹ appeared.

*I (Nanak) have no power to comprehend the nature
(of living beings and the cosmos) or to describe it.*

*I cannot even once be a sacrifice to
that Entity and Its Universe.*

Whatever pleases that Entity that is right.

*(Since every action happen
under the Laws of Nature)*

(However) that Entity is formless and exists forever.

16-4.

Page 3

SECTION V

STANZA 17

COUNTLESS DEVOTEES

*Countless are those reciting the various
names of that Entity,
And countless are those in fear of It.
Countless are those who worship various deities, and
perform ascetic practices.
Countless recite the scriptures and read the Vedas.
Countless stay detached from the world and remain
sad.
Countless are the saints who reflect on wisdom.
Countless are the saints who practice charity.
Countless are the warriors
who confront the enemy face to face
taking it as their religious duty
and bear the brunt of steel on their faces.
Countless are the silent sages who continuously
concentrate their minds on that Entity.
I (Nanak) have no power to comprehend and describe
the nature (of such people, who are busy in
performing so many rituals).*

*I cannot even once be a sacrifice to that Entity
(Nature).*

*Whatever pleases that Entity that is right.
(Since every action happen
under the Laws of Nature).*

That Entity is formless and lives forever (immortal).

17.

Page 3.

STANZA 18

COUNTLESS WICKED PEOPLE

Countless people are fools and ignorant.

*Countless people are thieves and embezzlers
who are busy deceiving others.*

*Countless people, who claimed themselves to be
immortal, imposed their will on others,
and have now died.*

*Countless people do not hesitate
to commit the sin of murder.*

*Countless people are the sinners who commit sins.
Countless people are the liars who keep on lying and
are trapped in the cycle of lies.*

*Countless are the wretched people who keep on
eating filthy things, i.e. do bad deeds.*

*Countless people are the slanderers who go on
committing sins by speaking ill of others and
suffering for this act.*

*I (Nanak) have no power to comprehend the nature
(of such wicked and wretched people)
or to describe them.*

*I cannot even once be a sacrifice to that Entity
(Nature).*

*Whatever pleases that Entity that is right.
(Since every action happens
under Its Laws of Nature).*

That Entity is formless and lives forever (immortal).

18.

Page 4

STANZA 19-1

INNUMERABLE CREATIONS

*There are innumerable names of living beings
and innumerable places for them to live.*

*There are innumerable
inaccessible regions of the Universe.*

*Even to say immeasurable
will be a pressure on the brain
Since the creations in this Universe
cannot be counted.*

Page 4

STANZA 19-2

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALPHABET / WORDS

*With letters of the alphabet one tries to write names
and words of praise.*

*With the alphabet one writes about
one's wisdom attained;*

*With the alphabet one writes songs
and with words one sings the songs.*

With the alphabet one writes spoken words.

*With the alphabet the nature of every living being is
written on their forehead (on DNA - genes).*

*The One (that Entity) has written
the nature of all the living beings on their foreheads
(on their DNA – genes);*

*but there is no one else who can write nature of that
Entity on Its forehead.*

*The nature of all the living beings will be decided
according to that which has been written (on their
DNA in the beginning) and according to the
environment.*

*All that has been created is the manifestation of that
Entity in its Laws of Nature (Naam).*

*There is no place without the Laws of Nature
(Naam).*

*I (Nanak) have no power to comprehend the nature
(of the Universe and development of Living beings
according to their DNA) and to describe it.*

*I (Nanak) cannot even once be a sacrifice to that
Entity*

→

*And its Universe (including living beings).
Whatever pleases that Entity that is right.
(Since every action happen under the Laws of
Nature)
That Entity is formless and lives forever
(immortal). 19.
Page 4*

SECTION VI

STANZA 20

THE DIFFERENT PROCESSES OF PURIFICATION FOR THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF POLLUTIONS

*If the hands are soiled with dust,
then the cleansing method is the use of simple water.*

*If clothes are soiled with urine,
then the cleansing method is the use of soap.*

*If the mind is polluted with sin,
then the cleansing method is imbibing Naam¹.*

*One does not become a virtuous person or a vicious
person just by saying or pretending to be so.*

*It is so because it is one's repeated good or bad deeds
that make³ one virtuous or vicious.*

*(Therefore) whatever one shall sow,
so one shall reap.*

*Every action and reaction is happening according to
the Laws of Nature/Universe. 20.*

Page 4

STANZA 21-1
**NO REWARD FOR BATHING AT HOLY
PLACES**

*People practice pilgrimages, penance/austerity,
compassion, and charity;*

*If there is any reward for such activities then,
it is equivalent to a sesame seed
(means an insignificant achievement).*

*Listening and accepting (Nanakian Philosophy);
and developing love (for humanity) is equivalent to
bathing at the holy places, which removes the inner
dirt of the mind (the polluted mind).*

That Entity has all the virtues;

I (Nanak) have nothing.

*Without doing good deeds one cannot become
virtuous (devout).*

I (Nanak) bow to that Entity.

*That Entity is everlasting, beautiful,
and bestows joy in every mind.*

Page 4

STANZA 21-2

THE TIME OF THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

Please eRead the Stanza 16-4
before reading Stanza 21-2.

Questions

What was that time, and what was that moment?

What was that day, and what was that date?

*What was that season, and what was that month,
when the Universe originated?*

*The Pundits could not find that time, even if it were
written in the Puranas.*

*That time is not known to the Qazis either if it were
written in the Kor'an, nor is the month or the season
known to them.*

Answers

Only that Entity knows it.

More Questions

How can I speak of That (Entity)?

How can I praise That One?

How can I comprehend That One?

Nanak answers

**Everyone claims to be wiser than others when
describing the Entity.**



That Entity is Great and great are Its attributes and every action and reaction is going on according to Its Laws of Nature/Universe.*

Nanak further says:

Anyone, who claims to know everything, will repent in the future (because more and more information will be becoming available about the Universe). 21.

Page 4

STANZA 22

THE UNIVERSE

*There are hundreds of thousands of netherworlds,
and hundreds of thousands of skies.
After great research the Vedas have said it definitely.
The Semitic books say that there are eighteen
thousand worlds and that is the fact.*

However, Nanak says:

*It cannot be possible to count (the number of the
celestial bodies in the universe) because the counting
person may reach the end of his life while counting,
but it will still be incomplete.
He further says that (Entity) is Great who knows the
count (of the celestial bodies in the universe). 22.*

Page 5

SECTION VII

STANZA 23 THAT ENTITY (GOD) IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

*By praising (that Entity) again and again
one cannot attain sufficient intellect
with which one can comprehend (that Entity).*

*It is like the streams and rivers,
which cannot find the vastness of the
ocean even after flowing into it.*

*If the rulers of the lands have treasures as vast
as the sea and the mountains, even then it will be
equivalent to an ant (very small)
when compared to the Greatness of that Entity.
(The above fact) should not be forgotten. 23.*

Page 5

STANZA 24

INFINITENESS

This is an extension of Stanza # 22.

*One cannot find the limits of that Entity either by
praising or by arguing/discussing or by the Vastness
of its creation or by bounties in Its creation.
There appears to be no limit to Its creation.
There appears to be no end to Its creation.
Many persons struggle to try to find Its limits.
But nobody can find Its limits.
No one can know Its creation's extent.
If one says that It is great, still greater It becomes.
That Entity is great and Its place is the highest of all.
Its attributes are the highest of all.*

*If there is anyone who is as great as that Entity
Then that one may comprehend Its Greatness.
But It is only That Entity (God) who can comprehend
Its Greatness.
The blessing of such comprehension is achieved
through good deeds. 24.*

Page 5

STANZA 25

THAT ENTITY IS BOUNTEOUS

*It is difficult to write about Its bounteousness¹.
The bounteous Entity gives all the matter required to
sustain life without any motive.
Even innumerable warriors beg for the bounties.
It is hard to count how many there are asking
for the bounties.
Many have struggled to keep an account of bounties
received but became exhausted with the effort.
There are many who keep forgetting the bounties they
have received.
And many such fools keep on enjoying the bounties.
There are many
who are suffering with pain and hunger.
However, this (misery) is also happening under Its
Laws of Nature.
One achieves liberation from the shackles
of superstitions
through these Laws of Nature.
No one can tell the way of liberation from suffering
other than explained above.
If someone claims and tries to develop a new method;
That one (actually) knows it will be a futile effort.
Only That (God) knows
to whom such bounties are to be given.
That Entity knows to whom and how much to give,
If anybody else would try to find these answers
they would fail.*

→

*Only a few out of many know the fact that
the One, who grants the bounties of comprehension,
is the King of kings. 25.*

Page 5

SECTION VIII

STANZA 26-1

PRICELESS VIRTUES/PHILOSOPHY

*Priceless are the virtues, and priceless are the
dealings in such virtues/philosophy.*

*Priceless are those who deal in the priceless
Treasures of the philosophy.*

*Priceless are those saints who come for such priceless
virtues/philosophy,*

*And priceless are those who take such
virtues/philosophy with them and go away.*

*Priceless are those who love (the virtues/philosophy),
And priceless are those who have imbibed such
virtues/philosophy.*

*Priceless are the laws (Laws of Nature)
in the divine court where the
Priceless method is used for the
evaluation/measurement to
decide the actions according to these laws
(Laws of Nature).*

*Priceless are the bounties and priceless are the signs
(of the bounties of that Entity).*

*Priceless are the workings of Its Priceless Laws of
Nature. 26 continued...*

Page 5

STANZA 26-2
ATTEMPTS TO DESCRIBE THAT ENTITY
(GOD)

*That Entity cannot be described
(nor Its price be fixed)
Because it will be difficult to describe (or fix) Its price
even by continuously thinking about it.
The mantras and formulae of the Vedas and Puranas
are trying to describe It.
The scholars after studying are trying to describe It.
The gods like Brahma and Indra, also talk about It.
The milkmaids and Krishna talk about It.
Shiva, god of destruction, and the Sidhas (adepts)
talk about It.
Many Buddhas (intellectuals) discuss
and talk about It.
The demons and demi-gods talk about It.
The demi-gods and men; and the silent-saints and
devotees speak of It.*

Page 5

STANZA 26-3

MANY ARE TALKING ABOUT THE GREATNESS OF THAT ENTITY

*A large number of people are attempting
to talk about the greatness of that Entity.*

*Many people departed from this world attempting to
describe the greatness of that Entity.*

*If as many more people are created as already
existed;*

*Even then, they will not be able to talk about the
greatness of that Entity.*

It is as great as It wants to be.

It is only that Entity Itself which knows Its greatness.

*If someone claims that he can talk about Its
greatness, he is deluding himself.*

*Then, he will be declared as a fool among the fools.
Since it is very difficult to describe Its greatness. 26.*

Page 6

STANZA 27-1

WHERE DOES THAT ENTITY LIVE?

Where is that gate of that dwelling?

In which that Entity sits (resides) and controls

Every action and reaction (in the whole Universe)?

Page 6

STANZA 27-2
IS IT THAT RESIDENCE
WHERE EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY
PRAISES THAT ENTITY?

(Many religious mentors and devotees think that
that Entity dwells where the following actions are
being performed.)

*Countless musical instruments resound, and
countless are the musicians who are playing these
instruments and praising that Entity.
(As are found in the court of mortal kings on Earth.)
So many musical meters
and sub-meters are rendered,
And so many are the singers who sing Its virtues.
The wind, water and fire sing Its praise,
And even Dharamraj (mythical god of justice)
sings Its praise.*

*Chittar and Gupt (the two mythical messengers of
Dharamraj) who keep the records of everybody on the
basis of which Dharamraj decides their fate,
also sing Its praise.*

*Shiva, Brahma, and the goddesses,
look beautiful while singing Its praise.
Indra, seated on his throne, sings Its praise
with the other gods gathered around him (Indra).
The Siddhas (Jogis) under the state of meditation,
And the saints (sages) in their contemplation,
sing Its praise.*



*The celibates and the contented sing Its praise,
And brave people sing Its praise
with their full strength.
Scholars and Rishis who have been reciting the Vedas
throughout various ages also praise It.
The captivating beauties (goddesses),
whether living in heaven or on the Earth
or even in the mythical nether-worlds sing Its praise.*

*Jewels, created by It, and all the 68 places of
pilgrimages all together sing Its praise.
The mighty warriors, strong people and all types of
living beings sing Its praise.
All the galaxies and their solar systems and the
Universe that It has created are all bound under the
Laws of Nature to sing Its glories.*

**(Besides the above concept there is also another
concept among the religious mentors and devotees
as follows:)**

*Only those devotees,
who have merged themselves into It,
and have been accepted by It, can sing Its praise.
How many more are singing Its praise?*

*I (Nanak) cannot count that number
since I (Nanak) cannot even imagine that number!*

Page 6

STANZA 27-3

THE ANSWER: THAT ENTITY EXISTS FOREVER AND EVERYWHERE

That Entity and Its Laws of Nature always exist.

*The One, who has created the Universe,
exists now and will exist forever,
and will never go away or perish.*

*The One, who has created all varieties of beings
and also created matter, so-called Maya;*

*After creating,
It enjoys (feel contented with) Its creation.*

(Because)

*Whatever action and reaction is occurring
in this Universe is happening according to Its Hukm
(Laws of Nature/Universe) and nothing can happen
without Its Hukm (these laws).*

*That Entity is as the Eternal Ruler
of all the earthly kings;
And everything is under*

Its Hukm (Laws of Nature/ Universe). 27.

Page 6

SECTION IX

STANZA 28

A YOGI IS ADVISED ABOUT THE MEANINGS OF THEIR PRACTICES

*Oh Yogi! Have contentment as your earrings;
Efforts to work for food
as your begging bowl and bag;
Consciousness as the ashes to apply on your body;
The thought of death be your long robe;
Your body/mind should be pure.
And all these attributes
should be your guiding stick (baton).*

*Consider the whole of humanity
as equal to the highest class;
Conquering the mind is equivalent to
conquering the world.*

*I pay my obeisance to That (Entity).
That was there before the appearing of space-time;
That (Entity) is flawless (pure); without any
beginning; imperishable;
and remains in the same state
throughout all the Ages.*

Page 6

STANZA 29

A YOGI IS ADVISED ABOUT MIRACLES, FUSION, AND FISSION

*Let knowledge be your food and
compassion your possession.
Then, the bells of contentment will ring in everybody.*

*The God Itself is the Controller; It controls every
action and reaction in this Universe
through the Laws of Nature.*

*The desire for the possession of miraculous powers
is a mere instinct.*

*The work is performed by the energy released by
fusion and by fission;
and the resulting work becomes assets (blessing) for
humanity.*

*I pay my obeisance to That (Entity)
That was there before the appearing of space-time;
That is flawless (pure); without any
beginning; imperishable;
and remains in the same state
throughout all the Ages.*

Page 6

SECTION X

STANZA 30

TRINITY OR ONE ENTITY?

*It is a generally accepted concept that
A mother was conceived
through some (unknown) method
and she produced three well-known
disciples (gods) to run the world.
These are: Brahma - the creator;
Vishnu – to give sustenance;
and Shiva - the destroyer.*

*(But) Nanak says that
The truth is that the Only One (Entity) runs the world
according to the ordained Laws of Nature/Universe.
It is the Only One (Entity) who looks after every
action and reaction in the Universe;
It makes us marvel at the fact that all the actions and
reactions in the Universe are happening according to
the Laws of Nature/Universe even though that One
(Entity) is neither visible nor comprehensible.*

*I pay my obeisance to That (Entity).
It (that Entity) was there before the appearance of
time and space; free from any taint (pure);
without any beginning; imperishable;
and remained in the same form (in fact, formless)
throughout all the Ages. 30.*

Page 7.

STANZA 31

THAT ENTITY (GOD) EXISTS EVERYWHERE

*That Entity exists everywhere
(in one form or the other) in the Universe
and has stored natural resources
in every world (including our Earth) of the Universe.
Whatever was to be put into these stores was put there
once and for all (right from the beginning and no
more will be added later on).*

*That Entity continues to create
(various matters and living beings)
and takes care of Its creations
and provides all their needs.*

(Meaning: Creation and thereafter every action and
reaction is going on automatically according to Its
Laws of Nature/Universe).

That is the truthful work of that Ever-existing Entity.

*I pay my obeisance to That (Entity).
It (that Entity) was there before appearing of time
and space; free from any taint (pure);
without any beginning; imperishable;
and remained in the same form (in fact formless)
throughout all the Ages.31.*

Page 7

SECTION XI

STANZA 32

REPETITION OF SOME NAMES OF THAT ENTITY

(It is a general accepted concept that)
*If one tongue becomes one hundred thousand and
then two millions; then with each tongue if some
name of that Entity is repeated hundreds of
thousands of times, one can reach that Entity (God).
After listening to the above lofty claims even the
lowest of low-beings
(having lowest religious knowledge) think that
they can reach that Entity
by repeating hundreds of thousands times
some name assigned to that Entity.*

*But Guru Nanak's philosophy is that
One can reach (comprehend) that Entity by having
ability to visualize¹ that Entity
since the above method explained is the false claim -
a boast of a lair. 32.*

Page 7

STANZA 33

NO ONE HAS ANY POWER TO CHANGE THE LAWS OF NATURE/UNIVERSE

*No one has any power to change the
Laws of Nature/Universe*

*Neither by repeating any mantra
nor by keeping silence.*

*No one has the power to change the
Laws of Nature/Universe*

*either by begging (from that Entity)
or by giving something as bribe (to that Entity).*

*No one has any power to change the
Laws of Nature/Universe to be alive or to die.*

*No one has any power to change the
Laws of Nature/Universe*

*because of collected wealth
or of acquired political influence.*

*No one has any power to change the
Laws of Nature/Universe*

even after gaining intuitive philosophy.

*No one has any power to change the
Laws of Nature/Universe to find the easy way to
escape the world's problems
(to obtain salvation).*

Nanak says:

*This power lies with that Entity who had created these
laws and see that they work accordingly.*

*Therefore, nobody is superior or inferior under that
power (Laws of Nature/Universe)*

*since everybody is
on an equal footing under these laws. 33.*

Page 7

STANZA 34

NATURAL RESOURCES AND PHENOMENA

*Nights, seasons, days, and weeks;
Wind, water, and
fire in Patal¹ (in the center of Earth);
Amidst of these natural phenomena and resources,
the Earth is placed as a venue
to practice righteousness.
On this Earth there are various types of living beings.
And their names and kinds are uncountable.
Everybody is judged according to their deeds.
One has pleasures or problems according to their
deeds under the Laws of Nature.
(Laws of Nature: Here it is mythically called the
court of God.)
In this court (under these Laws of Nature) only
nobles are accepted.
This honor of acceptance is based
on their good deeds.
Nanak says:
Whether one is ordinary or ecstatic is judged
under the Laws of Nature/Universe
(so-called in the court of that Entity – God). 34.*

Page 7

SECTION XII

STANZAS # 35-37

This section discusses
the different realms of understanding.

STANZA #35-1
THE REALM OF RIGHTEOUSNEOUS
(Continuity of Stanza # 34)

*In the Realm of Righteousness,
One's duty (dharma/religion) is to practice
righteousness on this Earth."*

Page 7

STANZA 35-2

THE REALM OF WISDOM / KNOWLEDGE

*The duty in the next Realm of Wisdom/Knowledge
is to understand/comprehend
(the nature of the following subjects in the world).*

*There is enormous quantity
of air, water, energy (fires);
and many Krishnas, Shivas and Brahmas
have been structured into idols
in different forms and costumes by people.
There are numerous Earths for practicing
righteousness, and there are numerous mountains on
these Earths;
and uncountable devotees
like Dhru are giving sermons.
There is an unlimited amount of clouds
around the Earth;
There is an unlimited number of
moons and suns in these numerous worlds.*

Page 7

STANZA 36-1
THE REALM OF WISDOM/KNOWLEDGE

(Continuity of Stanza # 35-2)

*In this Realm of Wisdom/Knowledge,
only wisdom/knowledge rules.*

*In this realm one feels
a high state of tranquility and happiness.*

Page 8

STANZA 36-2

THE REALM OF INNOVATIVENESS

*In this Realm of innovativeness, one is able
to formulate/promulgate many types of philosophies.*

*However, such state of innovativeness cannot be
described or expressed in words.*

*If anyone would try to describe it,
that person may repent later.*

*In this Realm, consciousness, intellect, and
wisdom are developed in the mind (brain).*

*In this Realm, awareness is developed
in noble people and Sidhas. 36.*

Page 8

STANZA 37-1

REALM OF DEEDS

In the Realm of Deeds, the word (Sabd)¹ is the power.

*No one else dwells here
except those who are brave (courageous)
and have wisdom.*

*Their minds are imbued with
the essence of that Entity (God).*

*As if completely attached (sewn)
with the majestic glory of that Entity.*

It is hard to describe that state of beauty (of mind).

*Those, whose minds have realized
the essence of that Entity,
never let their conscious die
and can never be deceived,*

in this realm dwell the nobles of all the worlds.

*They have peace of mind since they have
the essence of Ever-existing (that Entity) in their
minds. 37 continued...*

Page 8

STANZA #37-2

THE REALM WHERE ONE REALIZES ABOUT THE UNIVERSE AND THAT ENTITY

In this realm one realizes that:

*The Formless prevails everywhere in the Universe;
meaning the whole Universe is evolving under*

Its Laws of Nature.

*There are many spheres (stars and planets)
and the galaxies in this Universe.*

*If someone tries to describe them all,
one would fail to do so since an
unlimited number of worlds are being created there.*

*Such creations are happening as ordained
(according to the Laws of Universe).*

Nanak says:

*That Entity (God) is pleased to see that
everything is happening
as ordained under Laws of Nature/Universe.*

*It is as hard to describe this phenomenon
as it is to eat steel. 37.*

Page 8

SECTION XIII

STANZA 38

COINING SABD

*Self-control should be the furnace,
and patience of goldsmith.*

*Wisdom should be the anvil
and knowledge should be the tools.*

*Love for that Entity (God) should be the bellows to
blow air into fire to make it super-hot.*

*The body (mind), full of love, is the melting pot where
the above-mentioned self-control, patience, wisdom
and knowledge are matters to be melted together to
coin the Sabd (enlightened idea / philosophy / vision)
as an amrit (elixir) in the mint of truth.*

*Such type of work to coin Sabd (enlightened idea /
philosophy / vision) can only be accomplished by
those who have the capability of vision.*

*That Entity (God) is happy for such people who have
this type of vision. 38.*

Page 8

SECTION XIV

SLOKA 1

NATURAL RESOURCES

Sloka

*Air is like a Guru, water like a father
(both represent the environment),
and Earth like the great mother
(which provides all types of resources and food).
Both day and night are like a male nurse
and a female nurse, respectively,
And the whole humanity plays in their laps.
(Now) your virtues (good deeds)
and vices (bad deeds) are
evaluated under the laws of the Nature/Universe.
Since people are honored according to their deeds,
therefore, some will obtain salvation
while others will not.*

*Nanak says:
The faces of those nobles,
who have comprehended that Entity (God),
glow with happiness
and attain liberation from their troubles.
And with the association of such nobles
many others can attain salvation.*

Page 8

* * * * *

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

COMMENTARY & NOTES

THE COMMENCING VERSE

Definition of that Entity commonly called God

Page 1

All the verses of Guru Nanak start with a definition of that *Entity*, which is called God in the English world, Om/*Oankaar*, *Parmatama*, *Bhagwan* or many other names in Hinduism, and Allah in Islam. Guru Nanak has not assigned any specific or descriptive name to this *Entity* - something that has a real existence as explained by Guru Nanak in the following sloka. However, most Sikhs and many Sikh theologians incorrectly pronounce it as *Ek Oankaar* which represents OM - the Trinity in Vedanta. Guru Nanak does not accept this Entity in Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. In spite of this fact, most Sikhs have wrongly assigned the name, *Waheguru*, to this *Entity*. This definition is titled the *Commencing Verse* (commonly called *Mool Mantra*) since it appears before every section of his verses in its complete or abbreviated form. Therefore, the Commencing Verse appears before the first composition of Guru Nanak's verse called *Jap*.

The Commencing Verse starts with a logo: ੴ *Ek Oh Beant* (The One and Only - That is Infinite). This state is now called 'Singularity' or 'Nothingness' in the scientific world where nothing is distinguishable, nevertheless, it is the source of the origin of everything

and every being. The logo is followed by its attributes that distinguish this Entity from the God in other religions: ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ Saṭ nām kartā purakḥ nīrbḥaᵒ nirvair akāl mūṛaṭ̣ ajūnī saibḥa'n gur parsāḍ.

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

SLOKA

THERE IS NO SPECIFIC NAME OF THAT ENTITY (ੴ) WHICH EXISTS FOREVER

This is a short phrase about the ever-existence Entity

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ¹ ॥

Ād sach jugād sach.

Page 1

¹Sach (ਸਚੁ) is interpreted as true/truth by many Sikh theologians. However, Sach also means “exist / existence”. Here it has been interpreted as “existence”. The other point to be noted is that neither any specific nor any descriptive name nor even the pronoun, he or she, has been used in this phrase for that ever-existence Entity.

SECTION I

STANZA 1

PURIFICATION OF THE MIND TO ACHIEVE PEACE OF MIND

ਸੋਚੈ¹ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥

Soch_hai soch_h na hova¹ je soch_hi lakh vār.

Page 1

Purification of the mind or peace of mind can be achieved by understanding and abiding by the Laws of Nature/Universe and by breaking the vicious circle of lies (falsehood) built to cover the previous lies. This is one of the main principles of Nanakian Philosophy.

¹ਸੋਚੈ (sochai) = It means “physical cleansing” of the body if we keep in mind the main theme of this stanza. However, some interpret it as “thinking”.

³ਹੁਕਮਿ or ਹੁਕਮੀ or ਹੁਕਮੈ or ਹੁਕਮੁ (Hukm) = The Laws of Nature/Universe.

STANZA 2 THE LAWS OF NATURE

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ

ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥

Hukmī hovan ākār hukam na kahi᳚ā jā᳚ī.

Page 2

Guru Nanak emphasizes that every action and reaction (phenomena and various processes) or anything that is happening in this Universe and in all the living beings are governed by the Laws of Nature/Universe. Nothing can happen outside of these laws. Thus there is no chance of the performance of any miracle by any religious person or anybody else on this Earth. Now almost all the Laws of Nature have been discovered. However, still there may be many, which have not yet been discovered. Chahal [3] (pp 197-215) has discussed **ਹੁਕਮੁ** (hukm) as ‘Laws of Nature’ or ‘Laws of Universe’ or ‘Laws of Nature/Universe’.

STANZA 3
THAT ENTITY, ॐ ,
IS ABOVE ALL PRAISES
ਗਾਵੈ ਕੇ ਤਾਣੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਕਿਸੈ ਤਾਣੁ ॥

Gāvai ko t̄āṇ hōvai kisai t̄āṇ.

Page 2

Guru Nanak first describes what the people sing and think about that Entity (God). He then says that every action /reaction, and process is happening according to the Laws of Nature/Universe which have already been established; therefore, that Entity stays carefree and does not interfere in human affairs or in Nature.

⁶ਹੁਕਮੀ (Hukmi): Many theologians interpret Hukmi as God.

ਹੁਕਮੁ (Hukm): Many Theologians interpret Hukm as the ‘Will of God’.

But here both words mean Laws of Nature/Universe.

STANZA 4

HOW TO PLEASE THAT ENTITY?

ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਨਾਇ

ਭਾਖਿਆ ਭਾਉ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥

Sāchā sāhib sāch nā^e bhākhi^a bhā^o apār.

Page 2

That Entity (God) exists forever and so do Its Laws of the Nature/Universe. Neither any offering of any material article nor any food nor repeating of any particular word/s (mantra) can please that Entity. Only one's good deeds will help to reach to the gateway of salvation - the right way of life.

STANZA 5-1
THAT ENTITY
CAN BE NEITHER STRUCTURED
NOR CREATED

ਥਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥

Thāpiā na jāe kītā na hoē.

Page 2

That Entity cannot be structured or created since It has come into being of Its own volition. According to Guru Nanak that Entity is not a Shiva, Vishnu or Brahma or their consorts. That is beyond any description.

(In other words Ishar, Brahma, Gorakh, Shiva, Vishnu, Parbati or Lakhshmi are not that Entity.)

STANZA 5-2 THAT ENTITY BEYOND ANY DESCRIPTION

ਗਾਵੀਐ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਮਨਿ ਰਖੀਐ ਭਾਉ ॥

Gāvī^{ai} suṇī^{ai} man rakhī^{ai} bhā^o.

Page 2

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ (Gurmukh) is usually interpreted as “Guru-oriented or “Teachings of the Guru”. **ਗੁਰ** (Gur) or **ਗੁਰੂ** (Guru) has many meanings. Here “Gur” and “Guru” has been interpreted as “enlightened vision”. Therefore, here **ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ** (Gurmukh) has been interpreted as “enlightening teachings”.

STANZA 6

BATHING AT HOLY PLACES IS A FUTILE ACT

ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਾ ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਾ

ਵਿਣੁ ਭਾਏ ਕਿ ਨਾਇ ਕਰੀ ॥

Firath nāvā je tis bhāvā viṇ bhāne kē nā^oe karī.

Page 2

Bathing at holy places is of no avail to receive bounties/blessings. Blessings can be achieved by listening, accepting and practicing even one of the basic principles of the Guru (enlightened vision) and by performing good deeds.

STANZA 7
LONG LIFE AND FAME ARE NOTHING
WITHOUT RIGHTEOUS
AND VIRTUOUS CONDUCT

ਜੇ ਜੁਗ ਚਾਰੇ ਆਰਜਾ ਹੋਰ ਦਸੁਈ ਹੋਇ ॥

Je jug chāre ārjā hor dasūī hoᵉ.

Page 2

Attaining a long life and being known in the nine continents and attaining fame and having lots of followers does not make a person righteous/virtuous. If a person is not righteous in the eyes of that Entity, then nobody cares about that person. It is only the righteous conduct that can convert a non-virtuous person into a virtuous one.

SECTION II

STANZA 8

LISTENING MAKES ONE UNDERSTAND...

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਿਧ ਪੀਰ ਸੁਰਿ ਨਾਥ ॥

Suṇiṯai sidh pīr sur nāth.

Page 2

In this stanza and the next three stanzas Guru Nanak has put emphasis on listening to understand the truth about the various myths and wrong concepts being accepted by people. It is to be noted that emphasis is on listening not on repetition of any word or any phrase.

In 8th stanza Guru Nanak emphasizes that by listening (enlightening idea/philosophy/vision) one understands about various Ages and about the Universe. Thus the devotee remains in an exalted state.

Note: 1:

In Stanzas # 8-11 ਸੁਣਿਐ (Suniai)” has been interpreted as “listening” and the missing subject has been taken as “Sabd” (enlightening vision). It means listening and comprehending the Sabd (enlightening idea / philosophy) as described by Guru Nanak in stanza # 38 of Jap or the Sabd (enlightening vision) coined by Guru Nanak based upon his experience by observations of nature and its laws and behaviour of humanity.

STANZA 9
LISTENING MAKES ONE UNDERSTAND
ABOUT THE DIFFERENT GODS

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਈਸਰੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਇੰਦੁ ॥

Suṇi=ai īsar barmā ind.

Page 2

By listening one understands about different gods and ancient philosophies in various religious books. Thus the devotee remains in an exalted state.

STANZA 10
LISTENING MAKES ONE UNDERSTAND
CONTENTMENT AND WISDOM

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥

Suṇi^{ai} saṭ saṁtoḵ^h gi^{ān}.

Page 3

By listening one understands about truth, contentment, wisdom and attains honor in the society. Thus the devotee remains in an exalted state.

STANZA 11
LISTENING MAKES ONE ATTAIN WISDOM

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਰਾ ਗੁਣਾ ਕੇ ਗਾਹ ॥

Suṇi=ai sarā guṇā ke gāh.

Page 3

By listening one understands innumerable virtues of that Entity (God) and also about other Holy persons.

SECTION III

STANZA 12

ACCEPTING MEANS TO UNDERTAKE...

ਮੰਨੇ¹ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

Manne kī gaṭ kahī na jā^e.

Page 3

The one who has accepted the enlightening philosophy (Nanakian Philosophy) has such a high mental state that it cannot be described. Such a person has the ability to comprehend that Entity better than others.

Note

1: ਮੰਨੇ (*mannai*). Here, and in the next three stanzas, there is no subject mentioned for ਮੰਨੇ (*mannai*). Here ‘*mannai*’ has been interpreted as accepting and the subject is assumed as the philosophy which enlightens (Nanakian Philosophy). But many scholars have interpreted ‘*mannai*’ as obeying or believing or worshipping that Entity or to be faithful to that Entity by accepting Its ‘Will’.

2. ਨਾਮੁ (*Naam*) is usually interpreted as the name of God. But according to Guru Nanak no specific or descriptive name can be assigned to God. Therefore, here ਨਾਮੁ (*Naam*) has been interpreted as that “Entity” which has no name.

STANZA 13

THE EFFECTS OF ACCEPTING

ਮੰਨੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਮਨਿ ਬੁਧਿ ॥

Mannai surat hovai man budh.

Page 3

By accepting the enlightening philosophy (Nanakian philosophy) one's consciousness and wisdom are awakened to be aware of the whole universe and the environment in which one lives. One can use this consciousness and wisdom for the welfare of oneself and for the rest of humanity.

STANZA 14

THE EFFECTS OF ACCEPTING

ਮੰਨੈ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਠਾਕ ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥

Mannai mārag thāk na pā^e.

Page 3

By accepting the enlightening philosophy (Nanakian Philosophy) one does not fall into the trap of any cult, sect, creed and their meaningless religious rituals. Instead one binds oneself to righteousness.

STANZA 15 THE EFFECTS OF ACCEPTING

ਮੰਨੈ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਮੋਖੁ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥

Mannai pāvahi mokḥ du^{ar}.

Page 3

By accepting enlightening philosophy (Nanakian Philosophy) one gets salvation for oneself (a Sikh) and helps to get salvation for his family and others.

Note

1. ਤਰੈ ਤਾਰੇ (*terai taarai*) = To swim across meaning passes own life successfully and also helps others to make their lives successful.

SECTION IV

STANZA 16-1

THE REWARD FOR THE NOBLE ONES

ਪੰਚ¹ ਪਰਵਾਣ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ ॥

Panch parvāṅ panch pardhān.

Page 3

The noble ones are accepted in the Court of Righteousness and also in the civil courts of the earthly governments. All noble ones follow and teach the same one philosophy of enlightenment (righteousness).

Notes:

1. ਪੰਚ (*Panch*) - Noble): A person having or showing high moral qualities or righteousness or possessing lofty ideas.

ਦਰਗਹਿ (*Dargah*): Most of the authors interpret it as the ‘Court of God’. But Guru Nanak has posed a question about this issue as follows:

ਸੇ ਦਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਸੇ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥

So *dar* kehā so *ghar* kehā *jit* bahi sarab samāle.

AGGS, Jap # 27, p 7.

Where is that gate, and where is that dwelling, in which You (that Entity) sits and controls the whole universe and living beings?

This indicates that there is no such place or dwelling or court of God in this Universe. Therefore, i ਦਰਗਹਿ (*Dargah*) means a court of righteousness.

STANZA 16-2

THE MYTH OF THE WHITE BULL DISPROVED

ਜੇ ਕੇ ਕਰੈ ਕਰੈ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

Je ko kahai karai vīchār.

Page 3

In the 16th stanza, the myth about the white bull carrying the Earth on his horns is disproved with a very simple logic. If the bull is carrying this Earth, then the bull will need another Earth to stand on. Guru Nanak says that the one who discovers the truth about how this Earth stays its course in the Universe (according to the Laws of Universe and due to mutual gravitational attraction) becomes enlightened.

Notes:

ਸੰਤੋਖੁ (*Santokh*): The word, *Santokh*, used in this stanza is usually interpreted as contentment and satisfaction, meaning the one who is contented and satisfied settles down in tranquility. The contentment (*santokh*) of the Earth refers to the power which keeps the Earth in its orbit around the Sun; this power has been interpreted as the ‘gravitational attraction’. There is no such mythical bull carrying the Earth on its horns.

It may be difficult for many scholars and theologians to accept above interpretation of *santokh*. However, Principal Teja Singh [23] has interpreted this as follows:

“People have accepted that an actual bull has lifted the earth; in fact, that bull is the law of the blessing of

God. ‘Santokh’ is the system under which the whole Universe works – it means that creation (the Universe) is bound to work under these rules and it is the reason why everything is working perfectly and peacefully. If these laws did not exist there would be chaos everywhere; that is why the Law of Nature is the ‘compassion’ of God.”

The above interpretation comes to be somewhat close to that of mine interpretation of ‘Santokh’ as ‘gravitational attraction’ with which the Earth stays in its orbit around the Sun.

STANZA 16-3 COUNTLESS LIVING BEINGS

ਜੀਅ ਜਾਤਿ ਰੰਗਾ ਕੇ ਨਾਵ ॥

Jīa jāṭ rangā ke nāv.

Page 3

In this section Guru Nanak has explained that there are innumerable kinds and varieties of living beings, the reason for this, and who has written their ways of growth and development. This is also an indication that the ancient concept of 8,400,000 species of living beings cannot be a fixed number since some species become extinct and new species appear according to changes in the environment. For example, we hear very often that new bacteria and viruses are appearing every day, which cause new diseases which are difficult to control. Similarly, new varieties and species of vegetables, fruits, crops, and animals are being produced experimentally and the same thing happens in nature through natural mutation, the effect of the environment or by artificially introducing certain genes of one species into another. Now there are many such genetically improved vegetables, fruits, crops, and animals.

This section of stanza can be interpreted logically and scientifically as follows: the different kinds and types of living beings are due to the different inherited characteristics written in the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) of each living being.

Guru Nanak says it is very difficult to know this written inherited information. This is the hereditary information which governs the type of growth and the nature of the organism (ਲੇਖਾ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕੇਤਾ ਹੋਇ - *Lekha likhia keta hoai*). This is the hereditary information, which is also responsible for development of hereditary diseases, etc.

Recently it has been shown by molecular biologists how difficult and enormous a task it would be to map all the information on the DNA of every kind of living being (ਏਹੁ ਲੇਖਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਇ - *Eh lekha likh janai koai*). However, a few laboratories in the world are mapping the human genome and of other species; voluminous data about human genomes have been collected and still it is not complete. The data on the genome of humans is called the "Book of Life".

STANZA 16-4 THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੇ ਕਵਾਉ ॥

Kītā pasā^o eko kavā^o.

Page 3

This section is very similar to the Big Bang theory of the 20th century which postulated the origin of Universe. This section should also be read with Stanza 22, which deals with the vastness of the Universe.

NOTE:

1. Many things = A large number of galaxies, composed of a large number of stars and planets, came into being. The Big Bang theory was described by Guru Nanak during the 15th century in this single phrase and rest of the expansion of the Universe has been explained in Raga *Maru* on pages 1037-1038.

SECTION V

STANZA 17 COUNTLESS DEVOTEES

ਅਸੰਖ ਜਪ ਅਸੰਖ ਭਾਉ ॥

Asa'nhkḥ jap asa'nhkḥ bhā'o.

Page 3

Countless are the people who recite the name of God, worship around the fire, recite various scriptures or remain detached from the world and countless warriors fight as their religious duty etc. Nanak says that he sacrifices himself to the Laws of Nature/Universe, which control every action and reaction in the Universe. He further says that whatever is happening, it is happening according to these Laws.

STANZA 18

COUNTLESS WICKED PEOPLE

ਅਸੰਖ ਮੂਰਖ ਅੰਧ ਘੋਰ ॥

Asa'ṅkh mūrakh andh ghor.

Page 4

Guru Nanak explains that there are countless fools, thieves, embezzlers, wicked and wretched people, butchers, slanderers, etc. It does not mean that it is that Entity who made these people bad. They are the victims of the environment and conditions around them and their consciousness has not been awakened to understand righteousness and the Laws of Nature/Universe. Guru Nanak is always ready to sacrifice himself to the Laws of Nature/Universe and understands that every action and reaction is governed by these laws.

STANZA 19-1 INNUMERABLE CREATIONS

ਅਸੰਖ ਨਾਵ ਅਸੰਖ ਥਾਵ ॥

Asa'ṅkh nāv asa'ṅkh thāv.

Page 4

This stanza tells us that there are innumerable types of living beings and innumerable types of places for them to live.

STANZA 19 -2

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALPHABET / WORDS

ਅਖਰੀ ਨਾਮੁ¹ ਅਖਰੀ ਸਾਲਾਹ ॥

Akhrī nām akhrī sālāh.

Page 4

Note: ¹**Naam**: Here `Naam` means Laws of Nature. Here Guru Nanak has given the importance of the alphabet/words with which one can write the names of innumerable living beings, of innumerable places, and of inaccessible worlds. With the alphabet are written names, praise, songs, and also the nature of every living being on their genes (Deoxyribosnucleic acid - DNA).

(The alphabet of DNA is represented by first letters of the 5 elements: C for carbon, H for hydrogen, O for oxygen, N for nitrogen, and P for phosphorus. The link of two alphabets (A and T) of Purines and two alphabets (C and G) of Pyrimidines between two parallel DNA strands decide the nature and of every living being.

Purines: A for Adenine and T for Thymine.

Pyrimidines: C for Cytosine and G for Guanine.)

SECTION VI

STANZA 20

THE DIFFERENT PROCESSES OF PURIFICATION FOR THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF POLLUTIONS

ਭਰੀਐ ਹਥੁ ਪੈਰੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ ॥

ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਉਤਰਸੁ ਖੇਹ ॥

Bhārīai hath pair ṭan deh. Pāṇī dhoṭai utras k̄eh.

Page 4

In this stanza Guru Nanak explains that there are different processes for cleansing/purification of different types of pollutions. For example, soiled hands can be washed with simple water; clothes polluted with urine (chemicals) can be cleansed with other chemicals, soap; but if the mind gets polluted with sinful deeds it can be purified only by imbibing *Naam (practicing Nanakian philosophy as explained in the Stanzas 8-15 (*Sunnayae* and *Mannayae*) and Stanza # 21. of JAP).

STANZA 21-1
NO REWARD FOR BATHING
AT HOLY PLACES

ਤੀਰਥੁ ਤਪੁ ਦਇਆ ਦਤੁ ਦਾਨੁ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੇ ਪਾਵੈ ਤਿਲ ਕਾ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

Firath ṭap da^ṛi^ṛā dat dān. Je ko pāvai ṭil kā mān.

Page 4

There is no reward for pilgrimage, penance/austerity, compassion, and charity; it is only through listening and accepting Nanakian philosophy one's mind is cleansed of pollution. Moreover, one can become virtuous (devout) only by doing good deeds.

STANZA 21-2

THE TIME OF THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

Read the Stanza 16-4 before reading Stanza 21-2

ਕਵਣੁ ਸੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਵਖਤੁ ਕਵਣੁ

ਕਵਣੁ ਥਿਤਿ ਕਵਣੁ ਵਾਰੁ ॥

Kavaṇ so velā vakḥaṭ kavaṇ kavaṇ thiṭ kavaṇ vār.

Page 4

The origin of Universe was not known to Pundits, Kazis, Jogis. Guru Nanak says it is only known to that Entity.

STANZA 22 THE UNIVERSE

ਪਾਤਲਾ ਪਾਤਲ ਲਖ ਆਗਾਸਾ ਆਗਾਸ ॥

Pātālā pātāl lakh āgāsā āgās.

Page 5

In this stanza the Vedas say that there are hundreds of thousands of *Patal* (netherworlds) and hundreds of thousands of skies and on the other hand Semitic books say that there are 18,000 worlds. This is the information of Vedas and Semitic books but it is not the view of Guru Nanak. However, some scholars and preachers erroneously interpret that it is Guru Nanak who says that there are lacs (hundreds of thousands) of *Patal* (netherworlds) and lacs of skies.

Scientifically there is no netherworld; it is an ancient myth. Similarly, there is no sky. The blue color we see is the color due to the depth of the air through which the sunlight passes before coming to us; in fact, it is a void or space. After quoting the information available or the accepted concept at that time Guru Nanak gives his observations. He says that the Universe contains a countless number of celestial bodies. The real number would be only known to that Entity.

According to the present scientific information available there are billions of galaxies and each galaxy is composed of billions of stars and their planets and moons. Our Sun is one of the billions of stars in our galaxy, Milky Way, having nine planets revolving around it.

SECTION VII

STANZA 23

GOD IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

ਸਾਲਾਹੀ ਸਾਲਾਹਿ ਏਤੀ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਈਆ ॥

Sālāhī sālāhi eṭī suraṭ na pāīā.

Page 5

By praising that Entity again and again one cannot achieve intellect to comprehend that Entity and Its Greatness.

STANZA 24

INFINITENESS

This is an extension of Stanza # 22.
One cannot find the limits of (that Entity)

ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਸਿਫਤੀ ਕਹਣਿ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥

Ant na sifī kahaṇ na ant.

Page 5

This stanza explains the infiniteness and greatness of that Entity which is beyond everybody's comprehension. The more one sees or listens about Its greatness, the more it looks greater than before. It is true that the Hubble space telescope has now seen what had not been seen before. It is still exploring deeper into the space. The Universe is an unlimited creation.

STANZA 25 THAT ENTITY IS BOUNTEOUS

ਬਹੁਤਾ ਕਰਮੁ¹ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ ॥

Bahuṭā karam likhiṁā nā jāᶜe.

Page 5

This portion of stanza #25-2 is an extended description of ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ (parsad), one of the many attributes for the Entity used in the Commencing Verse at the beginning of Jap. However, it also explains that the suffering of pain and hunger also happen under the Laws of Nature and liberation from such suffering comes through understanding these laws.

Note:

1. ਕਰਮੁ (Karam): It has many meanings – blessing, bounties, deeds, understanding, comprehension, practicing, etc. Its interpretation depends on the context in which it has been used (see stanza # 37-1). Here it has been interpreted as “bounteousness”.

SECTION VIII

STANZA 26-1

PRICELESS VIRTUES/PHILOSOPHY

ਅਮੁਲ ਗੁਣ ਅਮੁਲ ਵਾਪਾਰ ॥

Amul guṇ amul vāpār.

Page 5

This portion explains that there are priceless virtues of that Entity (God) and those who understand these virtues are also priceless. It also explains that priceless are the Laws of Nature/Universe and so are the methods to evaluate these Laws. The bounties of that Entity are also priceless.

STANZA 26-2
ATTEMPTS TO DESCRIBE
THIS ENTITY (GOD)

ਅਮੁਲੇ ਅਮੁਲੁ ਆਖਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥

Amulo amul ākhiā na jāe.

Page 5

This part mentions that that Entity (God) cannot be described. Even many gods or goddesses fail to describe It (God).

STANZA 26-3
MANY ARE TALKING ABOUT THE
GREATNESS

ਕੇਤੇ ਆਖਹਿ ਆਖਣਿ ਪਾਹਿ ॥

Keṭe ākḥahi ākḥaṇ pāhi.

Page 6

The main theme is that Its virtues and bounties are priceless. It is very difficult to talk about It (God). Although many people have tried to talk about it, they failed to comprehend It and to describe It.

STANZA 27-1 WHERE DOES THIS ENTITY LIVE?

ਸੋ ਦਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਸੋ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ

ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥

So dar kehā so ghar kehā jīt bahi sarab samāle.

Page 6

The stanza #27 is a very long discussion about the gate to the residence of that Entity where It resides, controlling everybody and everything in this Universe.

This stanza is composed of three sections:

The first section is in the form of a question as discussed above.

STANZA 27-2
IS IT THAT RESIDENCE WHERE
EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY PRAISES
GOD?

ਵਾਜੇ ਨਾਦ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਸੰਖਾ ਕੇਤੇ ਵਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥

vāje nād anek asankhā kete vāvaṇhāre

Page 6

The second section is also a question:

Is it that residence of that Entity where everybody and everything (living and non-living) plays different musical instruments and sings the praise of that Entity?

STANZA 27-3
THE ANSWER
THE ENTITY EXISTS FOREVER
AND EVERYWHERE
ਸੇਈ ਸੇਈ ਸਦਾ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ
ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਚੀ ਨਾਈ ॥

So᳚ī so᳚ī sadā sacḥ sāhib sāchā sāchī nā᳚ī.

Page 6

The answer to the questions in the first and second section become evident in the third section, that there is no specific gate of the residence for that Entity where all those living beings and non-living are singing its praises as is being taught by religious mentors or as is generally accepted by many religious people. There is no specific residence because that Entity existed before the space and time appeared (before the origin of Universe), existed in the past, exists now everywhere and will exist forever (see the Sloka in the beginning of Jap). That Entity is the Eternal King of earthly kings meaning that every action and reaction in all the living beings and in the whole Universe is going on according to Its *Hukm* (the Laws of Nature/Universe). Nobody can change these laws in his/her favor by praising that Entity.

Note: This stanza # 27 also appears at page 8 and 347 of the AGGS with little change in some spellings and addition of some words but the theme remains the same.

SECTION IX

STANZA 28

A YOGI IS ADVISED ABOUT THE MEANINGS
OF THEIR PRACTICES

ਮੁੰਦਾ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਸਰਮੁ ਪਤੁ ਝੋਲੀ

ਧਿਆਨ ਕੀ ਕਰਹਿ ਬਿਭੂਤਿ ॥

Munḁa santokh saram paṭ jholī

ḁhiān kī karahi bibhūṭ.

Page 6

Guru Nanak advises the Yogi to be contented, keep the body and mind pure from evil thoughts, and earn food by working, and all these factors should be guiding stick (baton). High class is not only for Yogis but all of humanity, for humanity is the highest class of evolution among living beings. Conquering the mind is equivalent to conquering the whole world. Then, he explains ‘That’. What is that Entity which has been always here in the same state all the times? It is further explained in detail in the next stanza #29.

STANZA 29

A YOGI IS ADVISED ABOUT MIRACLES, FUSION, AND FISSION

ਭੁਗਤਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਦਇਆ ਭੰਡਾਰਣਿ

ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਵਾਜਹਿ ਨਾਦ ॥

Bhugaṭ giān daīā bhandāraṇ
ghat ghat vājeh nād.

Page 6

In this stanza Guru Nanak explains the importance of wisdom and compassion to achieve contentment. Then, he talks about the God as the controller and every action and reaction in this Universe are under his control (*Hukm* as explained in stanza # 2 and God remains care-free as explained in stanza # 3 of Jap). Guru Nanak explains that two processes, fusion (ਸੰਜੋਗੁ - *sanjog*) and fission (ਵਿਜੋਗੁ - *vijog*), generate the energy required to carry out every work in the Universe and in every living being.

The interpretation of the above verses in their real perspective would have not been possible without the application of knowledge of physics, biology, and genetics. However, at many other places in AGGS ‘sanjog’ and ‘vijog’ have been used in their simple meaning as the meeting of a person with another person or with God and the separation of a person from other person or from God, respectively. It also becomes clear from these phrases that the interpretation of certain words should be done by keeping in view the context in which they have been used.

SECTION X

STANZA 30

TRINITY OR ONE ENTITY?

ਏਕਾ ਮਾਈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਵਿਆਈ

ਤਿਨਿ ਚੇਲੇ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥

Ēkā māī jugat̤ vīāī t̤in chele parvāṇ.

Page 7.

The generally accepted concept of the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva) of God is rejected in this stanza. Guru Nanak says that there is only One Entity that controls everything (every action and reaction) under Its Laws of Nature/Universe. It has also been mentioned in the previous stanza # 29 (ਆਪਿ ਨਾਥੁ ਨਾਥੀ ਸਭ ਜਾ ਕੀ ...) *Aap naath naathi sabh ja ki* - 'The God is the Controller, who controls everything'. But almost all the interpreters have accepted the assignment of three different duties to three different deities of God, which is contrary to the basic concept of Guru Nanak's God (that Entity) - 'One and Only, the Infinite', who controls every action and reactions under Its Laws of Nature/Universe.

According to Nanakian Philosophy that Entity (God) does not exist in Trinity.

STANZA 31 THAT ENTITY (GOD) EXISTS EVERYWHERE

ਆਸਣੁ ਲੇਇ ਲੇਇ ਭੰਡਾਰ ॥

Āsaṅ loᵉ loᵉ bhṅdār.

Page 7.

That Entity (God) exists everywhere in the Universe and has stored natural resources in every world (including our Earth) of the Universe. Whatever was to be put into these stores was put once and for all right from the beginning and no more will be added later on. For example, fossil fuels as oil and coal were deposited once and no more will be added now after their depletion. Therefore, we are already looking for alternative energy sources.

Guru Nanak has already indicated that there are two major sources of energy in the Universe. Fission (atomic energy) is already being used extensively and now we are looking for fusion energy, which is safer and less polluting. Natural resources mean all types of matter other than fossil fuels and the environmental conditions to grow the food needed by living beings. However, it all depends on how the humans use them.

More is explained about natural resources in stanza # 34 and in a sloka at the end of the Jap bani.

SECTION XI

STANZA 32

REPETITION OF SOME NAME OF THAT ENTITY

ਇਕ ਦੂ ਜੀਭੈ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਲਖ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਲਖ ਵੀਸ ॥

Ik dū jībh̄ou lakh̄ hohi lakh̄ hovēh lakh̄ vīs.

Page 7

In the above stanza Guru Nanak explains that it is a concept accepted by many people, that one can reach that Entity (God) by mere repetition of some name of that Entity or of a deity or a mantra. But Guru Nanak says that mere repetition of any name of that Entity or of a deity or of a mantra does not lead anyone anywhere. One needs to comprehend that Entity through visualization rather than repetition of some name of the Entity.

Note:

Dr Joginder Singh's analysis [5] of this stanza indicates that many of the interpretations are based on the ancient philosophy that by repeating some name of that Entity (God) or of a deity or of a mantra helps to reach that Entity or get one's wish fulfilled.

ਨਦਰ (*Nader*): It is usually interpreted as 'blessing by God'. It has other meanings also, especially as **ਨਜ਼ਰ** which means 'vision': far-sightedness - the ability to anticipate possible future events and developments (Encarta Dictionary). Ability to visualize.

STANZA 33
**NO ONE HAS ANY POWER TO CHANGE THE
LAWS OF NATURE/UNIVERSE**

ਆਖਣਿ ਜੇਰੁ ਚੁਪੈ ਨਹ ਜੇਰੁ¹. ॥

Ākhaṅ jor chupai nah jor.

Page 7

The above stanza demonstrates that it is an allegoric expression to explain that every action and reaction is happening in the Universe and with/within all living beings under the Laws of Nature/Universe and nobody can change them. This is the extension of the previous stanzas # 2 and 21-2 in which hukum has been discussed.

STANZA 34

NATURAL RESOURCES AND PHENOMENA

ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ॥

Rāṭī ruṭī thiṭī vār.

Page 7

Guru Nanak explains in this stanza that the Earth is a place to practice righteousness. On this Earth God has supplied all the natural resources and necessary phenomena for sustaining all types of living beings. One is judged as an ordinary or elevated being according to the deeds performed. Under the Laws of Nature (so-called the court) of the ever-existing Entity, only those are honored who have performed good deeds.

Notes:

ਪਾਤਲ (Patal): There is no such thing as ‘Patal’ in this Universe. It is a mythical term in ancient philosophy. However, according to Bachan [24] one may consider the ‘Patal’ as the center of Earth since there is all molten lava there that means fire/heat.

ਦਰਬਾਰੁ (Darbar): It is a metaphoric impression since there is no such thing as court (Darbar) of that Entity (God) as has been discussed in the next stanza # 35-1.

SECTION XII

STANZAS # 35-37

Different scholars have interpreted stanzas # 35 to 37 differently. This is due to the fact that there are too many allegorical expressions and too many uses of metaphors and similes in the poetic form. Under these conditions it becomes difficult for many scholars to interpret the real theme expressed by the author. Therefore, it is very important to distinguish the use of allegories, metaphors, and similes and the context in which these have been used. Here keeping in view all these facts and after consulting many scholars we have tried to interpret it as close to the real themes as possible. Moreover, the readers must keep in mind that the themes in stanzas from #34 to 37 are overlapping.

Here the word “realm” has been used as defined by dictionary.com: An area or sphere, as of knowledge or activity: the realm of science.

SANTZA 35-1 **THE REALM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

(Continuity of Stanza # 34)

ਧਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਏਹੇ ਧਰਮੁ ॥

Dharam khand kā eho dharam.

Page 7

Notes:

The above phrase represents the theme discussed in the previous stanza # 34 of Jap, in which it has been emphasized that on Earth, (*Dharm Khand*- realm of practicing righteousness) a lot of natural resources (air, water, fire/energy, etc.) and many phenomena (day, night, seasons, etc.) have been provided by that Entity (God) for humans to practice righteousness, because righteousness is rated as the highest edict in all the religions.

STANZA 35-2

THE REALM OF WISDOM / KNOWLEDGE

ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਆਖਹੁ ਕਰਮੁ ॥

Giān khand kā ākḥhu karam.

Page 7

In this Realm of Wisdom/Knowledge one comprehends the details about the Universe and the reality of the various concepts accepted by people.

STANZA 36-1

THE REALM OF WISDOM/KNOWLEDGE

(Continuity of Stanza # 35-2)

ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡੁ ॥

Gi^ān kḥand mēh gi^ān parchand.

Page 7

Note:

ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੇਡ ਅਨੰਦੁ (*Nad Benod Kord Anand*) : All these words collectively represent “high state of tranquility and happiness”.

STANZA 36-2

THE REALM OF INNOVATIVENESS

ਸਰਮ¹ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪੁ ॥

Saram khand kī baṇī rūp.

Page 8

Note: 1.

ਸਰਮ¹ (*saram*) is usually interpreted as modesty, decency, courage, and initiative, however, if we analyze the theme in this stanza then it should mean ‘innovativeness.

The main theme in this Realm of Innovativeness is the development of knowledge, wisdom and philosophy for developing high morality in humans.

STANZA 37-1
THE REALM OF DEEDS
ਕਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੋਰੁ ॥

Karam khand kī baṇī jor.

Page 8

The main theme in this part of this stanza is that in the Realm of Deeds one attains courage and wisdom through words (sabd) as described in stanza 38. They also attained peace of mind by understanding that Entity (God) through the words (sabd).

STANZA 37-2

THE REALM WHERE ONE REALIZES ABOUT THE UNIVERSE AND THAT ENTITY

ਸਚ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥

Sacḥ khand vasai nirankār.

Page 8

The above discussion clearly indicates that this realm is neither a particular place nor a state of mind of any bhagat or human in which that Entity dwells. Therefore, Such Khand is the ‘realm where one understands about the Universe/Nature and that Entity (God).

The critical analysis of stanzas 34 to 37 indicates that the first Khand is the ‘Realm of Righteousness’ - the Earth, for conducting good deeds. The second one is the ‘Realm of Wisdom/Knowledge’; the third one is the ‘Realm of Innovativeness’; the fourth one is the ‘Realm of Deeds’; and the fifth one is the ‘Realm of Understanding the Universe/Nature and that Entity (God)’. All these five realms are the ‘States of Mind’ for understanding and developing the intellect.

Sabd: It is being discussed in stanza # 38.

SECTION XIII

STANZA 38 COINING SABD

ਜਤੁ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ ॥

Jaṭ pāhārā dhīraj suniār

Page 8

Almost all of the theologians and researchers under the heavy influence of ancient philosophy interpret ਨਦਰਿ (*nadar*) as “Grace/Blessing of God” and ਕਰਮੁ (*karam*) as the “effect of deeds of the last life”. Since there are many meanings of each word whether it is in English or in Punjabi, therefore, it is very important to apply the most appropriate meaning of *nadar* and *karam* to interpret the bani in order to understand the message of Guru Nanak in its real perspective. It is only the SGGGS Punjabi to Punjabi Dictionary of Gurbachan Singh [12] and also Bhai Kahn Singh’s *Mahan Kosh* [12] which gives the meanings of these words, other than the usually accepted meanings under the influence of ancient philosophy, as follows:

ਨਦਰਿ (*nadar*) means ਨਜ਼ਰ (*nazar*) which means ‘vision’ in English. Vision means an image or concept in the imagination; visions of power and wealth: farsightedness - the ability to anticipate possible future events and developments. These meanings are same as given for the Arabic word.

ਨਦਰਿ (*nadar*) is from ‘nazar’ from the Arabic language. There are two different meanings of this word:

Nazar: Vision as explained above, critical examination, sight, see.

Nazar: Gift, present given to a higher authority, Paying under the table (corruption)

ਕਰਮੁ (*karam*) means ਕੰਮ, ਅਮਲ, ਕਰਨੀ, ਕਰਤੱਬ, ਕਰਤੱਵ, ਕਾਰਜ, ਕਿਰਿਆ, ਕਿਰਤਕਮਾਈ-, ਨਿੱਤ ਦੀ ਕਾਰ, ਚਾਲ ਚਲਨ, ਆਚਾਰ, ਆਚਰਨ, ਕਰਕੰ ਜੋਗ which mean work, capability, method, daily work, routine, etc. in English.

ਕਰਮੁ (*karam*) is also an Arabic word.

In the above stanza # 38 Guru Nanak explains how a Sabd (enlightened idea / philosophy / vision) is coined (formulated) as the *amrit* (life-giving elixir) – the way of living, which will mould a person to be highly moral and progressive. This is generally accepted in Eastern philosophy that a Guru is necessary to guide a person to achieve a moral life. That is why during a discourse (Siddh Gost) the Siddhas posed a number of questions to Guru Nanak:

Q. 1: Who is your Guru?

ਕਵਣ ਮੂਲੁ¹ ਕਵਣ ਮਤਿ² ਵੇਲਾ³ ॥

ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

Kavaṇ mūl kavaṇ maṭ velā.

Ferā kavaṇ gurū jis kā tū chelā.

AGGS, M 1, p 943.

What is the source of beginning¹ and which type of philosophy² is of this Age³?

Who is that Guru of whom you are his disciple?

Note: ਵੇਲਾ³ (Age³): A distinct period of history. For example, the Stone Age, the Copper Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Middle Ages (1066 -1485), the Atomic Age, the Space Age, and the Computer and Information Age. Thus, the Siddhas were questioning that what is that Age we are passing through?

Q.2. What is your philosophy?

ਕਵਣ ਕਥਾ⁴ ਲੇ ਰਹਹੁ ਨਿਰਾਲੇ⁵ ॥

ਬੋਲੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਬਾਲੇ⁶ ॥

Kavaṇ kathā le rahhu nirāle.

Bolai Nānak suṇhu tum bāle.

What type of unique⁵ philosophy⁴ do you have?

Speak out, Oh child⁶ Nanak, we are ready to listen to you.

Q.3: What is your Sabd which can help us to cross the dreadful sea of life?

ਏਸੁ ਕਥਾ⁷ ਕਾ ਦੇਇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ⁸ ॥

ਭਵਜਲੁ⁹ ਸਬਦਿ¹⁰ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ¹¹ ॥੪੩॥

Ès kathā kā de=ie bīchār.

Bhavjal sabad langhāvāṇhār. ॥43॥

Could you, please, deliberate⁸ on your unique philosophy⁷?

What is that Sabd¹⁰ (your idea/philosophy) which could help¹¹ us to cross the dreadful⁹ sea of life?

Answer to first question:

ਪਵਨ¹ ਅਰੰਭੁ² ਸਤਿ³ ਗੁਰ⁴ ਮਤਿ⁵ ਵੇਲਾ⁶ ॥

ਸਬਦੁ⁷ ਗੁਰੂ⁸ ਸੁਰਤਿ⁹ ਧੁਨਿ¹⁰ ਚੇਲਾ¹¹ ॥

Pavan arambh satgur mat velā.

Sabad gurū surat dhun chelā.

The air¹ is the beginning² of every life and this is the Age⁶ of enlightenment⁵ through the True⁴ Guru³.

Who is that true Guru?

It has been explained in the second sentence:

The Sabd⁷ is the Guru⁸ (enlightener) and my keen¹⁰ conscience⁹ is its disciple¹¹.

Notes:

ਸਤਿ³ ਗੁਰੁ⁴ ਮਤਿ⁵ ਵੇਲਾ⁶ = This is the Age of

Enlightenment through the true Guru. The true Guru is the Sabd as described in stanza # 38.

The answer to Q. 3 is given as follows:

ਸੁਰਤਿ¹ ਸਬਦਿ² ਭਵ³ ਸਾਗਰੁ⁴ ਤਰੀਐ⁵ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ⁶ ਵਖਾਣੈ⁷ ॥

Surat sabad bhav sāgar tarī^{ai} Nānak nām vakhāṇē.

Nanak shows⁷ that the law⁶ to cross⁵ the dreadful³ sea of life⁴ is turning one's conscience¹ towards such Sabd² (as described above).

AGGS, M 1, p 938 (Siddh Gost).

SECTION XIV

SLOKA 1 NATURAL RESOURCES

॥ ਸਲੋਕੁ ॥

Sloka

ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥

Pavaṇ gurū pāṇī piṭā māṭā dharat mahat.

Page 8

Here Guru Nanak explains that the Earth is the only planet in our solar system where all the natural resources, i.e. metals, coal, oil, air, water and the necessary phenomena - day, night, and seasons, and the suitable life-sustaining environment for all the living beings are found. Guru Nanak advises the practice of righteousness for a peaceful life and protecting the Earth from pollution to preserve it for the future generations of humanity.

* * * * *

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

1. CHAHAL, D. S., THIND, K. S, DHAILWAL, A. .S. AND SCHELL, J (2014) Nanak: The Guru - The Founder of Sikhism (Laval, Quebec, Canada, Institute for Understanding Sikhism)
http://www.iuscanada.com/books/2015/ebook_Nanak_The%20Guru_The_Founder_of_Sikhism.pdf.
http://www.iuscanada.com/books/2015/ebook_Nanak_The%20Guru_The_Founder_of_Sikhism.pdf
2. SINGH, I. (1969 (1988)) *The Philosophy of Guru Nanak* (New Delhi, Anubhav Art Press).
3. CHAHAL, D. S. (2008) *Nanakian Philosophy Basics for Humanity* (Laval, QC, Canada, Institute for Understanding Sikhism).
4. AGGS (1983) *Aad Guru Granth Sahib* (Amritsar, Punjab, India, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee). (M = Mahla, i.e., succession number of the Sikh Gurus to the House of Nanak, M is replaced with the name of Bhagat/ Bhatt for their Bani, p = Page of the AGGS).
5. SINGH, J. (1981) *Japji de Teeke: Smikhyatmak Adhyan (In Punjabi)* (Patiala, India, 24 Green View).
6. CHAHAL, D. S. (2003) *JAP: The Essence of Nanakian Philosophy* (Laval, Quebec, Canada Institute for Understanding Sikhism, Distributors: Singh Brothers, Amritsar).
7. CHAHAL, D. S. (2013) Ketnote Address: International Conference Formuating Methodology for Interpreting Gurbani. Anniversary of Max Arthur Macauliffe (1841-1913) *Understanding*

- Sikhism Res, J*, p. 1 (Laval, Quebec, Institute for Understanding Sikhism).
8. MACAULIFFE, M. A. (1978) *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors* (New Delhi, S. Chand & Company Ltd).
 9. DAWE, D. G. (1997) Macauliffe, Max Arthur (1841-1913), in: Singh, H. (Ed.) *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, p. 1 (Patiala, Punjabi University).
 10. SINGH, T. S., BHAJ JODH; SINGH, KAPUR; SINGH, BAWA HARKRISHAN; SINGH, KHUSHWANT. (1973) *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs* (New York, Samuel Weiser, Inc).
 11. SINGH, D. & SINGH, K. (1993) Guru and Bani: The basic message, *The Sikh Review, Calcutta*, 40 (January), p 11.
 12. THIND, K. S. www.srigranth.org.
 13. THIND, K. S. (2004) Questioning-Answering System in Jap, *Understanding Sikhism Res. J.*, 6 (1), p 29.
 14. SINGH, P. (2003) *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Vichlay Prashan-uttaran daa Kosh. (Punjabi)* (Patiala, Prof Sahib Singh Trust (Reg.)).
 15. SINGH, M. (1962) *Sri Guru Granth Sahib: (English & Punjabi Translation)* (Amritsar, Publishers: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar.).
 16. SINGH, S. (1972) *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Darpan (Punjabi). Vols 10* (Jalandhar, India, Raj Publishers).
 17. SINGH, K. (1981) *Mahan Kosh* (Patiala, India, Bhasha Vibagh Punjab).
 18. SINGH, G. (2000) *Sri Guru Granth Kosh: Gurmukhi to Gurmukhi (In Punjabi)* (Patiala, India, Prof Sahib Singh Trust).

19. SINGH, H. (1988) *Aad Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Punjabi)*. Vols. 14 (Patiala, India, Gurmat Seva Parkashan).
20. CHAHAL, D. S. (2013) Application of Science and Logic in Interpreting Gurbani, Part I: Etymology, *Understanding Sikhism Res. J.*, 15 (1&2).
21. CHAHAL, D. S. (2013) Application of Science and in Interpreting Gurbani: Part II: Ontology, *Understanding Sikhism Res. J.* , 15 (1 & 2).
22. CHAHAL, D. S. (2010) Guru Nanak's Concept of God, *J. Sikh Studies*, 34 p 7.
23. SINGH, T. *Japji Steek (Punjabi)* (Amritsar, Dharam Parchar Committee (SGPC)).
24. BACHAN, GURBACHAN SINGH (1985) Theo-Cosmo evolutionary concept: A new interpretation of Japji Sahib, *J. Sikh Studies*, 12 (11), p 1.

* * * * *

JAP

The Verses of Guru Nanak

INSTITUTE FOR UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM

4418 Rue Martin-Plouffe
Laval, Quebec, H7W5L9
Canada

