

Key concepts

- Cause and effect, action and reaction.
- Present life is result of past karma and present karma will determine future life. However present failures, unlike those of the past, cannot be attributed to karma. They are the consequences of maya or haumai. Maya is holding a materialistic view of the world and haumai is self-reliance leading to pride which blinds people to their dependence on God.

- God is creator of first karma, the origin of the universe and the destroyer of karma. The Adi Granth states that karma is inscribed according to the divine will. Karma does not mean that everything is preordained and that there is no freewill. It is a person's own actions that makes them what they are. The individual can improve his own condition through effort. God is not responsible for destiny.
- Karma can be changed by prayer and the grace of God. In Sikhism grace is the word which describes the way God focuses his attention upon a person. No one is ever beyond his care. 'He takes care of everything, though he remains invisible.' (Adi Granth 7)

Rebirth

- When something dies their soul is reborn. However, Sikhism asserts that human existence is best because humans are unique.
 - Sikhs believe in reincarnation and the soul can be reborn many times.
 - The Guru Granth Sahib describes the body as clothing for the soul which is discarded at death.

Mukti

- Mukti has two aspects—a negative and a positive one. On the negative side, it stands for having got 'loose from' or 'rid of'. That essentially implies a bonded state from which people must be freed. On the positive side, mukti signifies the fullest and truest realization of the self.
- Freedom from the cycle of rebirth is called mukti. These things can stop a soul reaching mukti - pride, lust or desire, anger, and being self-centred.

Key quotes

'One receives in accordance to what one does. As one sows so one eats.'
(Adi Granth 662).

'Man's life proceeds as his accumulated actions determine it. He receives joy or sorrow in accordance with what his past deeds have earned. But all is good that comes from you.' (Adi Granth 1107).

'For many births you have become a worm or moth, an elephant, a fish or a deer' (Guru Arjan – Adi Granth 176)

'By virtue of the fellowship of the saints (sangat) you have achieved your present status so perform the Lord's service, repeat his name guided by the Guru.' (Adi Granth 176)

'No one succeeds or fails in his life, either attains Mukti or takes Rebirth'
— Dr.P.S. Jagadeesh Kumar

Key words

karma	maya	haumai	Adi Granth	grace
manmukh	gurmukh	moh	mukti	rebirth
hankar	kam	karodh	lobh	
Guru Granth Sahib				

Issues for analysis and evaluation

Key arguments/debates

Some see karma as being the biggest single influence on the life of a Sikh. Others would argue that God is the main focus of a Sikh's life. Some would argue that there are many influences on Sikh lifestyle.

Key questions

Is the belief in rebirth and mukti relevant for Sikhs today?
To what extent is karma an important aspect of a Sikh's life?

