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THE KHALSA

It will be worth noting what the Khalsa is expected to be like, who has been bestowed a part of Guruship :

Sikhs as a whole, are known as the *Panth*. *Panth* includes all sorts of Sikhs whether perfect or imperfect, novice or fully responsible, *sehajdhari* or *amritdhari*. Any one who believes in the Guru and *Gurbani* and has faith in no one else, cannot be denied to be a Sikh and, therefore, is a member of the *Panth*. For every Sikh, there is a bar. When he (she) crosses this bar, he (she) is elevated to the selection grade, and after having received *amrit* he (she) becomes Khalsa, a member of the *Akal Purkh's Fauj* (Army of God), who surrender their life and are tested and consecrated with the sword, a class of God-conscious men, saint-warriors, out to protect the good and spread goodness and punish evil-doers and extirpate evil. The tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, defines the Khalsa in these words :

He who keeps alight the unextinguishable torch of truth,
and never wavers from the thought of One God,

ਜਾਗਤ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਪੈ ਨਿਸ ਬਾਸੁਰ, ਏਕ ਬਿਨਾ ਮਨ ਨੈਕ ਨ ਆਨੈ ।

He who has full love for and confidence in God, does not put his faith, even by mistake, in fasting or the graves of Muslim saints, Hindu crematoriums, or Jogi's places of sepulchre;

ਪੂਰਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਸਜੈ, ਬ੍ਰਤ ਗੋਰ ਮੜੀ ਮਟ ਭੂਲ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ।

He who recognises the One God and no pilgrimages, alms giving, non-destruction of life, penances, or austerities;
ਤੀਰਥ ਦਾਨ ਦਇਆ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ, ਏਕ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਹਿ ਏਕ ਪਛਾਨੈ ।

And in whose heart the Light of the Perfect One shines,
he is to be recognised as a pure member of the Khalsa.

ਪੂਰਨ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗੈ ਘਟ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਤਾਹਿ ਨਿਖਾਲਸ ਜਾਨੈ ।

The dynamic presence of the Guru in *Gurshabd*, functions then in the Sikhs as the driving force. A Sikh is just like mouldable clay in the hands of the Satguru.

The Khalsa was not created out of vengefulness. It was not created impulsively. Nor was it created as a 'time-server', a strategic step, or as a reaction to any barbarous act or the martyrdom of the ninth Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur. The martyrdoms of the fifth and ninth Satguru, were significant and important stages in the process of development. They steeled the hearts against injustice and tyranny. The Khalsa was created at the pleasure of *Akal Purkh* (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਮਉਜ) and as ordained by Him. It was created after full thought, thorough deliberation, and meticulous planning. (ਤਬ ਸਹਿਜੇ ਰਚਿਓ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਾਬਤ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ ।) It was created by the Satguru, as Lepel Griffin has said, like Jupiter taking out Minerva from his thigh.

Guru Nanak Dev gave the clarion call :

If thou art zealous of playing the game of love,

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥

Then enter upon my Path with thy head on thy palm.

ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥

Yes, once thou set foot on this Path,

ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ ॥

Then find not a way out, but lay down thy head.

ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ॥

This call was made and promise demanded, which his followers freely and spiritedly fulfilled, when at Anandpur Sahib, the tenth Nanak repeated this call and the five 'Beloved Ones' came forth prepared to sacrifice their heads. Guru Nanak had sown the seed which his eight successors cultured, nurtured, fortified, and irrigated with their sweat and blood and this was brought to final fruition by the tenth Nanak in 1699.

Every time the Guruship was to be passed on, the recipient was put to severe test. In the same way the tenth Satguru when

passing on the Guruship to the Khalsa under the Supreme Instruction and Guidance of *Gurbani*, put the Sikhs to a test by the sword. To face the blood dripping sword of the Satguru, five *Pyaras* one by one volunteered to offer their heads. Previously in such tests only one personality got through. This time as many as five persons came forward. If the call had been further made, certainly more Sikhs would have volunteered and passed the test. Guru Nanak's movement, therefore, reached its apex in 1699. On this day these five *Pyaras* were first administered *amrit* of the *khanda* by the Satguru and then the Satguru requested and himself received *amrit* from the five Beloved Ones. Thus, the Guru became the Sikh and Sikh the Guru. Bhai Gurdas says :

Hail, wonderful Gobind Singh ! Yourself the Guru and yourself the disciple.

ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ ।

Such a development was unknown and unparalleled in history before. The leaders previously had functioned as shepherds to look after their disciples as sheep and cows. This day, the birthday of the Khalsa, is our great day. It was the day of culmination. Satguru's mission, after 200 years of calculated, persistent planned efforts, sacrifices and hard work, came to be fulfilled and the ideal set by the Satguru reached its perfection on this day. No date, so far, has ever been known of the creation of a Nation. It could not be determined. It is a special peculiarity of the Khalsa that not only its birthday but even the year of its creation can be pin-pointed.

The head of a Sikh, having been offered and accepted, becomes that of the Guru. It is in trust with him. It is, therefore, incumbent on a Sikh to carry the head high and not to bow it before a mortal or any one who took birth and died. It shall only bow and bend before God's *Hukam*.

The Sikh way of salutation also changed after this development. Previously, when a Sikh saw a Sikh, they used to touch one another's feet. In *Rag Suhi* the fourth Guru said :

Whenever a Sikh of the Guru is seen, repair to his feet in all humility.

ਜੇ ਦੀਸੈ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥

After being entrusted with the Guruship and his enrollment in the *Akal Purkh's Fauj*, his status soared high, and a Sikh began to greet a Sikh saying :

The Khalsa is of God-Guru (*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa*);
All victory is of God-Guru (*Waheguru ji ki Fateh*).

It will be interesting to note the significant implication of this development produced amongst the Sikhs. The tenth Satguru's four *Chhands* in connection with this occasion are enlightening.

Seeing these developments, Kesho, the Brahmin priest, noticed that offerings, gifts, and all the money, that these priests extorted and received, were being stopped by the Sikhs and the Guru Darbar, and diverted towards the needs and causes of their own and of the *Panth*. He flared up and full of anger went to the Satguru and spoke his mind. He even spoke disrespectfully about the whole matter and about the Sikhs as coming from low castes. The Satguru in his usual polite way replied, which is recorded in the following four *Chhands* of the tenth Satguru :

Whatever God had written in thy destiny thou hast received, O Brahmin ! Banish thy regrets.

ਜੇ ਕੁਛ ਲੇਖ ਲਿਖਿਯੋ ਬਿਧਨਾ, ਸੇਉ ਪਾਈਯਤ, ਮਿਸਰ ਜੂ ਸੇਕ ਨਿਵਾਰੋ ।

It is not my fault. It escaped my memory altogether. Do not be angry.

ਮੇਰੇ ਕਛੁ ਅਪਰਾਧ ਨਹੀ, ਗਯੋ ਯਾਦ ਤੇ ਭੂਲਿ ਨ ਕੋਪ ਚਿਤਾਰੋ ।

I shall send good clothes and bedding straight away. Be thoroughly assured of this.

ਬਾਗੋ ਨਿਹਾਲੀ ਪਠੈ ਦੈਹੋ ਆਜ ਭਲੇ ਤੁਮਕੋ, ਨਿਸਚੈ ਜਿਯ ਧਾਰੋ ।

All Khattris are created by the Brahmins. But on my Sikhs here you better have kindness and (leave them alone).

ਛਤ੍ਰੀ ਸਭੈ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਿੱਪ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ, ਇਨਹੂੰ ਪੈ ਕਟਾਛ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੈ ਨਿਹਾਰੋ ।੧।

Then the Sikhs, the Khalsa, is lauded in the next two *Chhands* :

My victories in battle have been through their favour;
through their favour I have made gifts;

ਜੁੱਧ ਜਿਤੇ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਦਾਨ ਕਰੇ ।

Through their favour all my troubles have been removed;
through their kindness again my house is replenished;

ਅਘ ਓਘ ਟਰੇ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਫੁਨ ਧਾਮ ਭਰੇ ।
 Through their favour I have acquired knowledge; through
 their kindness all my enemies have been destroyed;
 ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੁ ਬਿੱਦਿਆ ਲਈ, ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਸਭ ਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਮਰੇ ।
 Through their kindness I am exalted; otherwise there are
 millions of poor people like me.

ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੇ ਸਜੇ ਹਮ ਹੈਂ ਨਹੀ ਮੇਸੇ ਗਰੀਬ ਕ੍ਰੋਰ ਪਰੇ ।੨।
 To serve them pleaseth me; service of any other is not
 dear to me.

ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਭਾਵਤ, ਅਉਰ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਸੁਹਾਤ ਨ ਜੀ ਕੇ ।
 To bestow gifts on them alone is proper; to make gifts to
 others is not profitable.

ਦਾਨ ਦੀਯੋ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਭਲੇ, ਅਰ ਆਨਕੇ ਦਾਨ ਨ ਲਾਗਤ ਨੀਕੇ ।
 To bestow gifts on them alone will bear fruit hereafter
 and bring praise in this world; to bestow on others is
 altogether useless.

ਆਰੈ ਫਲੇ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ਦਯੋ, ਜਗ ਮੈ ਜਸ, ਅਉਰ ਦਯੋ ਸਭ ਫੀਕੇ ।
 All the wealth in my house, with my soul and body, is
 for them.

ਮੇ ਗ੍ਰਹ ਮੈ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਤਨ ਤੇ ਸਿਰ ਲਉ ਧਨ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਇਨਹੀ ਕੇ ।੩।

Hearing all this, the Missar (Brahmin) :

With agony and anger the Missar in his heart burnt like
 dry grass.

ਚਟ ਪਟਾਇ ਚਿਤ ਮੈ ਜਰਿਯੋ ਤ੍ਰਿਣ ਜਿਉ ਕ੍ਰੋਧਤ ਹੋਇ ।

Realising the loss of his income and in anxiety for his
 future provision, the Missar began to weep and cry.

ਖੋਜ ਰੋਜਿ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ ਲਗ, ਦਯੋ ਮਿਸਰਜੂ ਰੋਇ ।੪।

In the second line of the above *Chhands*, the words “it escaped my memory altogether” are very significant. They depict that the Brahmin priest was not at all in the picture or consideration at the Guru’s Court and would have no place amongst the Sikhs.