BOOK REVIEW

JAP: The Essence of Nanakian Philosophy
A Scientific and Logical Interpretation

Reviewed by Dr. Sukhraj Singh Dhillon

Author: Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD

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The spiritual writing is not quite as objective and verifiable as science. Therefore, the interpretations of Jap vary with the background (academic, family, environment...) of the author, and the level of scientific knowledge of that period. No wonder the 200 or so interpretations of JAP fall in 5 different categories (suggested by Dr Joginder Singh): School of Meharbaan, School of Odasis, School of Nirmalas, School of Gianis, and School of Modern Scholars. In "*Jap: the Essence of Nanakian Philosophy*," Dr Chahal has laid the foundation stone for another category "School of Scientific Scholars" to interpret Gurbani. It is a good start for the modern age of Science and Technology, where logic will prevail.

The Sikhs with open mind will find a refreshing change towards Gurbani and spirituality in this book. For the orthodox, it will take time to accept this approach, if they ever do.

The book consists of five parts: part 1, Meanings of Jap; Part 2, Nanakian Methodology; Part 3, The Commencing Verse of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib; Part 4, Jap: The Essence of Nanakian Philosophy; and in Part 5 is given the Glossary, and Information 'About the Author', and 'About Institute for Understanding Sikhism'.

In part 1, the author notes that many Sikhs consider it most important and sacred duty to repeat (*Jap*) every morning without any intention to ponder upon its philosophy and to put in practice. He further notes that Granth started to be worshipped more than read. Therefore, proper understanding of Jap by the serious readers or research scholars will be a big step forward to understand the philosophy, enshrined in the

AGGS, in its real perspective. This will save us from mere rituals.

In part 2, he describes methods used to express Gurbani by Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the house of Nanak. He discusses types of expressions used in Gurbani to interpret it properly: allegories, metaphors, and similes; questioning-answering system; use of practical methods; use of established concepts, ancient philosophy. He uses examples from Gurbani to explain these types of expressions used.

Part 3 is devoted to the Commencing Verse, which is generally called 'Mool Mantra', the author feels, should better be considered as '*Manglacharan*' because it occurs before every major section of the AGGS. He entitles this verse as 'Definition/Attributes of God'. He divides this verse into three parts. He argues that open "Oora" should not be pronounced *IK Oonkaar* or *Ikankaar*. He suggests that it should be pronounced *Ik Oh Beant*, (which means the One and Only, That, the Infinite). He asserts, "Guru Nanak has coined a new and original logo". Similarly he challenges the popular interpretation of *'Gur Prasad'* (By the grace of Guru made known to man) and calls it 'absolutely wrong'. He says '*Gur*' and '*Prasad*' are two different attributes of God, meaning "Enlightener; and Bounteous." He avers, "The commencing Verse is definition of God."

The interpretation of each of 38 *pauris* (stanzas) of Jap is in part 4. The author gives the text of the Jap in Punjabi, its English translation, his comments and interpretation and the summing of the theme and references if any. Each *pauri* (stanza) is also given a title that is quite meaningful.

Dr Chahal uses scientific explanations to prove that the philosophy of Guru Nanak has no contradiction with modern science. He believes the arrangement of Jap is equivalent to any of the modern writing of thesis or a dissertation embodying results of original research. His scientific approach is further obvious, the way he sites reference. He gives full reference, when applicable, whether opinion is similar to his own or is different.

Since science and religion have traditionally been treated

like oil and water-- they don't mix. Dr Chahal's interpretation will not be immune to this traditional thought. The reason for this polarization is embedded in the idea that religion is a form of subjective fundamental belief whereas science is objective verifiable phenomenon.

In existence observe, and see how polar opposites are functioning together, hand in hand, as complementary. That has not been done yet for science and religion; in fact, humanity was not at such level up to now. Everything needs a particular time, a particular environment, in which to be done. The East has lived religiously-- that is one pole-- and because it has lived religiously it has not been able to produce good science.

The West has lived scientifically, and because of its science it has lost track of religion and spirituality. Now for the first time in this Space Age and Internet Age, the East is no more East and the West is no more West. The earth is becoming one: the earth is becoming one global village. This is the time when the reconciliation between science and religion can be seen, can be understood. This book by Dr Chahal is just one of the examples.

A scientist may find it difficult to believe that some wise old man or woman sitting up in heaven is keeping track of everything. But the same scientist can't deny the incredible awareness and intelligence that exists in life, in nature, and in us. A scientist cannot deny the laws of nature that function in perfect order. We have seasons because of order; we have day and night because of order. Planets revolve around the sun because of order. The galaxies and solar systems are balanced in space because of order. Protons and electrons are balanced in an atom because of order. Photosynthesis in plants and plankton in the ocean produce oxygen that we breathe, because of order. The grass grows, the trees flower because of order. Our heart beats; our food digests and produces energy-- all because of order, because of law, because of organization that exists in nature. And acceptance of the Laws of Nature is acceptance of religion and acceptance of God. It's being a scientist that makes us spiritual.

Dr Chahal's interpretation of accepting the Laws of Nature, as *hukam,* is not out of order.

However, it is difficult to eliminate the elements of subjectivity in interpretation. Some of the readers are likely to differ with his suggestions, such as *Ik Oankaar* should be reworded as *Ek Oh Beant* (infinite); Moolmantar should be addressed as *Manglacharan*; *GurParsad* interpreted as Enlighter (*Gur*) and Bounteous (*Parsad*); in *pauri* (stanza) #1 *Sochai* (thinking) interpreted as such (cleansing); complete rejection of Hindu mythology. Anyway, these and many more are thought-provoking interpretations.

Since Dr. Chahal has laid the foundation stone for scientific interpretation of Gurbani, it is likely that more scientific interpretations of JAP would appear in the future to propagate the Nanakian philosophy of Sikh religion for the benefit of emerging global society of the twenty-first century (as pointed out by Dr Virk too). Otherwise the Sikhs as a global community are likely to alienate the younger generation in the absence of scientific approach towards Gurbani. Dr Chahal`s book can help them discover spiritual humanism aspect of Sikhism-- a universal religion for the 21st century.

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pusqk rIvIaU
JAP: The Essence of Nanakian Philosophy, *A Scientific and Logical Interpretation*
jpu, nwnkIAn iPlwsPI dw incoV: *ie`k ivigAwnk qy qrkmeI ivAwiKAw*

rIvIaUkwr: pRo: mnjIq isMG ipAwsw

lyKk: fw. dyivMdr isMG cwhl
pbilSr: ieMstIicaUt Pwr AMfrstYNifMg is`Kiezm
ifstrIibaUtr: isMG bRdrz, AMimRqsr ,   **Pon:** 403 590 4255
kImq: $ 20 (kYnyfw), $ 15 (AmrIkw)

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E-mail: sikhism@iuscanada.com or sikhism@chahal.info
Website: www.chahal.info
not: qusIN ieh ikqwb is`K ivrsw dy dPqr qoN vI lY skdy ho[
sMswr dy swry hI DrmW dy PlsPy smJx leI smkwlIn pRsiQqIAW nUM smJxw lwzmI huMdw hY, ikauNik hr iek

Drm dI ivcwrDwrw dy sMcwlk dw AnuBv/igAawn bySk AsIm sI, pr smkwlI lokweI nUM smjwx leI ijs lok muhwvry dI vrqoN krnI sI aus leI ieh zrUrI bxdw sI ik g`l aus hI AMdwz ivc kIqI jwvy jo Awm lokweI qy nwl nwl vkq dy igAwnIAW dI smJ ivc vI Aw jwvy qy nwl dllIl dI ksOtI qy vI pUrw auqrdw hovy ikauNik vkqI AMDivSvwS dI kwt kyvl dllIl duAwrw hI sMBv huMdI hY[

iesy leI gurU nwnk pwqSwh vrgy mUl icMqk dy icMqn dw AiDAYn krn l`igAW ieh ivcwr lYxw zrUrI hY ik aus smyN q`k ivigAwn ikMnI ku qr`kI kr c`ukw sI [isRStI dI isrjxw Aqy ies dI vwsqivkqw bwry ikMnw ku igAwn vkq dy ivigAwnIAW nUM pRwpq hoo cu`kw sI [ kudrqI nymW qy isRStI dy Aml dw ikMnW ku igAwn sI Awm jnqw nUM jW igAwnvwn mhWpurSW nUM [ guruU nwnk swihb qoN pihlW ijMny vI Drm sMcwlk hoey hn sBnW ny isRStI dI smu`cI hoNd nUM Awpxy smyN AnukUl pRwpq jwxkwrI dy AwDwr qy pRdrSq krn dw Xqn kIqw[

swihb sRI guruU nwnk dyv jI dy smyN ivigAwn dy bhuqy q`Q swhmxy Aw cuky sn, ijnHW dw igAwn qW aus mhwn Awqmw nUM pihlW qoN hI sI pr lokweI jW vkq dy ivdvnW nwl crcw krn l`igAW ieh ivcwr kwlpink nhIN sgoN hkIkq l`g rhy hoxgy[

ijvyN ie`k pwsy kwprinks dI iQaUrI ik DrqI sUrj dy duAwly GuMMdI hY sMswr dy igAwn nUM pRwpq ho c`ukI sI[ieh auh smW sI jd glylIaU vI AwpxI QIaUrI pyS kr irhw sI[ieDr pUrb ivc guruU nwnk swihb Awpxy ivcwrW dI AiBivAkqI krdy hoey kudrq dIAW aunHW scweIAW dw pUrn qOr qy pRgtwA kr rhy sn qW ik mwnv jwqI hmySW leI jhwlq qy AMD ivSvwS dy cuMgl 'coN inkl sky[guruU nwnk pwqSwh dI swrI ivcwrDwrw ieMnI prp`k hY ik aus nUM A`j q`k koeI vI ivigAwnk Koj JuTlw nhIN skI sgoN auhnW qoN bwAd Awaux vwllIAW swrIAW QIaUrIAW ny aunHW dy ivcwrW dI pRoVqw hI kIqI hY[

fw. cwhl dI pusqk: Jap, The Essence of Nanakian Philosphy: a Scientific and Logical Interpretation v`K v`K BwSwvW iv`c 'jpu jI' dIAW koeI 200 qoN vI v`D ivAwiKAAwvW iv`c kyvl ie`k igxwqmk vwDw hI nhIN, sgoN ies bwxI qy gurmiq dy isDWqW nUM shI AMdwz iv`c smJx dw ie`k SlwGwXog Xqn hY[vrqmwn pRsiQqIAW muqwibk ie`k vwsqivk phuMc hY[

jpu jI bwxI dw Anuvwd qy ivsqirq ivAwiKAw jo fw. cwhl qoN pihlW ho cu`kI hY aus ivc iksy nw iksy rUp ivc pRclq prIpwtI dy ADwr qy ivAwiKAw hoeI hY ikauNik AsIN Ajy vI Awpxy Awp nUM BwrqI mUl drSn/ivcwrDwrw dy pRBwv qoN mukq nhI kr sky jW krnw nhIN cwhuMdy[ hr vwr ieh koiSS huMdI hY ik iksy vI rUp iv`c ausy icMqn pRxwlI dy AnukUl hI

gurUu swihbwn nUM mhwn drswieAw jwey[BwvyN swfI Bwvnw SrDwvmk hI huMdI hY pr AsIN kdI vI gurmiq dI mhwnqw nUM pRclq pirpwtI qoN suqMqr ho ky v`Kry rUp iv`c dyKx smJx dw Xqn hI nhIN krdy [BwvyN AwDuink skwlrW ny pihly cOhW ivcwr mMflW nwloN v`KrI qy s`c dy bhuqy nyVII ivAwiKAw kIqI hY, pr iksy h`d q`k ieh ivdvwn vI pRMprwgq pRBwv qoN inrlyp nhIN ho sky, ies iv`c vkqI pRsiQqIAW dw vI kwPI Xogdwn irhw hY[is`KI dy isDWqk msilAW pRqI bwhrI jW AMdrUnI dbwA vI Awpxw jlbw idKwauNdw irhw hY[

'jpu' jI ijQy AiDAwqmvwd nwl BrpUr hY, auQy mnu`KI hoNd qy ausdy smu`cy vjUd nUM kwdr dI kudrq iv`c ivigAwnk qy vwsqivk rUp AMdr ivcrdw drswieAw igAw hY[

mMglwcrx; ijs *f* Ajoky smyN **'mUl mMqr'** vI ikhw jWdw hY (BwvyN ik iesnUM 'mUl mMqr' kihxw is`K iPlwsPI AnukUl nhIN hY) iv`c kudrq dy krqw kwdr dy vwsqivk srUp dI pRIBwSw ibAwn kIqI geI hY[jo ik gurmiq qoN pihlW pRclq qmwm icMqn pRxwlIAW qoN v`KrI hY[ gurmiq qoN pUrb swrIAW icMqn pRxwlIAW ny BwvyN auh BwrqI "K`t drSn" hY jW swmI "Drm drSn", kwdr *f* jW qW iksy Swsk dy rUp ivc pyS kIqw hY, jo iksy 7vyN Asmwn qy bYTw AwpixAW kwirMidAW (bRhmw, ivSnUM, iSv jI, Drm rwj, PirSqy Awid) rwhIN isRStI dw inzwm clw irhw hY jW iPr inrijMd jhI iksy vsqU dy rUp ivc pyS kIqw hY [kwdr dI ivSwlqw dw lyKw joKw vI kIqw imldw hY [gurU nwnk swihb ny pihlI vwr aus hsqI dI hoNd *f* igxqIAW imxqIAW qoN pry AsIm pRdriSq kIqw[**<>** dy pRMprwgq ArQ jo A`j q`k sw*f* pRwpq hn, auh hn ik krqw (mwrn vwlw, pwln vwlw jW pYdw krn vwlw) ie`k hY[ ieh ArQ ihMdU qRYmUrqI dy ArQW dw hI pirvriqq rUp hY[ pRo: cwhl ny **<>** dI jo ivigAwnk ivAwiKAw kIqI hY, aus Anuswr **"<>** dy buinAwdI ArQ **"ie`k auh ibAMq hn jW ie`k auh AnMq"** vwsqivkqw dy vDyry nyVy jwpdy hn[ ieh hI isRStI dI AsImqw jW ibAMqqw dw isDWq bwAd iv`c gxq dy igAwnIAW ny pyS kIqw hY[ieQy ieh vI vrnxXog hY ik **<>** dI pRclq pRMprwgq ivAwiKAw dy nwl-nwl iesdy aucwrn bwry vI ieh hI ikhw jWdw hY ik vydW-SwsqrW dy **'auAMkwr jW eykMkwr'** dy A`gy gurU nwnk swihb ny isrP ie`k lgw id`qw qy aucwrn bx igAw, **'ie`k auAMkwr',** jdik pRo: cwhl ny pihlI vwr ies aucwrn nUM **'nwnkIAn iPlwsPI'** dy AnukUl nw jwx ky iesdw aucwrn **'ie`k E byAMq' jW 'ie`k E AnMq'** pyS kIqw hY, aunHW dI ivigAwnk dllIl Anuswr iehI shI aucwrn ho skdw hY[pr swfI rwey Anuswr ies bwry iksy qrHW dI jjbwqI phuMc Apnwaux dI QW hor Koj dI loV hY[mMglwcrx qoN bwAd aunHW ivDIAW (qIrQ ieSnwn, dunIAWdwrI qy igRhsq iqAwg ky smwDIAW lwauxIAW, srIr nUM kSt dyxy, igAwn nwl cqurweIAW krnIAW) dw izkr qy KMfn hY, ijnHW dy Awsry

mn`uKqw dw soSx ho irhw sI jW ijnHW nUM mn`uK mwqr dI mukqI jW pRwpqI dw swDn svIkwirAw jw c`ukw sI[

iPr mnu`K dy lkS jW hoNd pRqI Awp hI pRSn krky guruU jI aus dw juAwb vI bhuq suKYn FMg nwl idMdy hn ik hukm **(kudrq dy nymW Law of Nature)** nUM smJ ky aunHW muqwibk jIvn bqIq krxw hI lkS qy pRwpqI hY[

dUsrI pauVI iv`c guruU swihb isRStI dI isrjxw dw Aml ibAwn krdy hn ik ikvyN hOlI-hOlI ies dw ivkws hoieAw Aqy qIsrI pauVI iv`c kurdq dy kwdr dI hoNd jW aus nUM ikvyN smJx dw Xqn huMdw Aw irhw hY jW aus dw j`s ikvyN ho irhw hY, iknHW guxW dy ADwr qy ho irhw hY[

cOQI, pMjvIN pauVI iv`c ausdI hsqI dw vrxn qy AglIAW pauVIAW iv`c s`mucy qOr qy m`nuK dI hoNd qy vwsqivkqw dw mukwblw aus krqy dy ivSwl bRhmMf dy nwl pyS kIqw igAw hY[sp`St hY ik jpu jI dw mksd mnu`K mwqr nUM aus dI vwsqivkqw dy nwl bRhmMf qy ies dy rcxhwry dI kmwl drswauxw hY[

pRo: cwhl jo ik kYnyfw dI ie`k XUnIvristI qoN pRoPYsr AwP mwiekrobwAljI dy auhdy qoN AkqUbr 1, 1996 nUM irtwierf hoey hn ny Awpxy ivigAwnk ik`qy dOrwn gurbwxI dy ivigAwnk qy qrk AwDwirq keI lyK, ivSv Br dy mYgzInW iv`c Cp cuky hn Aqy aunHW dIAW keI ikqwbW jo ik hor lyKkW nwl sWJy qOr qy pRkwSq hoeIAW hn[hQlI pusqk vI bhuqy skwlrW, icMqkW nwl ivcwr vtWdry qy nvIN pIVI duAwrw puCy jwx vwly Axigxq svwlW dy ADwr qy aunHW dy ivSwl AnuBv qy AwDwirq hY[

lyKk ny Awp hI AwpxI pusqk qy it`pxI kridAW ikhw hY: "jpu jI nUM mnu`Kqw leI ivigAwnk qy qrk AwDwrq mnu`Kqw leI pyS krn qy ivAwiKAw krn dw myrw ieh iek Xqn hY[mYN ieh vI svIkwr krdw hW ik ieh sMpUrn ivAwiKAw nhIN hY[mYN aumId krdw hwN ik kdI koeI ivAkqI jW skwlrW dw ie`k smUh, jo BOiqk Aqy kudrqI ivigAwn, dwrSink, mnoivigAwnk, rswiexk, qwrw ivigAwn, jIv ivigAwn, BwSwvW, ieiqhws, kwnUMn, Awid qy AwDwirq hovy, nyVvly BivK iv`c ies nwloN vDIAw ivAwiKAw pyS krygw["

aus dI suihrd Bwvnw nUM aujwgr krdI hY, lyKk dy KojI hox dw pRmwx hY[ikauNik koeI vI KojI iksy pRwpqI nUM sMpUrn nhIN mMndw[guruU swihb iesy kwrn hI "KojI aupjy bwdI ibnsy dw vr idMdy hn[" vYsy vI sMswr dy DrmW iv`c gurmiq dI ivl`Kxqw hI ieh hY ik ies iv`c qrk jW dllIl nUM qrjIA id`qI geI hY[ieQy qW gurU Dwrn krn leI vI Akl dI vrqoN krn nUM ikhw igAw

hY (AklIN swihb syvIAY....)[

gurmiq sMswr dy pswry dI aupjx qy ibnsx dI swrI pRikirAw nUM kudrq dy rcy hoey nymW qy hI AwDwirq mMndI hY[BwvyN auh ies dw sQUl p`K hY jW sUKSm p`K hY:paux pwxI AgnI kw Kyl[cpl icq buD kw myl[

ies pusqk dI ie`k KUbI ieh vI hY ik ieh gurbwxI dI AWqirk qrk ivDI qy ADwirq ijnHW pRclq ivcwrW dw guruU swihb ny KMfn kIqw hY qy snwqnI pirpwtI dy AMqrgq aus ivSvws nUM dobwrw gurmiq sQwn pRwpq ho cukw hY, lyKk ny bwKUbI pRdrSq kr idqw hY[ ijvyN 'pwqwlw pwqwl...' vwlI pauVI; AwDuink ivigAwn dI 'ib`g bYNg QIauUrI' jo gurUu swihb dI ivcwr dy "kIqw pswau eykw kvwau" dI pRoVqw krdI hY nUM bhuq dlyrI nwl pRdrSq kIqw hY[mYnUM Xwd hY ik 1982 iv`c AYm. iPl dOrwn ie`k Koj inbMD "gurmiq qy sUPImq ie`k qulnwmk AiDAYn" iv`c eykw kvwau qy ib`g bYNg QIaUurI bwry ies qrHW dy ivcwr pyS krn qy mYnUM ividAwrQIAW sihq pRoPYsrW dI nwrwzgI dw swmHxw vI krnw ipAw sI[

pRo: hrdyv isMG ivrk ny ies pusqk dy muKbMD ivc fw. cwhl dI koiSS nUM 1920 dOrwn pRo: pUrn isMG dI ivigAwnk idRStI nwl qulnw idqI hY ikauNik aus vkq vI pRo: pUrn isMG jo ik ie`k ivigAwnI sn ny gurmiq dI ivigAwnk qy qrk BrpUr ivAwiKAw dI pRoVqw kIqI sI[

AKIr iv`c iehI kihxw cwhWgw ik ies rIvIaU iv`c vMngI mwqr hI pusqk bwry crcw kr sikAw hW, vDyry qy shI jwxkwrI pUrI pusqk pVH ky hI iml skdI hY[ijQy ieh pusqk hr is`K nUM pVHnI cwhIdI hY, auQy ivdySW iv`c jMmpl jW A`j ie`kIvIN sdI dI dI nOjvwn pIVHI leI ieh pusqk gurmiq iPlwsPI nUM shI sMdrB iv`c smJx leI shweI hovygI[A`j swfI nOjvwn pIVHI swfy AnpVH jW ADpVH pRcwrkW dIAW AMD-ivSvwsI kQw-khwxIAW krky gurduAwirAW qoN hI nhIN, is`KI qoN vI dUr jw rhI hY[pRo: cwhl jI dw ieh Xqn bVw hI SlwGwXog hY, jy hor ivdvwn ies Kyqr iv`c A`gy Awaux qW is`KI dw mUMh-muhWdrw ie`kIvIN sdI dy hwx dw bx skdw hY[ AsIN 'Adwrw is`K ivrsw' vloN ijQy pRo: cwhl nUM ies mhwn kwrj leI vDweI idMdy hW, auQy ies pusqk nUM is`K swihq jgq iv`c jI AwieAw kihMdy hW[