

MEDITATION

Mankind has forever been in the quest for peace and happiness. To achieve this, different methods of practices and rituals have been adopted, but peace and contentment still elude mankind. In pursuit of materialistic, worldly and selfish motives, mankind has faced enormous mental trauma, stress and anxiety. Both religious teachings and scientific data indicate that worldly and materialistic desires are insatiable and pursuit there of results in restiveness and restlessness of body, mind and soul (conscience).

In this effort to achieve peace, man with limited knowledge moved towards meditation of some particular style and character. In our endeavor to understand the depth of meditation, it is vitally essential for us to know the definitions of some of the words and concepts that have been used in this article.

The **conscience** is defined in the Thesaurus dictionary in the following ways:

- " the faculty, power, or inward principle which decides as to the character of one's own actions, purposes, and affections, warning against and condemning that which is wrong, and approving and prompting to that which is right; the moral faculty passing judgment on one's self; the moral sense.
- " as science means knowledge, conscience etymologically means self-knowledge... but the English word implies a moral standard of action in the mind as well as a consciousness of our own actions.
- " Conscience is the reason, employed about questions of right and wrong, and accompanied with the sentiments of approbation and condemnation. It is common to all men.
- " the awareness of a moral or ethical aspect to one's conduct together with the urge to prefer right over wrong: Let your conscience be your guide.
- " the part of the superego in psychoanalysis that judges the ethical nature of one's actions and thoughts and then transmits such determinations to the ego for consideration.

The concept of **God** – the concept that God is an Eternal Action or Process and not a “thing” separated from its parts. It is the source of all aspects, of every thing and therefore all matter and energy . It is the primary cause of all action in physical reality.

The **Universal Truth** / Perennial philosophy (ageless wisdom) – the common, esoteric (subjective, interior) elements found in all of the world's great religions, stripped of the exoteric (objective, exterior) dogmas, ritual, and ceremony. Though different words may be used to express them, the Universal Truths behind them are the same.

- " God is the Primary Source of all consciousness (primary cause, omnipotence)
- " God is contained within all matter and energy, including you and I, in all times and all places (omnipresence)
- " God is ineffable, formless, of infinite awareness, understanding, and insight (omniscience)
- " Laws of nature are equally applicable to all beings in this creation, i.e. basic anatomical, physiologically, pathological etc. principles of universal truth are common to all humanity. All matter is constant in its properties and characteristics. The physical and chemical laws governing nature will be constant eternally. Laws of nature are the Will of God.
- " Compassion, love, service, interdependence, wholeness, and integrity are core values that lead to fulfilling relationships and healthy, productive communities (ethics)

It is well known that human being is a conglomerate of body, mind and soul (conscience), governed by definite and eternal laws of nature. Therefore, for the natural functioning of the body, no special efforts at meditation are needed, e.g. the role of the tongue and teeth are well known in the initial processing of ingested food, but no conscious meditation is necessary for this function. Similarly, if due to lack of true knowledge the thought process of the mind is not creative and constructive, keeping in tune with the laws of nature, certain reactions produce chemicals that cause mental trauma, anxiety and stress conditions that are abnormal states of mind and definitely not a state of natural meditation.

It is a common illusion and misapprehension that financial and material gains besides providing bodily comforts give happiness and bliss to the mind and soul. Ironically, greed and quest for material gains as we see today has delivered more stress and anxiety to mankind than happiness and bliss. Medical science clearly defines that anxiety, tension, stress, irritability and restiveness result in social loneliness and withdrawal manifesting as depression in various forms besides other unhealthy chronic illness.

Let us dig deep into the root cause of the above scenario . 'Mrigtrishna', (mirage) is a well known syndrome, a delusional state exemplified by the behavior of a deer that runs all his life in search of exotic fragrance (kasturi) leading to its demise, without realizing that the fragrance existed within. Like the deer, man is constantly in pursuit of material gains for eternal happiness, while bliss for the (conscience) soul is not sought for, forgotten and missing. In this outward worldly race, man distanced himself away from the inner center of gravity and as a result delicate balance between the body, mind and soul is disturbed.

Efforts were made to regain this balance but perhaps knowledge was limited in this direction, one such effort was yogic conventional meditation. Yogic exercises and such meditation were successful in aligning body with the mind temporarily to a certain extent but a complete failure in fixing and awakening the soul (conscience). In fact, this kind of meditation does help achieve some of the disturbed balance. Imagine wanting to make a full circle turn and being able to turn only 180 degrees instead of 360 degrees. This partial success in achieving some degree of peace gave man a false perception and a deceptive feeling of having met the ultimate goal. Yoga and meditation surely bring about certain degree of peace and harmonious balance between body and the mind but definitely this is not the ultimate goal of attaining divinity, spirituality and realization of God, which is the only state of never-ending, permanent peace in the present life.

As the peace and calmness attained by conventional meditation are short lasting and brief, the underlying stress and restiveness imbedded in our mundane lives constantly manifest in our actions and behavior. For example in a traffic jam tempers run high and impatience is demonstrated by verbal abuse and aggression as the tension graph escalates. This irritability and impatience exhibited are a result of quick evaporation of so-called balance achieved during conventional meditation. This manifests as anger and mental instability with abnormal breathing patterns during panic reactions; this state may be visualized as that of a body being orphaned in the absence of a focused mind. Therefore in such a situation the body indulges in destructive and negative thoughts and actions instead of positive and constructive deeds. For the purpose of instilling positive and constructive thoughts and deeds, religion paved the way for natural meditation to purify the conscience or the soul (the faculty, power, or inward principle which decides as to the character of one's own actions, purposes, and affections, warning against and condemning that which is wrong, and approving and prompting to that which is right), as explained in the unique message of Guru Nanak doctrine by the following verse,

saev keethee sunthokheeeukhuae jinuae sucho such dhiaaeiaa

Those who live by the Will of GOD are naturally content

ounuee mundhai pair n rakhiou kar sukiruth dhurum kumaaeiaa

They do not place their feet in sin, but do good deeds and live righteously, creatively and constructively

Studying the existing concept of yogic meditation, i.e. fixing the mind on tip of the nose or between the eyebrows or repetitive recitation of a particular word, the mind is positively influenced in a way so as to suppress the continuous tangential outpouring of thoughts but significantly the conscience remains untouched. Tranquility and serenity attained by yogic meditation are limited to the time spent at fixed postures, only to succumb to the overwhelming pressures of human evils and instincts of lust, anger, ego, pride and attachment.

As Guru Nanak doctrine explains :

paath parriou ar baedh beechaariou nival bhuangum saadhae

They read religious scriptures; they practice the inner cleansing techniques of Yoga, and control of the breath

punch junaa sio sung n shuttakiou adhik ahunbudh baadhae

But they cannot escape from the company of the five evil vices; they are increasingly bound to egotism

I.e. yogic meditation may control and alter our breathing pattern to prolong life but falls short of touching our conscience; therefore the evil instincts remain overwhelming and are not subdued since these arise from the maligned conscience.

Another salient feature of yogic meditation is the art, technique and ability to concentrate, but this has failed to actually alter and constructively mould our life style. To understand this let us look at the ability of 'crane', a bird that in order to capture the feed, has an inherent natural ability to concentrate and fix its sight so as to pounce on the prey at first sight. Yogic practices and meditation attempt to bind the body and mind in a similar fashion as the crane concentrates, but such minds easily succumb to any lustful external stimulus of greed, anger, attachment etc. This is so because the meditation had in no way stimulated and awakened the conscience. Obviously such meditation is of limited benefit, as to some extent it helps alleviate the stress and tension but has no role to play in the creative constructive moulding of our minds and thought process. This moulding of the conscience is essential foundation for creative thoughts round the clock while performing activities of daily life, therefore meditation needs to be redefined and revisited as exemplified by Guru Nanak doctrine,

oothuth baithuth sovuth dhiaaeai

While standing up, and sitting down, and even while asleep, be tuned with God,

maarag chuluth hurae har gaaeeai

Walking on the way of life, moment-to-moment live by Godly qualities

In the above verse, Nanak explains the spiritual and religious meditation in a natural form that is not bound by time, place, posture, position and special breathing practices; meditation that is incessant, permanent, constant and continuous and that purifies and cleans the conscience off the evil vices. As a direct corollary of the above, arises the concept of universal religion that does not pertain to any particular group of people, particular geographical area, sect or cult but can be practiced by all people at all times to live spiritually, attain divinity and state of realization of GOD.

To understand this concept of natural meditation based on universal religion, let us dwell a little more here. Some schools advocate meditation in the early hours of the day, adopting a particular posture of the body, breathing exercises, for a definite time period; disqualifying and making it impossible for some people to abide by these criteria due to their life styles; e.g. individuals doing active duty during the night or early morning hours, persons with physical disability unable to maintain fixed physical posture or any other reason. Therefore this practice cannot be universal.

Also if people wanting to realize God practice conventional yogic meditation by being confined to a particular place, adopting fixed physical postures for specified time period, then imagine who will run the daily household chores, community affairs, industrial activity and other economic developmental processes. Similarly particular days for meditation are meaningless, e.g. some people meditate and do not work on fixed days. What if they or their family member needs medical attention on a particular day or if they visit the doctor's office and find the doctor away on a meditation holiday, how would they feel? Therefore the above notion and concept of conventional meditation is not universally acceptable.

Some evidence exists that conventional meditation has benefit to alleviate the psychosomatic diseases, such as stress, tension states and anxiety, but we are in search for that spontaneous, effortless and natural meditation that is part and parcel of our daily lives and keeps us away from the evil vices and instincts, like lust, greed, anger, ego and attachment.

Guru Nanak doctrine explains this with the following verse:

haath paa kar kaam subh cheeth nirunjun naal

With your hands and feet, do all your work, but let your conscience remain with the Immaculate Lord

This gives inspiration to the concept of universal religion that follows the knowledge of universal truth, leading to natural meditation that is spontaneous, effortless and natural and knows no time, place, and special physical posture and is not confined to a particular cohort of people and be

accepted by all and effortlessly performed twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year and is incessant, permanent, constant and continuous. This renders meditation in a more practical and pragmatic sense. In this way by imbibing true knowledge on one's conscience meditation can be incorporated into our daily routine activities and living and not be a thing of isolation and confinement.

Another sect of people believed that renunciation of the material world is a prerequisite for meditation there by achieving peace for the body, mind and soul.

In this context, Guru Nanak doctrine explains by the verse:

ashul shulaaee neh shulai neh ghaao kuttaraa kar sukai

The material world in itself is benign, undeceiving and cannot cause any wound

jio saahib raakhai thio rehai eis lobhee kaa jeeo ttul pulai

As our Lord and Master keeps us, so do we exist. The soul of this greedy person is tossed this way and that in pursuit for material gains

The above verse describes the incipient relationship man has developed with the material world, there by increases awareness that it is not materialism (maya) at fault in making us corrupt and deceitful but the deficiency lies in our perception and acceptance of the laws of nature as the Will of God. This rejection of the Will of God is because of preconceived ideation in our weak and flawed conscience that forms the basis of our thought process.

To understand this further and elucidate this incipient attachment and relationship between man and material gains, let us consider an illusion. Imagine a person who is walking ahead of cattle attached to him by a rope. A group of people walks along side. People belonging to this group akin the cattle to the material world and enquire from their preacher by making a point, " It does not appear that man is after material gains since the person in the illusion is walking ahead of and directing the cattle". The preacher then asks the rope attached to the cattle be cut off. When the rope is cut off, the cattle run astray and no longer follow the person. Now the person referred to in the illusion runs after the cattle. Viewing this, the preacher of the group explains the presence of a unidirectional incipient bond that exists between human beings and the material world. Therefore we have to analyze this bond minutely, who is leading who in this relationship.

To an eye that is not aware of this incipient bond it would appear that the cattle is following the person, without realizing that the cattle is held and pulled by a rope. The cattle can be pulled in any direction at the behest of the individual. It is known that for selfish and egocentric motives mankind has used money and material, maneuvering it in various directions to satisfy the unending and insatiable desires of the individual. Money and material appear to be a silent and passive spectator in this relationship.

Clearly the director and the master is the human being under the guidance of the conscience, as to how we use this relationship to maneuver money and the material world, to be creative, innovative and productive or a to be worthless, futile, unhelpful and destructive. Therefore the conscience must be awoken and made pure by bathing in true knowledge so that our deeds reflect creativity and work for the benefit of humanity without any form of discrimination. The key word here is creative deeds and this can be visualized as the state of realization of GOD.

Creativity is defined as one of the cardinal Godly characteristics as given in Guru Nanak doctrine by the verse,

Karta Purakh

The creator having created the creation is embedded and cannot be differentiated from the creation

Therefore not being constructive and presence of destructive feelings can never usher peace in one's life; this is anything but realization of GOD, and does not touch the height of spirituality.

As per Guru Nanak doctrine, another angle of natural meditation is one's interpersonal conduct on humanitarian grounds. Imagine a king with all the power but lack of humanitarian feelings and thoughts. Such a king can surely rule but not without injustice to human values and principles. The presence of humanitarian concerns serves as a litmus test for functioning of any administration as well as the conduct and interpersonal relationship of its people. An illustration from Guru Nanak's life, where he refused to participate in a feast organized by the wealthy Malik Bhago, but readily accepted food from a poor and hard working Bhai Lalo because he explained that the former employed unethical practices while the latter represented hard earned bread. An artist illustrates this message by depicting Malik Bhago's bread with the flow of blood and Bhai Lalo's bread with that of milk. The above scenario clearly lays the need for self-analysis based on humanitarian grounds, an exercise that must be done to define any misgivings in our lives, our selfish and egocentric attitudes and behavior and such other characteristics that are definitely not natural meditation.

Before and during the era of Guru Nanak, many a people rejected family life and left for the wilderness to achieve salvation by yogic meditation. In the jungles, meditation was performed by positioning the body in different postures, e.g. standing on one leg, crossed legs, recitation of a particular mantra and consumption of hypnotic drugs in an attempt to focus and collect the mind.

Guru Nanak's message in this context is:

jog sidh aasun chouraaseeh eae bhee kar kar rehiaa

He practices the eighty-four postures of Yoga, and acquires the supernatural powers of the Siddhas, but he gets tired of practicing these

vuddee aarujaa fir fir junumai har sio sung n gehiaa

He lives a long life, but is reincarnated again and again, moment-to-moment; he has not met with the Lord

Yogic practices may be helpful in prolonging life, but fail to achieve the state of realization of GOD; but what use is this longevity if one is dying moment to moment (simultaneous reincarnation) by indulging in evil vices. In this regard, Guru Nanak increases awareness that without awakening the conscience from where the thoughts originate and are processed, meditation in any form is futile. Further in support of this Guru Nanak doctrine says,

vin mun maarae koe n sijhee vaekhuhu ko liv laae

Without conquering the thought process, no one can be successful and cannot realize GOD

bhaekhudhaaree theeruthee bhav thukae naa eaehu mun maariaa jaae

The wandering holy men are tired of making pilgrimages to sacred shrines; they have not been able to conquer their minds

Furthermore, any amount of conventional meditation cannot rid us off the evil vices i.e. lust, anger, greed, ego and attachment, only universal true knowledge can direct our mind towards spiritualism and a clean conscience. To understand this consider an example from common day life. As the rider directs the horse using sharp pointers, similarly when the mind goes astray, pointers of true knowledge that inspire oneself to live within the laws of nature must be used to direct the mind. True meditation that can direct the mind and conscience must involve the acquisition and assimilation of the truth and thereby development of creative and positive traits, so that our personality stands out by our qualities. Such an individual is a being of these divine qualities that are inseparable from the conscience. Guru Nanak doctrine explains this to be the state of true meditation, as in the following verse.

ruthae saeee j mukh n murrann ijinuee sinjaathaa saeee

Those who are one with God never sway away from Godly qualities

jharr jharr puvudhae kuchae birehee jinuaa kaar n aae

The false, immature lovers do not know the way of love, fall away from Godly qualities

The above verse conveys the message that once divinity is achieved and bliss is around us, we are engulfed with love and feelings for others and effortlessly follow the path of the truth, never to sway away from the creative thoughts.

On the contrary conventional meditation due to brief control over the mind results in spontaneous outbursts and breach in tranquility at the slightest provocation, this may be viewed in nature as weakly attached fruits falling off the tree by even a small draft of air. This is so because without awakening of the conscience with true knowledge and acquiring divine qualities we attempt to attain temporary peace.

Having discussed the concept of natural meditation as per Guru Nanak doctrine thus so far, it enables us to perform our daily routine deeds by neglecting and discarding the negative influences of the evil vices and simultaneously gaining strength from the positive influences of the conscience. If the conscience is truly awakened then it will remain unscathed by the evil, sinful, wicked, impious and immoral thoughts. This behavior is exemplified in nature as the unblemished growth of the lotus flower in dirty and filthy waters and yet the lotus flower blossoms naturally to its fullest extent and remains unaffected by the dirt around it.

This is explained in Guru Nanak doctrine by the following verse,

jaisae jul mehi kumul niraalum murugabae nai saanae

The lotus flower floats untouched upon the surface of the dirty water, and the duck swims through the stream without the feathers getting wet

The above thought is further clarified by another verse,

naanuk sathigur bhaettiai pooree hovai jugath

O Nanak, meeting the True Guru, one comes to know the Perfect Way of life, i.e. awakened conscience

husundhiala khaelundhiala painundhiala khaavundhiala vichae hovai mukath

While laughing, playing, dressing and eating with awakened conscience, he is liberated

I.e. when we understand the concept of universal truth being our guru and guide, then fulfilling our daily obligations and duties of the mundane life and participating in activities like eating, playing, laughing extra, salvation is achieved in the present life itself and not after death.

Guru Nanak doctrine explains this by the verse:

mooeae hooeae jo mukath dhaehugae mukath n jaanai koeiala

If You liberate me after I am dead and not in this present life, then what use is this liberation to me

Let us consider some everyday life situations in people who practice yogic meditation. It is observed that even the slightest provocation can disrupt the calm and peace since the inherent desires and vices are not understood and routed out but are suppressed temporarily in the process. For example even after meditating for long hours, when we encounter an attractive person on the street our lustful feelings rebound in our minds. Also if we ignore the genuine needs of the neighbour's child and devote all our time and energy in fulfilling the needs of only our child then the concept of true knowledge evades us and fruits of meditation are annulled and result in failure of the meditation performed. Similarly we are gratified if some body admires and praises us, and if we have to face criticism then clouds of anger burst like in a thunderstorm, thereby the peace achieved by yogic meditation is so fragile and easily shattered.

Another example from common day life is that as our association with others is based on give and take arithmetic, i.e. if we are given the opportunity to assist another being, we assume that the needy person is obliged for the assistance. Now if in an encounter, the deprived individual does not acknowledge our help by a saluting gesture, this is obviously an unpleasant response disturbing our peace. The above behavioral attributes illustrate the temporary and fragile nature of conventional yogic meditation.

In contrast, meditation based on acquisition and assimilation of true knowledge, enlightens us spiritually with divinity and Godly attributes, there by our love for others and the resulting desire to look out for any opportunity to help others is overwhelming and there is no expectation in return what so ever.

This is explained in Guru Nanak doctrine by the following verses :

kaahoo ful kee eishaa nehee baashai

The true being has no desire for the fruits of his labors

kurum kuruth hovai nihukurum

Performing good deeds, he does not seek rewards

this baisuno kaa nirumul dhurum

Spotlessly pure is the religion of such a being

Natural meditation can be practiced through out the day, without any domination or any threat to others. In contrast, those involved in conventional meditation sell their concept by throwing away gimmicks like admission into heaven and the scare and threat about transfer to hell after the cessation of life.

Let us study Guru Nanak doctrine's concept of natural meditation from another angle of self-analysis and self-recognition.

As illustrated in the hymn :

mun thoon joth suroop hai aapunaa mool pushaan

O my mind, you are the embodiment of the Divine Light - recognize your own origin and purpose

The above verse explains that self-analysis and self recognition help to dispel the negative feelings and hatred for others, do away with anger in our behavior, stop claiming to be pious and believer and accusing others of being atheist, refrain from pretending to be full of knowledge and putting down others as fools. Self analysis based on true knowledge, analyses our actions moment-to-moment and enables us to be non discriminatory.

Further exploring self-analysis we have to assess our attitude, manner and feelings towards others. Are we enmeshed in the thoughts of social castes, outward beauty and ugliness, rich and poor and other forms of worldly differentiation? If the answer to the above question is yes, then definitely we are not in a state of natural meditation.

A verse from Guru Nanak doctrine:

buraa bhulaa thichur aakhudhaa jichur hai dhuhu maahi

He calls others bad and good, as long as he is in duality

The message here is that if we are involved in the game of differentiation it is imperative that duality is being exhibited in our behavior. The differentiation of social beings into classes on the basis of status, financial assets, rich and poor, beautiful and ugly is obviously man made and changes from time to time as per individual convenience. It is in construable that any form of differentiation is God made, whom we consider impartial, has no enemy and is divine and pure.

In the light of true knowledge of the laws of nature and living by them, if we dig deep into the behavioral aspects of mankind we find that definite synergy exists amongst the various evil instincts and vices. With natural meditation, the conscience is awakened to the presence and destructive nature of the evil vices, i.e. lust, anger, greed, ego and attachment. One who lives by natural meditation understands the laws of nature and Godly attributes, thereby does not need to suppress any evil thoughts at any time but the urges and the energy that would have otherwise been used for selfish and material gains are now channeled for creative purposes for the benefit of humanity.

To understand these productive and creative channeling systems for various forms of energy, let us study the principle of conservation of energy by Helmholtz. This principle states, in effect, that the total amount of energy in any given system is always constant, that energy quanta can be changed but not annihilated, and consequently that when energy is moved from one part

of the system it must reappear in another part. The progressive application of this principle led to the monumental discoveries in the fields of thermodynamics, electromagnetism, and nuclear physics that have so comprehensively transformed the contemporary world.

Let us consider the various energies involved in the body system. To begin with, consider the energy of lust. Lust in the usual sense of the word is considered as pleasure deriving, but it is a natural way to continue the race of mankind and reproduction. Therefore the energy of lust other than that used for reproduction would better be channeled for constructive and creative activities for humanity rather than just sexual gratification.

Similarly the energy of anger would better be utilized to fight against injustice in the form of gallantry rather than for personal gains; greed for personal needs transforms into greed for qualities, attachment develops and flourishes into love and affection for others. Egotistic feelings are better converted into self-esteem for character building and the desire to be constructive and creative. Anyone with awakened and a clear conscience, lives with a clean conscience, thus effectively uses the internal energy for creativity and is not self-centered; this is a state of natural meditation. Such an individual truly is a role model for others.

In this context Guru Nanak doctrine explains by the verse,

ounuee mundhai pair n rakhiou kar sukiruth dhurum kumaaeiaa

They do not place their feet in sin, but do good deeds and live righteously, creatively and constructively

This translates into life of a role model that travels through worldly tides and yet remains untouched and unscathed because of the presence of an armor of an awakened conscience with transformed high energy yielding creative and constructive abilities of the human body as discussed above. Thus it is amply clear from the above that a clear and awakened conscience is of prime importance and can be achieved with true knowledge. This forms the basis of true natural meditation. Traveling in life on these lines, one can turn around full 360 degrees from a life of greed and selfishness towards divinity.

Guru Nanak doctrine enlightens us with the following verse :

sooruj kiran milae jul kaa jul hooaa raam

As the rays of light merge with the sun, and water merges with water, pious men absorb all Godly qualities

jothee joth rulee sunpoorun theeaa raam

With Godly qualities one moves towards perfection

Such a compassionate person full of love and affection appears to exactly fit into the dimensions of an ideal human being as designed by our supreme creator; devotes all resources of body, mind and soul towards creative and constructive development of humanity. Such understanding of the laws of nature (Will of God) will render our conscience transparent, enabling us to be in a state of natural meditation constantly. Alas, if we could all understand this concept and research further so that we can always be present in this state of natural meditation effortlessly and experience the state of realization of God; thus quenching the thirst for permanent peace and happiness alluded to at the beginning of this article.

Bhupinder singh ji

(The Living Treasure)

Transcript of Bhupinder Singh,s Audio Cassette "**Dhyan**"