Chapter 9

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF DOCTRINE
OF CHARHDI KALA

On the basis of our study of Guru Nanak Bani and Sri Guru Granth Sahib, we can frame different characteristics of doctrine in Charhdi Kala, which can be systematically analysed as follows:

(a) The doctrine of Charhdi Kala is the doctrine of rising upwards in all the spheres of life. It is the step by step ascension to the God’s mansion to achieve the oneness with Him. It is the process of gaining power and energy to rise in all the walks of life.

(b) The process of rising upwards starts from the scientific study of the body itself which is the temple of living God. Our search for the God, should not take us to the woods or to any seclusion. This search will have to start within our body only which has nine visible and one invisible door. These nine visible doors will have to be closed morally to open the tenth invisible door.

(c) When the tenth door is opened, our journey to the ‘sach khand’, which is the Abode of Truth, starts. In order to ascend to the mansion of truth, we will have to ascend step by step and pass through the mansions of righteousness, knowledge, spiritual effort and the mansion of grace.

(d) Next great characteristic of the doctrine of ‘chradi kala’ is the Guru himself. We can not ascend to the mansion of truth without the help of the Guru. “Guru is the ladder, Guru is the boat and Guru is the raft to ascend to the God’s Name.”

(e) Stable mind within stable body is the mind with the ascending energy and a major characteristic of Charhdi Kala. The doctrine of Charhdi Kala revolves totally around human mind which will have to be conditioned to arrive at Charhdi Kala. At times the mind is weak, and at times it is powerful. This flipper nature of the mind is well
understood by the philosopher-saints and the Spiritual Masters have propounded an adequate control on the reins of the mind. "If one wins the mind, one wins the whole world." It is through one's mind that one has a direct contact with the world. Hence, one's mind actually becomes one's world in which one lives positively or negatively. "Mind is very mean, weak and a low, humble petitioner and Thou, O, God are a Major Giver." The Mind gets its power from the God. Mind which has its origins in the Braham gets its power from the 'par-braham'. Mind says, "Through Thy omnipotence I have become powerful." So, the positive conditioning of the mind is an important characteristic of Charhdi Kala.

(f) Honest living through hard-earned-labour is another characteristic of the doctrine of Charhdi Kala. The wealth accumulated through unfair means maligns the mind and pollutes it. "One who eats what one earns through one's earnest labour and from his hand gives some in charity," finds the path to Charhdi Kala.

(g) The path to Charhdi Kala is the path of love. The Guru says, "If thou yearn to play at love, come thou in my lane placing thy hand on thy palm. When thou step in on this path, don't be hesitant to lay down thy head even." One who is in love with the God, loves everybody. "As an opium addict loves the opium and as fish loves water, the lover of the God's Name who is fully coloured in the love of the God, starts loving everybody." The Guru adds that, "The one who is coloured in the love of the God, remains awake day and night and does not sleep. This realization comes to those who are stricken in pain of separation. The physician has no treatment for the body which is pierced with the arrows of Divine love." Revealing the intensity of love for the God, the Guru says that, "Love should be such as the lotus has for water. Though the lotus is lashed at by the waves, it still blooms in love. The creatures of water cannot live without water. They die without water. The Guru says that if we have no love, we cannot be delivered from the shackles
of the world. The Guru asks, “O, mind, how shall thou be delivered without love? The God loves the beloved ones and lives in the heart of the Guru-wardly persons and blesses thou with the treasure of the devotional love. Giving the example of the love of the fish for water, the Guru advises man to love the God as fish loves water.” The more the water, the more the happiness and greater the peace of mind and the body. Here, the peace of mind is symbolic of Charhd Kala which one gets in love. The fish cannot live without water even for an instant. Even the God knows the pain and suffering of her mind.

(h) Charhd Kala is achieved through ‘Naam Simran’ with the help of the spiritual master. God’s Name is an ever-ascending force O, Nanak” One gets the glory of Charhd Kala through God’s Name.” The Guru prays: “Bless me with this glory, O, God, that I may devote myself to Thy Name. There is no living, no character, without the God’s Name. Learning God’s Name is process of immersing One’s self into the God Himself because God Himself has created His own Being and He Himself, The Creator knows Himself.”

(i) Learning of God’s Name is the process of concentration of one’s mind into the opening of tenth door by closing or commanding the nine ones. The opening of tenth door is the process of “remaining without hopes in the midst of hopes and by this process one meets the one God. In this way, the world ocean is crossed. Like this one remains dead while alive.” “But this stage can be achieved by killing one’s mind from the pleasures of the word. Unless the mind dies, the work of Charhd Kala cannot be accomplished.”

(j) The art of dying worldly to live spiritually is the art of reversing one’s attention from the ways of the world towards the path which leads to the God’s mansion. “When one turns away from the world and reverses one’s attention towards the God, one becomes dead in life and gets spiritually awakened. By doing so, one starts immersing one’s self
into the ‘Sabada’ and the mind gets attached to the God.”1 While defining the word ‘Qazi’, the Guru says, “He alone is a Qazi who reverses one’s attention to the God by turning away from the world and who by Guru’s grace remains dead in life.”18 “But one will have to have the virtues to reverse one’s mind from the world to let one’s self die, immerse into mind itself.”19 This art of reverse journey takes one to “Sun Smadh” which is very crucial in Charhdi Kala. This is a stage when one is completely absorbed in “God’s love in profound trance and achieves oneness by reflecting in the ‘Sabada’ of the One God.”20 “If it is achieved, the outgoing mind starts moving inward”21 (into the tenth door). This is the stage when “unuttered meditation starts repeating itself in one’s mouth”22 and one starts feeling the arrival of ‘Sehaj’ or a state of equilibrium or the stillness of the mind.

(k) Dying while living transports our soul upwards to inexplicable mystic realm of ‘Sehaj Smadh’ or the stage of automatic profound concentration or equilibrium which comes automatically through constant repetition of the Guru’s word. Mind remains still and tranquil in this stage and stops moving outward. The inner bliss gives more delight than the outer pleasures of the world.

(l) “Self-pride dies, I-am-ness is deadened and the soul’s breath starts flowing like a river. The worldly desire is exhausted, O, Nanak and the mind is coloured with God’s Name. The eyes are coloured with inner sights of the glimpse of the God and the awakening immerses in one’s ears. The tongue sucks the elixir of God’s Name and is dyed deep red in Holy Name. The inner self is perfumed with the Name’s fragrance. The worth of such a soul in Charhdi Kala is in explicable.”23 When mind leaves wandering and sits in rest in God’s Name, the fifth Nanak calls it “wonderful, inexplicable, subtle and absolute.”24 In this stage of “automatic profound concentration or unuttered meditation”25 which the Guru calls ‘sehaj smadh’, “the light appears within and the mind
gets fully immersed in it and starts rejoicing the God through ‘sehaj-smadh’ i.e. profound meditation.’

(m) From ‘Sehaj Smadh’, we rise upwards to ‘vismad’-- a wonder and a marvel in which the soul wonders at wonders of the creation. Everything starts looking wonderful in this state of mind. God’s word, knowledge, creatures and their kinds, forms and colours, wind, water, fire, earth, tastes, union, separation, hunger, repletion, praise, wilderness, path, all become wonderful to the mind. “Wonderous becomes God’s nearness and remoteness. It is wonderous to behold the God just present in front of the soul.” Beholding the wonders of the God, the soul is wonderstruck. Those who succeed in realizing the mystery of ‘vismad’ are perfectly fortunate.

(n) Vismad is the initial glimpse of Oneness with the God and with his creation. In this stage everything in God’s creation starts looking marvelous and wonderful. Enmity with anything which is because of I-am-ness starts dying its natural death. One’s soul fully craves to immerse itself in God’s will. Pleasure and pain start becoming one and resignation in God’s will (‘Bhana’) becomes the way of life. This is a stage of the mind when it starts looking for the welfare of all (‘Sarbat da Bhala’).

(o) From Vismad our mind ascends to ‘sunn-smadh’ with the grace of the Guru and obtains the “knowledge of the True Home of soul in a state of profound trance i.e. ‘sunn smadh’.” In the process of Charhd Kala, this is a stage which is purest of the pure. The Guru says that the infinite God “has enshrined Himself in imperceptible mystic power. He Himself is purest of the pure, endless and unequaled.” ‘Sunn Smadh’ is the state of ecstatic delight and spiritual rapture. Its chief characteristic is ‘Sunn’ itself - a state of nothingness, a sort of ‘Shunya’. Ourself will have to be taken to ‘Shunya’ to capture this state. That is why that Guru gives the concept of divine while living. It is state of being completely
lost and benumbed in meditation. While relating the God before the creation, the Guru says that “There was a complete darkness for countless ages. Earth or the sky was not there at that time except the order of the Infinite God. Day, night, moon or sun were not there but the God sat in profound trance ‘sunn smadha’. ”

The Guru states the creation, of everything out of ‘Sunn’ and concludes that it can be attained with the help of the Guru only. Sunn Smadh takes us back into the True Home of the God in profound trance and within our being starts resounding the immaculate music of the God’s name and the finally merger into the God’s True Name.”

The Guru says, “The house we are to enter after death should be conquered while living with the process of dying while living.” Dying into ‘sabada’ is to have the taste of death while living. It is to experience death while we are alive.

Benumbing our body in meditation and entering the tenth door should become the daily practice of the person in Charhdi Kala. He should daily ascend to the tenth door with the power he gets from the Guru and should come back daily to his usual domestic chores. The Third Nanak clearly says that we would “get immunity from the cycle of birth and death if we die while living and after dying come to life again.” And if we do so we will cross the cycle of birth and death and gain salvation. Bhagat Kabir also gives the same view when he says that we “should die while living and should come to life after such a death. In this way, we can finally merge into a state of ‘sunn’.” The Fourth Nanak says that “the people who die to come to life in the process of dying while living, drink the elixir of God and their mind is concentrated in the love of the wisdom given by the Guru.” The fifth Guru says, “Those who die while living find the God within. Such people gain the grace of the God.” Similar views are given by the first...
Guru: “Those who die while living know Him and develop love for the True God.”

(s) Coming to life after dying is the concept which brings in direct encounter with Charhdi Kala in our practical life. The Guru gives the examples of a lotus flower remaining unaffected in water and of a water-fowl swimming against the stream’s current and not becoming wet. Similarly, “O, Nanak, we should swim across the dreadful world ocean by immersing our soul into the Guru’s word.” The True Guru has such greatness that man obtains emancipation while living with sons and wife. “One may be a house-holder, renouncer or ‘yogi’. He is great who puts his mind in God’s feet.” We should “practice such a ‘Yoga’, O, Nanak, that we should die even while living.”

(t) All these characteristics of the doctrine of Charhdi Kala have some ancillary characteristics which have already been discussed in the first chapter and which help to pave the path of Charhdi Kala for us.

(u) The final and foremost characteristics of the doctrine of Charhdi Kala is the welfare of whole mankind without any discrimination of caste, creed, religion, race, country or anything. Charhdi Kala ends in ‘sarbat-da-bhala’

These great characteristics of Charhdi Kala travel from mystic to the spiritual with one’s self in the form of “I” kept in the centre which moves to interact with the other aspects of our life. That becomes the operational ground of these characteristics in all the spheres of life i.e. religious, social, economic, political, commercial, educational, moral and spiritual.
References & Footnotes (Chapter 9)

1. ఎండు కాడి పాడి పహజీం చిండిని వింటే కుంటుంటే (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-7)

2. దుస్తు పాతించిని సముద్రం పహజ్ఞం చిండిని కుంటుంటే (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-17)

3. చిత్రం నియంత్రించిని నియంత్రించిని (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-6)

4. మన విదేశాల విదేశాల ప్రభుదప్పా (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-1291)

5. మన విదేశాల ప్రభుదప్పా (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-1291)

6. దుస్తు సమాఘ సమాఘ కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-1245)

7. దుస్తు ప్రభు ప్రభు కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త కొత్త (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-1412)

8. మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-557)

9. మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-993)

10. మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల మనుష్యాల (భాగస్థ-1, పాఠం-60)
11. तत्त्व तथा शब्द चुनौती दर्शन || उंडे क्रोट मवधु दार वदन ||
   (अहलबाद)

12. तत्त्व तथा इतिहास शिक्षा देखू दृष्टि विभाग लगनी ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-903)

13. तत्त्व दिना त्रैमध्य अपार ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-1330)

14. अथी न हायु माया आयु धारिता || (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-1276)

15. आरा बीच में तीन विधान उ पत्र तत्त्व देखे इतिहास || दृष्टि विभाग मवधु उल्लोग || सीलिका तिहा अन्तर ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-877)

16. ता भूम में व वजन चोटि ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-222)

17. उंडू बांटी धोका भविष्य सनाचन || मवधु वने भूम दृष्टि मिहित सनाचन ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-221)

18. वनी में ने उंडू बांटे || वफ धर्मावधी शीर्ष भवे ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-662)

19. भूम अधित भूम उंडू भवे में बुझ तेष्टि रुपी ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-936)

20. मंत्र सनाचि तन्मित लिख ताता तेला तेली मवधु शीर्ष ||
   (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-503)

21. दण्डित साहे बीच में || (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-840)

22. असम में ने मुख भवें नम || (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-840)

23. उ पत्र में ताता वधि वधि चारचर || दृष्टि वपी तत्त्व शीर्ष कार ||
   उंडू भूम दृष्टि तहिया जीवित || आंत कुभ भवें तहिया जीवित चार ||
   शीर्ष कार कार (अहलबाद-1, पंजा-1091)
24. अच्छानु बिंदु बनाया स मात्रों ॥ बमबु अक्षिण कावी ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-883)
25. अभस्क लप्त सवे भूषिन लाम ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-840)
26. अक्षि नेता भुजारी मरे भविश्य तंत्र सच्च भविष्य स्थापित ॥ तिब्बते हथर थष्ट हथर सभाविन स्थापित ॥
(अवल-4, धंज़ा-1199)
27. रिखमानुर नेते रिखमानुर दृषि ॥ रिखमानुर नेते द्वन्द्व दृष्टिक ॥ नैदिक रिखमानुर रिखमानुर ॥ सत्यतु युधु युधु भाव ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-463-464)
28. तंडवबले दे बने भविष्य ॥ मुनि सभायि मचे ध्वनि करो ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-1038)
29. मुनि बल्ल अत्यंतेयि पाठी ॥ अथ तिरक्ष्य हरि अत्यंती ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-1037)
30. अवस्थ स्वरूप पुंछुन्नराव ॥ गव्यि न गोस्तु पुंछु अभाव ॥ न दिच्छु वैभव व झेंठु निर्व पंध्य परंच संभायि स्थापित ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-1035)
31. तंडवबले दे बने भविष्य ॥ मुनि सभायि मचे ध्वनि करो ॥ सत्यतु निर्माण सुधु मुख मन बलिम स्थायित ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-1038)
32. भविष्य निश्चु अवि सारिछे निश्चु भविष्य निश्चु अवि ॥
(अवल-1, धंज़ा-21)
33. तीखु मरे मरे बुर्मि मोरे व भेंतेतु भेंते ॥
(अवल-3, धंज़ा-550)
34. तीखु मरे मरे बुर्मि मोरे मरे तीखु संभायि सन ॥
(तारीक ब्रह्मवीर नौफ, धंज़ा-332)
35. सं तन मद्य षडी षिवं संभृत्य षडी मद्य लोगा द्रातप्ति दुर्ग नीङ्गृ॥
   (भजन-4, पं०-447)  
36. सीड़ षडी षुष्ण षूंष्ण निष्ठी॥ दिन मन बचान भवसाप्त रोदी॥
   (भजन-5, पं०-741)  
37. सीड़ षडी मूं मातीथें धिव षडी देशी निष्ठी॥
   (भजन-1, पं०-580)  
38. नैसं मन मद्य बशं बिताचु भूखसाही से मामे॥ सुखलि सबाधि हर नाज़ु मद्य केसांे॥ क्वादि दिविरंढ देशे भिं ब्रमीभा
   अचमन भिं थियामे॥ अभाम अभोछ देशि दिवशे शाङ्रू दा का दामे॥
   (भजन-1, पं०-938)  
39. महिलान से जैमो दण्डिभारी॥ भूषु भरुषु निचे गाडि गयी॥
   (भजन-1, पं०-661)  
40. पढ़ दिवाथी महिलामी संधी नि दिव ढंडी निशु लुढे॥
   (भजन-1, पं०-1013)  
41. लातः सीड़िदिवा मद्य जप्याने जैमं षांता ज्याथीसे॥
   (भजन-1, पं०-730)