

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Theology of SIKHISM



Dr. Jagraj Singh



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by
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Foreword

The theology of Sikhism is a wonderful scholarly work of Dr Jagraj Singh and I feel privileged to write these introductory words about it. I have intimate association with the author and I have seen him working diligently and his remarkable patience has resulted in producing a number of illuminating books on various aspects of the Sikh religion. His first publication, entitled, 'A complete guide to Sikhism' has already received a world-wide acclamation among the Sikh community and people belonging to other religions, who have intense desire to know about Sikhism.

I am convinced that this second book of the author will also be well received by the scholars and the Sikh masses who generally complain the dearth of good books on Sikhism in English. Our new generations in this western hemisphere will definitely be benefitted from the hard work put in by the author.

The book has been divided into fifteen chapters and the author has treated the subject in a systematic manner. The very first chapter deals with the major theological concepts of Sikhism. Starting with the concept of God in Sikhism, the author has successfully explained the various aspect of Sikh spirituality in a beautiful and methodical way. It makes an absorbing and enlightening reading.

In second chapter the author has dealt with the theory of creation as propounded by Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the holy scripture of Sikhism. His focus on the theme of 'mysteries of life' and 'the death of universe' makes an interesting reading. 'Ethics of Sikhism' has also been dealt in a brief but superb style.

Other chapters throw light on the lives of Sikh Gurus and the holy books of the faith. His study of the Sikh theologians, right from the Guru-period till modern times is also praiseworthy. The chapter on various Sikh Sampardais is informative. At the end the comparison of Sikhism with other religions makes the reader understand the revolutionary contribution of Sikhism to the whole range of spiritual

faiths of the world.

Glossary of religious terms and bibliography make this book, an attempt in perfection, worthy of all appreciation.

I congratulate the author on his achievement and hope that it will be well received by the Sikhs all over the world. Scholars from other faiths will also benefit from it.

February 01, 2014

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Preface

The word theology is derived from the Greek word, 'Theos' meaning God. It is the study of God and relations between God, mankind and the universe. Theology of Sikhism describes Sikh concept of 'God' and His creation, the universe, i.e cosmos (*Brehmand*) according to Sikhism. It is a well known fact that the earliest spiritual traditions in the world began in the Indian subcontinent in the Sikh homeland, Punjab, in the Indus valley. Those practicing spirituality were called Jogis / Siddhas, who believed in 'One Supreme Eternal Spiritual Reality', whom they called Brahma. The statues / seals of meditating jogis have been found among the ruins of Harappa and Mohinjodaro towns in the Indus Valley, so far no scriptures belonging to them have been found, although they had a script called *Brahmi / Siddhmatrica*. In Punjabi language jog literally means to unite to yoke together, but in spirituality it means to unite with the 'Supreme Eternal Reality (God).

Religion depends on intuitional power and demands belief. According to Sikhism 'the directive principle' is the Creator-person (*Karta Purkh*-God) who created everything and infused His spirit in the living organisms. The Guru says, "O, my body, the Lord infused His consciousness in you and only then did you appear on the earth—
ਏ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਤੁਮ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਖੀ ਤਾ ਤੂ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥ (GGS, p. 921). Since there is design in everything we see in nature, there must also be a designer. Sikhism believes that God is the designer whose creative designs are par excellence. For the Sikhs the existence of God requires no proof because God is visible everywhere, "*Jo deesay so tera roop—ਜੋ ਦੀਸੈ ਸੋ ਤੇਰਾ ਰੂਪ*" (GGS, p. 724). Nanak's King is manifest everywhere—*Nanak kaa paatshah disay zahira—ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਰਾ* ॥ (GGS, p. 397). ਡੂੰਗਰਿ ਜਲਾ ਥਲਾ ਭੂਮਿ ਬਨਾ ਫਲ ਕੰਦਰਾ ॥ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਆਕਾਸ ਪੂਰਨੁ ਹਭ ਘਟਾ—*Doongar jalaaa thalaa bhoom bana phal kandra*—The Lord is pervasive in the mountains, the oceans, deserts, lands, forests, fruits, caves, the nether regions, the skies and all hearts (GGS, p. 1101). The one sole Lord is in many manifestations,

wherever I look, there is He pervading and filling all—*Ek anek biaapak poorak jat dekho tat soee*—ਏਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਬਿਆਪਕ ਪੂਰਕ ਜਤ ਦੇਖਉ ਤਤ ਸੋਈ॥ (GGS, p. 485). He is immanent in the phenomenal world like a musician can be said to be present in his music. Just as the sun does not exist for the owl, God does not exist for those who have't got the vision and intuitive eyes. The Guru says, "The eyes that see God are different from physical eyes—*Nanak say akhrian beean jinni disando ma piri*—ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਅਖੜੀਆ ਬਿਆਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਡਿਸੰਦੋ ਮਾ ਪਿਰੀ॥ (GGS, p. Maru dakhne, M5, p. 1100).

Of all the world religions, Sikhism alone can, with the fullest justification, claim to possess the gospels of its founders in their original purity. Truths revealed to Prophets and seers have often been mixed, in course of time with spurious and imperfect additions through the ignorance, prejudices or ill-conceived zeal of their followers and lost their purity. The sagacity and the foresight of the Sikh Gurus envisaged the possibility of such a situation in respect of their own scriptures and they took steps to ensure against this eventuality. Guru Arjan compiled the Holy Granth embodying the Sikh teachings under his personal supervision and created for all times the imperishable and yet the visible embodiment of the Gurus as also of their wisdom (ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ). He has thus placed all mankind under a permanent debt of gratitude by bequeathing to it the highest moral and spiritual Truths in the purest form as were revealed to the Gurus. These were clothed in various dialects and languages of the people of the land of their birth and were thus made accessible to every person without any distinction of caste, creed, colour, or race.

All fundamental, thoughts both mystic and material, principles, doctrines and concepts including the Sikh concept of God which constitute the theology and philosophy of Sikhism are very clearly enshrined in the holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib. Further, the ten Gurus during their lives, apart from demonstrating the principles of religion, led the path of ideal life. Guru Granth Sahib is the only scripture in the world that has words of the Gurus compiled and authenticated by the Guru himself. And it is the only scripture that has been sanctioned by the Guru (Guru Gobind Singh) as the sole Guru or guide to the followers of the religion: "*Sabh Sikhan ko hukam hai*

Guru manio Granth—ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ—All Sikhs are commanded to have faith in Guru Granth Sahib”.

Sikhism is the zenith of eastern spirituality, which took birth in ‘Punjab’ in the Indian subcontinent. It says that this universe is creation of God. It is made up of two distinct entities: the matter and the spirit. The spirit being part of God is Eternal, whereas matter being His creation is not eternal and is subject to destruction / mortal. Both are studied and explored independently. The knowledge of matter comes through the material science and the knowledge of spirit comes through religion (spiritual science / spirituality / mysticism). The physical body (*Tan / Sareer*) made of matter is visible (*Drishat*) but the subtle body (Soul / *Atma / Mann*) is invisible (*Adrishat*). Physical body (*Tan / Sareer*) is made of matter where as soul (*Atma*) is part of God (*Parmatma*). The material science deals with the physical / material aspect, whereas spirituality deals with the subtle body and spiritual aspect. Eastern scholars in the Indus Valley researched on spiritual science and made remarkable progress in this regard, whereas in the west scientists concentrated on material science and did wonders by making various discoveries. There is hardly any page in the holy Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib where God is not mentioned and the Sikh belief in God is unshakable.

All the topics under various chapters have been authenticated with quotations from the scriptures constituting the canon of the Sikh faith. I am confident that the Sikhs living in various parts of the world in particular and followers of other religions in general will be able to understand Sikhism better and benefitted by this work. I will be more than gratified if the book is able to remove doubts of readers, and help them in getting precise information about Sikhism.

I wish the readers a happy reading of the text ahead. I hope this finds your attention and continuity of going through the passages of divinity of my concepts and perceptions.

Dr Jagraj Singh

Patron

Sikh Awareness Society of USA

Tampa—Florida

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I am thankful to Dr Mohan Singh Rattan for writing Foreword. Though every care has been taken while typing Gurbani however, mistake if any, that is highly regretted for which I may be pardoned.

Jagraj Singh