

What is Sikhism?
Series 10



ੴ ਸੇਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ



What is Sikhism? Series 10

Doctrines of Sikhism

**Sikh Awareness Society of USA
SASO USA
Tampa—Florida**

Major Doctrines of Sikhism

Major doctrines of Sikhism include:

The Doctrine of Guruship in Sikhism

The doctrine of Guruship is a cardinal principle of Sikh religion and therefore forms a part of what is popularly known as *Mool Mantra* (Basic postulate of Sikhism) in which Guru Nanak calls God as *Parkash* (enlightener), which dispels darkness (ignorance of mind) and enlightens it (with the light of knowledge). The term Guru comes from: *Gu* and *Ru*. *Gu* denotes *Ghor-andhera* (Pitch darkness) signifying ignorance and *Ru* denotes *Roshni-Parkash*--light (of knowledge /*Gian*), and therefore Guru literally means that light (of knowledge) which removes the darkness (ignorance) of mind. As Guru or Enlightener, God guides and enlightens man to the right path. He can lit up other lamps.

In the Indian tradition the necessity of a worldly i.e, human Guru for guiding the disciple on mystic path is usually taken for granted. But in this context, when during his meeting with the Jogis, they questioned him, "Who is your Guru and whose discipline you follow? The Guru said, "*Shabad Guru surat dhun chela*--"God (Word / Shabad or Immanent God) is my Guru and mind attuned to Him is the disciple" (GGS, p.943). Guru Nanak did not have any worldly or human Guru. He was working as Modi (food grain store manager) in the Modi Khana of Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi at Sultanpur Lodhi at the time of his enlightenment.

In Sikh scriptures, the word 'Guru' has been used to denote at least three different senses. Firstly, it has been used for God Himself, secondly, the word has been referred to as teacher-Guru, and finally it is used for the Holy Sikh scripture, "Guru Granth Sahib".

The preceptor (religious teacher--Guru) in Sikhism is an enlightened soul, through whom the revelations of God or the Word of God or '*Naam*' are spread. He is not God in human form, but a messenger or prophet sent by God, for a specific mission. He is not an incarnation of God but an instrument of God. He is not an end in himself but only a means. He is a humble messenger invested with the duty of showing the true-spiritual way to the people. The Guru is an intermediary (bridge) between God and Creation. Guru occupies a very high status in Sikhism. For Sikhs, the Guru is a special being, the bearer of the divine knowledge. He is like the sandalwood tree, which imparts fragrance to whoever comes near it. He helps his followers destroy self-centeredness and attain liberation. There were ten living Gurus but all of them had the same Jyoti (divine light / Spiritual knowledge).

In the Sikh scriptures the terms Guru and God have been used identically and interchangeably. The essential thing to be borne in mind is that God or His divine Light (Spiritual knowledge--*Adhiatmic-Giaan*) alone was the highest and most perfect Guru. Perfection in the case of others was to be taken only in the limited and relative sense. He, sometimes, speaks through Prophets and seers and they become Gurus because they reveal God's light. They are His best manifestations as could ever be conceived in human terms. It is only in this sense that they can be identified with God. But they are not to be confused with God whose purpose they sometimes are destined to fulfill. Guru Nanak says: 'ਅਪ੍ਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ' || i.e. 'He is the Infinite, Transcendental Lord, the Supreme God and Him Nanak has obtained as his Guru.

There is a Sakhi also that Guru Nanak had enlightenment at Sultanpur before he set out on his mission, which indicates that God appointed him as the Guru, and it was,

God's revelation (Bani / Shabad) that became Guru Nanak's Word or his teachings and form foundation of Sikhism. Thus God's Word and Nanak's Word are all identical terms meaning the same thing, affirming that God, the true was speaking through Guru Nanak.

According to Sikh tradition and history, there is no evidence to suggest that, before his enlightenment. Guru Nanak had been disciplined on the mystic path by a known person. He was in the service of a Lodhi ruler at Sultanpur in Kaputhala district in the Punjab, when he had his revelation. All available writings state most eulogistically, that Guru Nanak was summoned to his mission by God. Guru Nanak himself affirms it in his own words, “ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰ ਕਾਰੇ ਲਾਇਆ॥ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹ ਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਪੁਰਹੁ ਫਰਮਾਇਆ॥ ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੇ ਮਹਿਲ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ॥ ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਹ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ॥-“I was an out of work minstrel, God gave me employment. God gave me the order, ‘Sing day and night’. God summoned the minstrel to His court and bestowed on me the robe of honouring Him and singing His praises” (GGs M1, p.150) . He also says: ‘ਅਪੁੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ’ ॥ i.e. ‘He is the Infinite, Transcendental Lord, the Supreme God and Him Nanak has obtained as his Guru (GGs, p.599). He then says, ‘ਤਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਹਣ ਜਾ ਤੁਝੈ ਕਹਾਇਆ॥ i.e. ‘I speak only when you, O God, inspire me to speak’ (GGs, p.566). Again, ‘ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ’ ॥ i.e. ‘By myself, I know not how to speak. I say what He commands me to say’ (GGs, 763). Guru Nanak made it plain that his Guru or Enlightener was God. As such, in all the hymns of Guru Nanak, the word of Guru means God, the Enlightener.

In the Sikh scriptures the terms Guru and God have been used identically and interchangeably. The essential thing to be borne in mind is that God or His divine Light (Spiritual knowledge--*Adhiatmic-Giaan*) alone was the highest and most perfect Guru. Perfection in the case of others was to be taken only in the limited and relative sense. He, sometimes, speaks through Prophets and seers and they become Gurus because they reveal God's light / *Parkash*. They are His best manifestations as could ever be conceived in human terms. It is only in this sense that they can be identified with God. But they are not to be confused with God whose purpose they sometimes are destined to fulfill.

Guru Gobind Singh categorically asserts thus:--

“ਮੈ ਹੂੰ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਦਾਸਾ ਦੇਖਣ ਆਇਉ ਜਗਤ ਤਮਾਸਾ॥ ਜੇ ਹਮ ਕੇ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਉਚਰਿ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਨਰਕ ਕੁੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਪਰ ਹੈ॥ i.e. “I am but slave of God and I have come to witness the wonders of His creation, but whosoever regards me as Lord shall be damned and destroyed (Bachittar Natak).

The Sikh scriptures ‘therefore’ rightly speak of God as the only absolutely true Guru: ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਏਕੈ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ॥ ਸੋਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਮਝਿਉ ਹਮਾਰਾ॥ i.e. ‘Know, that He is my Guru who is the God incarnate from the beginning to the end’ (Guru Gobind Singh in chaupai).

The significance of Guru in Sikhism

The importance of Guru in Sikhism is mentioned in Holy Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib:

- ਗੁਰ ਦਾਤਾ ਗੁਰੁ ਹਿਵੈ ਘਰੁ ਦੀਪਕੁ ਤਿਹ ਲੋਇ॥ ਅਮਰ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਮਨਿ ਮਾਨਿਐ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ॥-Guru is the bestower of holy Name, the Guru is the house of snow and the Guru is lamp (light) of three worlds. The Guru possesses the eternal wealth of holy Name. Nanak says, by putting faith in Him,

desired peace is obtained (GGS, p,137).

- ਗੁਰ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪਾਰਜਾਤੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਨਸਾ ਪੁਰਨਹਾਰੁ॥ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਇ ਉਧਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ॥--The Guru is the place of pilgrimage. Guru the Elysian Tree and Guru the fulfiller of desires (GGS, p.52)
- ਜੇ ਸਉ ਚੰਦਾ ਉਗਵਹਿ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜਹਿ ਹਜਾਰ॥ ਏਤੇ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਦਿਆਂ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਘੋਰ ਅੰਧਾਰ॥--If hundred moons arise and thousand suns appear, with all this illumination, without the Guru, there would be pitch darkness (GGS, p.463).
- ਮਨ ਕੁੰਚਰੁ ਪੀਲਕੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਿਆਨ ਕੁੰਡਾ ਜਹ ਖਿੰਚੇ ਤਹ ਜਾਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਕੁੰਡੇ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਫਿਰ ਫਿਰ ਉਝੜਿ ਪਾਇ॥--The mind is elephant and the Guru, the elephant-driver, enlightenment is the goad. Withersoever, the guru drives, thither goes the mind. Nanak says, elephant without a goad, again and again strays into the wilderness (GGS, p,168).
- ਜਿਸੁ ਮਿਲੀਐ ਮਨਿ ਹੋਇ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਸੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ॥ਮਨ ਕੀ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਜਾਇ ਹਰਿ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਲਹੀਐ॥--He by meeting by meeting whom, the mind receives joy is called the True Guru. Mind's double mindedness departs and the supreme celestial status is obtained (GGS, p, 168).

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The preceptor (religious teacher – Guru) in Sikhism is an enlightened soul, through whom the revelations of God or the Word of God or 'Naam' are spread. He is not God in human form, but a messenger or prophet sent by God, for a specific mission. He is not an incarnation of God but an instrument of God. He is not an end in himself but only a means. He is a humble messenger invested with the duty of showing the true-spiritual way to the people. The Guru is an intermediary (bridge) between God and Creation. Guru occupies a very high status in Sikhism. For Sikhs, the Guru is a special being, the bearer of divine knowledge. He is like the sandalwood tree, which imparts fragrance to whoever comes near it. He helps his followers destroy self-centeredness and attain liberation. There were ten living Gurus but all of them had the same Jyoti (Divine Light).

In the Sikh scriptures the terms Guru and God have been used identically and interchangeably, "ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੁ॥-- *Gur Parmesar eko jaan* – Deem thou the Guru and God as One" (GGS' p. 864). The essential thing to be born in mind is that God or His divine Light alone was the highest and most perfect Guru. Perfection in the case of others was to be taken only in the limited and relative sense. He, sometimes, speaks through Prophets and seers and they become Gurus because they reveal God's light. They are His best manifestations as could ever

be conceived in human terms. It is only in this sense that they can be identified with God. But they are not to be confused with God whose purpose they sometimes are destined to fulfill. Guru Nanak says: ‘ਤਤ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਬਾਈ ਸੋਹੰ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਜੀਉ॥ ਅਪ੍ਰੰਪਰ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਨਾਨਕਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੋਈ ਜੀਉ’॥ i.e.; ‘The light of the pure Lord, the essence of everything, is pervading all. In I and He there is no difference. He is the Infinite, Transcendental Lord, the Supreme God and Him Nanak has obtained as his Guru. There is a Sakhi also that Guru Nanak had enlightenment at Sultanpur before he set out on his mission, which indicates that God appointed him as the Guru, and it was, God’s revelation (Bani / Shabad) that became Guru Nanak’s Word or his teachings and form foundation of Sikhism. Thus God’s Word and Nanak’s Word are all identical terms meaning the same thing, affirming that God, the true was speaking through Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak himself affirms it in his own words, “ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੇ ਲਾਇਆ॥ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹ ਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫਰਮਾਇਆ॥ ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੇ ਮਹਿਲ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ॥ ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ॥ – “I was an out of work minstrel, God gave me employment. God gave me the order, ‘Sing day and night’. God summoned the minstrel to His court and bestowed on me the robe of honouring Him and singing His praises” (GGS M2, p. 150). He further says in Rag Tilang, “ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈਂ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ”॥ -- i.e. ‘As the Divine word of the Master comes to me so I make it known to thee O, Lalo’ (GGS, p.722). He also says: “ਤਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਹਿਣ ਜਾ ਤੁਝੈ ਕਹਾਇਆ॥” i.e. ‘By myself I know not how to speak. I say what He commands me to say’ (GGS, p.763).

Guru Gobind Singh categorically asserts thus:–

- “ਮੈ ਹੋ ਪਰਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਦਾਸਾ ਦੇਖਨਿ ਆਇਓ ਜਗਤ ਤਮਾਸਾ॥ ਜੋ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਉਚਰਿ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਨਰਕ ਕੁੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਪਰ ਹੈ”॥ i.e. ‘I am but slave of God and I have come to witness the wonders of His creation, but whosoever regards me as Lord shall be damned and destroyed’ (Bachittar Natak).

The Sikh scriptures ‘therefore’ rightly speak of God as the only Absolutely True Guru: ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਏਕੈ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ॥ ਸੋਈ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਮਝਿਉ ਹਮਾਰਾ॥ i.e. ‘Know, that He is my Guru who is the God incarnate from the beginning to the end’ (Guru Gobind Singh in chaupai).

‘Guru Granth’ and ‘Guru Khalsa Panth’ doctrine of Sikhism

Guru Gobind Singh felt that Sikhism had fully developed, matured and its fundamentals, institutions and philosophy had taken firm roots among the Sikhs, who no more needed the guidance of a living human Guru. He therefore gave the institution of Guruship a permanent and abiding character by vesting it in the immortality of ‘Guru Granth’ and in continuity of ‘Guru Khalsa Panth.’ Doctrinally, the bani, has been paid high homage by the Sikh Gurus in the Guru Granth Sahib:

- ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤ ਧੁਨ ਚੇਲਾ[--“*Shabad Guru surat dhun chela*” i.e, “Shabad is the Guru, consciousness and intention towards it make one its disciple” (GGS, M1, p.943).
- ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਜਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਪ੍ਰਤਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ।।--“*Bani Guru Guru hai bani, vich bani amrit saaray Gurbani kahay, sevak jan manay, partakh Guru nistaaray*” i.e, “Bani is the Guru and Guru is the bani and it contains the elixir of life. If the devotee obeys what bani teaches us, God confers His Grace on him” (GGS, M4, p. 982).
- ਪੋਥੀ ਪ੍ਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨ।।--“*Pothi permeshar ka thaan*” i.e, “The book is the abode of God” (GGS, M5, p.628).

Before leaving the mortal world on the night falling between October 7-- 8, 1708, Guru Gobind Singh installed Aad Granth as Guru Eternal on October 5, 1708 and commanded the Sikhs to seek guidance from it in future: ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਉ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ।।--“*Sabh Sikh ko hukam hai Guru manio Granth*”. Since then Aad Granth has assumed the status of “Guru Granth” and it is the presiding deity in every Gurdwara or the Sikh place of worship and is respectfully called Guru Granth Sahib by the Sikhs. A person who, believes in a living Guru after Guru Gobind Singh is not a Sikh.

Guru Gobind Singh after the Amritpaan Sanskar at Anandpur Sahib on the Vaisakhi day 1699; passed on the Temporal Guruship not to an individual but to the corporate body of the Sikhs and named it ‘Guru Khalsa Panth’-‘The Sikh Nation’ and vested the authority for initiating the new entrants into the order of the Khalsa (Sikh faith) with the ‘Panj Pairay’. He declared that the Sikhs were to collectively view themselves as ‘Guru Khalsa Panth’ and not to recognize any single person as their sole leader.

The Guru's worldly responsibility (secular authority) and his word (Spiritual knowledge-Adhiatmic giyan) were separated, the Panth (Guru Khalsa Panth) being invested with the worldly responsibility (Secular duties) and his word became Giyan (Spiritual) Guru-“Guru Granth”.

All this can be considered as quite a satisfactory provision for a personal guidance and inspiration to take the place of that which could not be maintained. Who can say after this, that the Guru is dead, ਸੋ ਕਉਣ ਕਹੀਉ ਗੁਰੂ ਮੋਇਉ।।--“*So kaun kahey Sri Guru moyo*” (GGS, M5).

It is a complete answer to the two extreme views that there was no need at all for a Guru and the other that it was not possible to make any advancement without a living personal Guru. The Sikh Gurus combined both views making it possible for a seeker to have the necessary guidance and yet maintain initiative and independence.

NB:

Panth in Sikhism means brotherhood

Miri-Piri doctrine of Sikhism

Sikhism is a whole life system and does not accept any dichotomy in any sphere of life, whether it is 'personal and social,' spiritual and material' 'faith and reason', or 'any other' differentiation. It involves an integral combination between spiritual and empirical life of man. This constitutes the *Miri Piri (Bhagti-Shakti)* doctrine of Sikhism revealed by Guru Nanak Dev and propounded by Guru Hargobind Sahib and practiced by all the succeeding Gurus. *Miri* means social and political (material) aspects of life, while *Piri* guides on spiritual path of life. *Miri-Piri* combination means that while taking part in every aspect of social set-up, a Sikh must, as a religious responsibility, resist and confront all kinds of injustices, (social, political or religious) where ever he comes across them. It is this concept of Sikhism that makes a Sikh "Saint-Soldier" meaning, scholarly in knowledge of Gurbani and martial in spirit. Guru Gobind Singh says that a Sikh must recite the Name of the Almighty with his tongue but simultaneously he must always be mentally prepared and remain ready for battle to uphold righteousness" i.e; ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿਤ ਮੈ ਯੁਧ ਬੀਚਾਰੈ।--"*Mukh tay har chit mein yudh becharay*".

Sikhism is not a church of worship (Spirituality-Piri) only, but social and political (Temporal-Piri) activity also, meaning that man's public and spiritual life are inseparable. *Miri- Piri* doctrine of the Sikh faith prohibits a person from practicing dichotomous behaviour i.e, performing prayers in personal life, but being immoral in public life. In most countries, political and religious life is kept apart through statutory provisions. It is argued that the former is a dirty game while the latter is a person's sacred vow. They ask, "How can one practice a particular religion, while performing one's social and political responsibilities in a modern multi-religious society?" Therefore, they justify adoption of secularism in public life. Actually, modern secularism, divorced from religion, morality and ethics has come to mean self-serving life. One can be greedy, corrupt or a social parasite sucking blood of the helpless in one's public life and still claim to be religious person by performing some rituals in personal life. To avoid this pit fall the Guru gave the Sikhs the doctrine of *Miri-Piri*, so that man combines temporal life with spiritual life as a religious responsibility, thereby keeping the good of humanity foremost in his mind, instead of only the good of self, his race, caste, or nation.

The Sikh Gurus made the Gurdwaras as the center of their theo-political activities and thus Gurdwaras acquired a theopolitical status. Sikh history, Sikh doctrines and Sikh traditions inextricably relate spiritual values of religion to politics and to every form of activity, which would otherwise degenerate into something soulless. With this background, how could politics be banned from being directed from Gurdwaras? It is only the truly religious minded people that have the power to change the established order built on wrong values by basing the practice of politics on high principles of religion.

Raj bina nahin dharma chalay hai doctrine of Sikhism

It means that state power is necessary to sustain any religion and that man's public, private and spiritual lives are inseparable. It is the core teaching of the Gurus that Sikhs cannot fulfil their spiritual and social assignments without their own base of political power and that for a Sikh to insulate politics from religion is un-utterably abominable, degradation and fall from

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grace. As soon as Sikh people are separated from and deprived of political sovereignty and power Sikhism becomes eviscerated from true ethos. According to Guru Gobind Singh:

ਕੋਊ ਕਿਸੀ ਕੋ ਰਾਜ ਨ ਦੇ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਲੇ ਹੈ ਨਿਜ ਬਲ ਸੇ ਲੇ ਹੈ।

ਰਾਜ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਹੀ ਧਰਮ ਚਲੇ ਹੈ। ਧਰਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਭ ਦਲੈ ਮਲੈ ਹੈ।

“Koow kisi ko raj na de hai, jo lay hai nij bal say lay hai

Raj bina nahi darm chalay hai dharm bina sabh dalay malay hai--“No body gives rulership to another person on a platter,

Any body who gets it, attains through his own muscle power,

Dharma cannot be sustained without political power,

Without ***dharm*** (righteousness) everything is crushed and ruined”.

It is abundantly clear that, for the survival of any religious faith, sovereignty is the foremost requirement and a must. Without self-governance, spirituality cannot survive (as the slavery has no choice but to yield), but at the same time sovereignty must not over-ride, subjugate or guide spirituality. The spirituality basically, is a guide to guide the sovereignty and to bridle the absolute power of the ruler to some extent to maintain moral discipline and religious rectitude.

'Naash' doctrine of Sikhism

Naash literally means destruction. In theology of Sikhism it stands for the destruction of the divisive Hindu caste system. Sikhism believes in a casteless society, “Guru Gobind Singh says, ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਭੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ।।--“***Manas kee jaat sabay ekay pechanbo***”---“treat all humanity alike”. According to ‘***Naash***’doctrine of Sikhism the lowest is equal with the highest in race, as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes.

Amritpaan (Sikh baptism—***Khanday Baatay dee Pahul***) symbolizes a rebirth, by which the initiated are considered as having freed themselves of their previous family origin--caste or lineage i.e, ***Kulnash*** (ਕੁਲ ਨਾਸ) to become the family of Gobind Singh; of having renounced their earlier creeds--communal outlook i.e, ***Dharmnash*** (ਧਰਮ ਨਾਸ) for the creed of the Khalsa; of having renounced their previous occupations or professions i.e, ***Kiratnash*** (ਕਿਰਤ ਨਾਸ) for that of soldiering; of having given up superstitions i.e, ***Bhramnash*** (ਭਰਮ ਨਾਸ); of having given up all empty rituals i.e, ***Karamnash*** (ਕਰਮ ਨਾਸ) and develop catholicity and universality of outlook.

Guru Gobind Singh explained to Sikhs that all their entanglements of caste or lineage which had dwarfed their vision and killed their self-respect, had been broken and if they again behaved in the old way they would suffer as they had hither to been doing.

In purely religious sphere, all men were to be regarded equal in all respects. Sikh Baptism was made open to all men and women, rich or poor, peasants or labourers, the learned or illiterate alike irrespective of gender, race, creed and caste. Any five initiated Sikhs who are true devotees of God or God-oriented (***Gurmukh***) could baptize others so that no particular

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priestly class was allowed to be created. There was to be no special class to have monopoly of Divine knowledge or religious rights and ceremonies. Socially, no invidious distinctions were to be made between man and man.

Deg Teg Fateh doctrine of Sikhism

The Sikh doctrine of '***Deg Teg Fateh***' represents the concept of spiritual transmission from the first to the tenth Guru and it is first found written on the seal of Banda Singh Bahadur (1708—1716) stamped on his letters. The seal bore following inscription:

ਦੇਗ-ਉ-ਤੇਗ-ਉ-ਫਤੇਹ ਨੁਸਰਤੇ ਬੇਦਰੰਗ ਯਾਫਤ ਅਜ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ।---- "***Deg-O-Teg-O-Fateh-Nusrat-i-Bedrang Yafat Az-Nanak- Guru Gobind Singh***"

'***Deg***' (Cauldron) represents the institution of Langar (Sikh symbol of economy) instituted in Sikhism by its founder Guru Nanak, to feed all and sundry on an egalitarian base so that no body sleeps empty stomach. '***Teg***' (Sword) represents the Sikh symbol of power, granted to them by Guru Gobind Singh, to protect the weak and hapless and smite the tyrant and oppressor, victory and unending patronage are obtained from Gurus Nanak-- Gobind Singh".

Deg teg fateh' implies that the Sikhs should keep Guru ka langar running so that no body sleeps hungry and keep themselves armed to protect the weak and hapless and smite the tyrant and oppressor, victory will be theirs. After Banda Singh this inscription was adopted by the Sikh Misals and then by Sikh rulers for their coins also.

EMBLEM OF SIKHISM



DegTeg Fateh

Sharomani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) after its constitution in the early twentieth century depicted the Sikh doctrine "***Deg Teg Fateh***" in Emblematic (logo) form, which since then is seen inscribed on the Sikh national flag/ letter heads and the stamps of various Sikh organizations. "The kettle (***Deg***)- (The Sikh symbol of economy, the means to feed all and sundry on an egalitarian base), sword (***Teg***)-(The Sikh symbol of power, to protect the weak and hapless and smite the oppressor), victory and unending patronage are obtained from Gurus Nanak-- Gobind Singh ".Now the official seal of Akal Takhat bears this inscription. The two swords represent the *Miri, Piri* doctrine of Sikhism, the double edged sword (*Khanda*) in the middle of the emblem represents the spiritual and temporal powers, (*Bhakti* and *Shakti*) fused together in the *Khalsa*, who is a saint-soldier.

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