



An Analysis of the Historical Evolution of Value based Education: A Religious Perspective

(Dr. Vinay Kumar)** **

HOD, PG Department of History, JC DAV College, Dasuya (Hoshiarpur) Punjab

Abstract: The interaction between the guru and the shishyas occupies a very prominent place in the relationship between these two. Surrender of the disciple and his intimacy with the guru stand mostly on their interaction. Teaching, learning process begin only when the students become completely a disciplined human being. It is only through a disciplined life that a student gets in tune with the guru and begins to learn knowledge gradually. Moral values play a very significant role in making a man disciplined. To be fully disciplined, one needs to be imbibed and embalm moral values within him/her. Your moral values are what make you a good or not so good person. Most of the time, you get your moral values from your family, or your social network. It is good to have a high standard of moral values. Most influential person, responsible for promotion of Ethical Values is our Guru or Teacher. In the study of Indus Valley Civilization, there is no clear indication towards the existence of Guru and his relations with the Shishya but the seals founded in the excavations indicate that they worship some deities as Gurus. In Hinduism a guru is a spiritual teacher or guide. In Vedic period the Rishis were considered as the Gurus. They lead very noble life and always prayed for the public welfare. They were considered as the role models by their disciples though as a Purohita or as an Acharya. In Vedic Period the word Guru was generally used for a person who shows the right path of life to all. Buddhism is based on the principle of non-violence. In Buddhism the ultimate goal of the life of every individual is to attain Nirvana. Firstly, this word Nirvana was used in Bhagwat Gita. It is a situation where the individual has no desire. Mahavira Jain was the 24th Tiranthkara of Jainism as the 1st Tiranthkara was Rishabhdev and 23rd Tiranthkara was Parshavanath, it shows that the Guru Ship tradition was well strong in Jainism. In Jainism the three important elements (tatvas) are accepted which are Deva tatva, Guru tatva and Dharma tatva. In Jainism Deva, Guru and Dharma are collectively worshipped. Guru is the significant figure in Bhakti Movement. The need of a Guru, in the course of enjoying mystical experiences, is always stressed in almost all the mystical traditions, but in medieval saints, the position of a Guru is well esteemed and is exalted so high that no distinction between a Guru and God is left.

The interaction between the guru and the shishyas occupies a very prominent place in the relationship between these two. Surrender of the disciple and his intimacy with the guru stand mostly on their interaction. Teaching, learning process begin only when the students become completely a disciplined human being. It is only through a disciplined life that a student gets in tune

with the guru and begins to learn knowledge gradually. Moral values play a very significant role in making a man disciplined. To be fully disciplined, one needs to be imbibed and embalm moral values within him/her. The guru-disciple interaction touches deep and regressed layers of the two main features of the relationship, surrender of the shishya and intimacy with the guru.



Real teaching is believed to occur when the disciple has disciplined himself and is tuned to the wavelength of the guru. It is very important to have moral values. These are what keep people grounded in life. Everyone seems to have different morals and values, but some are very similar. Your moral values are what make you a good or not so good person. Most of the time, you get your moral values from your family, or your social network. It is good to have a high standard of moral values. Most influential person, responsible for promotion of Ethical Values is our Guru or Teacher. In the study of Indus Valley Civilization, there is no clear indication towards the existence of Guru and his relations with the Shishya but the seals founded in the excavations indicate that they worship some deities as Gurus.

Guru Shishya Tradition and Hinduism:

When we talk of value based education, we often refer to our cultural and religious heritage. These two are considered to be the store houses of moral and ethical values. The same heritage also throws

enough light on the guru shishya relationship. In Hinduism a guru is a spiritual teacher or guide. In Vedic period the Rishis were considered as the Gurus. They lead very noble life and always prayed for the public welfare. They were considered as the role models by their disciples though as a Purohita or as an Acharya. In Vedic Period the word Guru was generally used for a person who shows the right path of life to all. It is mentioned in Rig-Veda that Guru is a person who make complete changes in the individual indulged in wrong deeds to the individual with right deeds.¹ The relations of the Guru with his disciple are like parents with the child.² The Vedas also elaborates that the dedicated disciples always remain safe from misleading evils. It is also the duty of the Guru to protect the disciple from all the wrong acts and to teach him for the ultimate salvation and to get rid from the cycle of birth and death.³ The Upanishads elaborates the characteristics of the Guru that a person without the sense of pride and with utmost wisdom can be the real Guru.⁴

¹ **Rig-Veda (1.147.4)**
² **Rig-Veda (7.56.19)**
³ **Atharvaveda (9.3.24)**
⁴ **Kena Upanishad (2.10)**



The Guru-Shishya tradition is as old as that of the Vedas. Their collaboration is the reason of birth of the real knowledge.⁵ This tradition is also very much explained in Vaishnavism and Bhagwat Gita. In Bhagwat Gita Lord Krishna is the Guru and Arjuna is the Shishya and the Guru teaches the Shishya to favour right path without any hesitation.⁶

Guru Shishya Tradition and Buddhism:

Buddhism is based on the principle of non-violence. In Buddhism the ultimate goal of the life of every individual is to attain Nirvana. Firstly, this word Nirvana was used in Bhagwat Gita. It is a situation where the individual has no desire. In Mahayanaism, Lord Buddha is considered as creator of this world and he is also called as the path shower to the followers. The Buddhist monks were called 'Arhats' and Lord Buddha also like to be called as 'Arhata'. It is a word of Pali language which means the person who has control on his desires. It is compulsory for the 'Arhata' to

have zeal to attain knowledge, noble conduct of life, morality, honesty, dedication for right efforts, self confidence, farsightedness and firm faith in Lord Buddha. Initially, these Buddhist monks honestly followed the teachings of Lord Buddha and lead high moral life but with the passage of time some evil practices got place in Buddhism. This change gave birth to the principle of Bodhisattvas. These Bodhisattvas condemned the evil practices of the 'Arhats'. These Bodhisattvas got the place of Guru in later phase of Buddhism and without their consent no one in Buddhism can attain real knowledge.⁷

Guru Shishya Tradition and Jainism:

Mahavira Jain was the 24th Tiranthkara of Jainism as the 1st Tiranthkara was Rishabhdev and 23rd Tiranthkara was Parshavanath, it shows that the Guru Ship tradition was well strong in Jainism. In Jainism the three important elements (tatvas) are accepted which are Deva tatva, Guru tatva and Dharma tatva. In Jainism Deva,

⁵ Tetariya Upanishad (1.3.2)

⁶ Bhagwat Gita (11.43)

⁷ J. Gonda, Change and Continuity in Indian Religion pp. 278.



Guru and Dharma are collectively worshipped. Every shishya should follow right faith, purity, humbleness, self analysis, and universal brotherhood. Jainism accepts that even the Tiranthkara is not a super human and He should also follow the right path to give self example to the shishyas. The shishyas always remain attentive to accept the order of the Guru. Humbleness is the virtue of the shishya which comes to him from his Guru. According to Jainism, the shishya can attain the real knowledge only under the guidance of the Guru. In Jainism while following the path of asceticism, one may attain the real knowledge and selflessness. Jain Guru or Tiranthkara is neither God nor its incarnation but a simple human being leading a noble life.

Guru Shishya Tradition and Bhakti Movement:

Guru is the significant figure in Bhakti Movement. The need of a Guru, in the course of enjoying mystical experiences, is always stressed in almost all the mystical traditions, but in medieval saints, the position of a Guru is well esteemed and is exalted so high that no distinction between a

Guru and God is left. Guru for the saints is everything. They believed that without the guidance of a qualified Guru, no Sadhna can be perfect. The shishya is expected to follow all the advice of the Guru. The Guru is such a personality who can never do anything wrong. The shishya blindly follows the Guru and attain the real knowledge. Guru is the only person to lead the shishya to the path of salvation. The shishyas never disobey their Guru even in any of the situation.

Guru Shishya Tradition and Sufiism:

Sheikh is a guide and arif (the mature human being who has attained true knowledge of Gods affection) person and a murid is a person who is a student of a sheikh. Sheikh, in other words Murshid (master) is a guide who helps people to abandon public things and arrive at the haqq (divine and absolute truth). The Murshid is a title given to the spiritual director of any religious order.⁸ Sheikh is an instructor in dargah (the place where murids gather) just like a teacher at school. While the teacher is predominantly interested in mind, the

⁸ A Dictionary of Islam, pp. 608

murshid is engrossed in spirit. The face of the Murshid is blessed, and his words are godly. The murid is expected to obey all the orders of his Murshid who is responsible to give him the divine knowledge. Such a situation of murid is called self surrender to Peer and to follow him in all the respects though it may be blind following. In Sufism, there is a series for the attainment of ultimate truth in which firstly the murid surrender himself to the Murshid or Sheikh, then Murshid hand over him to the Peer who further show him the path to preach the wisdom of Allah under the guidance of Rasool or Nabi.

Guru Shishya Tradition and Sikhism:

The basic principles of Sikhism indicates towards three shadows of the guru

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| (i) Guru as God | (ii) Guru as |
| Human being | (iii) Guru as |
| a Shabad | |

Guru Nanak Dev ji has explained that Guru is a guide to show the right path of life. Present Gurus are the followers of someone living human being but Guru

Nanak Dev Ji had no living Guru.⁹ Guru Nanak Dev Ji has used word Guru in his Bani only for God.¹⁰ He opines that only God can be the real Guru who is the creator of this world.¹¹ The other Sikh gurus have also supported this viewpoint of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. It is impossible that the successors of Guru Nanak might have adored him as their Guru and have regarded as God himself.¹² Guru is a commissioned personality send by Satguru to teach all humanity.¹³ The successors of Guru Nanak Dev Ji considered him their Guru and very clearly differentiated between the 'Guru' and 'Satguru'. The guru should be called mouth piece of God. It is also explained in the Bani that the Guru is the Shabad and light of Satguru for the mankind.¹⁴

Guru is a mediator between the Sikh and God. The Guru with the effort of his Shabad shows the real path of knowledge to

⁹ **Bhai Jodh Singh, Gumat Nirnaya, pp. 114.**

¹⁰ **Gurbachan Singh Talib, Guru Nanak: His personality and Vision, pp. 141.**

¹¹ **Maru (1,1025)**

¹² **Darhsan Singh, Indian Bhakti Tradition and Sikh Gurus, pp. 147.**

¹³ **Vaar Aasa (1,466)**

¹⁴ **Savaiye Mahalle Panjven ke (1408)**



the Sikh.¹⁵ The duty of the Guru is to change the attitude of the Sikh towards the life and to follow him towards the ultimate knowledge. He works to make the Sikh complete both from social and spiritual point of view. The life of the Guru is role model for the Sikh. Guru is like father for the Sikh and Sikh is keen to get everything from him like an obedient son.¹⁶ The Guru can transform the whole life of the Sikh with his teachings and it may be called ‘Guru Mantra’, ‘Guru Updesha’, or ‘Shabad’. There are also certain duties of the Sikh towards the Guru to attain the real wisdom from him. The Sikh should have firm faith in the teachings of the Guru. He should be ready to sacrifice everything for the Guru and to be ready to serve him with the ultimate sense of devotion.¹⁷ To serve commoners and the needy ones is also a service to the Guru. It is very much evident in Sikhism in many respects.

In the light of the above explained details one may state that the guru-shishya tradition (parampara) denotes a succession

of teachers and disciples in traditional Indian culture and religions such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam and Sikhism. It was imparted through the developing relationship between the guru and the shishya. It is considered that this relationship, based on the genuineness of the guru; and the respect, commitment, devotion and obedience of the shishya, is the best way for the subtle or advanced knowledge to be conveyed.

¹⁵ **Maajh (3,125)**

¹⁶ **Malhar (4, 1263)**

¹⁷ **Mali Gaura (4, 986)**