THE CREATION OF KHALSA (1699)

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ABSTRACT

Guru Gobind Singh created Khalsa for the protection of Dharma i.e. righteousness. The Guru had also determined to abolish the caste system and untouchability so that these evils should not be made an arm of disunion amongst his ‘Khalsa brotherhood’ and thus he stressed on the disciplined life for his followers. The tenth Guru ordered that all Khalsas must drink Amrit out of the same vessel at the time of their baptism. The Guru decided to put his predetermined elaborate plan into operation on the Baisakhi day in 1699 at Anandpur and that too in a systematic manner. For creating khalsa, Guru Gobind demanded five heads from his devotees. Daya Ram, a Khatri of Lahore, Dharm Das, a Jat of Delhi, Mohkam Chand, a washerman of Dwarka, Himmat Rai, a weaver of Jagan Nath and Sahib Chand, a barber of Bidar cheerfully responded one after another and advanced to offer their heads. To these five now the Guru bestowed the name of Panj Piyare or “Five beloved” – as they came to be called. The five beloved, fully dressed and accounted, stood up before the Guru. They were asked to repeat “Wahguru” and the preamble of the Japji. The Guru then gave them five palmfuls of the Amrit (Nectar) to drink. He sprinkled it five times on their hair and their eyes, and caused them to all to repeat “Wahguru Ji ka Khalsa, Wahaguru Ji Ki Fateh” (hail to the Khalsa who belongs to the Lord: Hail to the Lord to whom belongs the victory). On this they were given the surname of ‘Singh’, meaning lion and were to wear the following five emblems whose name began with ‘K’, namely, Kes, long hair and beard; Kangha, a comb; Karha, a steel bracelet; Kachha, short drawer; Kirpan, a sword. The Guru asked his five faithful Sikhs to prepare the Amrit as he had done. When it was ready, he stood before them with clasped hands; and he sought them to baptize him into his brotherhood. The Khalsa is the Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa. You and I are one for ever. Then the Guru received Amrit from the five Beloved in the same manner as they had received it form him. Like the names of his five Beloved, too, was made to end in Singh or Lion. It was changed from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh. The Guru invited others to receive baptism. Upon this many others prepared to receive baptism. In a very little time many thousands were received baptism. Through this chastening baptism at Anandpur on the Baisakhi of 1699, the nucleus of Guru Gobind Singh’s Khalsa had come into existence.

KEY WORDS: Khalsa, Waheguru, Baisakhi, Baptism
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