

# The Guru & the Mystery of Consciousness

## A Dialogue

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*Claudia:* I would appreciate if you could comment on a subject that Guru Nanak would certainly address if he lived in this twenty first century, to wit, the mystery of consciousness and the neural basis of the Self.

*Gurmukh:* First of all, the Message of Guru Nanak is not his message, it is the message as *revealed* to Him by what is the representation of God, in what we call the *Shabad Guru*. If you wish, I can give you references of this, for your better understanding. Also Guru's message is eternal and is relevant in all times, it is not bound by any time. It will also be relevant when the World is no more. The mystery of consciousness has been the same since the inception of time. Neutral Self is the one's self revealed with the practice of *Shabad Guru*, in a state of concentrated, single-pointed mind. Remember *Japji*. Neutral mind is where there is no thought and there is only Him, the state of rest and peace and *Anand*. In this state the *Shabad* is an uninterrupted practice, without effort and well call this the *Anhad Bani*, what is not created sound, but revealed to the within; this comes from His grace and our submission to Him, as Guru.

*C:* You probably know the book "*The Feeling of What Happens*" by Professor Antonio Damasio, a neurologist that studies the mysteries of conscience and the arrival of the self to the mental world. The continuity of self awareness is based on the constant generation of pulses, that correspond to to unremitting processing of an infinite number of objects, whose interaction modifies the self.

*G:* These can be the effects, but what causes it is the practice that changes our inner and outer being. This is not a mere physical phenomenon, it is a spiritual, mental and physical change. *Shabad* when revealed within changes all consciousness. Remember what the Third Guru reveals in the *Bani* of *Anand*. He gives all the changes that are brought about in detail. But we are concerned with the practice. The change will come and the change is not something which can be described. It can only be a reflection of truth, never the truth. Never the absolute. It must be clearly understood that the creation has come out from one Spirit, one Consciousness and that matter is but a mere reflection of it. Matter is never real, it is dynamic and unstable. Please learn one thing. You cannot decipher the world mystery by working in the *physical* plane. The roots of this world are in the universal Spirit and the universal Spirit has revealed itself to Guru Nanak in the form of the *Shabad*. This *Shabad* is what we must be in tune with, and that is what the game is all about. from here the key can be opened. But again, he who knows cannot say anything because it's beyond words to talk about the Absolute.

*C:* *The continuity of conscience comes from a copious stream of non-verbal narrative from the central conscience. The understanding of the biological basis of the mind from the point of view*

of Guru Nanak will give rise to the perception of Sikhi as the most advanced universal religion ever. **More than a mere treatment of the social, cultural and political identity of Punjab, the greatness of Sikhi doctrine is based on an approach to the stream of consciousness and in its relationship to the knowledge of the Transcending Absolute. The conscience is a biological function that allows us to know, or even perceive and anticipate God.**

G: Yes, this is what Guru calls the *Shabad Guru, Anhad Bani* (sound created without an instrument) and also the *Ajapa Jaap* (the narration, which cannot be narrated). This is what Guru has given us as the *Nirankar*. Representation of God head in the form of *Shabad*. But the question is how the *Shabad* is revealed (the practice of it is what you must dwell into and that will start when your questions stop and you start to follow). Guru's philosophy, I would rather say Guru's reality. because philosophy deals with thought and reality is beyond thought, it is not in thought, but beyond it, that is called *Sach Khand*.

**C: Only God can know Himself, as He is. Our mind does not allow us to know ourselves objectively, since we are subject and object at the same time, observer and the observed thing. (*drish* and *drishta*)**

G: God is all knowing, but God reveals Himself to a Sikh, the Sikh himself becomes all knowing. In the Guru Granth it is clearly affirmed. That by saying Thou art, my ego is dispelled, I am no more and only You are. When the me and my approach are replaced by Thou and Thou art, then the approach of false moves towards truth, absolute truth. This is because the 'I' is a false notion, living under certain frames like time, space and cause. When an individual is devoid of 'I' that is, when the mind is no more, thoughts are no more. Devoid of the changes of life, then the meaning of 'I' is lost. That is why we are taught to attach ourselves to *Naam*, which lives beyond these frames of physical existence. When we live in the knowledge of the subject, then we become observers in the play, while being the subject. **This is *Hukam*. Being aware of the Order of creation, we live in alignment with it, in harmony with it. When we transcend the mind's duality there are no observer and observed, there is only universal consciousness. We have submitted our mind, so there is no mind, only being, awareness.**

C: Since the mind, that is a stream of consciousness, is interrupted at death, the memory of the historical self is reduced to *nihil* (nothing). The DNA decomposes itself and the body goes to its mineral components.

G: Consciousness, which lives in the thought, is uninterrupted. The mind is made of positive and negative thoughts and these are stored in the mind until they are fulfilled, either in action or in thought. These thoughts guide the future of the soul, future state of existence. The body dies, but the mind does not. It lives on. But that special being, who has transcended thought and can live in the state of reality, has no thoughts, no desire and is complete. That mind is unaffected by death and is drawn into the inner Reality and bliss within man and has no unfinished thoughts to be converted into action. He is unborn, undying and forever in bliss. He is what Guru Nanak refers to as the one who attained *Naam*.

C: How can one get an in-depth understanding of the soul's liberation from the *karma* of past lives and from the reincarnation wheel ? If the historical self is transitory, and its existence as individual disappears at death, how can we understand the concept expressed in the SGGS ? There is no hell, no heaven, but melting with God. Then, what melts with God, if we are speaking about historical self and consciousness ? Do you think that there is a series of escalating reincarnations, from simpler beings to more complex ones? In order to reach the human shape, do we need to go through the mineral, vegetal and animal kingdoms?

**G: This is where the Guru comes in. Guru is the one who, with His grace, breaks the cycle of life and death. He breaks the bonds of past life. Guru is the one who give everlasting life to his disciple. However, there is a heaven and hell for the Sikh. Hell is when he/she is broken from the Guru by thought, and heaven when he is in tune with the Guru. The difficult part is for us to submit. We like to 'have our cake and eat it too'. We like to be called Sikhs and not submit to our Guru. We like not to drop our mind. However, when we drop it, with it goes all pain and pleasure and it is replaced by eternal bliss. The individual does not disappear at death, but lives with the mind and if the mind is attached to the physical it causes one a lot of pain, because the physical is not achievable in that state. There are reincarnations, but when we are with the Guru, we should look at proceeding to achieve, the enlightened state, which lies within us. remember that the *Mool Mantra* ends in *Gurprasad*. *Gurprasad* means His grace. This is how you achieve salvation; we must be capable of receiving and handling it.**

