

# SCIENTIFIC VISION OF GURU NANAK

By Col. Dr. Dalvinder Singh Grewal

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*A Review by Dr. D.P. Singh\**

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'What is the Universe? Who has created it? What was there before its creation? Where did the Universe come from? Will it ever come to an end? What is Nature? What is God? What is the origin and purpose of life? What is soul and where does it exist? What is the best way of living? Is there life after death?' - are some of the most frequently asked questions. These have remained upper most in almost all the great scientific minds as well. Col. Dr. Dalvinder Singh Grewal in his book titled 'Scientific Vision of Guru Nanak' makes a successful attempt to answer these using Gurbani as the cornerstone. The book offers an exciting bridge between religious studies and natural sciences. The author has made a splendid in-depth study of Guru Nanak's hymns and their relationship with science.

An article published in Hindustan Times kindled his interest to search for the answers to the above questions. He articulates that a detailed study of Guru Nanak's hymns reveal a wealth of information about these most intricate problems of modern science.

Dr. Grewal stresses that Guru Nanak's version appears to be unique, scientific, truthful and logical. Using appropriate quotes from Guru Nanak's hymns he points out that the great Guru has explained the origin, development and existence of the Universe very vividly. Science and Religion are not polarized in Guru Nanak's hymns. These hymns bring us face to face with the concreteness and reality of the interdependence of all life and of our own microcosmic and macrocosmic relationship. Science, with its observations and factual data, does not clash with truth revealed in the sacred hymns. The scientific observations and the data rather reveal their intrinsic vigour, far reaching insights and their contemporary relevance. These facts emerge most convincingly in Dr Grewal's interpretation of Guru Nanak's hymns in the light of scientific theories of evolution, cosmology, nature of reality and time. The author has a strong faith and conviction that Guru Nanak's hymns have the potential to be a beacon light for the present and future generations to unravel the great Cosmic mysteries.

In the chapter titled 'Guru Nanak's Answers to some Unanswered Questions' the author points out that Guru Nanak had not only a great vision but also a very scientific and analytical mind. Through his immense knowledge, analytical and scientific vision, he had propounded certain doctrines, which were very new to the world. Some important questions about God, Universe, Creation, Nature, Man, Transmigration and Spirit as answered by Guru Nanak has been reproduced in this chapter with appropriate quotes from his hymns. Dr. Grewal stresses that through experience, intuition and super-consciousness Guru Nanak has answered the most difficult questions very vividly, cleared various doubts and decried fallacies. His propagation of scientific truth was realistic and humane.

Elaborating on 'Finding Truth' the author emphasizes that the knowledge of the 'True Lord' and His functioning, the Universe and Creation etc. cannot be obtained by ordinary scientific paradigms. True wisdom comes through self-realization, achieved by concentration, super-consciousness, awareness and intuition. Providing an overview of the various stages of consciousness as proposed in both science and religion, the author points

out that '*The Sat*' the cosmic energy, a dynamic state of *aakaash* (space) generates the cosmic matter and is the universal truth of all visible and invisible existence. Like bubbles in water the worlds rise, exist and dissolve in Supreme self (Parmeswara), which is the material cause and the support of everything. This is the highest spiritual truth as regards the origin of the universal energy for the generation of cosmic matter and their harmonious movements.

In describing 'Guru Nanak's Methodology of Finding Truth', the author points out that Truth is taken to be the essence of God, which accords well with the concept of 'Ultimate Reality' in our age of scientific quest. According to Guru Nanak, the Ultimate truth is the one that is permanent and does not change. It is 'The True Lord or God' alone that is permanent and unchangeable. Guru Nanak's method of attaining 'The True Lord' was natural assimilation through meditation on 'His Name' with devotional love and Lord's Grace was an essential requirement. In *santanza (Paudi)* 34 to 38 of *Japuji* the great Guru has explained the method of reaching 'The True Lord' through meditation. He described the five Realms i.e. Realm of Righteousness (*Dharam Khand*), Realm of Knowledge (*Gyan Khand*), Realm of Spiritual Effort (*Saram Khand*), Realm of Grace (*Karam Khand*) and Realm of Truth (*Sach Khand*), through which one has to advance through.

Science and Religion, represent two great systems of human thought. Science is defined as the knowledge about the structure and behaviour of the natural and physical world based on facts that we can prove. Religion is the belief in the existence of God or gods and the activities that are connected with the worship of them. After a thorough analysis, Dr. Grewal opines that Guru Nanak had a deep knowledge of the basic concepts of all the major branches of natural and social sciences. Guru Nanak's knowledge of Theology was also very vast. The author points out that Energy, Light, Sound and continuous change through regular development and decay are important fields of study of science in Guru Nanak's hymns. The author explains that the hymns of Guru Nanak describe 'The True Lord's Scientific Management System' meticulously and provide a very clear methodology for the salvation through his Spiritual Technology expertise. The extraordinary linguistic and tonal features, choice of appropriate vocabulary, phonetic transcription and usage of appropriate language in these hymns undoubtedly point out that Guru Nanak had a very deep knowledge of various sciences. The author stresses that these extraordinary features of the great Guru's hymns demand an urgent attention of the interdisciplinary researchers.

In the chapter on 'Theories, Concepts and Doctrines propounded by Guru Nanak the author describes that Guru Nanak's concept formation was very scientific, logical and systematic. Guru Nanak's Concept of God, Concept of Creation of Universe and his Concepts of Nature (*Maya*), Existence, Soul, Life, Death and Transmigration, Ego, God-realization and Salvation show originality of thought and in depth knowledge, study and intuition. Doctrine is a belief or set of beliefs held by a Church, a political party etc. Guru Nanak's hymns are a treasure trove for several Doctrines propounded by him such as Doctrine of Cause and Effect, Doctrine of Space and Time, Doctrine of Duality, Doctrine of Change, Doctrine of Divine order and Doctrines of Ethical Conduct (*Dharma*), Knowledge, Karma, Hard Work (*Saram*) and Divine Grace. The author points out that the Doctrines propounded by Guru Nanak are superior to the corresponding doctrines propounded by modern science or other religions.

The author stresses the need to understand the 'Preordained Divine Order' to know the Truth of the Universe in the chapter titled; 'The Divine Order'. He points out that even the modern scientists have stood in awe at the intelligent order exhibited throughout the

Universe. Talking about the forces of Nature and the delicate balance in them, he concludes that scientists agree that everything in our Universe is in a particular order. This fact is in strong consonance with Guru Nanak's saying, made almost 500 years earlier, that 'Everything is subject to Lord's order, No one is beyond His order'.

'Divine Light' and 'Guru Nanak's Theory of Energy' are the topics discussed in the next two chapters. On the basis of a comparative study of the various forms of energy, the author concludes that there has been encouraging research in the field of subtle energies. These energies can be measured and they are continuously changing from one form into another. Although scientific tools for the study of subtle energies are still in their formative stage, many individuals over the centuries have had the ability to see these energies. Guru Nanak was the one, who has foretold in his hymns that the entire universe is a play of the Lord with the help of energy. 'He (The Lord) Himself is the light energy and his Divine Light is infused in every heart and soul'. The thoughts expressed in his hymns by the great Guru about the interplay of energies in the Universe are in complete agreement with the prevalent scientific theory of Energy, confirming the correctness of Guru Nanak's Theory of Energy.

'Creation or Evolution?' has been a matter of discussion for the ages but without any universally accepted answer. This is the topic taken up for discussion in the chapter titled; 'Theory of Developmental Assimilatory Creation'. After describing various myths about the originator of the Universe, as prevalent in different tribes and races, the author presents an analysis of the modern scientific theories such as the Big Bang Theory, the Steady State Theory and the Pulsating Universe Theory. He concludes that Guru Nanak gave an explicit answer to this question in '*Japuji*'. Using appropriate quotes from the Guru's hymns the author describes that the entire 'Universe is created by the True Lord with one word'. 'He created millions of nether worlds and skies'. 'From void He created air and water'. 'He created the bodies of beings in many colours and forms.' 'Creation is His sport.' 'He is both the Creator and the Destroyer.' 'He is settled in it to enjoy His creation.' The author concludes that Guru Nanak was however very clear that it was beyond anyone to have the exact knowledge of the origin of the Universe, a fact in complete agreement with the thoughts prevalent among modern scientists.

Dr. Grewal has summed up the discussion with an article titled, 'Sound as a Source of Creation and Ultimate Assimilation' to emphasize the inter-relationship in Science and Religion. He opines that a thorough analysis of Guru Nanak's hymns points to the importance of sound as a source of creation as well as the source of salvation or ultimate assimilation with the 'True Lord'. Guru Nanak says, 'With the help of the word sound the Lord is won and one gets merged into Him.' Thus in his hymns, Guru Nanak has explained the importance of sound, i.e. reciting the True Lord's Name and the accompanying sound for the purpose of assimilation and salvation. The importance of sounds produced by '*Ik Aumkar*' '*Onam*', '*Aum*' and '*Kun*' have been discussed in detail in this article.

Dr. Dalvinder Singh Grewal has done a momentous work in projecting the divine thought of Guru Nanak to the modern world through this book. The Scientific Vision of Guru Nanak comes out brilliantly through this work. His thesis is strongly supplemented by appropriate quotes from Guru Nanak's hymns. Though there has been some repetition of *Gurbani* quotes and textual material in the book yet it does not take the reader astray rather it helps in making things clear. Although the book is a gist of several research papers prepared by the authors, yet each article is complete in itself and is a treat to read. The younger generation of the Sikhs is likely to gain much from this treatise of scientific and spiritual knowledge. It is pertinent to add that this is one of the best books ever authored on this

topic till date. I strongly recommend that this book should be on the shelves of all the libraries and be distributed by all Gurudwaras. It is imperative that the Sikh youth of today are encouraged to read works of this nature.



## 1. ਮੌਲਿਕ ਪੈੜਾਂ ਸਿਰਜਦਾ ਸਿਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ [A Book of Essays]

### 2. ਸਿਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢਲੇ ਫਾਰਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਰਦੂ ਸਰੋਤ

[Farsi/Urdu sources of Sikh History]

**By Jasbir Singh Sarna, Ph.D.**

1. Published by Unistar Books P. Ltd. , Sector 34A, Chandigarh.

Pages: 284 Price: Rs. 300 Hard Cover

2. Guru Gobind Singh Study Circle, Ludhiana

. 141002. Pages 76. Price: Rs. 20.

When studied in depth, Gurbani and history of Sikhism can be a fascinating kaleidoscope. The variety of subjects mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib is mind-boggling. In this volume, in chaste Punjabi prose, the author - a prolific and knowledgeable essayist - traces references to Nature, historical events and personages, even as he traces a rare *Bir* of SGGS at Mattan, another in Farsi.

Then follows a collection of essays on the historical events, with a bearing on the evolution of Khalsa Raj, social and cultural developments and their imprint in Jammu & Kashmir, the holy relics of Islam, and how the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh provided protection to these rare treasures - since consigned to safety in the Badshahi Mosque at Lahore.

The essays cover a variety of subjects connected with Sikh culture over the centuries, and have a special fragrance of Jammu & Kashmir - which is home to a small but significant population of Sikhs.

The second slimmer volume (also in Punjabi) is meant as a handbook for students of history, dwelling on the Persian (& Urdu) sources. Since the knowledge of Farsi (and Urdu) is - regrettably - scarce in our academic circles, the glossary compiled by the author serves a special purpose for today's researchers in history of the Sikhs.

**- S.S.**