

Current Sikh Issues-Sikh Historical Perspective

chapter 4-15

Sikh religion teaches higher moral and ethical values-Sikhs must follow these values in their practical life-

The Divine teachings of Sikh religion lay the emphasis on the higher moral and ethical values which elevate one spiritually, morally and socially. The eminent scholars of the world religions consider these conduct guidelines to have something of special value to the rest of the world; being the religion of the present age, capable to solve the problems of the modern man and having fullness of truth. In Sikhism, clear guidance has been provided to forbid the temporary allurements of worldly desires and entanglements which create the hinderance to attain the real aim of human life to unite with the creator by constantly abiding Name of God in the mind and leading a truthful way of life with the simple and basic needs. However most of the Sikhs have no real understanding of these values and lack to follow in their practical life. They must have the correct understanding and act upon it.

Sikhism discards FASHIONS: COSMETICS, JEWELLERY AND DIAMONDS-

"If one would indulge in collection of and wearing of jewellery pearls and diamonds, and would bring hankering and crying for more and more what to say of peace and inner happiness." GG 700.

"If one gets indulging him in such like poisonous activities, artificialities, and temporary pursuits, then his mind would never get contentment and bliss and rather wither away in despair and depression." GG 279.

"One would repent for useless bodily gratification with fashions and ornaments at the time of his death to the court of God bearing it all behind in the world as there; he would be judged purely on merits of his deeds, good or bad, whatever it might be." GG 470.

"In this precious human life, the aim is to unite with God. If it is not achieved, then accursed is the food, clothing, sleep and body itself. The egoistic living with pomp and show is a great hindrance to fulfill their own, which keeps the mind wandering and astray, rather than to concentrate on the remembrance of God." GG 796

NO INTOXICANTS- Intoxicants are totally forbidden in Sikh way of life.

"Alcohol even if prepared from Ganga Jal (which was considered to be pure in Hinduism) is a bad thing to drink which deprives a human mind of its control and causes depression." GG 1293

"One should drink the nectar of the Name of God and not the useless Alcohol." GG 360.

"One should strictly avoid alcohol by drinking which only loses one's control of faculties, forgets God. Alcoholics would be punished in God's court."

As to smoking of tobacco, it is a violation-kuraihat- "People smoke and keep chewing betel nuts for pleasure and thus waste their lives. They do not remember God and the angel of death punishes them." G G 726

"Kuttha meat (Hala) tobacco, Alcohol, charas, ganja, tarri, topi, -----should never be consumed by Sikhs." (RehatName Bhai Daya Singh)

NO WORLDLY DESIRES

Sikhism discards worldly desires and rather advocates death in life itself.

"The desires free mind with the fear of God, enjoys Divine knowledge and shall not feel hunger again" GG21.

"The conquest of mind is the conquest of the world itself."

GG 6.

Whosoever overwhelms his mind, he realizes death in life. Through His grace, the gracious Lord is recognized. The mind becomes stable if man does and practice the deed of the true way of life. Lust, wrath, materialistic entanglements and worldly desires bring defeat, defame and mental disturbance, while Truth, contentment, kindness, faith in God and all other virtues lead to success, peace of mind, happiness and honor. Awakening of mind by self restraint and realization and the Name of God dispels all the dualities and evils. The mind becomes desire free and above temporary worldly allurements, inculcating the virtues to lead a truthful living.

GENERAL CONDUCT DICTUMS

In the Sikh way of life, general conduct dictums are to be followed per teachings of Sikhism which are of higher moral and ethical values. "No amassing of wealth" "The wealth can not be collected without committing sins and it cannot accompany at the time of death." GG 417.

"Many have died crying for wealth and property, but it goes along with none ." GG 935

"One should not always be after money as it is like a serpent which has taken the world in its fold, though it eats that very person who collects it."

NO AGGRESSION

"Aggression over others' rights has been made a religious violation, a sin for Muslims and cow for Hindus." GG 146.

NO CORRUPTION

The corruption and injustice cannot be tolerated as these are worst type of impurities.

"Those who suck the blood of others can never be pure as even the garment is polluted and stained with blood." GG 140.

No Falsehood-

"Falsehood in one's conduct though appears to be sweet like honey but it drains the man. One who indulges in falsehood gets the reputation of being false. All the liars shall obtain, what is altogether false."

No ill speaking-

"Impurity of ill speaking pollutes one's mind and brings daily disgrace."

No Rudeness and Discourtesy-

"By uttering harsh words to be rude, man comes to grief. To speak with discourtesy to others, makes one's own mind and body discourteous." GG 473

No deceit and Hypocrisy-

"The deceitful and hypocritical is excessively linked with worldliness."

No Foolishness-

"Whoever is fool, sees not with his eyes. His language gives not pleasure and he understands not what is told to him. Intoxicated with vices, he quarrels with the world."

No Greed' Greedy person is not liable for trust."

No Impurity "When the mind is impure, then the body is impure and impure becomes the tongue. With false mouth man utters falsehood. How can he be pure?"

No cruelty,worldly love,avarice and wrath- "Cruelty, worldly love, avarice and wrath are the four stream of fire. By falling in to them, the mortal is burnt."

No Worldly Attachments-

"The love of worldly attachments is all entanglement."

No friendship with mammon worshipper-

"False is the friendship of the mammon worshipper and false is its very foundation."

No saying to others bad and himself good-

"One should not say bad to others. One should not consider himself to be good and others bad."

No enemy or stranger-

"There is no enemy and no stranger in this world as every one belongs to the same brotherhood."

No fasting or excessive eating-

By not eating any meal one causes distress to his own body."

"Accursed is such a life wherein man distances his belly with the excessive eating."

The Sikh way of life exhibits the higher moral and ethical values to be in actual practice, to have the inseparable affection, for Sikh Gurus and God, the Almighty, to have the love between man and man and total equality of mankind; to eliminate the vices and acquire the virtues with truth, the name of God and pious deeds and to achieve the aim of human life to unite with the creator. It practically develops the higher consciousness and transfers the control of mind from narrow egoistical and self-centered mind to God-tuned, to live under the will of God. It enables to create harmonious mutual understanding to mention universal peace, wherein problems of poverty, suffering, egoistic conflicts can be solved with man's correct perceptions of equality and dignity of everyone. Man is blessed with the light of reason and discrimination. Sikhism teaches its use in the right way, honoring the will of God, bringing honor to him in this world and hereafter. Moral activity is the source to spiritual growth to be flourished from the association of God-tuned persons and continual remembrance of God throughout one's span of life, thereby acquiring self control, humility, kindness, mercy, forgiveness, contentment and selfless service to humanity to be applied in all activities of life. In Sikhism, world is the creation of God, with his light in every thing, to practice righteousness. Man, being the superior from other species is capable to unite with His source of light by understanding the will of God and acting upon it with the making of his mind, abode of God, the methodology of which is provided in the Sikh way of life to carry out the will of God through truth, the Name of God and pious deeds. Sikhism does not limit the attainment of Divine

knowledge to be the end of all. It emphasizes that, after having achieved the divine knowledge one must carry it out and live in the activity for service of humanity and discharge the moral socio-political responsibility with higher ethical values. The realization of truth is to be the means of truthful practical living and solving the problems of the mankind with honest approach without selfish motivations. The Sikh way of life, is the honest house holders life and to live in the world in the normal way with the endeavor to attain the higher consciousness without entanglements in temporary alluring materialistic attractions and rather leading a worldly desire free life in the world, as the lotus flower remains in water, but still above it. The Sikhism gives a message of love and peace to the world. The pious relationship of man and God and between man and man is based on love and peace; the first with the creator and the other with creation of that creator. John Clark Archer has rightly remarked:

"The world today needs the message of Sikhism of love and peace."The American scholar HL Bradshaw rightly stated:

"The Sikh religion is the religion for the present space age and is truly the answer to the problems of modern man."

According to the eminent scholar of religions, CH Pen, "Guru Nanak had brought a practical religion. Guru Nanak had understood, the basic knowledge, which had not been understood by other reformers. Only that religion can survive which teaches practical way of life (as Sikhism) and not that how to fled from the worldly affairs."