

# Guru Nanak Explores God's Creation in *Asa di Var*

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Guru Nanak conceptualises Naam in its eightfold nature: (1) Creator, (2) Person, (3) Uninhibited, spontaneously creative, (4) Without internal inconsistencies, (i.e. Harmonious), (5) Timeless, (6) Materializer, (7) Unborn, and (8) By Itself.

For understanding *Naam* as Creator, we should understand three ways in which Guru Nanak amplifies his concept of Creator. Before we mention the amplifications, let us keep in mind his identification of the two concepts of the Giver and the Creator. In the *Asa Di Var* itself, we shall find him saying: You are the Giver-cum-Creator.<sup>1</sup> And now the three amplifications: one, the Creator creates unceasingly throughout the eons - the beneficiaries of His creation may tire out, the Creator goes on creating through the eons.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, he says, the Great Creator keeps back not an iota<sup>3</sup>; in other words, He explores, as *Purakh*, all possibilities of creation. Thirdly, He creates a variegated universe<sup>4</sup> and thus gives the idea of the Creator who burgeons forth uninhibitedly and spontaneously in Existence or Nature (*kudrat*) - the idea he expresses in the phrase *Vigasai veparavah (u)*.<sup>5</sup> But the uninhibited nature of *Naam's* creativity does not mean a lack of design leading to inharmony in the universe or totality of nature.

As would be expected from *Naam* being the Universal *Purakh*, the supermind, there is not only purpose, design and hence harmony in creation, but even a pre-established harmony. Within a second of the start of creation, as the modern "Big Bang" cosmologists would have it, some elementary particles clicked into a pattern we know as the carbon atom, which has such extraordinary properties that, eons afterwards, it was to form the essential basis of life. Again, in the course of the chemical development of the universe, there came into being another miracle of creation: the water molecule, no other molecule than which could function as a medium of life, which it did eons after it came into being. Such examples can be mentioned galore.

***Naam's* uninhibited burgeoning forth into harmonious *kudrat* (Nature) gives to existence a time-dimension.** But this temporality of Existence is not inconsistent with the timelessness of *Naam*. There are two types of arguments leading to this conclusion. The first type of argument takes off from the idea of zero-time or even anti-time. Einstein has shown that when an object travels at the velocity of light, for it the hands of a clock stand still. **If a man was to travel at this speed, he would retain the age at which he started to travel as long as he continues to travel at that speed.** That, of course, does not mean that he would stop dead, for as soon as he begins to slide back in his speed, he would start ageing. Thus at the speed of light the man would live in a timeless universe.

Again, it is not an imaginary idea that there could be a speed greater than the speed of light. If that happens, in a particular case, the same equation of Einstein which would make one stop ageing at the speed of light, would show a negative time or anti-time. Also, the symmetry in the universe would require us to posit time as well as anti-time. Now, just as matter and anti-matter promptly destroy one another when they come together, giving place to matterlessness, time and anti-time, were they to come together - say, in a mind - would eliminate one another to give place to timelessness.

This would be an absurd conclusion to draw, were we not acquainted with the experience of timelessness under certain conditions. We thus come to the second type of argument,

which is the argument from human experience itself. L.S.D. is the name of a remarkable chemical, which when taken in extremely minute quantities, yields wierd experiences. In some of the experiences, time stops dead to give the feeling of the timeless present. Again, in many cases where persons have been rescued from the very jaws of death, many of them give astonishingly uniform reports of their having had flashbacks of their lives. In some cases a mere second, or even a fraction of a second, is available in which a review of years of life is laid out in the dying man's consciousness. So that, in such experiences years are not incompatible with the 'timeless' present. **Thus it is not a figment of imagination run riot to hypothesize that the evolving universe can be present as a 'timeless' experience to the Supremind.**

We have already dwelt on the capacity of the Formless *Naam* to jet out into material existence. But as the existence flows from *Naam*, it dwells under the sovereignty of *Naam*, thus giving rise to the categories of causality and time and to the idea of laws of Nature. But it would be a mistake to think that this materialization can, in any way, clog the nature of *Naam* as timeless, and, therefore, make it subject to time, that is, subject to birth, decay and change. Even *Naam* as *Murat(i)* retains its character of not being subject to birth and decay, that is, retains its *ajuni-ness*. Even material existence itself gives an indication of that, for what we may, for our present purposes, call identical particles, such as atoms or even small molecules, from which all finite beings are constituted, may roam in and out of finite beings and may pass through a whole series of finite beings, unaffected by the birth and decay of finite beings. And, then, what is timeless can only be by itself.

In characterising *Naam* in this eightfold way Guru Nanak does not wish to lead us into rarified abstractions, far from the concern of flesh and blood, men and women. Like the Buddha, Guru Nanak is concerned with the life of man in the concrete. In fact, *Asa Di Var* itself results from such a concern. The eight noetic globules are really his *Astang Marg*, his eight-iteded instructions to us to realise ourselves as persons taking the way of uninhibited and harmonious creativity in the timeless perspective of man, to rise above the vicissitudes of finitude and birth and install ourselves in accordance with the way of mysticism in His Being-for-Itself.

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## REFERENCES

1. *Data karta ap(i) tun*, SGGGS, p. 463.
2. *Deda deh lade thak(i) pahi(i). Juga jugantar(i) khahi khah(i)*, Ibid. p.2.
3. *Vada data til na tamai*, Ibid., p. 5.
4. *Tudh(u) veki jugat(u) upaia*, Ibid., p. 469.
5. Ibid., p. 2.