

Current Sikh Issues-Sikh Historical Perspective

Chapter 4-8

Sikhs should practically reject caste and creed distinctions as forbidden in Sikh religion-

Sikh religion forbids in total all the caste and creed distinctions and Sikhs should reject it in their practical life as most of the Sikhs reflect these distinctions in practice in one way or the other. Some of the Sikhs not only suffix their castes or subcastes with their names but even go to the extent of naming some of the Gurdawaras on the basis of their castes in defiance of the clear teachings of Sikh religion, being anti Sikh on the face of it.

The basic feature of Sikh religion of fatherhood of God automatically leads to the brotherhood of mankind. The entire creation is the creation of the same one God, the Almighty; His light shines in all and the creator has created all the human beings with the same stuff as the builder of vessels makes all vessels from the same clay. The entire mankind is from the same fatherhood with His same light. There is only one God and all the human beings equally belong to Him. The entire creation is of one creator, so there can be no distinction between them as good or bad.

Guru Gobind Singh proclaimed in his Divine hymns: Recognize the entire humanity as one race;" Akal Ustat) "The entire mankind is partner in God's grace, who sees alien to none, being the creator of all (GG 91)

"By Guru's grace, see all with one eye, as in every one the same light of God is contained." GG 599

"Gathering the body of five elements, God infuses in it His immaculate light. God is all pervading and has created the creation. There is no other second. God is contained amongst all. GG 1297.

"The creation is in the power of one creator, who by His might sustains" GG 1410

"All that the perfect Lord does is perfect. There is no deficiency or excess in it. One merges in perfect Lord by His Grace." GG 1412.

SAME INNER CONSCIENCE IN ALL

"There is the same inner consciousness amongst all the human beings. Without inner consciousness God has created none." GG 24.

SAME SOUL IN ALL

"The same light of the creator God, the soul, is in all human beings, which enlightens All." GG 685.

"Entire humanity is of the same form brotherhood. It is due to different faiths and system that they look different. Someone by sharing his head becomes a Sanyasi and another Yogi yet another poses for a monk or ascetic; some call themselves Hindus, others claim to be Muslims; among them are Shias and Sunnis; Recognize all as belonging to one race of humanity; God as the Creator for Hindus, God as good for Muslims, God as sustainer and as merciful in all the same god. Recognize not another even in error or

in doubt; worship that one alone as He is the supreme Lord of as all. It is only His form, His light that is diffused in one and all." (Guru Gobind Singh , Akal Ustat 15/85)

"Temples, Mosques, Hindu worship and Muslim prayers are the same; all men are the same and it is through error that they are seen different; all men are endowed with the same eyes, same ears, same body and the compound of same elements; the Aulakh of Hindus, and Allah of Muslims mean the same Supreme one; The Purans and the Quran being of the same God. They are all of one form; One god made them all." (Guru Gobind Singh , Akal Ustat.)

THE DENOUNCEMENT OF CLASS SYSTEM

It was proclaimed in Sikhism that sex is no ground for discrimination and the women are entitled to the equal status with men in all matters.

"Why to lower the status of women, when their can be no life without her as only God, the Almighty is self created without woman. All the kings are born from women they why to denigrate her. (Asa di Var)

The Hindu society had been miserably divided on caste and creed system in four castes, giving the superiority to Brahmans and untouchability to Shudras, with the diction of their sage Manu that if their division is interfered with Dharma, itself shall stand polluted. No one dared to challenge such inhuman system In Hindu Gita sermons, even no voice was raised against such anti human slur. In Muslim scriptures Quran, women faced discrimination in several aspects in to comparison to man though it is free from caste and creed systems. In Sikhism all such discriminations have been outrightly rejected. Effective steps were taken in Sikhism to eradicate such discriminatory system.

Sikh Gurdwaras were made open to each and every one conferring the equal status without any discrimination, whatsoever. Sikh congregations and community Kitchen were set up (Sangat and Pangat) to eliminate the distinctions of all sorts, where there was total equality in man and man. The initiation of Sikh ceremony, Amrit of double- edged sword, obligatory for Sikhs is administered without any distinction of caste and creed from the same vessel. Everyone at that time has to abandon his previous caste and creed to become member of Khalsa Panth with equal status.

Sikhism has created a distinct classless society with full equality in every respect in total contradiction to Hinduism. As remarked by Dr. Gokal Chand Narang, author of History of Sikhs:

"Under the influence and guidance of Guru Gobind Singh, those persons become brave warriors, who had not touched the sword earlier and not even had placed any gun on their shoulders. Wahsermen, Barbars, Mehras (considered to be of lower caste) had become the generals, before whom, Kings and Nawabs were afraid of to come."

Hari Ram Gupta in his book "History of Sikhs" remarked at page 189:

"In Sikhism at the time of Amrit or baptism, the Sikhs gained five freedoms:

1. Deliverance from the bonds and prejudices of all previous religions, customs and practices.
2. Obliteration of and deliverance from the effect of past deeds.

3. Freedom from the influence of the previous race, caste or family lineage.
4. Freedom from the stigma attached to a previous calling or hereditary profession.
5. Deliverance from all previous rituals, prejudices and inhibitions.

There was thus a complete break from the earlier religious practices, useless rites and rituals and the caste, creed and class distinctions and divisions. Sikhism created totally classless nation, free from any indignity and honor for everyone in every respect. Sikhs must strictly follow the Divine teachings of their religion in this regard, which should reflect in their practical living as the Divine knowledge is not the end of the matter in Sikh religion, where in, it must also be acted upon in practical life.