

## Guru Gobind Singh Ji: The Dynamic Liberator

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Sikhism, 549 years back was founded by Guru Nanak and the mission, (the practical way of life) was cultivated by his nine spiritual successors up to 1708 A.D. Sikh religion is one of the living religions of the world, the other being Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. No doubt Sikh religion is the youngest religion but it has world-wide acceptance and followers. It has elements of universal brother-hood of man and fatherhood of God.

Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) was the last and tenth Guru of Sikh religion. The aim and mission ordained by Guru Nanak, was completed and achieved by Guru Gobind Singh. He left no bodily successor. At the end of his life when the Sikh asked, who would be the Guru after you. Guru Jee replied and clarified his Sikhs that wherever five Sikhs (Panth) will gether in presence of Guru Granth Saheb Ji, I spiritually will remain there and after me Adi Granth will be the Guru.

ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੈ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ, ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ।

*“When ordered by the Akal Purkh  
The Khalsa Panth was established  
All sikhs are ordered to accept  
Adi Granth Saheb as the “Guru”*

The multifarious personality of Guru Gobind Singh was a combination of Bhakti and Shakti, patriot and warrior spirit, saint and soldier, liberator of mankind, organiser and administrator, scholar and philosopher. Reformer and revolutionary nature of Guru Nanak, tolerance of Guru Arjan Dev Jee (fifth Guru), fearless fighting and courage of Guru Hargobind Saheb (sixth) Guru) and sacrificing spirit of Guru Tegh Bahadur Saheb (ninth Guru) was his great heritage. At the age of nine (Guru)Gobind Singh succeeded to Guruship. It was critical time of Hindu-Muslim crises. The Mughal tyranny degraded, demoralised and exploited the Hindus in their social, religious and political field. Guru Gobind Singh possessed marvellous dynamic personality. Physically he was imbued with the spirit of Divine power, strong will and firm faith in Almighty God. He was fully attuned with God’s will.

The chief characteristics of Saint and soldier were embodied in Guru Gobind Singh’s personality. He was a nationalist, liberator, commander general, scholar, philosopher, Administrator, patriot, and Rationalist.

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The purpose of his birth, as mentioned by him in his autobiography (Bachitar Natak) was to establish the right thing of Dharma, to protect saints and meek, and to punish the evil doers and evil he says:-

ਹਮ ਇਹ ਕਾਜ ਜਗਤ ਮੇ ਆਏ । ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਪਠਾਏ । ਜਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਤੁਮ ਧਰਮ ਬਿਥਾਰੇ । ਦੁਸਟ ਦੋਖੀਅਨ ਪਕਰਿ ਪਛਾਰੇ ।

ਯਾਹੀ ਕਾਜ ਧਰਾ ਹਮ ਜਨਮੰ । ਸਮਝਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਾਧੂ ਸਭ ਮਨਮੰ । ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ । ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੇ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨ ।

*“For this purpose have I come in this world. To uphold and establish Dharma in every place. And to seize and destroy the doers of sin and evil.*

*Understand ye holy men full well in your mind that I took birth in this age so that righteousness may flourish, the good, the Saint be saved And the villanous, tyrannts be uprooted from the land.”* (Bachitar Natak)

From his very birth (at Patna) and childhood his activities were that of a saint and warrior. He used to form two parties of playmates, the offensive and defensive to fight the fictitious battles on the bank of river Ganga. The winner party was awarded prize by mataji. He also made earthen rounds (*golies*) and arrows to pierce the pitchers of ladies, who would come for sweet water of the well in his house. Till now these historic arrows of Gobind Rai are preserved at Patna, and daily shows to the pilgrims.

Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed his life for the achievement of his aim. He begged only this spirit and power from the Almighty.-God for establishing the righteous deed and to die the death of a brave man in the battlefield of Dharma Yudh, The spirit of saint and soldier in true sense was the pivot of his personality and life aim. He sought the blessings from Lord as under

ਦੇਹ ਸਿਵਾ ਬਰ ਮੋਹਿ ਇਹੈ : ਸੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਟਰੋ ॥ ਨਾ ਡਰੋ ਅਰਿ ਸੌਂ ਜਬ ਜਾਇ ਲਰੋ- ਨਿਸਚੈ ਕਰ ਆਪਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕਰੋ ॥

ਅਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਹੋ ਆਪਨੇ ਹੀ ਮਨ ਕੋ, ਇਹ ਲਾਲਚ ਹਉ ਗੁਨ ਤਉ ਉਚਰੋ ॥ ਜਬ ਆਵ ਕੀ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਧਾਨ ਬਨੈ - ਅਤ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੋ ॥

*“Grant unto me this boon, ‘O’ Lord, that I may never be deterred from doing good deeds I should have no fear of enemy when I go to battle (field) And when the time comes I should die brave death in the field of battle,”* (Bachitar Natak)

Guru Gobind Singh had come to establish Dharma, to uphold the right and he tried his utmost to save it from the wrong doers and mischief-mongers. He was a Karam-Yogi and Raj-Yogi of the highest level. He not only conquered his mind but also lived in the world unattached as lotus abides in the water. He remained the same in weal and woe.

He was not a war-monger. Being the apostle of Shakti, he set a typical example to use the power or sword in a proper way.

Sikh sword has caused sometimes terror in the minds of certain persons. But in real sense Sikh sword is a symbol of self-reliance, self-confidence and self protection. It is meant for defensive purposes, to resist aggression, tyranny and injustice. It is also meant to sweep the evil doers. It is not a butcher's knife but a surgeon's instrument to remove the dirtiness. Sikh sword in Guru Gobind Singh's words is a source of Shakti and inspiration. It is the last resort when all other remedies and means of argument, persuasion, diplomacy and reasoning have failed. In Sikh way of life, the legitimate use of force or sword in defence is not only right but incumbent. Guru Gobind Singh justified this theory in Bachitar Natak.

ਚੂੰ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਹ ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਸ਼ਤ ॥ ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤ ਬੁਰਦਨ ਬਾ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੀਰ ਦਸਤ ॥ (ਜ਼ਫਰਨਾਮਾ)

When all other remedies have failed, It is righteous to have recourse to the sword.

(Zafarnama)

History of India witnessed that Guru Gobind Singh was a great warrior, wonderful general and Commander. He was a skilled swords man, horse rider. He had to fight fourteen battles against the Mughal imperialism and fanatic hill chiefs of Shiwalik and had wonderful victories over them. As a true saint-soldier he never attacked first. He remained always defensive. But when the sword he brought into function it was effective and decisive. He was general of rare courage and patriotic fervour.

His life was full of struggle and great turmoil. He organised an army of devotee Sikh soldiers of unique type who dedicated their lives and all belongings for the sake of Guru and Dharma. The soldiers demanded nothing in return rather they dedicated all they had with them to their revered Guru. They fought against aggression, oppression and suppression. Guru Gobind Singh appreciated Khalsa and blessed them with spiritual power and Guruship.

ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਬਿਦਿਆ ਲਈ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਸਭ ਸਤ੍ ਮਰੇ ॥

ਇਨ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੇ ਸਜੇ ਹਮ ਹੈ ॥ ਨਹੀ ਮੋ ਸੋ ਗ਼ਰੀਬ ਕਰੋਰ ਪਰੈ ॥

*Through their kindness all my enemies have been vanquished.*

*Through their kindness I am exalted, otherwise there are millions of poor people like me.*

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*The Khalsa is my own image I reside in the Khalsa.*

ਜਬ ਲਗ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਰਹੇ ਨਿਆਰਾ ॥ ਤਬ ਲਗ ਤੇਜ ਦਿਉ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਰਾ ॥

*So long as the Khalsa retain independent identity, I will bestow on them all glory.*  
(Guru Gobind Singh)

The great contribution of Guru Gobind Singh was that he could create and cultivate an acute sense of patriotism and national outlook amongst his followers. Guru Gobind Singh himself was a fearless fighter. His personal participation in the battlefield infused new spirit in his soldiers even many a times converted doubtful encounter into a sure victory. His policy was same in peace and war, even in grave danger he never turned to unfair means, treachery, deceit and falsehood. He never killed his adversaries by sudden attack. Never did he shoot as such of them taking rest. He ordered his soldiers; never to molest woman, nor to assault a sick or an unarmed person. Kazi Noor Mohammad though called the sikh soldier dogs yet appreciated their bravery of fighting and character in the battlefield.

Guru Gobind Singh never fought for wordly glory, territorial gain, and he won most of the battles. All these fightings were with the purpose to defend the religious and social values and political sovereignty established by his predecessors. The spirit of optimistic heroism kept him progressive, constructive, and inspiring. For this good cause guru ji sacrificed his four generations, i.e. great grand father (Guru Arjan Dev) father (Guru TeghBahadur) four sons, and finally himself even his beloved sikhs and all belongings and valuable literature. After continuous struggle against the cruel Mughal Tyranny and fanatic hill Chiefs of Shiwalak he changed the fate of Indian people and made the apposition to understand about his bravery and strong will.

After the Chamkaur battle Guru Gobind Singh reached Machhiwara and then Damdama Saheb (Bhatinda) and received the death news of two younger sons and mother at Sirhind by the order of Nawab Wazir Khan, Unnerved by these tragic losses the liberator and Saviour of mankind Guru Gobind Singh burst into the following song :

ਮਿੱਤਰ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲ ਮੁਰੀਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਹਣਾ । ਤੁਧ ਬਿਨੁ ਰੋਗੁ ਰਜਾਈਆਂ ਦਾ ਉਢਣ ਨਾਗ ਨਿਵਾਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਣਾ ।  
ਸੂਲ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ ਖੰਜਰੁ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਬਿੰਗ ਕਸਾਇਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਹਣਾ । ਯਾਰੜੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੱਥਰੁ ਚੰਗਾ ਭੱਠ ਖੇੜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਰਹਣਾ ।

*Go tell the beloved Lord, the condition of his yearning devotee without thee, rich coverings are agony to us And to live in the comforts of our households is like living with snakes.*

*Our pitchers Have become like pikes on which men are impaled. The cup we drink from has an adge like a dagger.*

*O, Beloved thy turning away from us is like the knife of the butcher with the beloved in heart a matter of straw would please us without Him in rich houses we are burned alive.*

(Guru Gobind Singh)

Guru Gobind Singh diagnosis the social, religious, political and economic condition of the Indian people. Centuries long subjugation of invaders had demoralised them morally,

exploited politically degraded socially, and suppressed religiously. They were banned to enjoy even their fundamental rights and ceremonies. There was no scope for their intellectual and moral development.

Guru Gobind Singh's great contribution to the nation and history of India is that he stood for encouraging the down-trodden people who had forgotten their rich brave heritage. Guru Gobind Singh's period is wonderfully recorded in the history of India. It was known the period of renaissance and reorientation of cultural faith.

Guru Gobind Singh dedicated 33 years of his guruship life for poor, meek, weak and down troddens. He was the savior and liberator of mankind. He revived the sense of bravery and resistance in the minds of low and frustrated Indian people. He deputed 52, poets of different languages in his socio-religious court at Ponta Saheb (Himachal Pradesh) to compose and translate the heroic poetry of Indian epic and puranic literature to inspire the cowards.

He was a man of strong will and determination. He converted the meek into sardars (man of respectable status) and cowards to brave fighters. He said;

ਗਿਦੜੇ ਸੇ ਮੈਂ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਬਨਾਉਂ, ਸਵਾ ਲਾਖ ਸੇ ਏਕ ਲੜਾਉਂ । ਤਬੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ ਕਹਾਉਂ ।

*"Sheep will I turn into lions against mighty kings will I put the low one will I pitch against a lakh and a quarter.*

*All this will I do only then alone I shall bear the name GOBIND SINGH"*

Guru Gobind Singh set a rare example in history of mankind which bears witness to the fact that he fashioned heroes out of ordinary people of low caste. Practically he made them sparrows fight the hawks. He exalted the common folk to fight for DharmYudha, to sacrifice all for their motherland and resist against tyranny and aggression It was a spirit of saint-soldier. Guru Gobind Singh who alone could write an Epistle of victory in the darkest hours of tumultuous. This letter of victory changed the entire life and attitude of Aurangzeb. As he heard and read about Guru Gobind Singh, the worshipper of qualified monotheistic God (Akal Purakh), Similar to himself, put his desire to see him personally to eliminate the differences of misunderstanding. Here a little reference will be sufficient for the readers. Guru Jee wrote to Aurangzeb.

ਸ਼ਾਹਿਨ ਸ਼ਾਹਿ ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ ਆਲਮੀ । ਕਿ ਦਾਰਾਇ ਦੌਰ ਅਸਤੁ ਦੂਰ ਅਸਤ ਦੀਂ । (94)

*"Thou hast Empire, wealth, pomp and show but far from thee religion"*

ਕਿ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਨ ਕੁਨਦ ਮਿਹਰਬਾਂ ਅਸਤੁ ਦੋਸਤ । ਕਿ ਬਖਸ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਕਾਰ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਦਗ ਓਸਤ । (98)

*"My protection is God than whom there is no one higher and stronger.*

*How can an enemy touch him whose friend and saviour is God on High"*

(Zafarnama)

Indian people were badly effected by caste discrimination and other distinctions. The so-called four divisions were great hindrance in the achievement of Guru's mission. Guru Gobind Singh believed in oneness of God, man and nature. He was resolutely determined to put an end to this exploitation of man by man. Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man was the basic concept of Guru's teaching.

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕੋਊ ਰਾਫ਼ਜ਼ੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸਾਫੀ ॥ ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਬੈ ਇਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ ॥  
 ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੀਮ ਸੋਈ ਰਾਜਕ ਰਹੀਮ ਓਈ ॥ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਨ ਭੇਦ ਕੋਈ ਭੂਲ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਮਾਨਬੋ ॥  
 ਇਕ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਕੋ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਏਕ ॥ ਇਕ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਬੈ ਇਕੈ ਹੋਤ ਜਾਨਬੋ ॥  
 ਦੇਹਰਾ ਮਸੀਤ ਸੋਈ ਪੂਜਾ ਔ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਓਈ ॥ ਮਾਨਸ ਸਬੈ ਇਕ ਪੈ ਅਨੇਕ ਕੋ ਭਰਮਾਉ ਹੈ ॥

(ਅਕਾਲ ਉਸਤੱਤ)

*"Recognise all mankind as one, The same Lord is the creator and Nourisher of all.  
 Recognise no distinction among them,  
 The temple and the Mosque are the same.  
 So are the Hindu worship and the Muslim prayer Men are all one."*

(Guru Gobind Singh)

Guru Gobind Singh never fought against any religion and community. He always fought against hypocrites, bigotry, priesthood, evil doers and aggressors. History witnesses that both true Hindu and Muslims had great respect for Guru Jee. In war against the Mughal tyranny, true national Muslim saint Sayyed Pir Budhu Shah of Saudhora (Ambala) fought alongwith his four sons and seven hundred followers well on side of Guru Gobind Singh and sacrificed their lives for the right cause.

**Deg, Teg and Fateh**, three ideals are land marks of Guru Gobind Singh's philosophy, indicating democrating, patriotic and national outlook in the history of Sikh religion. The nation having these three ideals will never loose its status in social, religious and political field. Deg means big cooking pot-symbolically stands for Guru KaLangar (free kitchen) for community. Sikh Gurus established it with the purpose to eliminate the social differences of caste between rich and poor, high and low. This was a society of democratic pattern introduced by Guru through free kitchen, where people would get their bread without any distinction of caste, colour and creed.

TEG means sword which symbolises the spiritual power and its proper utilisation. The heroic poetry of Guru Gobind Singh inspired the slave people to fight for freedom and to die for the good cause. They exhorted to draw the sword. Sword means not a ordinary dagger but stands for a sign of power, to defend, to protect others and punish the evil-

doers.

Fateh indicates victory of Divine heroism. The victory over social degradation, religious bigotry and political freedom were all victories over evils. The khalsa created by Guru Gobind Singh was absolutely devoid of these immoral practices. His greeting was - ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ ।

“Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa, Wahe Guru Ji ki Fateh.”

The Khalsa belongs to God i. e. it is dedicated to God and its victories are all victories of God. Guru Gobind Singh glorified all victories to Khalsa.

I owe my victories to the Khalsa

I owe my magnanimity to the Khalsa.

Thousands go about un-marked and unseen

I am what I am because of the Khalsa—

The sword in Sikh way of life is a combination of spiritual as well as of marshal power. Guru Gobind Singh worshipped sword as power of Almighty God to set the things in a right way.

‘O’ sword thou scattereth the hord of the wicked

Thou art a never failing friend of the brave

Thou art a protection for the saints

Thou art a scourge for the evil minded

I take shelter under thee Hail to God the protector

Guru Gobind Singh’s creation of Khalsa is a rare example in the history of world. He not only established the equality between man and man but also brought Guruship to the level of disciple. After initiating (baptising) to the five beloveds, He knelt down before them and asked them to initiate him, this wonderful activity was expressed by Bhai Gurdas second in the following lines :

ਵਾਹੋ ਵਾਹੋ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ।

Well done : wonderful Guru Gobind Singh, Yourself the Guru and yourself the disciple. (Vaar 41-1)

Selected five beloveds were from different parts of India and were of different castes. Three of them were of so called low caste i. e. washerman, cali-co-printer and barber. This was completely a democratic set up.

A few historians could not understand the dynamic personality of Guru Gobind Singh. Sri J. N. Sircar misunderstood him and wrongly expressed saying that he totally diverted from the spiritual path of Guru Nanak and put all his sources and energy to develop the temporal and political status.

There was quite clear sequence in the development of thoughts and mission from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh. Guru Nanak's concept of God was blended with qualities such of creator, sustainer and destroyer, embodiment of kindness, qualified monotheism, immanent and Transcendent.

Guru Gobind Singh's God in addition was the wielder of arms punisher of evil doers and wicked forces. Guru Nanak's followers were saints lover of peace and goodness. Guru Gobind Singh also made his followers true saints and soldiers. Guru Nanak named his disciples Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh turned them into Singhs (Lions) Guru Nanak preached spiritual social freedom, Guru Gobind Singh added political freedom. Guru Nanak emphasised on Bhakti, Guru Gobind Singh combined Bhakti with Shakti and proclaimed it necessary for protection and flourishing.

Guru Nanak prescribed Charanpahul for initiating his followers. The prospecting Sikh would drink water in which the Guru had dipped his toe. It symbolises humility and submissiveness to the Guru's mission and God.

Guru Gobind Singh turned Guru Nanak's followers to marshal spirit. They were bold and plucky. Guru Jee initiated (Baptised) to his followers with sweet water stirred with double edged sword (Khanda) in a iron vessel. The mission of Guru Nanak succeeded through nine Gurus in Bodly Form. Guru Gobind Singh stopped it and converted Guruship to holy word *sabad* (Divine poetry) of Adi Granth to avoid any kind of fueds, imposters and ordered his Singhs :

“He who wishes to behold the Guru, let him search the Holy Guru Granth. The Guru will dwell with the Khalsa, be firm and faithful; where ever five Sikhs (Khalsa) will assemble together in the presence of Guru Granth Saheb there will I also be present.”

For spiritual embodiment Guru Nanak 'used the word grace of Guru i.e. "Guruprashad". The mission of Guru Nanak was achieved at the stage of tenth Guru 'Guru's grace was converted to God's grace (ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥). The greeting of Guru Nanak Sat Sri Akal, Sat Kartar was changed in to—

*Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa,  
Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh.*

