

# **RELIGION**

## **EMERGING ISSUE AND CONCERNS**

**ARTICLE**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Today, there is great unrest throughout the world; many philosophers are blaming this unrest on religion. Some are of the view that the global turmoil is due to the illiteracy of religion, although another factor is the poor economy of certain sectors of the population. People, in general, all over the world are concerned about why inter-religion and intra-religion fights are going on, involving all the major religions, in spite of the fact that at interfaith conferences, every religion claims that their religion is the most peace-loving and that it preaches equality for all humans. The main cause of this religious illiteracy may be the fact that religious doctrines are not taught with respect to the advancements in science and the *modus vivendi* of people of the current science age. Consequently, a large number of contemporary issues and concerns are emerging in religions; each religion has its own unique problems which may or may not be shared with other religions. These problems are so numerous and complex that it is beyond anyone's capability to discuss them all. In this paper, this topic will be discussed in general, with special reference to Sikhism.

### **MAJOR ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

#### **Concern About Fights Among Religions**

The heinous terrorist crime committed on September 11, 2001 was declared as an "attack on America" by then-President George Bush. In fact, it was an attack on humanity as several thousand innocent people of various

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The world is passing through unrest. Terrorist attacks on small or large scale on innocent people are on the increase throughout the world since the terrorists' attack on the twin towers of World Trade Center in New York during September 11, 2001 where many innocent people of various religions were killed. The emerging issues and concerns of every religion are different from that of others. In most of the cases minority religions suffer the most in every country. However, it is not realized that a majority religion in certain countries is a minority religion in others. Sikhism is in a special category since it is a minority religion in all the countries including India. Therefore, they have their own special issues and concerns. This paper discusses emerging issues and concerns about religions with special reference to Sikhism and also solution to work for peace in the world through scientific and logical approach as well as through the application of basic principles of Nanakian Philosophy.*

religions, nationalities, races and ethnic groups, lost their lives through no fault of their own. The terrorists hijacked four planes, slammed two of them into the twin towers of World Trade Center (WTC), the third into the Pentagon building and crashed the fourth into the ground in Pennsylvania. The gruesome attack totally destroyed the Twin Towers, partially damaged the Pentagon building and had a significant negative impact on the US economy whose ripple effect was felt globally. The other tragic consequence of this horrendous attack was a sudden blow to the peaceful co-existence of peoples of different religions and ethnic backgrounds, not only in North America, but also in Europe and as far away as Australia and New Zealand. Since the 9/11 attack on Twin Towers in USA, many such attacks have occurred almost all over the world, especially in India and in Europe, in France,

Belgium, etc. Other religiously-motivated attacks occurred in various Muslim countries where the victims were minority Muslim sects, Christians, Hindus and Sikhs.

Soon after the attack on the Twin Towers in the USA, it was publicized that the terrorists belonged to Al-Qa'ida, the organization of Osama bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian exile in Afghanistan. As soon as the picture of Osama bin Laden was shown on TV screens around the world, the general public in the USA, Canada, and UK started to hate all persons with beards and turbans [1].

For an average American, anybody with a beard and a turban looks like an Afghan or a Muslim, equating them with terrorists. The irony is that there are very few Afghans or Muslims with beards and turbans in North America, but many Sikhs keep beards and turbans as their religious symbols. In the aftermath of 9/11, people started to hate and to kill any person with a beard and a turban without identifying whether the victim was a Sikh, an Afghan or a Muslim. Most of the victims of this mindless and vindictive frenzy turned out to be Sikhs, due to the mistaken identification with Afghans or Muslims.

The Sikhs were also ill-treated at airports, railways and buses, and even on streets and in shopping malls. Their houses and shops were damaged and some have been shot dead. On December 15, three months after the September 11 attack, a Sikh gas station owner was killed in West Haven, Connecticut. That same week, in Washington DC, a Sikh woman was stabbed repeatedly while sitting in her car [2]. Sikh gurdwaras were attacked in the USA and other places

because of the generalization of a person's identity.

On August 5, 2012, exactly 10 years after the infamous attack of 9/11, a massacre took place at the Sikh temple (gurdwara) in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, where 40-year-old Wade Michael Page fatally shot six people and wounded four others. Page committed suicide by shooting himself in the head after he was shot in the stomach by a responding police officer [3].

Although the major question is why do certain groups of a particular religion attack people belonging to other religions, the fact of mistaken identity is a major concern for Sikhs living in North America and other Western countries. In India, in 1984, thousands of Sikhs were killed and their properties were destroyed because of politically-motivated racial furor against them. Let us go back to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when the Moguls killed the Sikhs because, although they looked similar to Muslims (i.e. beards and turbans), they were practicing the philosophy of Guru Nanak which was different than that of the Prophet Mohammed. Thus, it appears that the Sikhs have been killed because of either their mistaken identity or recognized identity or similar identity. Recently, in France, all conspicuous religious symbols, e.g. cross, turban, yarmulka, and hijab have been banned from government jobs, in schools and for identity cards in an effort to reduce tensions between religious followers and to keep religion out of public life by promoting secularity. But, France is not the only country in the world to outlaw the wearing of religious symbols in public. Consequently,

the use of religious symbols by Sikhs to promote their identity, has become a major issue and concern for the Sikhs all over the world.

### **Religion in the Hands of Fanatics**

Dr Parvez Hoodbhoy, a professor of nuclear physics at Islamabad's Quaid-e-Azam University, a visiting research scientist at MIT, and a regular contributor to the Karachi newspaper DAWN, has given an unbiased analysis of the relationship of the attack of September 11 and Islam. It is worth noting in his analysis that the root cause of the current terrorism is that Islam is in the hands of its fanatical clergy [4]. As an aside, it is interesting to know that the word, fanatical, comes from the Latin *fanaticus* meaning, mad or, inspired by a deity.

If we look into the cause of all the troubles and fights instigated by religion, the blame falls on religious doctrines, because every religion teaches an absolute belief in its own superiority and its divinely-given right to impose itself upon others. It is only in Sikhism where no such ideas are taught; instead, it teaches altruism and egalitarianism.

On the other hand, Irfan Husain [5] says, for Islam, the main concern is that the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent extremist violence have convulsed the Middle East, and the terrorist atrocities carried out in the West as well as in the Muslim world, have all produced a backlash. It has now become a default position for Muslims to say: "Islam is a religion of peace that has been hijacked by terrorists." However, he says that the reality is that the faith has been hijacked by the clergy. The words of many Muslim clerics provide

ammunition to those who see violence in the faith's DNA.

McDonald-Gibson wrote [6]: “Since the Paris attacks last November 13 (2015) that killed 130 people, there has been a general expectation that Brussels was next. It was here, after all, that those attacks had been planned, a call of Syria-trained Islamic extremists taking advantage of the security failure in a country that struggles to act as one unified state, rather than two bickering regions divided along linguistic and cultural lines.”

Karl Vick [7], while writing in *Time* magazine about the terrorist attack at the airport and the subway in Brussels, Belgium, has reported that number of deaths caused by the Islamic State (IS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), so far is as follows Belgium, 31; France, 130, Egypt, 316; Yemen, 266; Libya, 160; Turkey, 135; Tunisia, 73; Lebanon, 40; Saudi Arabia, 39; Afghanistan, 39; Kuwait, 27; Bangladesh, 4; Dagestan, 3; and Indonesia, 2. This list does not include people killed in Canada, India, the UK, or the USA and it also does not include the killing of Sikhs by Hindus in India during 1984 and thereafter.

### **Illiteracy About Religions**

An inational symposium, *Why Religious Literacy is Important in Today's World*, was held at McGill University, Montreal. Chahal [8] has summed up the views of speakers as follows.

Dr Spancer Boudreau of McGill University, Montreal, mentioned that teaching of religion is a very controversial task since it is difficult to decide what is right and what is

wrong in a particular religion since a teacher cannot be expert in all the religions.

Dr Isabelle Saint-Martin, University Sorbonne, France, reported that religious education was mandatory in French schools from 1882 to 1923, known as one's 'duty before God'. The first textbook on religion for schools was published in 1877.

Dr Robert Jackson, University of Warwick, UK, said, that the incident of 9/11 is an awakening, demonstrating that there is an increased interest to know religions which can allow such terrorist act. However, he said that research on religion has also increased to promote an increased understanding of other religions thereby increasing the spirit of tolerance. He also mentioned that books on religions are written by those who are not sufficiently knowledgeable on the subject of religion. He further mentioned that the same religion is being taught differently in different countries.

Dr Diane Moore, Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University, USA, emphasized that the illiteracy about religion is wide-spread over the globe. The significant consequence is that it fuels antagonism and hinders respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence and cooperative endeavors.

### **Illiteracy about Sikhism Recognized**

Illiteracy about Sikhism has also been recognized by the custodians of Sikhism, Sikh scholars and Sikhs at large. S Avtar Singh Makkar [9], President, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar, has also realized the illiteracy about

Sikhi (Sikhism) among the Sikhs, although the scholars of other world religions are showing a great interest to know Sikhi:

“ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਜਿਥੇ ਇਹ ਮਾਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੇ, ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਭਰ ਦੇ ਧਰਮ-ਖੇਤਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ, ਅਧਿਆਪਕਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ-ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਲ ਖਿੱਚਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਬੜੀ ਗੰਭੀਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਣ ਹਿਤ ਸਰਗਰਮੀ ਵਿਖਾਰੇ ਹਨ ਉਥੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਅਤੇ ਖਤਰੇ ਦੀ ਘੰਟੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਇਸ ਅਨਮੋਲ ਵਿਰਾਸਤ ਤੋਂ ਅਨਜਾਣ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ।”

English Translation: “Whereas for all of us (Sikhs), it is a matter of pride that Sikh dharam (religion) has received the attention of scholars, students and religious preachers from the field of religions of the world and they are expressing their seriousness in activities to understand Sikh dharam. But for all of us (Sikhs), it is an issue of worry and a warning of danger that a large number of families connected with Sikh dharam are becoming unaware of this invaluable heritage.” (in the foreword)

Similarly, Dr Jodh Singh, Prof of Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Punjabi University, Patiala has discovered that the objective of many scholars is to amalgamate Sikhi into Hinduism [9]:

“ਪ੍ਰਾਚੀਨ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸੰਸਕਾਰ ਜੁੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਖਾਸਤੋਰ ਤੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਹੁਤਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਨੂੰ ਧੁੰਧਲਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਨਵਾਂ ਧਰਮ ਮੰਨਣ ਤੋਂ ਇਨਕਾਰੀ ਹੋਣ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ ਪੌਰਾਣਿਕ ਨਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਵਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਨਵੇਂ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਰਲਗੱਡ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਅਰੰਭੀ ਹੈ ।”

English Translation: “Many of the scholars associated with the ancient Indian philosophy, especially from among the Indian scholars, have begun to amalgamate the Sikh dharma into Hinduism by fogging its unique identity and refusing to accept Sikh dharma as a new dharma by exploiting the use of ancient names (of God) and (of sacred) the places mentioned in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib.”

Dr Jodh Singh has further warned that serious efforts are going on to erase the uniqueness and originality of Sikhi (Sikhism) from religious literature, trying to bring back Sikhs to their original status of the time before Guru Nanak, in order to subdue them:

“ਅਜੋਕੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਪਰਤੱਖ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਉਤੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਹਰੋਂ ਦਬਾਅ ਪਾਏ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਪੈਰੋਕਾਰ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਪਛਾਣ ਭੁਲਕੇ ਉਥੇ ਜਾ ਖੜਨ ਜਿਥੋਂ ਇਹ ਚੱਲੇ ਸਨ । ਅਜਿਹੇ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਾਂ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਰੋਲ ਘਚੋਲਾ ਖੜਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਹ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿੜਕ ਜਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਮੁੜ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਗੁਲਾਮੀ ਦਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਜੀਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਣ ।”

English Translation: “In these days, it is evident that a lot of pressure from within and without is being put on the followers (of Sikhi) so that after forgetting their independent identity they go back to the original status wherefrom they started. Such laws are being enacted to create confusion in their minds so that they slip away from the principles of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and they are forced to fall back to the slavery of old religious, social and political way of living again.”

It is an encouraging sign that the

custodian of Sikhi, S Avtar Singh Makkar, President of SGPC, Amritsar, and a famous professor of the Encyclopedia of Sikhism, has recognized the illiteracy about Sikhism and the cause of this illiteracy. Now illiteracy about Sikhism is also felt among the young Sikhs of the science age. They often claim that they do not understand Sikhism the way it is being taught in the gurdwaras and being represented in Sikh literature.

Therefore, teaching and preaching of Sikhi to the peoples of the world is one of the major concerns for the Sikhs and Sikh authorities, before fighting the hate crime against them.

### Changing Religious Profile in the World

The religious profile of the world is rapidly changing due to fertility rates and the size of youth populations among the world’s major religions, as well as by people switching faiths. Over the next four decades, Christians will remain the largest religious group, but Islam will grow faster than any other major religion. If current trends continue, by 2050 ...

- The number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians around the world.
- Atheists, agnostics and other people who do not affiliate with any religion, though increasing in countries such as the United States and France, will make up a declining share of the world’s total population.
- The global Buddhist population will be about the same size it was in 2010, while the Hindu and Jewish populations will be larger than they are today.
- In Europe, Muslims will make up

10% of the overall population.

- India will retain a Hindu majority but also will have the largest Muslim population of any country in the world, surpassing Indonesia.
- In the United States, Christians will decline from more than three-quarters of the population in 2010 to two-thirds in 2050, and Judaism will no longer be the largest non-Christian religion. Muslims will be more numerous in the U.S. than people who identify as Jewish on the basis of religion [10].

These are the religious trends highlighted in new demographic projections by the Pew Research Center. Sikhism, although the biggest religion in the ‘other religions’ category, was not surveyed; nevertheless, its population in 2010, according to the World Religion Database, was mentioned in the notes. What the population of the Sikhs in 2050 will be is anybody’s guess.

### Conflict Between Religion and Science

The conflict between religion and science is another of the major issues and concerns for theologians all over the world. It started during the period of the Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries) in Europe, when scientists started to challenge the authority of the Catholic Church and many of its Christian teachings. During the same period in South East Asia, it was Guru Nanak (1469-1539) who, like his European counterparts, challenged the superstitions, mythology and ancient philosophy in which people were shackled for centuries. The record of the century-long conflict between scientists and Church authorities and the punishments given by the Church to those scientists who raised their

voice against the Church's wrong teachings, was reported by Bender and Leone [11]:

- Roger Bacon, a 13<sup>th</sup> century English priest, spent the final 14 years of his life in a dungeon for writing that, in the quest for truth, experimentation and observation are valid challenges to the uncritical acceptance of spiritual and secular authorities.
- In spring of 1633, Galileo, an Italian scientist, was imprisoned for life for challenging the teaching of the Church, that the Earth is the center of the universe and the sun revolves around the Earth.
- During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Charles Darwin was mocked and maligned for claiming that all living things evolved from lower life forms.
- In 1925, John Scope, a high school biology teacher from Dayton, Tennessee, was accused and convicted of violating a state law, which specified that only divine creation, as an explanation for the origin of life, could be taught in Tennessee public schools.

Today, there continues to be much debate over the teaching of creationism and intelligent design (ID). Intelligent design is a creationist's belief which suggests that the biological complexity of human beings is evidence for the presence of a God, an 'intelligent designer'. It is a pseudoscientific view, that it is sometimes advanced as fact based on scientific theory but it has no underpinning scientific principles or explanations supporting it nor is it accepted by the international scientific community. Creationism and intelligent design are not part of the National Curriculum for Science, but there is scope for schools to discuss creationism as part of religious education programs. [12]

## SOLUTION

Arnold Toynbee, the world-renowned historian, mentioned the future of the religions and the Sikh scriptures [13], "Mankind's religious future may be obscure; yet one thing can be foreseen: the living higher religions are going to influence each other more than ever before, in these days of increasing communication between all parts of the world and all branches of the human race in this coming religious debate, the Sikh religion, and its scriptures the Adi Granth, will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world."

Toynbee's "Mankind's religious future may be obscure;" seems to be true, given the trend among educated people to abandon organized religion, due to the advancements in science and using the power of reasoning to find the truth. However, his second observation. "...the Sikh religion, and its scriptures, the Adi Granth, will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world" is very inspiring and heartening that Sikhism has something useful and important to say to the world. I am a retired microbiologist and have been studying life at the microscopic level during my entire professional life. During this period, I have learned how life, as a single-cell, originated from inanimate matter and how this simple life form evolved into a very complex but very well-organized life, human. Therefore, I understand life better than theologians who believe that God created life at his whim.

I have been a Sikh all my life as I was born in Sikh family. After retirement from the position of Professor of Industrial Microbiology in 1996, I

started to dedicate my time to the understanding of my religion. During my study of religion and science I came across the following quote of the Nobel Laureate, Albert Einstein: "After religious teachers accomplish the refining process indicated, they will surely recognize with joy that true religion has been ennobled and made more profound by scientific knowledge."

This quote encouraged me to work on an in-depth interpretation of the writings of Guru Nanak, applying scientific knowledge and logic to make it understandable by the humanity of our science age. I soon discovered that the philosophy promulgated by Guru Nanak is original and unique in many respects and there is nothing based on Vedanta and other ancient philosophies other than some allegoric and metaphoric references. Many of my books and papers are based on the interpretation of verses of Guru Nanak with the application of scientific knowledge and logic [14-17].

The most scientific, logical and applicable solution for the major issues and concerns about the fights among religions has been promulgated by Guru Nanak as follows:

### Equality in Humanity

Guru Nanak emphasized, that the resolution for the unrest in the world, is to develop unity within humanity. In some religions, it is believed that humanity was created in Image of God or humanity was created as man/woman by God right from the beginning. But in Nanakian Philosophy there is no speculation about the creation of human as man/woman or in the image of God.

However, Guru Nanak emphasizes equality in humanity as follows:

### Everybody is Equal

ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਉਚਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਨੀਚੁ ਨ ਦੀਸੈ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਇਕਨੈ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਸਾਜਿਐ ਇਕੁ ਚਾਨਿ ਤਿਰੁ ਲੇਇ ॥

Sabh ko ūchā ākhī'ai nīch na dī'sai ko'e.

Iknaī bhā'nde sāji'ai ik ihuchānaḥ t lo'e.

Call everyone high, none appears to be low;

Everyone has been moulded from the same matter

And the same source of energy is found in all.

AGGS, M1, p 62.

Guru Amardas has further explained that equality in humanity is due to the fact that the origin of humans is from *jot* (energy):

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥

...

Man tū'n joṭ sarūp hai āpṇā mūl pachḥāṇ.

Hey mind (man)! You are the embodiment of energy, try to recognize your roots (origin).

It means that humans originated from one source, *jot* (energy).

Guru Amardas further confirms that the same philosophy has been said by Guru Nanak in his above phrase:

ਇਉ ਕਰੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਅਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥੫॥

I'o kahai Nānak man tū'n joṭ sarūp hai āpṇā mūl pachḥāṇ. ||5||

Nanak says the same philosophy that human is the embodiment of *jot* (energy).

AGGS, M 3, 441.

Now the question is:

What is this ਜੋਤਿ (*jot*)?

Etymologically *jot* is energy (E):  
 $E = mc^2$  according to Einstein.

This means that everything inanimate and animate was created from energy (*jot*).

Guru Nanak has designed a logo to represent the same equation,  $E = mc^2$ , about 400 years before Einstein.

ੴ

(One + open oora + its extended end.)

One = Singularity

Open oora = Oh (That)

Extended end = infinity

Therefore, the One in ੴ is

“Singularity, highly concentrated form of energy in a single point.. Some scientists call this state of energy as “Nothingness” but Guru Nanak calls it ਸੁੰਨ (*sun*).

The open *Oraa* (ੳ) represents Oh (That) and its extended end of the open *Oraa* represents “Infinity”. The open *Oora* with its extended end represents that One in ੴ.

According to Guru Nanak, the whole Universe originated from this One (ੴ):

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ ॥

<b>Eukaryotic cell appeared</b>	<b>about 2 billion years ago</b>
<b>Mammals appeared</b>	<b>about 200 million years ago</b>
<b>Primates appeared</b>	<b>about 75 million years ago</b>
<b>Earliest <i>Hominin</i>, <i>Lucy</i>, <i>Australopithecus</i> <i>afarensis</i>, appeared</b>	<b>about 3.2 million years ago</b>
<b>From <i>Hominin</i> the new genus, <i>Homo</i>, appeared.</b>	
<b><i>Homo habilis</i>, who started to use tools, appeared</b>	<b>about 2.8 million years ago</b>
<b><i>Homo erectus</i>, started to walk on two feet standing completely like today's human, appeared</b>	<b>about 1.8 million years ago</b>
<b><i>Homo sapiens</i>, perfect &amp; intelligent human, appeared</b>	<b>about 200,000 years ago</b>
<b><i>Homo sapiens sapiens</i>, the most intelligent and modern human of today, appeared</b>	<b>about 50,000 years ago</b>

ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥

Kīṭā pasāᵒ eko kavāᵒo.

Fis te hoᵒe lakh dārīᵒāᵒo.

*The Universe originated from one source of energy (Singularity) and started to expand. Thereafter many things\* appeared.*

\*Many Things: a large number of galaxies composed of a large number of stars and planets came into being.

The Box on the left page shows the timeline of the evolution of humans, based on scientific information, clearly supports the philosophy of Guru Nanak that the humanity originated from one source of energy, therefore, there should be no hatred against any individual.

Guru Nanak promulgated further principles for living amicably by helping each other. These would resolve many of the current issues and concerns of occupying religions.

### Altruism

ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥

vidīᵒā vīchārī t̄āᵒn parᵒupkāri.

Nanak Says:

*That education is worthwhile, which is applied to the welfare of humanity.*

AGGS, M 1, p 356.

This is also the moto of the Punjabi University, Patiala.

ਗੁਣਾ ਕਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਵਾਸੁਲਾ ਕਢਿ ਵਾਸੁ ਲਈਜੈ ॥

ਜੇ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਵਨ੍ਹਿ ਸਾਜਨਾ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਝ ਕਰੀਜੈ

॥

ਸਾਝ ਕਰੀਜੈ ਗੁਣਹ ਕੇਰੀ ਛੇਡਿ ਅਵਗਣ

ਚਲੀਐ ॥

Guᵒā kā hovai vāsulā kadᵒ vās laᵒījai.

Je guᵒ hovnīᵒ sājnā mil sājᵒ karījai

Sājᵒ karījai guᵒah kerī chᵒᵒod avgaᵒ

chālīᵒai.

*If you posses (a bag of) wisdom open it to be shared with others. If your friends have virtues, share together.*

*Share only the good virtues and reject the others, which are not good.*

AGGS, M 1, p 765.

ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥

ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਹ ਲੁਡਾਈਐ ॥੪॥੩੩॥

vichᵒ dūnīᵒā sev kamāᵒīᵒai.

Fā dargēᵒh baisaᵒᵒ pāᵒīᵒai.

Kaho Nānak bāᵒ ludāᵒīᵒai.

||4||33||

*While living in this world the one, who serves humanity, attains peace of mind.*

*Nanak says that one waves his arms in happiness*

*(this is a great honor).*

AGGS, M 1, p 26.

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ ॥੧॥

Ghāl khāᵒe kichᵒᵒ hathahu deᵒe.

Nānak rāᵒu pachāᵒᵒᵒᵒᵒᵒᵒ seᵒe. ||1||

*The one, who earns by the sweat of his brow and*

*shares some of his earning*

*for the welfare of humanity,*

*Nanak says that one has recognized the real path of life.*

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ ॥

ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ ॥

"*Nanak Naam Chardikala.*

*Terai bhanai Sarbaht dah Balha*".

This is a very common proverb, but it is not found in the AGGS. I have interpreted it as follows which is quite different than that as is

understood by many Sikhs:

*"According to Guru Nanak the Laws of Nature/Universe (naam) of modus vivendi is to remain in progressive state and high spirit and wish for welfare of the whole humanity."*

### Collaboration of Scientists and Theologians

Elain Howard Ecklund [18], a Professor of Sociology and the Associate Director of the Center on Race, Religion, and Urban Life at Rice University, reported that she completed the most comprehensive study to date of what natural and social scientists think about religion. She surveyed nearly 1,700 scientists and conducted in-depth interviews with 275 of them. According to her analysis, not all scientists are atheists, almost 50 percent identify with a religious label and about one in five is actively involved in a house of worship, attending services more than once a month. While many scientists, who are completely secular, are also seen sitting in the pews of churches, temples, and mosques.

She has suggested, that to resolve the conflict between scientists and theologians, the religious leaders should utilize scientists to help them to integrate science within their houses of worship. The faith leaders should provide them with a forum for discussing the scientific approach to understand religion and to teach adult classes. She also warned that scientists must not be required to leave behind their professional identities and ideas when they come to the altar [18].

### Finally, a Message for the Clergy of all the Religions:

*If every religion believes in One God, and all of humanity is Its creation,*

then the clergy and the authorities of every religion should stop imposing their own absolute belief, superiority, and divine right upon others and start practicing and teaching altruism and egalitarianism to the followers of their religions. This will not only eliminate terrorism from its very roots but will establish peace on this tiny planet Earth.

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