

# Current Sikh Issues-Sikh Historical Perspective

## Chapter 4-11

### **Sikh religion advocates-Selfless service of Humanity rather than selfish vested interests-**

The Divine teachings of Sikh religion emphasise the social responsibility leading to the selfless service to humanity, discarding the selfish vested interests as the natural outcome of Brotherhood of Mankind is the social responsibility. Sikhism is distinct in this regard to emphasize the responsibility to society in all respects.

All the other faiths and systems previously at that time in the Eastern side of the world were laying stress on individual Moksha, Nirwan, and salvation preaching no moral and social responsibility to the society. Rather involvement in the worldly pursuits in society was considered to be a distraction, impeding the spiritual progress. The world itself was considered to be an illusion and negation leading to disassociation from society.

Sikhism discarded these traditional systems. It took altogether a different approach that entire mankind being the creation of the same creator and of one brotherhood requires each one to serve the other. Everyone is to seek Justice (Political, religious, social and economic) not for himself alone but for all others who are victims of injustice. A person who is to lead a life of normal way as a householder has to show the due regards and services to all others of the society in which he is to operate and help them with the best of his capability to challenge the problems united which the society faces. Rather selfless service of humanity was made the cardinal rule than the selfish and vested individual interests to lead the life more harmoniously with the moral ethics.

In Sikhism so much importance was given to the selfless service of mankind that it leads to the unity with God.

"He who serves humanity selflessly, get united with God." GG 286.

"Selfless service of humanity earns the grace of God." GG 26

"Whosoever serves God and humanity get salvation, whosoever meditates in the Name of God gets contentment and serves the humanity. He who gives in charity and alms to the needy out of his earnings is the pure householder." GG 952.

"He who earns through honest means and gives in charity to the needy member of the society, alone knows the true way of life." GG 1245.

No religion or religious leader came forward to raise the voice against the brutalities, oppression and injustice committed on the innocent masses by the autocratic cruel rulers, against the exploitation of innocent masses in the name of religion and against the unjust social systems, rather fled away to mountains and forests to save their skin.

It was Guru Nanak who called upon the Sidh yogis at the time of his divine discussion with them that that they should go back to suffering humanity to serve them and import the divine knowledge which they openly claimed to be learned having the supernatural powers.

It was Guru Nanak who condemned Babar, the Mughal invader on his face for committing cruelties on the innocent masses and gave his arrest, though he was released along with other innocents, when Babur came to know of his godly personality.

It was Guru Nanak who condemned the kings as ferocious Tigers and their officers as dogs to harass the innocent masses.

It was Guru Nanak who exposed the then so called religious leaders to exploit the innocent masses in the name of religion, alleging the Qazis (The Muslim Preachers) to be corrupt and fake Brahmins (the Hindu preachers) to be sucking the blood of the helpless, the Yogis knowing not the path of God, and those three responsible for the miseries of the public at large.

It was Guru Nanak who criticized the social set up of that time to have been overpowered by sin, falsehood, lust, and evil designs to the innocent masses to be devoid of any Divine knowledge.

It was Guru Nanak who with his divine message of truth, Name of God and pious deeds, preached the responsibility to society to get rid of the humanity of these impediments. His successors, the other Sikh Gurus paid a special attention to this aspect.

It was this sense of social responsibility and selfless service to humanity that the hundreds of thousands of Sikhs sacrificed their lives to save and serve others, irrespective of the faiths and systems they followed. It is a historical fact that Sikhs at the cost of their lives rescued thousands of captive Hindu womenfolk from the caravans of Ahmed Shah Abdali , each time in the area of Punjab, when they were forcibly abducting them from Delhi to their country (Afghanistan) without any resistance from anyone else and then they would safely with honor take them to their homes. What a high standard of responsibility to society and service of mankind selflessly, to the suffering public had been infused in them by their religion which was altogether absent in the previous systems.

Such spirit is rarely visible in the Sikhs today. On the other hand some Sikhs and particularly the Sikh leaders are openly accused of the selfish vested interests, causing a great harm to the Sikhs and Sikh religion. They need their self introspection and the understanding of their religion and history in this regard, which can certainly bring the desired improvement, if it is so done with the honesty of purpose.

Sikhs have to really understand that their religion has been very highly appreciated by the eminent scholars of world religions and history and if they do not come to its expectations, then they will be held responsible to belittle it. Such a responsibility will be much more to the Sikh leaders, religious and political, in the history to be recorded in future.

The consideration and analysis of all the current Sikh issues make one thing clear that these have been made controversial to confuse the Sikhs and to dilute their separate identity. The Sikhs and particularly the Sikh leaders must ensure to study their Sikh historical perspective and follow the Divine teachings of Sikh religion as contained in Guru Granth Sahib and observe strictly Sikh code of conduct and live in Sikh way of life, rising above the unnecessary controversies. If there are genuine disputes on any issues,

that must be settled amicably in accordance with the Sikh traditions, by them through Gurmatta under the guidance of Guru Granth Sahib by the Gur panth itself, acceptable to all the Sikhs world over.