

## **Current Sikh Issues - Sikh Historical perspective**

### **chapter 4-1**

#### **Current Sikh issues-need to understand and resolve**

There is Urgent need to understand and resolve current Sikh issues. Sikhs need to understand the Sikh issues and find out the causes and then to amicably resolve these issues in accordance with the Divine teachings of Sikh religion. They must take Sikh initiation-Amrit, observe Sikh code of conduct and live in Sikh way of life, with the understanding and acting upon the Sikh dictums as per the Divine teachings as contained in Guru Granth Sahib. They also must ensure it for their younger generation, which is drifting away from it day by day.

It can only be done by the effective preaching of Sikh religion, for which all the three Sikh institutions religious, educational and political, will have to play their part in this regard with honesty of purpose, being not up to the mark at present. The office holders of these institutions have to be true Sikhs known for their honesty, integrity, capability and commitment to the Sikh cause, to achieve the aim for which these were set up.

For some Sikh issues the Sikh adversaries are also playing some part to create confusions and controversies in Sikhs to dilute the Sikh identity and code of conduct and to misrepresent Sikh religion to be only a part of Hinduism. However for most of the Sikh issues the Sikhs themselves are responsible, just as not to follow the Sikh initiation, not to observe Sikh code of conduct, not to live in Sikh way of life and not to understand and act upon the basic doctrines of Sikh religion as contained in Guru Granth Sahib. To set them right, the preaching of Sikh religion is of urgent need.

The leadership is always the reflection of the followers. Sikh leaders of truthful living in Sikh code of conduct and Sikh way of life can be ensured only if all the Sikhs become and act as true Sikhs in every respect. Urgent attention is thus needed to ensure the Sikhs to become true Sikhs and particularly the younger Sikh generation. Sikhs are now spread world over. Sikh religion is highly appreciated by the scholars of world religions and its future is optimistic, in spite of some ups and downs sometimes.

The doctrines and ideology of Sikhism obviously establish that Sikh religion, being the latest religion, founded about five centuries back is the religion of the present age, capable to solve the problems of the modern man. It contains not any mystery, myth and superstition, which had dominated the previous Indian religions and faiths. It is based upon the divine revelation of Truth, Name of God and pious deeds. God, being one and the only one, formless, unborn and self-illuminated. It rejected the theory of numerous gods, goddesses and incarnations of god of Hinduism. Sikh religion discarded the religions and religious preachers who are without preaching and reaching the reality of God. It satisfies the scientific mind of today as it is based upon true wisdom, true reason and true understanding of the supreme creator and His creation. It advocates the natural and normal life of a householder, leading a truthful living with meditation in the virtuous deeds. It denounces the roaming about in Forests and mountains to seek the truth as everything is inside the mind and impurities of mind are to be washed out by the mind itself.

The vices and evils operate in the mind in darkness without Divine knowledge and run away when mind is enlightened with the presence of God, giving place to virtues. Submission to the will of God and His commandments which function the entire universe is the Divine teaching of Sikhism, which create the feeling that the same light of God is shining everywhere and in everyone. Love between man and man, equality and brotherhood of humanity and its selfless service is the natural outcome of it.

Sikhism teaches and provides the methodology to convert the self-centered mind of narrow egoistic tendencies to God tuned of higher consciousness, to be applied to higher consciousness, to be applied to all the socio-political activities throughout one's span of life. The soul may then aspire to earn the grace of God to unite with Him and then help others to achieve that aim. In Sikhism a true realistic concept of God has been provided and the mode of His worship alone to earn His grace by meditation in His Name and to make one's mind abode of God which eliminates the vices and inculcates the virtues.

The Name of God is nucleus of Sikhism as God abides in one's mind with continual meditation in the Name of God. Then ego burns, vices eliminate and virtues inculcate in the mind leading to a Truthful living with the permanent presence of God in mind, earning by honest means and sharing it with the needy, without any aggression over the rights of others.

The first condition of Sikhism is to become a Sikh and act as a Sikh with the initiation procedure duly prescribed for it by the tenth Sikh Guru, by taking Amrit of the double-edged sword and possessing the five emblems of Sikhism (uncut hair, steel bracelet, Kirpan, comb and long underwear.) to keep a separate Sikh identity and not to commit its four violations. Sikhism is strict in this code of conduct which is obligatory without any exemption. The daily rituals of Gurbani in morning and evening as prescribed, is also essential. The meditation of Name of God automatically occurs in this code of conduct and a Sikh is enabled to imbue the Name of God in his mind leading to the continuous presence of God.

The dictum of the society with godly persons, attendance of Sikh congregation in a Sikh Gurdwara is also a part of the Sikh code of conduct. The Name of God gives the realization of humanity as one race, the entire creation being of the same one creator and further to provide selfless service to humanity, accepting the social responsibility to society in all the spheres (religious, political, social and economic)

## **GURU GRANTH SAHIB: THE SOURCE OF DIVINE THOUGHT**

Guru Granth Sahib containing the divine hymns of Sikh Gurus, the word of God revealed to the entire mankind to enlighten it through Sikh Gurus as proclaimed by them is the source of Divine thought, doctrines and ideology of Sikhism based upon truth, knowledge of God, and pious deeds. It removes the ignorance, duality and urge of materialistic possessions. It leads to the constructive criticism and rejection of useless rites, rituals and other religious practices of the existing faiths and their doctrines and ideologies which were superstitions, irreligious mysteries not preaching the reality of only and the only one God and love between man and man.

Sikhism teaches the total submission to the will of God as everyone is governed by His wish, commandments in the Universe and none is beyond His will. Sikhism provides the Divine knowledge as to the creator and His creation and one's own self. It then has to reflect in his actions during life as the divine knowledge is not be and the end of it. In Sikhism Truth is above everything but higher still is truthful living. The attainment of higher consciousness itself leads man to love between man and man, equality and dignity of mankind and its every individual and selfless approach to every aspect beyond the egoistic selfish tendencies and to unite with God while living a normal and honest life of a householder. Then to help others to achieve that aim, while sticking to the selfless service of humanity.

In Sikhism, the Divine Name of God elevates man to perfect tranquility of mind beyond influences of worldly sorrows sufferings and entanglements,

leading to the highest spiritual experience and perception. It turns the self-centered mind to God tuned of higher consciousness under the activities of which man reaches the peaks of successful socio-political life doing good deeds. None is acceptable to God without good deeds. Sikhism lays a great stress on spiritual wisdom and meditation in the Name of God and to blend them with good and pious deeds, besides to temper with the love of the creator and His creation.

The Name of God controls the mind and inculcates virtues. No one can fully control the mind without the Name of God. Only those who imbue Name of God in mind can know the mystery of three worlds and enjoy perpetual bliss and attain salvation. The Name of God only can cool the burning world desires. It is through the Name of God only that one discovers the light within. The Name of God burns egoism, eliminates vices and inculcates virtues.

He alone is wise who contemplates virtues as through virtues wisdom is attained, while vices of anger, greed, lust, attachment. Egoism eats up the body as flex melts the gold. The divine wisdom creates the qualities of humility, kindness, broadmindedness, the detachment from worldly entanglements, the righteousness and contentment and keeps the mind under the will of God, the Almighty and the service of humanity.

Sikhism, starting from monotheistic aspect of God awakens the conscience of man teaching the reality of life and spirituality of consciousness. It reconstructs the man's ideal personality to successfully teach a truthful living in the Sikh way of life. Just as the lotus flower lives in water, but blooming still above it; and the duck floats in water but still above it. Sikhism teaches the man to remain in the world, but still above its materialistic entanglements and temporary alluring desires, with the power of Truth, the Name of God and pious deeds.

The methodology of old faiths and systems and particularly of Hinduism as to the worship of numerous gods, goddesses and incarnations of God in idolatory; the self human tortures; the pilgrimages to holy places and ritual baths in rivers; the sacrificial Havans with chanting of Vedic Mantras by Brahmins and several other rites, rituals and customary traditions to acquire the Divine knowledge and wash off the sins, have been totally rejected in Sikhism to be altogether irrelevant and misleading, reaching not the reality of God. Sikhism has presented its own thought and methodology without involving in verbose about rites and rituals to provide the Divine knowledge of one's own self and of the creator and His Creation. The doctrines and ideology of Sikh religion are so impressive and truthful that led British scholar MA McAuliffe to remark:

"It would be difficult to point out to a religion of greater originality or to a more comprehensive ethical system. The Sikh religion, the Sikh scriptures contain sublime truths, the study of which can not but elevate the reader spiritually, morally and socially. There is not the tinge of sectarianism in them. They teach the highest and purest principles that serve to bind man to man and in spite of the believer with an ambition to serve his fellowmen."

American Scholar of world religions, H.L. Bradshaw, stated:

**"The Sikh faith is universal religion for the present space age. The Sikh religion is truly the answer to problems of modern man. The older faiths were good in their day but that day is now past and we are living in the dispensation of Guru Nanak. The other religions contain, the truth, but Sikhism contains the fullness of Truth. It is the faith of new age."**

Pearls S. Buck, the noble prize winner remarked:

"I have studied the scriptures of other great religions but I do not find else where the same power of appeal to the heart and mind as I find in Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh Scriptures)"

"Dorothy Field, the eminent British scholar stated:

"Sikhism is a new world separate religion and not reformed sect of Hinduism."

Duncan Greenles, eminent scholar of religions remarked:

"Sikhism is no disguised Hindu sect. It is a distinct religion like other great religions of the world."

It is obvious from the doctrines and ideology of Sikhism, that the Sikh religion is an independent revealed world religion for the present age and distinct from Hinduism and other faiths and systems. If any Sikh is not correctly understanding it and not strictly acting upon its Divine teachings then the only reason can be that he has not been made to learn it, the remedy of which is its effective preaching, to which the Sikhs are duty bound to do.