

Conquering The Cycle of Joy and Sorrow.

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Prakash Parv is a symbolic celebration of the birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur. While the behavior of a person changes between the events of joy and sorrow, he is one of the examples who moved beyond that. There are many things which we need to learn from him, we need to understand the power of his commitment and how the external situations left him untouched.

If you look at the Sikh community, it was born in a certain type of historical situation, Guru Nanak had many disciples, whom he initiated into certain meditative processes with his universal teaching, he didn't ascribe to any particular scriptural dictum nor any separate belief system. Another 7 gurus continued the same tradition after Guru Nanak but the 9th Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur had to reorganise the Sikhs because the situation was different. If you look at the Punjab (whose major chunk is now in Pakistan) on the map of Bharat, it was the only frontier province to enter the mainland as by that time Afghanistan (provinces like Ninhar, Gandhar, Balkh etc.) and frontier states were almost sieged by the Muslim invaders. When any invader wanted to enter the subcontinent, they naturally first hit Punjab. They forcefully wanted to kill people there who refused to convert, the women were abducted and were subject to ravish. Under all these circumstances he restructured the entire community where every man from each family was a soldier 'Nihang' as a part of the Khalsa. Even today we can see a large representation of Sikhs in the Indian Army because the martial attitude is so deeply rooted in them.

If we recall and see why Guru Tegh Bahadur became like that, there are many reasons for that and that was the most obvious thing to do. Aurangzeb wanted to convert India into an Islamic nation, hence forcing the Hindus to convert to Islam else be ready to be executed. A delegation of 500 Kashmiri Pandits led by Pandit Kripa Ram went to seek help from Guru Tegh Bahadur at Anandpur Sahib ji. Even today the community has preserved the cavalry and the tradition of 'Nihang' set by Guruji. He introduced the system of 'Karsevaks' volunteering in the temples as their Sadhana. It is extremely touching to see so many people working with absolute devotion in Gurudwaras, even during this pandemic they're working tirelessly.

We are alive today and peacefully following our culture but this doesn't come free of cost. The Sikh gurus sacrificed a lot from the time of their inception to the partition of this nation. The amount of suffering Guru Tegh Bahadur had to go through was enormous, he was brutally beheaded by Aurangzeb, but he was dedicated to what was utmost necessary. We should not forget the sufferings of our ancestors because of them we all are here.

"Give up your head, but forsake not those whom you have undertaken to protect. Sacrifice your life, but relinquish not your dharma" -- Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.