

KUDRAT (NATURE) IN GURU NANAK'S HOLISTIC VISION

ARTICLE

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INTRODUCTION

Kudrat (Nature) refers to the phenomena of the physical world, and also to life in general. It ranges in scale from the subatomic to the cosmic. The word 'nature' is derived from the Latin word *natura*, or "essential qualities, innate disposition". *Natura* [9] was a Latin translation of the Greek word *physis* (φύσις), which originally related to the intrinsic characteristics that plants, animals, and other features of the world develop of their own accord.

Nature also refers to the general realm of various types of living plants and animals, and in some cases to the processes associated with inanimate objects – the way that particular types of things exist and change of their own accord, such as the weather and geology of the Earth, and the matter and energy of which all these things are composed. It is often taken to mean the "natural environment" or wilderness—wild animals, rocks, forest, beaches, and in general those things that have not been substantially altered by human intervention, or which persist despite human intervention. For example, manufactured objects and human interaction generally are not considered part of nature.

Nature! It is all around us, we see it every day, but hardly observe it. We hear it, but never listen to its sweet calls..... Nature is an integral part of our lives. The sunset and sunrise, the song of birds, their evening gatherings, the breeze that sways trees and the winds that blow your mind away...it's all nature and beauty divine. In his

compositions 'Asa Di Var' [1] and 'Baarah Mahaa' [1] Guru Nanak's holistic approach to the phenomena of Nature comes out very clearly.

What is Nature? Who was it originated? How does it work? ... All these questions and many more are well explained by Guru Nanak in his bani. The inter-relationships between Nature and Divinity, Nature and Spirituality, and Nature and humanity are also well depicted. It is emphasized in Guru Nanak's bani that Nature is serene, beautiful, lovely, unique gift to every one of us. Nature is to be enjoyed, cher-

Guru Nanak holds a prominent position among the pioneers of Period of Renaissance (14th to 17th centuries) and occupies a unique place amongst the spiritual leaders, preceptors, reformers and saints of India. His teachings have universal appeal and are good for all ages. The impact of his teachings on the Indian society has been incredible. He travelled far and wide to dispense his message of love, peace, devotion to God, social justice, religious toleration and universal brotherhood. He was a great thinker, a wonderful mystic and a distinguished social reformer. He was a revolutionary prophet, a litterateur of high caliber and a person of extraordinary foresight. In addition to all this Guru Nanak was a man with a great love and reverence for Kudrat (Nature). Guru Nanak's teachings and several incidents of his life confirms this fact. In this article, the concept of Kudrat (Nature) as enunciated by Guru Nanak in his hymns is described.

ished and revered. Guru Nanak professed that all of us should have a harmonious relation with Nature.

NATURE

For a scientist, the word 'Nature' stands for the baffling mysteries of the universe [27]. The universe consists of this planet earth with its land, underlying lava, minerals, rivers, mountains, seas, atmosphere, vegetation, life, billions of billions of solar systems, meteors and galaxies, novas, super-nova, nebulas, white dwarfs, quasars, pulsars, dark matter

and dark energy etc. and also Black Holes. Thus 'Nature' is the entire composite material universe and its phenomenon – the world. It is the sum total of all the things in perpetual motion in space and time.

From the point of view of religion, 'Nature' is the wonderful conglomeration and ever present consciousness. It is controller of five distinct but subtle classical elements; Air, Water, Earth, Fire and Space (Ether or Akasha). (However, it may be noted that these are not elements in the modern sense as we define chemical elements these days. Rather Water is a compound of Hydrogen and Oxygen elements, Air and Earth are mixtures of several elements or compounds, Fire is a form of energy and Space is a continuous area or expanse that is free, available, and contains the other four classical elements). Many philosophies and worldviews believe that these classical elements reflect the simplest essential parts and principles of which anything can consist or upon which the constitution and fundamental powers of everything are based. Most frequently, classical elements refer to ancient concepts which some science writers compare to the modern states of matter, relating earth to the solid state, water to liquid, air to gaseous and fire to plasma. It is presumed that these classical elements give birth to chain of beings, which can be classified into five Kingdoms by scientists as animals (Animalia), plants (Plantae), fungi (Fungi), protozoa and eukaryotic algae (Protista), and bacteria and blue-green algae (Monera).

Guru Nanak has delineated in great detail about 'Nature' in his hymns. In his hymns the word 'ਕੁਦਰਤਿ (Kudrat)' has often been used to depict 'Nature'. In Guru Nanak's bani, the word 'Kudrat' is also synonym with 'Prakirti' or 'Maya':

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਦਿਸੈ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ

ਭਉ ਸੁਖ ਸਾਰੁ ॥

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਪਾਤਾਲੀ ਆਕਾਸੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸਰਬ

ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਵੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ

ਸਰਬ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਖਾਣਾ ਪੀਣਾ ਪੈਨ੍ਹ੍ਰੁਣੁ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ

ਸਰਬ ਪਿਆਰੁ ॥

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਜਾਤੀ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਰੰਗੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ

ਜੀਅ ਜਹਾਨੁ ॥

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਨੇਕੀਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਬਦੀਆ

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਮਾਨੁ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਪਉਣੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ

ਧਰਤੀ ਖਾਕੁ ॥

ਅਸ਼ਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 464.

To perceive with the eyes, to perceive with the ear, to be in fear or to be happy is all part of Nature.

Nature is the nether worlds, and the ethers. Nature is the manifestation of all forms.

Nature is the Vedas, Puraanas and the Semitic Scriptures. Nature is all the deliberations.

Eating, drinking and dressing is all natural; And Nature is love within us.

Nature is all kinds, colors and species; Nature is the living beings and the world. Nature is virtues and vices. Nature is honor and dishonor. Nature is wind, water and fire; Nature is earth and dust.

AGGS, M 1, p 464.

Thus Guru Nanak has used the word 'Nature' to describe the phenomena of the physical, chemical and physiological world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth.

PRIMAL CAUSE

Guru Nanak proclaims that the 'Nature' was created from the 'Primal Void' by the Creator. Even the primal Void had been created by Him.

ਆਪੇ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਖੈ ਸੁੰਨਹੁ ਸੁੰਨਹੁ

ਉਪਾਇਦਾ ॥

ਅਸ਼ਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 1037.

Exercising His Creative Power He creates 'Nature', and gazes upon it; from the Primal Void, He formed the Void.

AGGS, M 1, p 1037.

ਆਪੀਨ੍ਹ੍ਰੈ ਆਪੁ ਸਾਜਿਓ ਆਪੀਨ੍ਹ੍ਰੈ ਰਚਿਓ

ਨਾਉ ॥

ਦੁਯੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਸਾਜੀਐ ਕਰਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਡਿਠੇ

ਚਾਉ ॥

ਅਸ਼ਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 463.

He created Himself; and Himself assumed His Name. Secondly, He created Nature; seated within it, He beholds it with delight.

AGGS, M 1, p 463.

TIME OF ORIGINATION

In 1930, a Belgium astronomer Georges Lemaitre expounded the 'big bang' theory [14], which describes the way in which the universe began. He suggested that about 13,800 million years ago, a super dense particle—the "primeval atom" as he called it—disintegrated in an explosion, giving rise to space and time and the expansion of the universe that continues to this day. In due course of time this explosion and its many fragments gave birth to planets, stars and galaxies.

Another popular belief – The Steady State Theory [11] – was advanced in 1948 by British cosmologists Hermann Bondi, Thomas Gold

and Fred Hoyle. They suggested that the universe was eternal and that it has always existed. In 1965, an American astronomer Professor Allan Sandage developed the ‘Pulsating Universe Theory’. He suggested that the universe is created, destroyed and then re-created in 86,000 million – year cycles. At the moment, he said, the universe is only 13,800 million years along the expansion stage. So the scientists are unable to account for the creation of the universe with exactness, till date.

Among the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers there were different opinions and traditions pertaining to the date of the creation. Some philosophers believed the universe was eternal, and actually had no date of creation [6]. Apollonius, an Egyptian pagan priest in the 2nd century AD, calculated the cosmos to be 153,075 years old as reported by Theophilus of Antioch [4]. Numerous efforts have been made to determine the biblical date of creation, yielding varying results. Besides differences in interpretation, the use of different versions of the Bible had also affected the result. Two dominant dates for creation using such models exist, about 5500 BC and about 4000 BC. These were calculated from the genealogies in two versions of the Bible, with most of the difference arising from the two versions of Genesis [6]. The ancient Chinese historian [6] Xu Zheng dated the creation of the world about 39,000 BCE.

The Hindu religion is dedicated to the idea that the Cosmos itself undergoes an infinite, number of death and rebirth cycles. These cycles run from our ordinary day and night to a day and night of Brahma, 8.64 billion years long, longer than the age of the Earth or the Sun and about half the time since the Big Bang [24]. So in different countries and different schools of thought, the time of

creation has been reported differently.

Guru Nanak has reported, in his hymns, that it is not possible to pinpoint the time of creation. He holds that only the Creator (the Ultimate Reality) knows the time of origination of Nature. In Jap(u), he has elaborated on the issue, as;

ਕਵਣੁ ਸੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਵਖਤੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਥਿਤਿ

ਕਵਣੁ ਵਾਰੁ ॥

ਕਵਣਿ ਸਿ ਰੁਤੀ ਮਾਹੁ ਕਵਣੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਹੋਆ

ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਵੇਲ ਨ ਪਾਈਆ ਪੰਡਤੀ ਜਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਲੇਖੁ

ਪੁਰਾਣੁ ॥

ਵਖਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਓ ਕਾਦੀਆ ਜਿ ਲਿਖਨਿ

ਲੇਖੁ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ ॥

ਥਿਤਿ ਵਾਰੁ ਨਾ ਜੇਗੀ ਜਾਣੈ ਰੁਤਿ ਮਾਹੁ

ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਜਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਿਰਠੀ ਕਉ ਸਾਜੇ ਆਪੇ

ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 4)

What was the time, and what was the moment? What was the day, and what was the date? What was the season, and what was the month, when the Universe took its shape? Had Pandits (Hindu religious scholars) known the time, it would have been written in Puraanas. Had Qazis known the time, it would have been written in Quran. No Yogi knows the time, the weekday, the month or the season of the creation. The Creator who created it, only He knows about it.

AGGS, M 1, p 4.

VASTNESS

There have been numerous speculations [5, 21, 26] about the extent of the universe. The Greek philoso-

phers Aristarchus of Samos, Aristotle and Ptolemy proposed different cosmological theories. In particular, the geocentric Ptolemaic system was the accepted theory to explain the motion of the heavens until Nicolaus Copernicus, and subsequently Johannes Kepler and Galileo Galilei proposed a heliocentric system in the 16th century.

According to the Talmud [7, 10, 16] (the central text of Rabbinic Judaism), the universe is made of seven heavens (Shamayim) viz. Vilon (Araphel), Raqia, Shehaqim, Ma'on, Makhon, Zebul, and Araboth. The Jewish Merkavah and Heichalot literature was devoted to discussing the details of these heavens, The Qur'an [7] (the central religious text of Islam) frequently mentions the existence of seven (Samaawat), or heavens. Christian mythology [13] describes existence of heaven and seven nether worlds viz. Hades, Hell, Sheol, Gehenna, Tartaros, Limbo and Purgatory. Hinduism also has the concept of seven heavens (Svarga). According to the Puranas and the Atharvaveda there are fourteen worlds [8]. There are seven higher ones (heavens), viz. bhū, bhūvar, svar, mahar, janas, tapas, and satya. There are seven lower ones (underworlds) called the Narka or Patalas viz. atala, vitala, sutala, rasatala, talatala, mahaatala, and patala.

In the Hindu tradition [12, 15] there is also a description of three lokas (triloka): Bhur (Earth), Bhuvah (Atmosphere), and Swarag (the world of the gods) as well. Similarly, early Buddhist texts [12, 15] have counterparts to the three worlds as kāmaloaka (the world of Hell and desire), the rūpaloka (the world of the gods and of form relieved of desire), and the arūpalok (the world of perfect form-

lessness). Guru Nanak's views about the vastness of universe were entirely different from the prevalent ideas of his time [2], as is obvious from his following hymns;

ਪਾਤਾਲਾ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਲਖ ਆਗਾਸਾ ਆਗਾਸ ॥

ਓੜਕ ਓੜਕ ਭਾਲਿ ਥਕੇ ਵੇਦ ਕਹਨਿ

ਇਕ ਵਾਤ ॥

ਸਹਸ ਅਠਾਰਹ ਕਹਨਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਅਸੁਲੂ

ਇਕੁ ਧਾਤੁ ॥

ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੈ ਹੋਇ ਵਿਣਾਸੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ. 1, ਜਪੁ 22, ਪੰਨਾ 5.

There are numerous nether worlds, and hundreds thousands of heavenly worlds above. The Vedas (religious scriptures of Hindus) say you can keep on searching, until you get tired, (but you cannot know the count). The Semitic scriptures say that there are 18,000 worlds, but in reality, there is only One Truth. If a count is feasible, then one can try to write it, but in reality it is countless.

AGGS, Jap 22, p 5.

Describing the vastness of Creation, Guru Nanak proclaims an immeasurable expanse in the sense of *Neti, Neti*:

ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਕੀਤਾ ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰੁ ॥

ਅੰਤ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਬਿਲਲਾਹਿ ॥

ਤਾ ਕੇ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਪਾਏ ਜਾਹਿ ॥

ਏਹੁ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਬਹੁਤਾ ਕਹੀਐ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, , ਜਪੁ 24, ਪੰਨਾ 5.

The limits of the creation cannot be perceived. The limits of its near (micro) and far (macro) extremes cannot be perceived. Many struggle to know these limits, but these cannot be determined. None is able

to know these limits. The more you say about these, the more still remains to be said.

AGGS, Jap 24, p 5.

As is a well-known fact that the scientific investigations have yet not revealed any limits to the vastness of the creation. Till date, the scientists have been able to probe only a fraction of the universe. Yet to travel to the far frontiers of this observed fraction of the universe, even at the speed of light (i.e. 300,000 kilometer per second), would take about 20,000 times the period that human life is estimated to have existed on earth. Expounding on the realm of truth (*Sach Khand*), Guru Nanak proclaims the existence of countless universes.

ਤਿਥੈ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੇ ਕਥੈ ਤ ਅੰਤ ਨ ਅੰਤ ॥

ਤਿਥੈ ਲੋਅ ਲੋਅ ਆਕਾਰ ॥

ਜਿਵ ਜਿਵ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 37, ਪੰਨਾ 8.

There are planets, solar systems and universes. If one has to describe these, then one can only say it that these are unlimited. There are countless worlds in the Creation. As is ordained, so these exist.

AGGS, Jap 37, p 8.

ਪੁਰਖਾਂ ਬਿਰਖਾਂ ਤੀਰਥਾਂ ਤਟਾਂ ਮੇਘਾਂ ਖੇਤਾਂਹ

॥

ਦੀਪਾਂ ਲੋਆਂ ਮੰਡਲਾਂ ਖੰਡਾਂ ਵਰਭੰਡਾਂਹ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਸਲੋਕ ਮਃ ੧, ਪੰਨਾ 467.

Men, trees, sacred shrines of pilgrimage, banks of sacred rivers, clouds, fields, islands, continents, worlds, solar systems, and universes;

AGGS, Shalok, First Mehl, p 467.

Thus Guru Nanak, in his hymns,

dilates on the diversity and innumera- bility of the treasures of 'Nature'.

DIVERSITY OF LIFE

Discussing the realm of piety (*Dharam Khand*), Guru Nanak in *Jap (u) bani* describes the diversity of things and life forms on our Earth. He emphasizes that the Earth is a place to do righteous actions (*Dharma*).

ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ॥

ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ

ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਕੇ ਰੰਗ ॥

ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਨੰਤ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 34, ਪੰਨਾ 7.

Nights, days, weeks and seasons; wind, water, fire and the nether regions - in the midst of these, the Earth is established as a home for Dharma. Upon it, are placed the various species of beings. These are countless and have numerous names.

AGGS, Jap 34, p 7.

Describing the realm of knowledge (*Gian Khand*), Guru Nanak elaborates the innumerable nature of diversity of life, such as life forms, planets, stars and solar systems.

ਕੇਤੇ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਵੈਸੰਤਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕਾਨ

ਮਹੇਸ ॥

ਕੇਤੇ ਬਰਮੇ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਅਹਿ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ

ਕੇ ਵੇਸ ॥

ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕਰਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਮੇਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਧੂ

ਉਪਦੇਸ ॥

ਕੇਤੇ ਇੰਦ ਚੰਦ ਸੂਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਮੰਡਲ ਦੇਸ ॥

ਕੇਤੇ ਸਿਧ ਬੁਧ ਨਾਥ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਵੇਸ ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵ ਦਾਨਵ ਮੁਨਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਰਤਨ
 ਸਮੁੰਦ ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਖਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੀਆ ਬਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੇ ਪਾਤ
 ਨਰਿੰਦ ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੇਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਤੁ
 ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥
 ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 35, ਪੰਨਾ 7.

There are numerous winds, waters and fires; so many Krishnas and Shivas. Numerous Brahmas, fashioning forms of great beauty, adorned and dressed in many colors. Numerous worlds and lands for working out karma. Countless lessons to be learned! Numerous Indras, countless moons and suns, so many galaxies and worlds. Numerous Siddhas and Buddhas, so many Yogic masters. Numerous goddesses of various kinds. Countless demi-gods and demons, so many silent sages. Numerous oceans of jewels. Countless ways of life, so many languages. Numerous dynasties of rulers. Countless intuitive people, so many selfless servants. O Nanak, it is all limitless!

AGGS, Jap 35, p 7.

Scientists have reported the existence of countless species of diverse forms and colors in our universe. According to a recent estimate, about 8.7 ± 1.3 million species of flora and fauna may exist on our Earth itself. Till date, scientists have been able to identify and classify only about 1.4 million of such species. As an illustrative term, Gurbani vouches such an estimate in its hymns as;

ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਏ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ:1, ਪੰਨਾ 1190.

8.4 million Species of beings were created.

AGGS, M 1, p 1190.

Guru Nanak declared the existence of life on earth, in water and in various worlds and universes as;

ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਜੀਆ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਲੋਆ ਆਕਾਰਾ
 ਆਕਾਰ ॥ ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 466.

There are beings and creatures in the water and on the land, in the worlds and universes, form upon form.

AGGS, M 1, p 467.

In the Sikh scriptures, there is mention of *NavKhand*, *Triloki* and *Chudah Bhavan* as well. But these are only illustrative terms and not those of belief [20].

WORKING OF NATURE

In the vast realm of Nature, law and order, method and system, regularity and consistency are found to prevail. Natural phenomena follow definite laws, which are same everywhere, at all-time and for everyone. Natural laws have existed since the origin of the universe and are inexorable. In no country these can be disobeyed without penalty. Nor do these ever warn the transgressor; punishment is as silent as the command. Like the numerous phenomenon of Nature, the natural laws are innumerable. Scientists opine that no matter how much man enlarges his powers, he cannot acquire absolute control over nature [23].

Guru Nanak expounds that the Creator (The Ultimate reality) is pure consciousness. He acts as a conscious power. Nature and all its phenomena follow the Universal Law (Command or *Hukm*) constituted by Him.

ਕੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਕੁਕਮ

ਨ ਕੇਇ ॥ ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 2, ਪੰਨਾ 1.

Everyone is subject to His Command; no one is beyond His Command.

AGGS, Jap 2, p 1.

All elements of Nature, planets and stars of the cosmos and all creatures of the universe act within the bounds of eternal laws. All cosmic forces obey His universal commands (*Hukm* and *Bhai*).

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਵਣੁ ਵਰੈ ਸਦਵਾਉ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਕਢੈ ਵੇਗਾਰਿ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਦਬੀ ਭਾਰਿ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਇੰਦੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਸਿਰ ਭਾਰਿ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਾਜਾ ਧਰਮ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਚੰਦੁ ॥

ਕੋਹ ਕਰੋੜੀ ਚਲਤ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਿਧ ਬੁਧ ਸੁਰ ਨਾਥ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਡਾਣੇ ਆਕਾਸ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੇਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰ ॥

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਵਹਿ ਪੂਰ ॥

ਸਗਲਿਆ ਭਉ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਸਿਰਿ ਲੇਖੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਸਚੁ ਏਕੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ. 1, ਪੰਨਾ 464)

In the Fear of God, the wind and breezes blow forever. In the Fear of God, thousands of rivers flow.

In the Fear of God, fire is forced to labor. In the Fear of God, the earth is crushed under its burden.

In the Fear of God, the clouds move across the sky. In the Fear of God, the Righteous Judge of Dharma stands at His Door. In the Fear of God, the sun shines, and in the Fear of God, the moon reflects. They travel millions of miles, endlessly. In the Fear of God, the Siddhas exist, as do the Buddhas, the demi-gods and Yogis. In the Fear of God, the Akaashic ethers are stretched across the sky. In the Fear of God, the warriors and the most powerful heroes exist. In the Fear of

God, multitudes come and go. God has inscribed the Inscription of His Fear upon the heads of all. O Nanak, the Fearless, the Formless and the True Lord, is One and Only.

AGGS, M 1, p 464.

Guru Nanak expresses his inability to describe the universal laws in totality, though he proclaims that this is the basic cause of creation.

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ ਹੁਕਮੁ

ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਜਪੁ 2, ਪੰਨਾ 1.

By His Command, bodies are created; His Command cannot be described.

AGGS, Jap 2, p 1.

Scientists explain that all the natural phenomena are manifestation of energy, according to eternal but universal natural laws. Guru Nanak enunciates that all this occurs as per the eternal and universal command of the creator.

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਚਲਾਏ ਰਾਹੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਵੇਪਰਵਾਹੁ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ. 1, ਜਪੁ 3, ਪੰਨਾ 2.

The Commander, by His Command, leads us to walk on the Path. O Nanak, He blossoms forth, Carefree and Untroubled.

AGGS, M 1, Jap 3, p 2.

WONDERS OF NATURE

Sometime, be awake on warm and clear night and gaze at the star-lit heavens in a passive and imaginative mood. Let the glory of infinity sink deep into your soul. Just gaze and gaze, and do nothing more, until you cry out in rapture, with Shelly [3]:

Spirit of Nature, here;
In this interminable wilderness,
of Worlds, at whose immensity,

Even soaring fancy staggers,
Here is thy fitting temple;
Spirit of Nature, Thou;
Imperishable as this scene,
Here is thy fitting temple.

Wonder is defined as a feeling of surprise mingled with admiration, caused by something beautiful, unexpected, unfamiliar, or inexplicable. Wonder is a rapt attention or astonishment at something awesomely mysterious or new to one's experience. It is an emotion that leaves one astonished with a sense of questioning. The sense of wonder is common to mankind and does not distinguish between the sage and the scientist [22].

A scientist is a man enchanted by the mysterious universe which possesses a powerful motivating force. Albert Einstein [18], a noted scientist, has emphasized that *'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed'*. It must be stressed that the motivation does not so much arise from trying to solve the mystery as simply from the act of apprehending it.

Talking about the religious spirit of science, Albert Einstein [25] tells us of 'Cosmic Religious feeling', which knows no dogma and no God conceived in man's image. He says that *'for a scientist religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural laws which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection.'*

Guru Nanak is not only a sage or conventional mystic but an explorer with a scientific mind. To describe the beauty of nature, he lays a great

emphasis on the wonder element [26] – ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ (*wismad*). The cosmic religious feeling as described by Albert Einstein can be seen in Guru Nanak's composition 'Asa Di Var' where-in he acclaims the beauty of Nature as:

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਦ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਵੇਦ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਜੀਅ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੇਦ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰੰਗ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨਾਗੇ ਫਿਰਹਿ ਜੰਤ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਪਉਣੁ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਪਾਣੀ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਅਗਨੀ ਖੇਡਹਿ ਵਿਡਾਈ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਧਰਤੀ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਖਾਈ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਦਿ ਲਗਹਿ ਪਰਾਈ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸੰਜੇਗੁ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਵਿਜੇਗੁ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੁਖ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਭੋਗੁ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਸਾਲਾਹ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਉਝੜ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਰਾਹ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਨੇੜੈ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੂਰਿ ॥

ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਦੇਖੈ ਹਾਜਰਾ ਹਜੂਰਿ ॥

ਵੇਖਿ ਵਿਡਾਣੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਵਿਸਮਾਦੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਬੁਝਣੁ ਪੂਰੈ ਭਾਗਿ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ. 1, ਪੰਨਾ 463-64.

Wonderful is the sound current of the Naad, wonderful is the knowledge of the Vedas. Wonderful are the beings, wonderful are the species. Wonderful are the forms, wonderful are the colors. Wonderful are the beings who wander around naked. Wonderful is the wind, wonderful is the water. Wonderful is fire, which works wonders. Wonderful is the earth, wonderful the sources of creation. Wonderful are the tastes to which mortals are attached. Wonderful is union, and wonderful is separation. Wonderful is hunger, wonderful is satisfaction. Wonderful is His Praise, wonderful is His adoration. Wonder-

ful is the wilderness, wonderful is the path. Wonderful is closeness, wonderful is distance. How wonderful to behold the Lord, ever-present here. Beholding His wonders, I am wonderstruck. O Nanak, those who understand this are blessed with perfect destiny.

AGGS, M 1, p 463-64.

Guru Nanak in his composition 'Aartee' (praise) elucidates that the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind and the flowers sing the praises of the Creator. Nature is His temple:

ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ ਤਾਰਿ

ਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੇਤੀ ॥

ਧੂਧੁ ਮਲਆਨਲੇ ਪਵਣੁ ਚਵਰੇ ਕਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਬ

ਨਰਾਇ ਫੂਲੰਤ ਜੇਤੀ ॥੧॥

ਕੈਸੀ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ਭਵ ਖੰਡਨਾ

ਤੇਰੀ ਆਰਤੀ ॥

ਅਨਹਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਵਾਜੰਤ ਭੇਰੀ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 663.

In the platter of the sky, the sun and moon are the lamps; the stars in the constellations are the pearls. The fragrance of sandalwood is the incense, the wind is the fan, and all the vegetation are flowers in offering to You, O Luminous Lord. ||1|| What a beautiful lamp-lit worship service this is! O Destroyer of fear, this is Your Aartee, Your worship service. The sound current of the Sabd is the sounding of the temple drums.

AGGS, M 1, p 663.

Thereby Guru Nanak expresses his wonder about how the entire creation is ecstatic, inspiring and kept in perfect order. He is amazed at immensity of hills, variety of water sources, diversity of trees and flowers, splendor of clouds, enormity of the Sun, the moon and the stars, and whatever appears to be wonderful.

Julian Huxley [19], a noted zoologist, once opined; *'There are certain experience which transcend the ordinary experience, make the individual feel enlarged and have a quality of absoluteness and perfection, which is absent in the human affairs of everyday'*. 'Wonder and joy' is a right relation towards Nature, whether we feel it in relation to a hypothetical power behind Nature or in relation to the stars, seas and living creatures directly. This feeling of wonder and joy is *wismad* and it is indescribable. Guru Nanak expresses such a sense of wonder as:

ਬਿਸਮੁ ਭਏ ਬਿਸਮਾਦ ਦੇਖਿ

ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਤੇਰੀਆ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 521.

I am wonderstruck beholding the wonder of Your wondrous creation (Nature).

AGGS, M 1, p 521.

NATURE AND DIVINITY

John Calvin (1509-64), a noted theologian once remarked [17]; *The creation is quite like a spacious and splendid house, provided and filled with the most exquisite and at the same time the most abundant furnishings. Everything in it tells us of God.* 'Guru Nanak, in his hymns has proclaimed a sacred link between Nature and its Creator.

ਆਪਿ ਅਲੇਖੁ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਦੇਖਾ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: ੧, ਪੰਨਾ 1042.

God Himself is unseen; He reveals Himself through His wondrous creative power Nature.

AGGS, M 1, p 1042.

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚ ਦਾਤਾਰੁ ਸਿਨਾਖਤੁ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 141.

O Nanak, the True One is the provider to all; He is revealed through His All-powerful Creative Nature.

AGGS, M 1, p141.

ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਮਹੀਅਲਿ ਰਵਿ ਰਹਿਆ

ਸਾਚੜਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੇ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 579.

The True Creator Lord is pervading and permeating the water, the land and the air.

AGGS, M 1, p 579.

NATURE AND SPIRITUALITY

Nature offers manifold spiritual messages to us. In the words of St. Paul [17] of the Cross (1694-1775): *Listen to the sermon preached to you by the flowers, the trees, the shrubs, the sky and the whole world. Notice how they preach to you a sermon full of love, of praise to God, and how they invite you to glorify the sublimity of that sovereign Artist who has given them being.* 'Buddhist Mark Coleman [17] asserts that *In nature we can feel a living connection with life all around us. Being outdoors we can taste how we are held and nourished exquisitely by the intricate web of life that is supporting us in every moment, every breath.* "Natural spirituality offers us a vision of something greater than ourselves that transcends our individual concepts of Deity. Natural spirituality implies a sacred connection to the Earth and Universe. The message contained in Guru Nanak's hymns concurs such a relationship with Nature.

ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ॥

ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਜਪੁ 34, ਪੰਨਾ 7.

Nights, days, weeks and seasons; wind, water, fire and the nether regions – in the midst of these, He established the earth as a home for Dharma (Righteous action).

AGGS, M. 1, Jap, Paori 34, p 7.

ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਮੁਰਗਾਈ ਨੈ
ਸਾਣੇ ॥ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਨਾ
ਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੇ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: ੧, ਪੰਨਾ 938.

As the lotus flower floats untouched upon the surface of the water, and the duck swims through the stream; so with one's consciousness focused on the Word (Sabd), one crosses over the terrifying world-ocean. O Nanak, chant the Naam, the Name of the Lord.

AGGS, M 1, p 938.

ਰੇ ਮਨ ਐਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੈਸੀ
ਜਲ ਕਮਲੇਹਿ ॥ ਲਹਰੀ ਨਾਲਿ ਪਛਾੜੀਐ
ਭੀ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਅਸਨੇਹਿ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: ੧, ਪੰਨਾ 59.

O mind, love the Lord, as the lotus loves the water. Tossed about by the waves, it still blossoms with love.

AGGS, M 1, p 59.

NATURE AND HUMANITY

Of all living beings, humans have the most impact on Nature. Many human activities that relate to agriculture, transportation, and industry create different kinds of contaminants. Whether they are released into the water, the air, or the ground, these pollutants waste no time spreading throughout an ecosystem, throwing the natural environment off balance. Nature's health and future depend on our willingness to fight the causes of pollution and to work hand in hand to prevent it.

Our water reserves are being constantly polluted by waste from agriculture, industries, and sewers. Every year, millions of tons of industrial waste, household garbage, fertilizer, and pesticides are dumped into nature. Automobile engines and power plants burn combustible fuels like gasoline and coal and allow toxic gases and smoke to escape into the air. Some pollutants help destroy the ozone layer, others contribute to global warming, and still others create acid rain. All these phenomena have disastrous effects on Nature and its constituting elements. Guru Nanak elaborated on such a state of Nature in his hymns as:

ਸੂਤਕੁ ਅਗਨਿ ਭਖੈ ਜਗੁ ਖਾਇ ॥

ਸੂਤਕੁ ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਥਾਇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੂਤਕਿ ਜਨਮਿ ਮਰੀਜੈ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: ੧, ਪੰਨਾ 413.

Pollution is the burning fire, which is consuming the world. Pollution is in the water, upon the land, and everywhere. O Nanak, people are born and die in pollution.

AGGS, M 1, p 413.

Guru Nanak has asserted that we can control the pollution of Nature provided we have knowledge and wisdom to do so. Thereby he emphasized that the relevant knowledge be acquired and it be applied wisely to overcome the difficult situation.

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਏਵ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਗਿਆਨੁ

ਉਤਾਰੇ ਧੋਇ ॥

ਅਗਗਸ, ਮ: 1, ਪੰਨਾ 472.

O Nanak, impurity cannot be removed in this way; it is washed away only by knowledge and wisdom.

(AGGS, M 1, p 472.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus Guru Nanak, a great preceptor and a mystic prophet of extraordinary foresight, with his remarkable gift of intuition, brought forth revelations and contributed meaningful generic thought to our understanding of Nature. He has revealed the cosmological and physical evolutionary explanation of 'Nature', in subtle and sensitive manner, which is in general in consonance with the findings of modern scientific research.

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