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## Guru Granth Sahib: Ethical Precepts

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Until a scripture dealing effectively with the issues and concerns of the modern era does not talk about the welfare and the benefit of the entire mankind, the state of stagnation creeping in it just gives it a meaningless existence and links mankind with superficiality. About Guru Granth Sahib ji, it is an infallible and undeniable truth that the Gurbani along with the issues concerning human kind, contemporary and modern knowledge-tract, just juxtaposes the interests(welfare) of mankind. This is so possible in the case, in connection with knowledge base in Guru Granth Sahib because it is a created text which is present in the script form being imbued with the testimonial quality enables the man to become worthy to establish an interaction with such a knowledge-base.

Ethics is an unadulterated human attribute which distinguishes him from other living species. Basic instincts like fear, hunger and lust are present in every living organism but these basic instincts by the element of ethics are made fundamental human characteristic which is a radical approach. For the holistic and multidimensional development of the human life, the special conduct embraced is called ethics which is in connection with the human activities and behaviour.

Ethics and ethical fundamentals regulate human conduct owing to which they become the vital organs of the very system which keeps the society organised. The conduct carried out for the benefit of everybody in the entire mankind only, correctly bears the name ethics.

As far as the question is of ethics and morality, it is the study of that philosophy which explains the criteria of right or wrong and is the embracer of attributes of characters like duty and justice. In this context, to confirm the real true identity/form of the Man, religion and ethics have played a major role.

Devotion to the Absolute *Brahm* is the path to human welfare which accepting fully the ethical values and implementing them finally turns out to be profitable.

Guru Granth Sahib ji is the only faith that where truthful conduct is prioritized over even the ultimate reality ...*Aad Sach Jugad Sach, Hai Bhi Sach, Nanak Hosi Bhi Sach*. He was true in the beginning, He is eternal and true forever, Nanak, He shall be always immanent (Guru Granth Ang 1)

In *Sri Raag Mahla 1*, Guru Nanak states- *Truth is a higher thing, still higher is the truthful conduct*. (GGS Ang 62). That in the entire universe, That Absolute is the supreme and the highest truth, but still higher is the truthful conduct. We can think over this fact in the context of our society.

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This conduct or moral values are acquired, that is an acquisition of these values and morals is to be made to imbibe them. These are acquired while living in the society. Acquisition of knowledge through Studying, learning, and experience, is the actual knowledge. Knowledges apart from enhancing the outlook, also helps in character building. Knowledge acquisition is a societal process with which the mental states of an individual are established clearly established, so for every meaning for leading an ideal life the chief foundation is knowledge.

ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥ ਜਾਾਂ ਪੰਚ ਰਾਸੀ ਤਾਾਂ ਤੀਰਥ ਵਾਸੀ S.G.G.S. Page 356

*Contemplate and reflect upon knowledge, and you will become a benefactor to others. When you conquer the five passions, then you shall come to dwell at the sacred shrine of pilgrimage.*

Through this *shabd*, it is clear that Guru Granth Sahib is instructing that by the practice of knowledge, kindness wells- up in a person, to tread upon the divine path by curbing sensory pleasures a way appears.

In the holy preaching of Guru Granth Sahib, through the use of attributive symbols and various inter-faith and inter-cultural situations imparting a common meaning to i.e., same thread running through otherwise different faiths, has presented a unique, modern and an exquisite treatise on conduct.

ਕੋਈ ਬੋਲੈ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਕੋਈ ਖੁਿਾਇ ॥

ਕੋਈ ਸੇਵੈ ਗੁਸਈਆ ਕੋਈ ਅਲਾਵਿ ॥੧॥ ਕਾਰਣ

ਕਰਣ ਕਰੀਮ ॥

ਦਕਰਪਾ ਧਾਵਿਰਹੀਮ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਵੈ

ਤੀਰਵਿ ਕੋਈ ਹਜ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਕੋਈ ਕਰੈ ਪੂਜਾ

ਕੋਈ ਦਸਰੁ ਵਿਵਾਇ ॥੨॥

ਕੋਈ ਪੜੈ ਬੋਿਕਈ ਕਤੇਬ ॥

ਕੋਈ ਓਢੈ ਨੀਲ ਕੋਈ ਸੁਪੇਿ ॥੩॥

ਕੋਈ ਕਹੈ ਤੁਰਕੁ ਕਈ ਕਹੈ ਵਿਿੰਦੂ ॥

ਕੋਈ ਬਾਛੈ ਦਿਸਤੁ ਕੋਈ ਸੁਰਗਿੰੂ ॥੪॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਜਵਿ ਹਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਤਾ ॥

ਪ੍ਿ ਸਾਦਰਬ ਕਾ ਦਤਵਿ ਿੇਿੁ ਜਾਤਾ ॥ S.G.G.S. Page 885



*Some call Him, 'Raam, Raam', and some call Him, 'Khudaa- i'. Some serve Him as 'Gusain', others as 'Allah'. //1//*

*He is the Cause of causes, the Generous Lord. He showers His Grace and Mercy upon us. //1//Pause//*

*Some bathe at sacred shrines of pilgrimage, and some make the pilgrimage to Mecca. Some perform devotional worship*

*services, and some bow their heads in prayer. //2//*

*Some read the Vedas, and some the Koran. Some wear blue robes, and some wear white. //3// Some call themselves Muslim, and some call themselves Hindu. Some yearn for paradise, and others long for heaven. //4//*

*Says Nanak, one who realizes the Hukam of God's Will, knows the secrets of his Lord and Master.*

This whole dynamics has a very significant role to play. Through Hukam, it means abiding sincerely and whole - heartedly by that Supreme Estate and becoming one with it showing no defiance and to inculcate the natural spontaneous state of Morality within while alive in the spirit of equipoise.

The man mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Nanak, is that truthful being who stays in the humble obedience to the Will of the Supreme Being, and to which he has given the name Sachyar- Truth-Oriented.

Guru Granth Sahib is that rich medieval heritage which has been building meaningful-arrangement and will be a guiding light universally covering the welfare aspect universally. This mega holy-text emerged as a special model of moral education because since 12th century to 17th century, its evolving ideology over a long period, is not only confined to Punjab rather it spans over the entire sub-continent and is thus connected with geographical areas.

Indian ideology since before 1500B.C. has been constantly pursuing the progressive path and during which Moral poetics acquired its special form. In Vedic times through incantations, aphorisms, Brahminical texts and Upanishads, the dissemination of moral values had started and the process of which had perfected and had become enriched with epics like Mahabharat and Ramayan. Especially, Bhagwad Gita was a popular philosophical song in which there is an amalgamation of righteousness, philosophy and treatise on polity.

Gita is a discourse in which highest truth and issues pertaining to polity are preached about, and for a man to walk on the path of action and achieve his target is being emphasized. Later, Ramanujam and Shankar and other erudite scholars re-established the ancient principles and explicated *Vedas* and *Shastras* in such a way that it left a profound impact on affirming and ensuring the Indian idea of moral and ethics. Out of these, The *Advait-Vedant* by Shankaracharya proved to be the most impactful.

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Afterwards, almost the entire ideology of the medieval period remained based on it and even till today the impact of this spiritual ideology is still present on the minds of the Indian people.

Became a religious movement. The basis of this religious movement led by Guru Nanak was, of course, the traditional heritage, but he rebuilt it with his talent and vision and applied his teachings in a way that was unique. Gur Nanak presented a different doctrine by weaving different religious ideas into a single thread, which later came to be known as Sikhism. Guru Nanak made these journeys to confirm the limits and possibilities of the inner and outer form of the philosophical arrangements of the Sikh-Panth which he designed to accommodate his views as neither a Hindu nor a Muslim. During these pilgrimages, discussions were held with the leaders of the major sects, but no hasty attempt of imposition of their religious views on the people of any religion was made. The movement started by Guru Nanak in the Middle Ages flourished in the form of Splendorous Pathway in the time of other successor Gurus. There were ten Gurus of this religion and the tenth Guru Gobind Singh wrote the Bani composed by the Gurus, which was compiled by Guru Arjan in the Adi Granth, and later recorded the Bani of the Ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur in this unique volume. Rated. In the context of that time, Sikhism was a progressive ideology with a unique ideology. The main feature of this divine scripture is that apart from the Sikh Gurus, it contains the hymns of prominent saints, devotees and Muslim Sufi saints (Baba Farid) from different languages, geographical regions, cultures, religions and castes of India. The ideology of this divine scripture, which has the status of 'Shabad-Guru' within the Sikh sect, is recognized as Gurmat ideology. In this whole context, Guru Ganth Sahib presents itself as a model of ethics of a completely unique, all-human interest, which deals meaningfully and relevantly in the light of contemporary concerns. The Guru Granth Sahib seeks to deal with contemporary issues of human existence and eternal concerns on a universal human level. This is a high moral creation.

ਦਕਵ ਸਵਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਦਕਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਵਿ ॥

*So how can you become truthful? And how can the veil of illusion be torn away?*

ਿਕਵਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਲਵਿਆ ਨਾਵਿ ॥੧॥ S.G.G.S. Page 1

*O Nanak, it is written that you shall obey the Hukam of His Command, and walk in the Way of His Will.* <sup>3</sup>

A truth-oriented person is a being who by his acceptance to the Will becomes an intuitive embracer of the morals and ethics.

In Guru Granth Sahib ji, a benign consciousness higher than cultural and religious narrowness has been made the platform. The mysticism contained in its



gnosis is not in exclusivity and singularity. Instead, it emerges from while living in this world being consistent with the sensitised society

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਵਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਵਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਵਿ ਆਈ ॥੧॥

S.G.G.S. Page

1299 *No one is my enemy, and no one is a stranger. I get along with everyone.* <sup>4</sup>

The model of ethics presented in the Guru Granth Sahib makes aware of the life ideal based on mutual compassion by giving up the life of self-centredness or Egoism. Gurbani's ultimate message provides resolution to intricated problems afflicting the society and moreover propels beings to attach themselves with an eminent purpose where self interest or benefit is not focused upon, rather a man talks about the benefit of everybody.

ਜਗਤੁ ਜਲੰ ਿਾ ਰਵਿ ਲੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਦਕਰਪਾ ਯਾਵਿ ॥

ਦਜਤੁ ਿਆਰੈ ਉਬਰੈ ਵਿਤੈ ਲੈਹੁ ਉਬਾਵਿ ॥

S.G.G.S. Page 853

*The world is going up in flames - shower it with Your Mercy, and save it! Save it, and deliver it, by whatever method it takes.* <sup>5</sup>

United Nations Organisation has also have also included policies on Moral and Ethical values. The conflict arising out of Anarchy and radicalism in the world can be resolved through religious ethics and thus peace can be brought about. With mutual sharing of ideologies and a healthy dialogue, healthy ideology comes into being which is conducive to the welfare of everybody and anybody.

In this connection, these words of Guru Nanak's aptly suit

ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਿਨੀਆ ਰਹੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਛੁ ਸਈਐ ਵਿਛੁ ਕਹੀਐ ॥ S.G.G.S. Page 661

*As long as we are in this world, O Nanak, we should listen, and speak of the Lord.* <sup>6</sup>

Interpersonal interaction is an effective praxis for a soulful, morally upright and a balanced society. For this very thing, Gurus communicated with the masses and travelled to many different places and initiated neo Sikh-panth having new value and moral system.

ਰੋਇ ਇਕਿਰ ਦਮਲਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਿਾਈ ਿਹੁ ਿਯਾ ਿਹੂ ਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਦਲਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ S.G.G.S. Page 1185

*Come and join together, O my Siblings of Destiny; dispel your sense of duality and let yourselves be lovingly absorbed in the Lord.* <sup>7</sup>

In the current world scenario, the cardinal propensities of fear, hunger and lust



are just making the planet unworthy of living. Its answer has also been given by the Gurus in the context of society as

ਿੰੈ ਕਾਰੂ ਕਉ ਿੰੇਤ ਨਵਿ ਨਵਿ ਿੰੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ ॥

*One who does not frighten anyone, and who is not afraid of anyone else*

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਵਿਰੇ ਮਨਾ ਵਿਆਨੀ ਤਾ ਵਿ ਬਖਾਵਿ ॥੧੬॥

S.G.G.S. Page

1427 says Nanak, listen, mind: call him spiritually wise. <sup>8</sup> Also

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੇਵਿ ਸਰਪੁ ਰੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥ ਿੰੇਤੁ ਿੰੇਤੁ ਿੰੇਤੁ ਸਾਵਿ ਿੰੇਤੁ  
ਮਿੰਿ 441

*O my mind, you are the embodiment of the Divine Light - recognize your own origin.* <sup>9</sup>

The United Nation's charter is oftentimes violated by few nations but for the betterment of the world it is imperative to embrace the Ultimate Reality or it can be called as the Absolute Truth and all human beings should be linked with a common brotherly spirit.

ਏਕੁ ਦਪਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਦਰਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥ S.G.G.S. Page 611

*The One God is our father; we are the children of the One God.*

*You are our Guru.* <sup>10</sup>

In the current world scenario, Guru Granth Sahib Bani I quite relevant and precise because it in welfare of all has been made as fundamental value system. The following words by Kabir encapsulates the entire mankind with fundamental unity and brings Homo Sapiens on one central

Beneficial point through all-inclusiveness.

ਅਵਵਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਰਿ ਰਵਿ ਕੇ ਸਿ ਬੰਿੇ ॥

*First, Allah created the Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings.* <sup>11</sup>

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਿ ਜਗੁ ਉਦਪਜਆ ਕਉਨ ਿਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਿੇ ॥੧॥

*From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So, who is good, and who is bad? ||1||*

ਸਿ ਮਵਿ ਸਚਾ ਏਕੇ ਸੇਈ ਵਿਸ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਸਿ ਕਛੁ ਹੋਈ ॥

*The One True Lord abides in all; by His making, everything is made.*



ਹਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਨੈ ਸੁ ਏਕੇ ਜਾਨੈ ਬੰਿਆ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੇਈ ॥੩॥

S.G.G.S. Page 1349-50

*Whoever realizes the Hukam of His Command, knows the One Lord. He alone is said to be the Lord's slave.*

Recognizing that fiat of the Supreme Being, and seeing that absolute reality in everyone is a real human being. Contemplating on the following *shabd* of Guru Granth

....dichotomy, ego-arrogance, greed and violence just dissolve.

ਜਾਵਿ ਬਰਨ ਕੁਲ ਸਹਸਾ ਚਕਾ ਗੁਰਮਵਿ ਸਦਬਿ ਬੀਚਾਰੀ ॥੧॥

ਵਿਸੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਅਵਿਮਾਨੁ ਨ ਤਾ ਕਉ ਵਿੰਸਾ ਲੇ ਿੁ ਵਿਸਾਰੇ ॥ S.G.G.S. Page 1198

*Social class and status, race, ancestry and scepticism are eliminated, following the Guru's Teachings and contemplating the Word of the Shabad.*

*One whose mind is pleased and appeased, has no egotistical pride. Violence and greed are forgotten. 12*

Answering enmity with friendship and cordiality is the divine pinnacle of morality and ethical value system. Guru Granth embraces with affinity the different cultures, different aspects, different languages and faiths. Guru Granth embraces everybody

and respects with the spirit of equality for which it can be regarded as guiding knowledge system for obtaining world peace and prosperity. Every type of danger like social, cultural, degradation looming on mankind can be remedied through moral precepts in Guru Granth and mankind can be saved.

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਵਿਸਮਨੁ ਰਵਿਆ ਨਾ ਹਮ ਏਕ ਕੇ ਬੈਰਾਈ ॥

*No one is my enemy, and I am no one's enemy.*

ਿਰਹਮੁ ਪਸਾਰੁ ਪਸਾਵਿਓ ਿੀਤਵਿ ਸਵਿਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਸੇਝੀ ਪਾਈ ॥੨॥

*God, who expanded His expanse, is within all; I learned this from the TrueGuru. 13*

ਸਿੁ ਕੇ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮ ਆਪਨ ਕੀਨਾ ਹਮ ਸਿਨਾ ਕੇ ਸਾਜਨ ॥

*I am a friend to all; I am everyone's friend.*

ਿੁ ਿੁ ਪਰਾਇਓ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਬਰਹਾ ਤਾ ਮੇਲੁ ਕੀਓ ਮੇਰੈ ਰਾਜਨ ॥੩॥ S.G.G.S. Page 671

*When the sense of separation was removed from my mind, then I was united with the Lord, my King. 13*



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