

Gursikh - As An Inspired Person

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MY SON, COLONEL SUKHVINDER Singh Chopra, who is born and brought up in Singapore, hosted a dinner at his home, a few days ago for a small group of non-Indian multi-cultural friends who asked him, out of curiosity, "Who is a Sikh?" Without thinking much he said, light heartedly, **that a man can be called a Sikh if he has a spirit of a warrior, a mind of a thinker, a heart of a kind soul, hands of justice and his feet rooted to the ground.** His friends were impressed and they had a very interesting discussion that evening.

To this excellent, simple and meaningful description, I may add some comments based on our religious hymns (*Gurbani*). The founder of the Sikh religion, Guru Nanak, observed that most of the people in this world, were worshipping not only different but many Gods and Goddesses and directing their spiritual pursuits into many different directions. They had, perhaps, forgotten that the life in each human being and a living thing, was a gift of God, and was possible due to a spark which belongs to Almighty God, the Supreme Power, the Master of the Universe, who has no body or shape, and whom people call by different names in different religions. In other words all of us are a part of the same Supreme Power, Almighty God, but are separated from Him.

Observing this kind of state of mind of mankind, Guru Nanak uttered inspired *Gurbani*, the Divine discourse with the words, "Ek Onkar". He tried to teach us to focus our attention first of all, on One God. You may call Him by any name but He is the One and the Only One. He is not born and He does not die. He has no shape, form or body. He is omnipresent, yet none can see Him. This Supreme Power is self-created. He is the creator of the whole of Universe. Only He creates and only He destroys.

A Sikh firmly believes in this concept. Anybody who is born and who dies, is a human being. God creates all human beings but some of them are created by Him with a special mission to give His special messages to mankind. These spiritual leaders perform their duties according to the wishes of God and as long as He wishes and then depart from this world. *Gurbani*, the Sikh religious hymns are the Divine Words and teachings which are passed on to us by the Sikh Gurus. Our Gurus attached the greatest importance to the Divine Words, *Dhur Ki Bani*, but not to themselves or their bodies.

Those who understand *Gurbani* and believe in it whole-heartedly, are Sikhs and they will be able to save themselves from the sufferings caused by life and death occurring again and again, thousands of times, with their souls encompassed in different forms and bodies such as human beings, animals, birds etc. They will get out of this circle of life and death and their soul will get united with God from whom they are separated in the first instance. *Mukti*, salvation is the ultimate goal of everyone. Reciting the name of God, saying prayers, singing hymns, trying to serve

God by giving alms, helping others etc., are our efforts to achieve that ultimate aim of getting our soul united again with God, that Supreme Power.

But we can reach that stage only if we fully understand the Divine Bani and firmly believe in it, having full faith and trust in God. And all those who are making genuine efforts to travel in that direction to achieve their aim, are Sikhs. A Sikh will continue following that direction throughout his life and will not lose his way by traveling on different roads with his wavering mind.

Many of us are weak and show no understanding and concern for our soul. We lack faith and trust in God and the Divine *Bani*. Very often we question the existence of God and ask those who talk of spiritualism, "Have you seen God?". In our every day life, we think only of 'body and form'. In our weak minds, forgetting the presence and existence of God in His creation, we look for God in a body or in some other solid form. That is why some opportunists have taken undue advantage of this weakness and innocence of human beings. They have become self-proclaimed spiritual leaders, in fact self-proclaimed gods on earth and have started their business by opening their what can be called "shops" or "*uddaas*". They are misinterpreting the Sikh religion and misleading the people by going against the basic principles of the Sikh religion. Each such leader prescribes a certain colour and style of the dress and turban or in many cases patka to be used by his group, so that his followers can be distinguished easily. By singing hymns from the Sikh Scripture, he portrays himself as a Sikh religious preacher and wishes to be worshipped and obeyed unquestioningly. He expects and accepts donations from his followers and others.

Anyone who has full faith in Waheguru, the Almighty God and tries to understand Gurbani, and is determined to follow *Dhur Ki Bani*, the Divine Words, will not go astray and will not be influenced by any of those so called leaders and preachers. A Sikh will not be a leader or a follower of any such group or sect or cult, call it what you may, under any circumstances, and will keep himself miles away from such sects. A Sikh will not accept any human being as God or His equivalent.

A Sikh continues to travel, in humility and charity, on the path set out by Waheguru for him, by living a humble life based on Gurbani and Sikh Maryada and by being a good human being.

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