

# Re-living the Khalsa Glory

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As we prepare to celebrate the day Guru Gobind Singh Ji created the Khalsa in 1699 (Samvat 1756) at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab, India, it is worthwhile to recall the prescience and planning that had gone into the holding of the momentous event. The Guru-Patshah had sent out invitations all over the country asking everyone to come for this special occasion. It has been estimated that some 100,000 people showed up. If we take into account the then prevailing mail system and available modes of transportation over three hundred years back then this number of attendees is quite astounding.

What happened there is even more significant. At the conclusion of singing of hymns, Guru Gobind Singh Ji came to the podium with his unsheathed sword in his hand and in a thundering voice said, "I want one head. Is there any one who can offer his head to me?" This unexpected call sent a shock wave through the crowds and there was complete silence. Nobody came forward, so he repeated the request again. Finally, at the third call Daya Ram offered his head. Guru Ji took Daya Ram by the arm into a covered tent. A blow and a thud were heard outside and then Guru Ji came out with his sword dripping in blood. He came back to the podium and asked for another head. This time seeing the blood produced even more panic, but Guru Ji was firm and at the third call Dharm Das offered his head. Again, Guru Ji took him inside the tent and the same process was repeated and Guru Ji came out again and asked for one more head. Seeing the spectacle, many started leaving their places and looking for their personal safety. He repeated the process three more times. After that Guru Ji was in the tent for quite a while, and the remaining anxious audience kept waiting for the Guru Ji to come out from the tent.

When finally Guru Ji came back on to the stage his sword was sheathed and he had five men with him. They were all looking fresh, clad in new garments and with a new radiant glow on their faces. These five had offered their heads to Guru Ji and Guru Ji had transformed them. Guru Ji, while presenting them to the audience declared that these five are "The Five Beloved." By offering their heads to Guru Ji, he had baptized them and initiated them into new order. These five became Khalsa. These five were not just "The Five Beloved" of the Guru Ji but became respected and revered true role model for all the Sikhs. It is because of the grace of the Guru Ji, these five attained their exulted spiritual growth that even today we as Sikhs remember them in our prayers right after remembering God and Gurus. Before going any further let us ask Guru Ji to explain what is meaning and definition of Khalsa?

Guru Ji says:

"Awqm rs ijh jwnhl so hY ^wls dyv ]

pRB mih mo mih qws mih rMck nwhn Byd ]"

*"Atam ras jeh janhee. So hai Khalsah dev. Prabh mai, moh mai, taas mai ranchak na-han bhev"*

(Sarabh Loh Granth)

Meaning: Khalsa is the one who has realized Super Consciousness. Between God, me and him there is no difference, what so ever.

From this it appears Guru Ji considers Khalsa as those who have realized that they are not just the bodies but soul. They have not just known that as a matter of fact, but have experienced it first hand by incorporating Guru's teachings in their lives. Therefore they did not hesitate to offer their heads to the Guru. By connecting with the soul they realized that even if their body dies they are still alive as their soul never dies. They had this experience

while they were still alive, and this experience is also known by other terms as becoming enlightened or realized soul or obtaining salvation. Guru Gobind Singh ji by defining them as his beloved has laid bare for every one that this is the true goal of human life. The success in human life is not measured in terms of how big a mansion one has, or how successful one is in his/her chosen profession or field or how recognized one is in the society. The Sikh or disciple has to realize that human body is a unique endowment from the Creator with a sole purpose of spiritual development so that one can experience the Creator within one's self and in everyone.

We have seen in our worldly life that if we want to become something in life we have to acquire knowledge and skills to achieve it. Any profession that we want to adopt or any expertise we want to acquire we have to go through the learning process. If that is the case in our real life then it is because of the laws under which the entire creation works. Then these laws apply equally to our spiritual development as well. We have to learn and acquire the divine nature and qualities in this life and that is the objective of life. These qualities and traits are kindness, compassion, contentment, patience, forgiveness, etc. In our rat race we do not hesitate to trample, steal, or even rob from others. When we look at all the corporate scandals and the associated court trials we can see an open exhibition of blatant greed, lust of power, etc. However, the very lives of Khalsa present us with a very different picture and their lives inspire us that even we can make our lives blossom imbibing the fragrance of higher qualities. The stenching smell of greed, lust, attachment, anger is completely gone. They have no desire for material possessions, for a long life, or looking attractive and young. They understood what they can take from this world and they strived for it wholeheartedly. However, we have desires to live longer and resort to Botox, Lasiks and other makeovers to look attractive and live longer. Yet we are not clear why we want to live longer. For them the purpose and objective of life was clear and they achieved that objective. Guru ji has seen our mental condition and painted its picture in these words:

“kUr ikRAw auriJE sBhl jg sRI Bgvwn ko Bydu n pwieE j”

*“Koor kiriya urjhe-o sabh hee jag, shree Bhagwan ko bhed na paa-e-o”*

(Tav Prasaad Sawayie, Patshahee Dasvi)

Meaning: The whole world is entangled in false rituals/ practices; they have not realized mystery of God.

Guru Ji wants us to rise above false rituals, practices and explore our divine nature. In order to explore that aspect, Guru Ji wants us to awaken from our sleep of attachment.

“sovq khw mo inMdRw mY, kbhMU suicq hvY jwgoj”

*“Sowat kaha moh nindraa mai, kabhoo suchit havai Jaago”*

(Ramkali, Patshahee Dasvi)

Meaning: Why are you asleep, intoxicated by the worldly attachment? At least sometimes, become alert and awake.

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib has defined Khalsa not just in terms of physical appearance but the actual traits that make Khalsa unique:

“pUrn joq jgY Gt mY qb ^wls qwih n^wls jwnY j”

*“Pooran joth jagai ghatt mai thab khaalas thahai nakhaalas jaanai.”*

(Taetees Savaiye, Patshahee Dasvi)

Meaning: Such a man, in whose heart shines the full Divinely Radiant Light is a true, pure Khalsa.

Once the divine light is enkindled within and the soul nature is experienced, then the Khalsa will only be yearning for that experience constantly.

“jwigq joiq jpY ins bwsur eyk ibnw mn nYk n AwnY j”

*“Jaagat joth japai nis baasur aik binaa mun naik n aanai.”*

(Taetees Savaiye, Patshahee Dasvi)

Meaning: He the Khalsa, who meditates on the Ever-radiant Light, day and night, and rejects all else but the one Lord from the mind.

In fact, one who becomes a Khalsa gets countless blessings and is also showered with admiration by Guru Gobind Singh. There is a complete *shabad* by Guru Gobind Singh that lavishes his praises on the Khalsa. Just one line quoted here defines as to how he values and holds Khalsa in high esteem.

“^wls w myro rUp hY ^ws] ^wlsy mih hO krO invws j”

*“Khalsa mero roop hai khaas. Khalsa mein hoon karoon nivaas”*

(Sarabh Loh Granth)

Meaning: Khalsa is my special form and I reside in the Khalsa.

Because Khalsa has worked on himself, and purged all the lower animalistic traits and acquired divine traits Guru Gobind Singh puts him/her on the highest pedestal.

“ienhl kl ikRpw ky sjy hm hYN nhIN mo so grlb krOr pry j”

*“Einehee kee kripaa kae sajae hum hai nehee mo so gareeb karor parae.”*

(Gyan Prabodh, Patshahi Dasvi)

Meaning: It is through their aid that I have attained this status; otherwise there are millions of unknown mortals like me.

It is amazing that Guru Ji bestowed so much love, admiration upon the Khalsa. It is sad that we have distanced ourselves from that glorious vision and refreshing perspective of life. On the occasion of creation of Khalsa next month, let us ask for Guru's guidance, blessings and grace so that we can explore our divinity and experience salvation (become Khalsa) in this life and return from this world with the task accomplished. Let us recreate the Khalsa he envisioned, and become what Guru Ji sees as our true potential and capability.

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