

Guru Nanak's Doctrine of Divine Order

Dr. Dalvinder Singh Grewal*

* HM-210 Focal Point, Sukhdev Nagar, Ludhiana 141001.

Concepts of Divine Order (*hukam*) and Divine Grace (*nadar*) are the characteristic contributions of Adi Granth. *Hukam*, a Persian term, meaning command or decree or direction, sanction or permission, occurs in Guru Nanak's hymns in several different - but related - connotations such as Divine law, Divine Will, or Divine Pleasure (*bhana*, *raza*); Divine *fiat* (*farman*); Divine power or Divine creation (*qudrat*). Guru Nanak has used the word *hukam* for Divine constitution under which this universe and nature were created and developed and functioning. Guru Nanak declares in Japuji that "all forms, beings, great and small, the pain and pleasure, bounties and wanderings are indescribable and there is nothing outside the realm of *hukam*." All the worlds, all the continents and all the beings of universe, are driven by God according to His will, and His pen flows to record their deeds. All the creation works under the *Hukam* or the Law of God. These laws are true for all times and work in all the three fields, i.e. physical, moral and spiritual. These laws bind all the creatures in the world.

Doctrine of Divine Grace: Divine Grace (*nadar*) is another characteristic concept of Guru Nanak. Meaning of Divine Grace are different in Guru Nanak's hymns from its usage in Christian theology, where the stress is upon its universal nature and absolute sufficiency for salvation. In Guru Nanak's hymns *nadar* is related to divine pleasure (*raza*) and somewhat close to "election": of neo-Calvinist theology, except that it leaves no scope for individual's free will. It is through *nadar* (God's Grace) that one secures the threshold of salvation (*mukti*). Though we get our body according to our *karma*, the release can only be obtained through the Grace of the Lord. The Grace of God begins with our acceptance of the True path in life. The amount of the Grace of the Lord necessitates our accomplishments on the right path. In fact, the Grace of the Lord is not the result of any whim of the Lord; it begins and matures with the beginning and maturity of our *dharma*.

Doctrine of Cause and Effect: The law of cause and effect works in every field. As per Newton's Law, "Every action has equal and opposite reaction." It is however different in Guru Nanak's words. He says, "He is the Creator and the destroyer and He himself puts every one on various jobs." He Himself is the doer and Himself the cause. Nothing happens without His order. A being performs His actions as per the directions of the Lord. A being gets birth into a form of life according to the *karma* of his previous life. He can improve his *karma* by doing good deeds. He loses the purpose of life if he is lost into *maya* and self-interest. He however can attain his purpose if he keeps off from *maya* and remains attached with the Lord. He can remain attached with the Lord by keeping his soul, mind and body tuned to Him through Naam which is the only way to attain salvation, i.e. to save one self from the cycle of births and deaths. Naam can be obtained from the Guru and a person can merge into Him by True Guru's Grace.

Doctrine of Dharma (Ethical Conduct): The man's final assessment and approval before God will depend entirely on his deeds. Activity is the keynote of Guru's teachings. The real objective of a being is to reach the ultimate but it forgets its path in the worldly evils and fails in attainment of the Lord. The prominent vices connected with the body are cruelty, theft and sexual hunger. The Gurus and saints believed in two kinds of actions, i.e. good or bad. The doer cannot escape from the effect of his deeds. While good deeds are fruitful, the bad actions get due punishments. The Charvaka hedonism has been rejected outright by the Guru. The virtue or righteousness exhibited through body, speech and mind is known as *Dharma*. In no religious system is the

emphasis on ethical conduct greater than as laid down in the Adi Granth where ‘truthful living or conduct has been declared higher than Truth itself’. Sweetness and humility are the essence of all virtues. Life is most fruitful when we meet those who practice humility and gentleness even while they are strong. The virtuous deeds are the tree, God’s Name its branches, faith its flowers and the Divine knowledge its fruit. To achieve sublimity one should make truth his fasting, contentment his pilgrimage, cognition and meditation his ablution, compassion his deity and forgiveness his rosary. Very few have the right way their loin-cloth, consciousness their sacred enclosure, good deeds their frontal mark and the Lord’s love their food. He who eats what he earns through his earnest labour, and from his hand gives some in charity, alone knows the true way of life.

The Gurus ‘never forgot that there is only one God of all the beings’. For him none is born great, none is inferior to the other; the walls and prejudices created in society are only man made. He advocates the removal of all social barriers between man and man, and man and woman. He has totally rejected the division of *varnas* (castes) and *Ashrams* (stages of life) enjoined by Hindu *Shashtras*. He believes in universal brotherhood and propagates love amongst all beings.

q